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ARTICLES

Review

An analysis of western diversity management theories in a Nigerian context

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Research has shown that the philosophy behind diversity studies emerged from the Global North. This also strengthens the assumption that the current diversity management theorizing is mainly Anglo-centric which gives priority to the Global North, and reflects neoliberal structuring. In view of this critique on the implementation of Western theories in the Global South, this study examines two key Western theories within the diversity management discourse to critically examine Multinational Corporation's (MNCs') diversity management constructs in sub-Saharan Africa, focusing on Nigeria. This is to explore the relevance of Western theory in the Nigerian context, and to further identify and evaluate similarities and differences between MNCs diversity management processes in the Global North and Global South.

Key words: MNCs, western theories, Nigeria, global north, diversity management.

INTRODUCTION

Early recognition of the term 'Managing Diversity' emerged from the United States of America. This was as a result of the movement for equal opportunity rights and affirmative action (Klarsfeld, 2010); a product of the civil rights movement of the 1950s.

The civil rights movement was due to African-Americans seeking political equality as well as improved economic and social well-being (Klarsfeld, 2010). These movements aimed to eradicate the discrimination and injustice that were evident in society, and the workplace (Gilbert et al., 1999). It has, however, been argued (Gilbert et al., 1999) that these movements had some negative consequences because of the low job satisfaction recorded during their implementation.

Equal opportunity rights and affirmative action were later labelled as 'valuing differences', and this then became known as 'managing diversity' in the early 1990s.

Similarly, in the UK the term 'Managing Diversity' developed from the equal opportunities systems (Gold et al., 2010).

Metcalfe (2010) states that the diversity scenario in the UK has also evolved because of migration from Europe, Africa and Asia; this is also evident in the fact that there has been a significant rise in the number of Muslims employed within the workforce in the UK.

Additionally, it is recorded that more women are moving into the labour market in professional roles (Metcalfe, 2010). With regards to the difference between equal opportunities and diversity management as concepts, Metcalfe (2010) states that while managing diversity is internally driven and focuses on individual, there is a strong external drive for equal opportunity, which tends to focus on groups (Metcalfe, 2010). Managing diversity also embraces a broader range of differences exhibited

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among the workforce (Whitelaw, 2010), including, women, ethnic minorities and disabled people.

Whereas diversity management is concerned with all employees, especially managers, equal opportunity focuses mainly on the personnel department (Mavin and Girling, 2000). Metcalfe (2010) and Mavin and Girling (2000) agree that unlike equal opportunity, diversity management is concerned with not just dealing with discrimination in the workplace, but with developing the potential of the workforce (Gold et al., 2010). Consequently, the influence of globalisation on managing diversity has established a consistently evolving diversity management process, which informs the global perception of diversity management.

For instance, Canada does not consider diversity management a concern because of the perception that Canada accepts cultural differences (Polese and Stren, 2000). Miller and Rowney (1999) study of 180 companies in Calgary revealed that half of the organisations surveyed demonstrated little concern with issues around managing diversity, although they did show concern with adherence to regulatory pressures. Part of the observation was that many of these respondents did not feel that the lack of women and minorities in top management positions was a concern.

Of the 50% of organisations that did recognise the concept, 37.5% were beginning to work towards building diversity management in order to employ the most highly skilled workforce. Only about 12.5% had effective diversity programmes towards women, minorities, disabled and aboriginal people (Miller and Rowney, 1999). In contrast, in the French context, diversity has been gaining popularity since 2003 (Klarsfeld, 2009). Organisations practice diversity for various reasons (Mor-Barak, 2005) which include economic empowerment (Thomas, 1990), competitive advantage (Wentling and Palma-Rivas, 2000), creativity because of the increased pool of skills and experiences, as well as the society's expectation to accommodate all people (Klarsfeld, 2009).

In China, because of the open door policy, many privately owned enterprises, joint ventures; foreign investment firms and Western organisations including Multinational corporations Multinational Corporation's (MNCs') came into the country, leading to further cross-fertilisation and harmonisation of the human resource terminologies and practices of the Western world and the Republic of China (Yang et al., 2004). Meanwhile in Pakistan, according to Budhwar and Yaw (2001), the discourse on diversity takes a dimensional approach where gender is prevalent though not secluded.

Similarly, India practises a caste system, originally based on individual professions but that evolved into a hereditary structure where offspring were required to practise the same profession as their ancestors. Alongside the class structure, other diversity strata prevalent in India are gender and disability.

Likewise, African societies including Nigeria are recognised as diverse in nature (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011). The societal constructions of these nations are largely centred on its historical framework and on the social identities acknowledged within its geographical stretch (Singh, 2011). In spite of the awareness of the diverse nature of African States like Nigeria, it has to an extent proven difficult to clearly identify social categories within the Nigerian diaspora (Odiegwu et al., 2012).

However, with the influence of Western Societies and globalisation (Harzing and Pinnington, 2011), social identities recognised in Nigeria evolve firstly from social categories (Nyambegera, 2002) as documented within global or Western discourse on the concept of diversity (Sweetman, 2004). This paradigm of understanding diversity in Nigeria brings to light the existence of social categories like gender, ethnicity, religion, age, class and others like political partisan and geo-political zoning significantly obvious within the Nigerian society (Azolukwam and Perkins, 2009).

Nigeria which has over 200 ethnic groups consists of 36 States and a federal capital territory, and is further divided into 6 geo-political zones (Odiegwu et al., 2012). This ethnic driven character of the Nation plays out as the dominant drive for its political activities, national development and commitments. Another significant characteristic of the Nigerian social structure is the existence of religious intransigence between two major religions (Christianity and Islam) and to a large extent, has been known to influence national ethnic conflicts identified within the Nigerian diaspora especially within the North which is predominantly made up of the Muslims and the rest of Nigeria sometimes identified as the South and is predominantly Christian (Jibrin, 1991; Basedau et al, 2013).

Additionally, the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorate of Nigeria by colonial rulers which makes up the current day Nigeria has been argued to be a significant challenge towards the total eradication of religious and ethnic conflicts at a national level (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011; Ekande, 2012). Hence, the use of politics, commerce, religion and the bringing together of the North and South under the colonial rule for easy governorship, have remained a debate about the foundation of the formation of Nigeria-post independence (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011).

A study on diversity in Nigeria shows that ethnicity is a principal social relation within the Nigerian context (Hino et al., (2012). Following this, Hino et al. (2012) also acknowledges that ethnic diversity is responsible for just below 40% of the impediments experienced within sub Saharan Africa that delays growth and development. Nonetheless, other dominant social relations identified within the Nigerian society include religion, gender, class age, marital status, political partisan. With the influence of globalisation, Western practices and conceptualisation of

diversity through social identities (Harzing and Pinnington, 2011), it is no surprise that African States including Nigeria, also address the concept of diversity through understanding the impact of primary social relations recognized within this society structure (Singh, 2011).

In addition, examining diversity as a global concept, some scholars (Oswick and Noon, 2014) argue that the increasing interest shown on the topic of 'diversity' is due to the changes experienced in the political, social and cultural systems in the world today. This is evident in the level of migration experienced around the world, and also the movement of production of goods and services to developing countries (Gold et al., 2010).

Therefore, this paper contributes to understanding the processes involved in using western 'diversity management' theories within the Nigerian context. This can be a major step to fostering the development of diversity management models and frameworks in the Nigerian context (Anakwe, 2002) that will help reduce social conflicts as a result of social differences in the scale (Olsen and Martins, 2012).

Overview of western diversity management theories in Nigeria

The decision to use Western diversity management theories (Akobo, 2016) reflects the absence or limited use of Nigerian established diversity management practices in indigenous or multinational contexts (Anakwe, 2002).

As stated by Adeleye et al. (2014), Nigeria ranks poorly on the overall diversity index SHRM (2009) as a result of its negligence toward engaging in this management practice (Adeleye et al., 2012). This justifies the choice of starting from an Anglo-centric position as pioneers of this practice (Klarsfeld, 2010), with the aim to understand the extent of impact of Western developed practices in the Nigerian context.

In addition, this analysis identifies similarities and differences between the Global North and South contexts. Consequently, using Western developed theories, addresses in the Nigerian context, the argument that the possible transfer of Western management polices to Africa can be unfavourable towards the development of 'African style' management practices (Anakwe, 2002). The selected theories are the Cox Taylor theory on organisational types and dimensions of integration, which explores the impact of organisational and national cultural influences in the integration of minority groups in the workplace. The second theory, the Ely and Thomas (2001) model of diversity management, explores diversity policies that address issues of social equality and development.

Cox (1991, 1994) characterises organisations in three types: monolithic, pluralistic and multicultural. He states that these types of organisations were developed according to a six factor framework inspired by Milton Gordon's 'seven point framework' on diversity (Cox, 1991) consisting of acculturation, structural assimilation, intergroup marriage, prejudice, discrimination, identification with dominant group of society and intergroup conflict, and it can be used to show the degree to which an organisation is receptive to the value of diversity (Cox, 1991).

Cox (1991) within his framework develops six factors to demonstrate the level of integration of minority groups in an organisation. For the purpose of this paper, the study divided integration into organisational structures into two categories, formal and informal structures. Following Cox (1991) analysis, acculturation shows organisational cultural integration with individual culture or culture exhibited by the minority social groups, while the degree of structural integration indicates the ability of the organisation to adapt to minority groups in its structure.

The integration into formal/informal organisations indicates organisational support for minority social groups beyond work operations, and the degree of cultural bias shows the level of discrimination due to social differences. The level of organisational identification examines the gap between the majority and minority group in the organisation, and the degree of intergroup conflict explores the impact of conflicts caused by social differences.

The major difference of all three types of organisations is the level of inclusion of women and minorities in the organisation (Stockdale and Crosby, 2004). In the Monolithic type, which is the major form within organisations in the Unites States (Gold et al., 2010), minorities are required to adapt to the already existing organisational culture. In addition, these organisations are made up of a high number of white males with a low number of women and minority men in managerial positions.

Cox (1991) acknowledges that this scenario occurs in organisations where an identity group is dominant. He states as instances a minority owned business, or foreign companies in operation within the United Sates (Cox, 1991). He further identifies that organisations who exhibit this structure argue that geographical location and size are major influences they experience towards change (Cox and Stacy, 1991).

Pluralistic organisations identify the impact of women and minorities within the workplace as significantly valuable; hence, they are able to achieve a level of structural integration although this doesn't change the organisational structure (Cox, 1991; Stockdale and Crosby, 2004). Areas affected include hiring, promotion, management training on equal opportunity rights and audits on compensation (Cox, 1991). This model is also dominant within organizations in the United States (Metcalfe, 2010), with Cox (1994) giving examples of companies within the United States practising this (Coca Cola, General Motors, Phillip Morris, and Chrysler).

Although these types of organisations achieve a level of integration, there is some limited evidence that they still have an integration approach to social control, which Cox (1994) identifies as a characteristic of a monolithic organisation. The third type of organisation, which is multicultural, not only values and allows contributions from women and minorities, but adjusts the organisational structure to utilize the diverse workforce represented (Cox, 1994).

Further, Cox (2001) stresses that an organisation has to be multicultural in practice to be able to manage its diverse workforce effectively (Stockdale and Crosby, 2004) Cox (2001) believes that for an organisation to handle diversity effectively, it should be a multicultural organisation.

Cox (2001) further developed this theory as he identified five areas where change needs to occur in an organisational structure to qualify as a multicultural organisation; these include leadership components, research and measurement, education, alignment of management systems and follow-up. He further defined this as a model towards cultural change (Cox, 2001).

In an explanation of the model, Cox (2001) sees leadership as key for organisational change as leaders ensure organisational vision is well represented, motivate staff, and provide the required environment for the achievement of these organisational goals. This links to research and measurement, which can ensure that the data required to solve organisational problems (which include environmental factors) are gathered, and he explains that measurement is the process by which the data collected can be used to monitor progress within the organisation. He stresses that, for an organisation to be successful at change, they will need to be knowledgeable about the necessary data, and desired results must be precisely identified during the change process (Cox, 2001). Including education as another link, Cox (2001) explains this is to help the staff learn about any organisational change process. Most companies include education within their training programmes.

Alignment of management system is the fourth area, and relates to organisational policies and practices. These include the human resources practices such as recruitment, promotion, training and development. Cox (2001) recommends that these need to be in line with the company's goal to achieve diversity. Subsequent, Follow-up, which is the fifth area but not necessarily the last link, has to do with the implementation of action towards achieving cultural change within the organisation. It could intersect with other areas, but links most strongly with research and measurement (Cox, 2001).

Cox (1991) theory explains types of organizations based on their level of integration of diverse work groups within the organisation. The study uses this theory to assist in the assessment of empirical data in relation to identifying the level of organisational integration (Cox, 1991) in the Nigerian context. This theory will explore the level of integration of various social groups within the organisational structure. As any workforce is likely to reflect the culture of the society, it is significant to examine how organisational culture adapts in a society like Nigeria.

Cox (2001) theory was developed, and has been applied primarily within the United States (Cox, 2001) and has measured organisations' level of integration with the identifiable social categorisations and geographical location of the United States in mind. Hence, this can be a limitation concerning the use of this theory within the Nigerian context. This is because there is a possibility of identifying organisational types that do not fit into Cox (1991) organisational types, or that may have adopted characteristics from all three types.

The second theory the Ely and Thomas model, looks at social categorisation and identity (Gold et al., 2010), emerged from a qualitative research study they carried out within three culturally diverse organisations (Ely and Thomas, 2001). The theory was based on people's experiences within culturally diverse workgroups and in circumstances in which diversity 'enhances or detracts' from work group functioning (Ely and Thomas, 2001). They argue that diversity could be seen as a burden on organisations with the potential of high costs in terms of management and resolution of conflicts, therefore compromising the efficiency of these organisations (Choi and Rainey., 2010). This argument was based on the study of workgroups in three firms located in the United States (Gold et al., 2010). Ely and Thomas (2001) further stress that the perspective of diversity held by a workgroup influences how people in that workgroup 'express and manage tension that is related to diversity.

Metcalfe (2010) highlights that the results from the aforementioned study showed that workforce diversity had a high positive outcome on workgroup performance when the diversity perspective was focused on integration and learning. This focus was based on 'quality of intergroup relation, feelings of being valued and respected and the positivity of employees' racial identity at work' (Metcalfe, 2010). The three models of diversity management developed and then further refined were discrimination and fairness, access and legitimacy, and integration and learning (Ely and Thomas, 2001). Furthermore, Metcalfe (2010) explains that the discrimination and fairness perspective ensures fair and equal treatment while eliminating discrimination within an organisation's employment practices.

Subsequently, the access and legitimacy perspective uses diversity as a way of gaining 'access to legitimacy with a diverse market', and the integration and learning perspective proposes that the knowledge, skills and experiences of employees which have been developed as a result of their 'cultural identity groups are potentially valuable resources' (Gold et al., 2010). Similarly, Point and Singh (2003) categorise diversity in terms of four perceptions: resistance, discrimination and fairness,

access and legitimacy, and learning. Access and legitimacy frames diversity as establishing equal opportunities, whereas discrimination and fairness aims to ensure equality for people from minority groups (Ely and Thomas, 2001).

In contrast, the resistance approach ignores diversity while learning; it is more involved with valuing differences, offering a systematic process for all employees to learn about others, and the value of culture as well as demographic diversity (Fernando et al., 2012), leading to a multicultural organisation (Cox, 1991, 2001). Hence, Fernando et al. (2012) propound a multicultural approach to diversity, which includes demographic diversity and human capacity diversity. This is premised on their assumption that human capital diversity directly influences demographic differences, and demographic differences impact on group work because of other, less detectable, social identities that directly add value to group action, like knowledge and skills.

Although there have been arguments on the value of diversity management processes in relation to its cost, the results from Ely and Thomas (2001) study identify the advantage of effective diversity management within an organisation towards the eradication of discrimination or inequality (Gold et al., 2010). This model looks towards ensuring equal treatment and elimination of discrimination within the organisation's employment. This again is relevant within this context as the practice of diversity management looks to eradicate discrimination within the workplace and create equality amongst all social groups represented (Shen et al., 2009). This theory analyses diversity processes within the organisation with a view to exploring social equality and development in Nigeria; and, due to analysing a different context; this theory does not focus on group work.

These theories have been selected because they cover relevant areas required for the effective and efficient process of diversity management identified within organisations in Western societies (Klarsfeld, 2010). For instance, the Cox organisational types and dimensions of integration (Cox, 1991, 1994) show three levels of the integration of social groups in an organisation.

In the Nigerian context, this theory will explore integration of social groups – especially minority groups – within these organisations. Complementing this, the Ely and Thomas (2001) diversity model focuses on social categorisation and social identities. In the Nigerian context, this theory will examine diversity processes directed at social equality and development. In addition, these Western theories (Cox, 1991; Cox, 2001; Ely and Thomas, 2001) will explore relevant socio-cultural dimensions that influence individual and organisational culture in the Nigerian context.

METHODOLOGY

In order to understand social differences and how they are managed in Nigeria, it is applicable to study organisations that operate in Nigeria who as a result of the diverse workforce, are keen to manage these social differences. For instance, the diversity in Nigeria include dimensions like gender, age, class, religion also exists within the workforce.

Therefore, MNCs reflect the Nigerian society with evidence of dominant diverse groups identified in the Nigerian State. Likewise, as MNCs, there is a clear evidence of other social differences as these organisations employ staff from all over the world. The study took a qualitative case study research design approach. This is intended to provide an understanding, of how MNCs manage diversity in Nigeria. Therefore, the analysis in this study hinges on empirical data collected from two MNCs operating in Nigeria (anonymously referred in paper as MNCs' A and B). The home countries of these MNCs are the USA and Netherlands. The rationale for choosing this design was to allow for high level of conceptual validity (George and Bennett, 2004) in order to understand the effect of Western diversity management theories in the Nigerian context.

In addition, the research is subjective in nature; hence, this permits efficiency within this study. There is a need to create a method to allow participants to best express or present a social world view on the subject matter (Saunders et al., 2009). Primary data collection was used; a total of 34 participants were interviewed across these MNCs from a workforce of 1500 and 150 respectively. Semi- structured interviews were carried out, and the participants were selected through random, stratified sampling. Narrative approach was used for data analysis to expansively explore the diversity management processes and identify its relevance within the context.

Organisational types and dimensions of integration theory in the Nigerian context

Examining the structural integration, it was revealed that MNCs have been able to build structural integration through various means that include goals, objectives and sharing as part of the organisational culture, expertise and regionalisation, though in a partial state. It also showed that these processes established togetherness; ensuring that allocated work can contribute to organisational goals.

Participants from one of the MNCs acknowledged that some form of structural integration was achieved through promoting skill balance by focusing more on the merit system; while another described this as a feeling of involvement arising from the existence of platforms and opportunities to share views.

Furthermore, a respondent explained that the 360°-feedback system, comprising of the end of year review and a 2-way appraisal process (where the management and the team leaders appraise employees and where

employees appraise the management and the team leaders) is an impact of structural integration. These findings demonstrate a level of structural integration tailored to suit the operational systems in each MNC. However, arguably, the degree of structural integration within the MNCs can take a more proactive approach to create more perceptible process in the Nigerian context.

Subsequently, integration of informal organisational structures represents initiatives for networks in the organisation. For instance, participants from one of the MNC highlighted the formation of networks like women's organisations to help foster a mentoring and empowering process in the organisation. However, while the MNC sees this as a significant step towards valuing women in the organisation, some respondents argue that this can be portrayed as a form of discrimination against men seeking similar opportunities for mentorship and empowerment. Hence, this perception of devaluing one gender at the expense of the other presents a challenge to the organisation in the process of integrating informal structures in the company. Within another MNC, most participants did not identify any of such informal networks in the organisation.

However, some identified social networks outside the organisation that are recognised by the organisation, as supportive, motivating and effective mentoring groups. This recognition indicates organisational acceptance of social networks and structures outside the organisation that are likely to impact on individual behaviour (Hofstede, 2001).

Regarding the level of organisational identification, the findings revealed that there is a social gap; especially in comparison to what pertains within the MNCs subsidiaries located outside Nigeria. Participants rated this gap as 80 percent in favour of majority groups, however, some participants found it difficult to identify who makes up the 'majority groups'. Consequently, some participants identified the top management level as a majority group by stating that the people at this level appear to feel superior, which makes them the majority, while staff at the lower (mostly contract level) are the minority. Categorising further, it was added that there is quite a gap in expatriate income, especially in comparison to the income of locals (nationals). In addition, the findings acknowledged gaps in relation to the age factor as the MNCs restrain the negative perception of seniority, in relation to both age and position. This further indicates the existence of the cultural and economic influence of the host country and possibly transferred policies from the home country.

Similarly, it was revealed that there is a level of organisational identification generally as a social gap between the number of male and female staff. Despite the possibility that other identifiable differences recognised in the workplace could raise social related concerns between and at various levels of staff relations, the findings showed that the MNCs are gradually though

slowly closing these social gaps or concerns, especially in relation to gender issues. This has been a conscious effort at every level, as every department aims to ensure a balance in system to make sure that it is not in favour of a particular group. Likewise, it was revealed that within the MNCs, diversity management initiatives recognised there could be possible social gaps; hence, leading to the creation of these diversity policies as a mitigation process. Conversely, it's been argued that the social gaps between any identified minority and majority groups would always exist, especially in Nigeria (Abdulwahab, 2012). This argument is due to the significant and evolving level of social concerns regarding class, gender, ethnicity, religion and political partisanship at the national level (Abdulwahab, 2012; Ekanade, 2012).

Also, results derived supported the probability of existing social gaps and indicated how MNCs work to ensure there is no exploitation due to the existence of these gaps. This includes monitoring by the 'diversity and inclusion' team within the human resource (HR) department. This division comprise professionals who manage all diversity and inclusion concerns. Moreover, it cannot be over-emphasised that the respect culture built is a noteworthy tool for diversity management, as recognised within the MNCs. This culture allows everyone to refer to one another on a first-name basis, although this is not widely recognised in the Nigerian context as most cultural relations in Nigeria place a lot of significance on seniority with respect to age or position (Abdulwahab, 2012). Nonetheless, it is also creating a debate that the organisational cultural context confines the Nigerian cultural context in the MNC.

From the empirical study, the reactions derived indicated that the first name basis adapted from the Western culture as a means of closing possible social gaps between minority and majority groups is definitely not ideal. This is because the cultural structure of the Nigerian society promotes seniority, although, arguably, creating possible imbalance, unfairness and abuse of human rights.

Concerning gender imbalance, it is also argued that the majority group is still predominantly male, especially in the engineering and technical industries which these MNCs are categorised under. In agreement with the views of most feminist discourse (Harding, 2004), participants remarked that minorities in the context of diversity happen to be the women. The respondent stated that the organisational workforce in Nigeria has a ratio of four men to one woman. Therefore, demographically, the women will be the minority. This demonstrates societal impact on the MNCs' procedures in relation to closing social gaps like gender and age. Therefore, it is necessary that the MNCs examine these external factors to resolve the gender imbalance and other social gaps likely to occur (Syed and Ozbilgin, 2009).

In addition, further findings support this argument regarding societal impact by indicating, though social

gaps between the minority and majority may not be distinct in the organisation, in the societal context it is almost impossible to say that there has been no instance where people feel disadvantaged because of their background. As a result, the MNCs argue that they have a good, unbiased policy. Therefore, there is seldom a situation regarding recruitment or promotion that is based on tribal nepotism which exists within the society (Odiegwu et al, 2012).

From the findings, it can be deduced that the majority and minority groups identified within the MNCs are apparently age, nationality and gender-focused. In addition, although it is evident that these MNCs are working to ensure closure of these social gaps, particularly through the respect culture built alongside other intervention processes, this is evidently still work in progress. Figures 1 and 2 shows an analysis of two multinationals using the Cox Taylor Theory on Organisational Types and Dimensions of Integration framework.

From the foregoing critical analysis, Figures 1 and 2 have been presented to summarise the findings. Figure 2 highlights the culture, policies and procedures in the MNCs. As earlier indicated, this is in correspondence to Cox (1991) 6-factor framework applied to indicate the integration processes in each MNC. Based on these policies and procedures,

Figure 1 presents the levels of integration in both MNCs within the 6-factor framework. It is evident that, based on the Cox-Taylor diversity model on organisational types and dimensions of integration, both MNCs are moving towards a pluralistic structure that recognises the impact of social groups in the organisation. Hence, they are working to achieve a level of structural integration (Cox and Blake, 1991).

However, as a progression towards a more effective diversity process, Cox (2001) stresses that a multicultural organisation is a necessity for any significant change to occur in an organisational structure. He further highlights key areas like leadership components, research and measurement, education, alignment of management systems and follow-up, and defines this as a model for cultural change (Cox, 2001).

Following the aforementioned illustration using Cox-Taylor's model on organisational integration further shows similarities with the practice of diversity management policies in Western states, as identified in Western studies (Cox 1991), and now in the Nigerian context. These similarities can be summarised as evidence of major social gaps between men and women workforce. However, a major difference in Nigerian society is that Nigeria is yet to build a national culture or follow through policies from government institutions that strongly promote equality between the men and women at the national and organisational level. When achieved this should empower more women to progress in the society. These areas for equality include social, political,

and educational, especially in academic courses predominantly seen as male dominated fields.

Comparing both the MNCs, both MNCs show existence of strong organisational culture. These cultures drive organisational practices, which includes diversity management. Furthermore, both MNCs display existence of strong Western founded philosophy that integrates with their organisational culture. This minimises social conflicts likely to occur in the organisations because of the Nigerian socio-cultural character. Nonetheless, the MNCs show evidence of social gaps between majority (top management) and minority (lower staff, especially contract staff). Other dominant social gaps include gender and age related gaps. This indicates that multinational (A) exhibits a high gap stratum while the outcome in multinational (B) is between the high and medium levels (Figures 1 and 2).

Arguably, this could be because of the size of the workforce, as MNC (A) has a smaller workforce than MNC (B) in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. This further indicates that a larger workforce can show a different result in relation to closing social gaps between the minority and majority staff represented and categorised in an organisation (Cox, 1991).

Additionally, MNC (B) shows significant support for internal social networks, while MNC (A) indicates organisational support for staff who are involved with external social networks.

The Ely and Thomas model on diversity management in Nigeria

The Ely and Thomas model explores experiences within culturally diverse workgroups. This model also explores circumstances in which differences 'enhance or detract' the functioning of people in work groups (Gold et al., 2010).

As earlier mentioned, the model focuses on three major paradigms: discrimination and fairness, access and legitimacy, and integration and learning. It highlights characteristics that elucidate the philosophy of these paradigms of diversity. Nonetheless, Kamal and Ferdousi (2009) argue that most organisations focus on two areas, which are discrimination and fairness, and access and legitimacy. This model will be used to explore the diversity process towards social equality and development in the selected MNCs in Nigeria.

In examining the paradigm on discrimination and fairness, the findings revealed that for instance, the policies and the compliance rule towards managing diversity on MNC (A) is an open policy, and the culture built in the organisation promotes equal opportunity and equal treatment among all staff, especially in the areas of organisational experience, education and knowledge sharing. Therefore, there is some form of fairness at various organisational levels with regard to experience,

Indicators	Multinational A	Multinational B
Form of Social Control	Strong Organisational Culture	Strong Organisational Culture
Degree of Structural Integration	-Expertise and Regionalisation -Sharing -Part of Organisational culture, goals and objectives	-Merit System -Feeling of Involvement -360 Feedback -2 way appraisal system
Degree of Formal/Informal Organisation	Involvement with social groups outside the organisation but recognised by the organisation	Formation of groups within the Organisations (e.g. Women Organisation)
Degree of cultural Bias	-Existing Western culture that downplays social related conflicts within the organisation though still in existence -Promoting a respect culture that helps reduce discrimination and social injustice within the organisation	Existing Western culture that downplays social related conflicts within the organisation though still in existence -Promoting a respect culture that helps reduce discrimination and social injustice within the organisation
Level of Organisation Identification	-Majority and minority in favour of majority (top management) -Gap in Expatriate income -Gap in relation to age and position -Gender related gaps	-Gender related gaps -Gaps relating to staff levels -Age related gaps
Degree of intergroup Conflict	Monitoring systems to downplay negative perceptions on age and position	Reduction of age related conflicts through existing Western culture

Figure 1. Analysis results using Cox Taylor organisational types, and dimensions of integration framework (Source: adapted from organisational types and dimensions of integration Cox, 1991).

education and exposure. Furthermore, the findings established that there is a non-discrimination policy which is not always apparent in practice.

This lapse in process also includes a lack of policy implementation due to subjective events that have occurred within the MNC. However, participants withheld details on these subjective events. In relation to this, it was highlighted that any discrimination and unfair treatment was more likely to occur amongst the contract staff. This is because contract staff members are more likely to be exempt from the privileges, support and benefits accorded to full-time or permanent staff members. Subsequently, the findings on MNC (B) recognised some level of equal treatment and non-discrimination procedures, which was attributed to the level of diversity awareness created by the company. This included instances of how unfair treatment are interpreted, describing a situation where a man feels a woman who has been away for maternity leave tends to get a better performance appraisal than her male counterpart. Although this may not be a significant concern, it provides evidence that the MNCs try to ensure women experience fair treatment.

From the aforementioned narratives, there is evidence

of mixed feelings, as respondents in both MNCs indicate that some levels of unfair treatment still exist. Both MNC (A) and (B) significantly rely on 'respect and value for all' as a culture to help promote equal opportunity and fair treatment amongst the workforce on various levels, including areas where unfairness may possibly be felt. However, the feeling of fair treatment experienced can be relative as this involves individual perceptions. This includes equal pay (with expatriates, colleagues in other subsidiaries and contract staff members) and gender-related initiatives. On the issue of equal pay, the challenge could sometime transcend 'respect for all' due to the form of organisational employment structure where employees could be full time, permanent, part time, top management, middle management, lower staff member, nationals or expatriates.

Nonetheless, the findings also highlight that recruitment is based on competency and merit, thereby reducing the chances of exhibiting favouritism, although not affecting payment systems as this is based on an individual's employment package. In relation to payment variance between nationals and expatriates, Mahajan (2011) argues that this is important for facilitating expatriate adjustment and for increasing the usefulness of MNCs

Type	Multinational A	Multinational B
Form of Social Control	Assimilation	Assimilation
Degree of Structural Integration	Partial	Partial
Integration of Formal/Informal Organisation	Limited	Limited
Degree of Cultural Bias	Progress on the elimination of prejudice and discrimination though still in existence	Progress on the elimination of prejudice and discrimination though still in existence
Level of Organisational Identification	Gap between majority to minority is towards a high level	Gap between majority to minority is between a high-medium level
Degree of Intergroup Conflict	Minimised	Minimised

Figure 2. Analysis result positioning multinationals within Cox Taylor theory on organisational types and dimensions of integration framework (Source: adapted from organisational types and dimensions of integration, Cox, 1991).

in the host nation.

However, in the Nigerian context, this disparity presents as unfair treatment and inequality between the foreign and local staff. This also captures the discussion on pay disparity that promotes inequality between MNC workers and other employees within various private and public organisations in Nigeria. However, there is no empirical proof concerning this perception of inequality as the class disparity discourse in Nigeria spans beyond a comparison of how well the MNC pays its employees compared to other employers.

In assessing recruitment and compliance with federal or other institutional regulations, both MNCs' employment policies suggests they employ staff on either a contract or a permanent basis. In light of this, the MNCs adhere to, and advise their agency recruiters that they have the right to resource and recruit the best people. This could mean, regardless of likely ethnic or regional recruitment quotas, the companies themselves do not adhere to the proposition of specifically recruiting from a particular region. They stick to their policy of recruiting based on merit and competency despite perceived views or instances where communities of operation could impose certain conditions on the MNCs by requesting they recruit locals (indigenes).

Hence, in relation to community quotas, most MNCs in

Nigeria recruit under service contract schemes. This is a different recruitment scheme, as the contract staff members employed under this scheme are not recognised as company staff and this does not usually affect corporate recruitment. Such roles usually include job types like cleaners, security staff and drivers; essentially, these are the non-graduate, non-technical or unskilled labour jobs. The corporation initiates these opportunities as a means of developing the communities where it operates. In agreement with the aforementioned narratives, another respondent stressed that employees within these job roles do not have the opportunity for career development or promotion in the MNC.

The findings as discussed earlier suggest that a significant number of the recruitment requirements for nationals issued to the MNCs are community driven. Nonetheless, the federal government also issues employment requirements in the form of quotas to these corporations. The detail of the quotas and legislation from the national level was, at the time of the interviews, unknown to most of the respondents. However, a respondent narrated that this quota largely relates to the number of nationals that an MNC is expected to recruit in its Nigerian subsidiaries in comparison with expatriates. Arguably, this employment requirement acts as a means of increasing national job opportunities and empowering

Nigerian nationals towards national development. This has been the case in other African and Western countries (Klasfeld, 2010).

Additionally, it is observably a means of increasing employed national labour capacity in the workforce and under the influence of foreign direct investment (Jensen, 2003). Furthermore, the underutilised equal employment policies developed by the federal government in relation to diversity management could be a missed opportunity and a reason for a significant social gap in the study and promotion of diversity management in a Nigerian national context.

The third paradigm from the Ely and Thomas (2001) model, the access and legitimacy paradigm seeks to create a level of acceptance and value amongst identified minority groups in the MNCs. This paradigm looked specifically at racial and gender concerns between black and white staff, and between female and male staff in the United States (Gold et al., 2010).

In the Nigerian context, both MNCs identify women as a minority due to the level of male dominance in the organisations (Berdahl and Moore, 2006). Hence, in relation to access and legitimacy, the organisation seeks to ensure that women feel valued and accepted in their various departments. Confirming the existence of this process, some respondents highlighted that the organisations take extra steps to promote women-focused initiatives like women's empowerment programmes, mentorship programmes (in and beyond the organisation), and fair appraisal processes for women who take maternity leave. This endorses the fact that there is an inter-relationship between discrimination and fairness paradigm and the access and legitimacy paradigm. This is the reason why most organisations, as identified by Kamal and Ferdousi (2009) and Gold et al. (2010), focus on the two areas (discrimination and fairness and access and legitimacy) demonstrated in the Ely and Thomas model on diversity. Another reason relates to the origin and evolution of diversity management (Gold et al., 2010).

Diversity management is an enhanced process of affirmative action and equal employment opportunity, which are products of an equal rights movement that focuses on core processes for achieving equal opportunity, ending injustice and discrimination (Gilbert et al., 1999). In relation to this, the discrimination and fairness, and access and legitimacy paradigms both interchangeably focus largely on equality, accepting and valuing staff, as well as eradicating discrimination (Kamal and Ferdousi, 2009).

Subsequently, the learning and effectiveness paradigm focuses on integration and, as highlighted by Kamal and Ferdousi (2009), this paradigm provides the organisation the opportunity to examine differences among employees, further creating an environment in which the organisation learns and grows due to previous outcomes. Similarly, Cox (2001) argues that most organisations are yet to

develop a full integration process; which he identifies as multicultural.

In relation to this concern, Cox (2001) integration model also propounds the need for organisations to move towards integration; adapting a skill training and learning process to ensure a more effective diversity management system. In the Nigerian context, this is work in progress as most diversity interventions centre on awareness programmes with existing but limited skill, and learning processes in place. Following the foregoing critical analysis, the initiatives in each paradigm of diversity management process implemented by the MNCs indicates the challenges and policies within the corporations that centre on the social concerns identified.

Conclusion

Based on the need to understand the relevance of Western diversity management theories in the Global South, (Akobo, 2016) using Nigeria as case, this study examines diversity management processes in MNCs; the similarities and differences between Nigeria and the global North (Cox and Blake, 1991; Ely and Thomas, 2001; Syed and Ozbilgin, 2009).

This covers the development and implementation of diversity and equality, policies by the MNCs. The study highlights the opportunities and challenges with adopting Western theories in the Nigerian context. The Cox theory on Organisational Types and Dimensions of Integration looked at the level of organisations' openness to diversity management processes. The analysis hence, reveals some level of openness depicting similarities with the Global North. Following, Ely and Thomas model indicates again, similarities with the global North as it portrays more focus on discrimination and fairness with less established procedures for learning and effectiveness. This model also indicates significant focus on gender concerns, which can be argued to be a global concern.

As a result of this analysis, this study indicates a significant level of influence from the Global North on the Global South. Nonetheless, the paper also recognizes that these Western theories in the context of MNCs provide a solid foundation for assessing the concept of diversity management in Nigeria which is currently an emerging terminology. This includes, policies transferred from home to host countries. This critique also validates the relevance of a two-way process, that is, knowledge flows from the Global North to the Global South and vice–versa. This two-way adoption process further affirms the feasibility of Western corporations to promote, globally, both perspectives as well as localise diversity management approaches (Looise and Drucker, 2002).

Nonetheless, though this study indicates that diversity management in the Nigerian context shows an integration of both western and national approaches, it likewise, indicates mixed consequences that diversity

management has proven to be successful (Wentling and Palma-Rivas, 2000) due to increased employment of a diverse workforce and competitive advantage. However, it is a challenge for organisations in relation to conflict management (Jehn et al., 1999; Cox, 1991).

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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Full Length Research Paper

Craft globally, blame locally: How global neo-liberal development cartographies obfuscate social injustices against the poor in Sub-Saharan Africa

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For over two decades now, Sub-Saharan Africa has been superimposed in a coercive and contradictory neo-liberal development economism agenda. According to this paradigm, markets and not states are the fundamental determinants of distributive justice and human flourishing through the promotion of economic growth that is believed to trickle down to the poor in due time. Despite the global intellectual criticism of this neo-liberal development economics orthodox of measuring development and wellbeing in terms of market induced economic growth, autocratic states in Sub-Saharan Africa that have accumulated un-dimensional growth continue to be applauded as role models on poverty reduction, wellbeing and social justice by donors and global development institutions such as the World Bank and international monetary fund (IMF). This is basically because they have wholly embraced the implementation of the anti-pro-poor neo-liberal structural adjustment tool kit. This study uses a critical hermeneutics methodology to expose the distortions embedded in neo-liberal gross domestic product (GDP) growth cartographies and how these disguise the social injustices against the poor in Sub-Saharan Africa with particular reference to Uganda. The study contends that in measuring development and wellbeing, human rights and social justice must take precedence over economic efficiency and GDP growth for that matter.

Key words: Cartographies, Neo-liberal development, social injustices, Sub-Saharan Africa.

INTRODUCTION

Since 1990, there has been a seeming increasing commitment to human rights and social justice on the African continent and particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa as evidenced by the increasing commitment to electoral and constitutional democracy, ratification of international human rights treaties and domestication of these international human rights standards (political globalization).

In Uganda for example, even peasant cultivators were given the constitutional mandate to usher their leaders in and out of leadership[i]. In addition, women in Ghana, Rwanda, Kenya and Nigeria among other states were

guaranteed the prerogative to equally compete with men in a formerly patriarchal public sphere.

This seemed to be a wind of change and new dawn on the African continent however, it was during the same time when an ambitious and predatory neo-liberal economic agenda was imposed on African leaders with structural adjustment programs (SAPs) that would propel Sub-Saharan African from a 'bottomless pit' of indebtedness and economic stagnancy(economic globalization) to prosperity.

These SAPS were enshrined in privatization, cost-sharing, retrenchment and liberalization. According to this neo-liberal New Public Management (NPM) agenda spearheaded by the IMF and World Bank, the state had to virtually withdraw from the management of the economy so that markets could take over the promotion of economic growth and the distribution of wellbeing. The promotion of neo-liberal growth is believed to be a positivistic process that is oblivious of ethics, human rights and social justice[ii]. This put many Sub-Saharan African countries in a contradictory positioning in the sense that, states which had leaders that had been voted into power by the citizens to promote and protect their rights and interests, were forced by neo-liberal precursors to turn against the same people by retrenching them from work without adequate compensation, evicting them from their agricultural lands to pave way for corporate agriculture.

In Uganda for example, the fabulous bill of human rights in the constitution and institutions that are supposed to protect the poor from social injustice are at total variance with the blatant violations of human rights by the state and the police brutality against anybody who dares to stand up against social injustices. In post genocide Rwanda, despite the flamboyant performance of the economy and vital institutions such as the health sector, the government has persistently violated the right to freedom of association and expression and a number of journalists and political opponents have lost their lives for standing up against the violation of human rights with impunity. This exposes the inadequacy of the GDP growth measurements in explaining sustainable development and human flourishing.

The persistent use of economic growth as a sole standard of development is an injustice. Economic growth is a necessary but not a sufficient condition of development and thus ought to be promoted in a frame work of equality, equity, environmental sustainability and respect of human rights for all irrespective of gender, sex, colour, opinion and social status. According to the National Development Plan, ''the Ugandan Economy experienced varying growth rates when the Poverty Action Plan was being implemented, with an average GDP growth rate of 7.2% between 1997/1998 and 2000/2001 to 6.8% between 2000/2001 and 2003/2004, increasing to 8% over the period 2004/2005 to 2007/2008 (NDP I, 2010: i)''.

However, the plan is silent on how increased growth has enhanced the wellbeing, capabilities and livelihoods of the poor men and women in Uganda. We ought to be aware of the fact that a country can easily have increased growth amidst structures of gender oppression, heinous human rights violations, environmental degradation and social exclusion. This implies that the benefits from such growth are only enjoyed and controlled by a tiny percentage of the population leaving the multitudes to languish in a sea of poverty.

The demise of the socialist movement and the superimposition of Sub-Saharan Africa in the neo-liberal empire

African nationalism espoused in the clamour for freedom and self governance bore fruits in the late 1960s when most of the states in Sub-Saharan Africa gained independence from their colonial masters. Colonialism was equated to capitalism and exploitation and therefore the 1970s saw a ''restoration'' of African identity and consciousness with a move to the left (socialism)in most of the states(Sklair, 2002:).The African leadership and intelligentsia chose socialism as an ethic of development and ideology of distribution because of its close affinity to African communalism. They argued that capitalism was individualistic and hence repugnant to the African social reality in which the common good takes precedence over the good of the individual. This social movement was led by Milton Obote in Uganda, Kenneth Kaunda in Zambia, Amilcar Cabral in Guinea-Bissau, Samora Machel in Mozambique, Nkrumah in Ghana and Julius Nyerere in Tanzania among others (Cox, 2005). However, the economic depression and political crises that characterised most of Sub-Saharan Africa in the 1980s and early 1990s saw the total crumbling down of this anti-capitalist social movement in Sub-Saharan Africa as well as state economic sovereignty. This period saw the superimposition of Sub-Saharan African states in the neo-liberal 'empire' of structural adjustment, privatisation and New Public Management (NPM). As a result, ''the African intelligentsia has argued that colonialism was thrown out through the door only to come back through the window (Kiely, 2004)''.

Growth-centrism and magnanimous economic performance in the eyes of neo-liberal precursors and proponents

Since the mid-1990s, Sub-Saharan Africa for the first time in three decades, started growing at about the same rate as the rest of the world (World Bank, 2008b). For example, over the decade (2000 to 2009), economic

growth was very strong in East Africa, with regional real GDP growth averaging 6.6% annually (African Development Bank, 2011).

According to the World Bank ''Uganda established a strong record of prudent macroeconomic management and structural reform between the 1990 and 2000s. The country was among the first Sub-Saharan African countries to embark on liberalization and pro-market policies in the late 1980s. During that time, a stable macroeconomic environment and sustained private sector-oriented reforms led to Uganda's graduation into a mature reformer in 2006. Real gross domestic product (GDP) growth averaged 7% per year in the 1990s and the 2000s (World Bank, 2008a)''.

Uganda is regarded as the African country that has adopted the neo-liberal reform package most extensively (Harrison, 2006). It is considered the star performer of liberal economic reforms and the poster example that other African (and other developing) countries on the verge of starting reforms should copy it in almost every aspect (Kuteesa, 2010). The country's ''apparent success (in the 1990s) allowed donors and the ruling political elite to claim Uganda as the jewel in their crown, an emblematic case for neo-liberal reform (Golooba-Mutebi and Hickey, 2009)''.

Neo-liberalism was imposed on the country, as elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa, by external actors in the process and aftermath of structural adjustment policies after the1980s. It has since been pervasive, chiefly due to the powerful ideological, normative and material impact of the foreign agents of the 'development industry', especially the international financial institutions (IFIs) and the various bilateral donors, which promoted neo-liberalism in the country (Harrison, 2010); but also due to the (evolving) interests, orientations and actions of a range of domestic actors.

Pro-poor deceptive nuances in neo-liberal cartographies

Although the World Bank was for a long time not concerned about human rights in its articles of agreement, in 2000 it embarked on its famous project titled; ''Voices of the Poor''. The purpose of this project was to solicit the views of the poor on poverty which were to influence both domestic and global poverty policies. Sub-Saharan African economies such as Uganda and Rwanda were cautioned to include the views of the poor in their Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). This culminated into Participatory Poverty Assessments (PPAs) which solicited the views of the poor, rich, civil society among other stakeholders on poverty.

A close scrutiny of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) reveals that they are in tandem with neo-liberalism and technocratic assessments and hence are largely devoid of the views of the poor. Now, if neo-liberalism essentially posits that markets are positive scientific processes that are self equilibrating and hence should not be interfered with by even the state, how can the views of the poor have any consequence under such a neo-liberal mantra. When examining these Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) closely, one will notice the prominence of neo-liberal nuances such as; privatization as the fulculum of the economy and the surrender of agricultural livelihoods to corporate tyranny.

GDP growth centrism and the Uganda national development plan (NDP)

The revision of PEAP has ushered in the National Development Plan, a neo-liberal policy planning frame work oriented towards economic growth and virtually devoid of human development and the perspectives of the poor. According the National Development Plan:

The overarching policy of the NDP will intertwine economic growth and poverty eradication. Policies and strategies will be focused towards achieving accelerated and sustainable growth in the priority areas, creation of gainful employment and socio-economic transformation for prosperity. Increasing incomes beyond the subsistence level and stimulating growth requires sustained orientation of Government expenditure and interventions towards the effective resolution of the most binding constraints …. Attention to these areas will have impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery, productivity, household incomes and overall economic development (NDP1, 2010:43).

Despite being devoid of pro-poor perspectives, the first National Development Plan aims at transforming Uganda from a predominantly peasant low income to a middle income country within 30 years. The plan envisaged that the country will graduate to the middle income segment by 2017(NDP1, 2010:43). Although the NDP claims to have been greatly informed by the experiences from PEAP which comprised of a number of human development imperatives, it categorically aims at eradicating poverty through promoting economic growth (NDP1, 2010). This economic growth yard stick was not derived from the views of the poor but is rather a view of neo-liberal technocrats in the ministry of finance. According to Amnesty International 2009 Human rights report:

For the past two decades, the state has been retreating or reneging on its human rights obligations in favour of the market in the belief that economic growth would lift all boats. With the tide receding and boats springing leaks, governments are radically changing their positions and

talking about a new global financial architecture and international governance system in which the state plays a stronger role. That opens up an opportunity to also halt the retreat of the state from the social sphere and re-design a more human rights friendly model of the state than the one that has characterized international policy-making for the past 20 years. It creates the possibility to radically rethink the role of international financial institutions in terms of respecting, protecting and fulfilling human rights, including economic and social rights. Governments should invest in human rights as purposefully as they are investing in economic growth (Khan, 2009).

Amnesty further opines that:

Many experts point to the millions lifted out of poverty by economic growth, but the truth is that many more have been left behind, the gains have been far too fragile – as the recent economic crisis shows – and the human rights costs too high. Human rights were too often relegated to the backseat as the juggernaut of unregulated globalization swept the world into a frenzy of growth in recent years. The consequences are clear: growing inequality, deprivation, marginalization and insecurity; voices of people protesting suppressed with audacity and impunity; and those responsible for the abuses – governments, big business and international financial institutions – largely unrepentant and unaccountable' '… It is also clear that not only have governments abdicated economic and financial regulation to market forces, they have failed abysmally to protect human rights, lives and livelihoods. Billions of people are suffering from insecurity, injustice and indignity. This is a human rights crisis (Khan, 2009).

Current narrative of economic growth, poverty reduction and development in Uganda by political actors

Under the guidance of the IMF and World Bank, Uganda has painstakingly pursued an ambitious neo-liberal economic transition under President Yoweri Museveni since the early 1990s. Uganda has been hailed as an economic shining example, success story and the "development darling" of Africa by many international donors (Craig and Porter, 2006: 56). Despite successes in certain sectors and the adoption of an official Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) sponsored by the World Bank (WB), the poorest of the poor in Uganda have not necessarily experienced 'poverty eradication'. Sustained growth in the country has averaged 7.8% since 2000, and official World Bank statistics say that as a result of this economic growth, poverty declined from 56% in 1992 to 31% in 2006 (World Bank, 2008a) and 18% in 2014.

Sergeant reiterates that:

Positive statistics are so often used by the international financial institutions (IFIs) to inflate their current projects and to play up the successes of neo-liberal reforms to serve their own gain. The focus on economic growth and its 'success' in Uganda has resulted in ignoring massive human rights violations being committed by the Ugandan government on its own people and the impact that conditional aid has actually had on the poorest of the poor. Loan debts will be paid by the poor and not the human rights abusing government who borrowed them through structural adjustment programs that guarantee the international community will continue to have a hand in Uganda for decades to come (Sargent, 2009).

According to president Museveni the Ugandan economy continues to be vibrant amidst economic challenges and reforms on the local, regional and International scene (Museveni, 2014). GDP rate of growth is 5.1%; inflation rate is 3.6%; foreign exchange reserves are US$ 3.3 billion; export earnings are US$ 4.9 billion; remittances from Ugandans abroad are US$ 767.26 million; the total size of GDP of Uganda is 54.7 trillion shillings; the total size of GDP in US$ (*exchange rate*) is US$ 21.2 billion(Museveni, 2013).

What has brought about economic recovery in Uganda in the last 26 years in Museveni's opinion are : ''security of person and property brought about by the NRM, but more especially by the discipline of NRA/UPDF; the Private Sector, whose investments account for about 77% of all total investments in the economy, including investments of our citizens of Indian origin (who contribute 25-30% of all the total investments); the macro-economic stabilization and liberalization of the economy, which enabled us to control inflation for a very long time and to free the Private Sector from bureaucratic interference; the ever-expanding consumer demand in Uganda and in the Region; and some little support from Development Partner (Museveni, 2012)''. Museveni (2012) further opines that Africa growth is miraculous despite the lack of infrastructure, no electricity, and no roads. Africa has higher rates of growth of 5.8%, USA 1.9%, average global is 3%, the Euro Zone — 0.4% and Africa 5.8% rate (Osike, 2012).

Skeptical perceptions of Uganda's miraculous GDP growth by donors

With a value of 0.514 in the 2009 Human Development Index, Uganda has moved from the low to the medium human development level and at position 157 out of 182. Uganda was able to reduce poverty considerably during the past two decades. Household data show that between 1993 and 2006, the percentage of people living

below the poverty line fell from 56 to 31. Under the NDP, Uganda strives to further reduce this share to 24.5 by 2015. However, inequality as measured by the Gini-coefficient rose since 1993. There are strong disparities of poverty in terms of region and of rural vs. urban. Poverty estimates range from 5% in urban areas of the central region to 64% in the rural North (Austrian Development Cooperation, 2010).

As witnessed by the reduction of poverty, Uganda's economy grew steadily in the past decade with annual GDP growth rates between 6 and 10%, while in 2009 the rate dropped to 5% as a result of the global economic crisis. The annual growth rate up to 2015 is projected at 7%. But this progress had a mixed impact with respect to the Millennium Development Goals. Uganda is on track on the indicators of population below the poverty line, primary education enrolment, girl-to-boy ratio in primary education, prevalence of Human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS), and access to improved water sources (for example, rural water supply coverage increased from 40% in the mid-1990s to 65% in 2009). On all other indicators, however, the country is off track and most seriously so on primary education completion and child and maternal mortality. This leaves Uganda with serious challenges to poverty reduction which, as is economic growth, is further hampered by the high population growth of 3.3% (Austrian Development Cooperation, 2010).

Development in the region of Northern Uganda was affected by two decades of violent conflict. Towards the end of conflict, the poverty rate was estimated at 61% which is double the national average. Socio- economic activities had virtually come to a standstill for most of the population in the central North and humanitarian assistance has become regular for several years. Confined within conflict, the population of the North in addition suffered from sociopolitical marginalistion in the national context. Violence, particularly against women and children, and land disputes are major problems. Following the cessation of hostilities in 2006, security was restored, the formerly displaced population returned to their places of origin and socio-economic activities slowly resumed. Nevertheless, the challenges for reconstruction and development remain enormous (Germany Embassy, 2014).

In response to these challenges, the Austria government directed its funding to efforts to sustainably reduce poverty, vulnerability and inequality. In line with the Austrian Development Cooperation policy on poverty reduction, this support took into account the multifaceted nature of poverty and target aspects of two dimensions of poverty by focusing on

1. The provision of sustainable social and environmental services and

2. Participation and empowerment.

It specifically contributed to

1. To the MDG targets 10 and 11 related to water and sanitation and
2. To the strengthening of human rights.

The Germany Government on the other hand supports Uganda's endevour to move towards becoming a middle income country but puts special focus on promoting human rights, reforms in public financial management, contributing to peace-consolidation and improving livelihoods, particularly in Karamoja and other parts of Northern Uganda (Germany Embassy, 2010). In addition, Sweden's new development cooperation strategy for 2014 to 2018 aims at creating better conditions in Uganda for sustainable economic growth and development. The aid package seeks to strengthen respect for human rights, improve sexual and reproductive health and rights, as well as promote sustainable growth and employment (Kagolo, 2014).

According to USAID, although Prosperity can be measured by poverty rates and GDP growth, and the distribution of prosperity can be measured by ratios and Gini- coefficients, a modern country implies democratic principles and orderly succession of power, transparency and predictability for the private sector and civil society, and efficient, equitable services for the population. Uganda's steady path of poverty reduction over the past 20 years could easily be broken in any number of ways, such as through major internal conflict, service delivery that cannot keep up with the needs of the growing population and economy, accelerated dissatisfaction over poor governance, or spiraling corruption caused by the emerging oil industry(USAID, 2011).

Systemic corruption and cronyism in Uganda amidst unprecedented GDP growth: An apparent contradiction

For a very long time, many Ugandans have innocently argued that as far as corruption in Uganda is concerned, President Yoweri Museveni is being frustrated by his corrupt ministers. The implication of this perception is that the president is not corrupt and greedy like his political cadres. Today, Ugandans are still nursing the shock after learning of the president's acquisition of two executive Mercedes Benz vehicles at a cost of about 6 billion Uganda shillings (The Monitor, 2012). President Museveni has been very instrumental in the watering down of the Inspectorate of government and leadership code of Conduct 2002 which is a brain child of his NRM regime, for example:

In 2004, President Museveni told off the former IGG,

Jotham Tumwesigye, to stop interfering with the work of other government officials, when the former ordered the arrest of Lucien Tibaruha, then Ag. Solicitor General, because the latter had sanctioned the payment of thirteen billion Uganda shillings to one James Musinguzi Garuga in compensation for his farm which had been allocated to settlers by government. On the other hand, he (the President) applauds the work of the current IGG prompting one to wonder whether it is a mere façade of a well orchestrated effort by the State to frustrate39 the work of the Inspectorate of Government40 and to limit its jurisdiction(Ruhweza, 2008).

In addition when Kakooza Mutale, a Senior Presidential Advisor, failed to declare his wealth as required by the Leadership Code Act, prompting the Inspector General of Government in May 2003 to recommend that the President should relieve Mr. Mutale of his duties. Mutale went to court to challenge the decision of the Inespector General of Government (IGG), and his main ground was that there was no prescribed legal form on which to declare his wealth, which arguably was a mere technicality since all other leaders had managed to declare their wealth in various forms. Unfortunately:

The President swore an affidavit in support of his application, thereby sending out the message that the President and his men were not interested in the fight against political corruption and as such were making it harder for the Inspector of Government to carry out his functions. This was confirmed by the President's willingness to re-instate Kakooza Mutale despite the fact that the said petitioner had contravened the law (as it was then). If it were not so, then the President did not have to be the deponent nor did he have to categorically state that he would reinstate the applicant despite the fact that the applicant had breached the law. This was a clear departure from the President's earlier commitment to strict adherence to the rule of law and zero tolerance for corruption (Ruhweza, 2008).

In addition, when Captain Mike Mukula, the former junior Minister of Health appealed against his January 18, 2013 conviction to four years in jail for embezzling Shs 210m from the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (Gavi). President Museveni gave him 100 million Uganda shillings as legal fees to help secure his freedom. The Presidential Press Secretary, Mr. Tamale Mirundi confirmed this development and described this conduct as Museveni's contribution to his friend (Lumu, 2013). Miria Matembe, an anti-corruption activists and former Minister of Ethics and Integrity in Museveni's government reiterated that Museveni can not lead the fight against corruption because many of the suspects are his relatives and cronies (Jeanne, 2012).

Despite his obliviousness to the neo-liberal dimension

of corruption in Uganda, Andrew Mwenda has succinctly argued that corruption in Uganda should been seen ''…as a social institution through which political power is organised, distributed, exercised and reproduced (Mwenda, 2012).''In other words there is no way Museveni and his National Resistance Movement regime can exist without corruption. According to Roger Tangri:

Under President Museveni, the management of state institutions has been increasingly subject to executive influence. Museveni has been personally responsible for appointing government ministers, higher civil servants, and army officers. 'The purpose of these personalized appointments is to make every office holder feel personally grateful and loyal to the person of the President instead of the institution of the State in Uganda'. Moreover, what has bound these senior state officials to the President has been the possibility of using their positions for the sake of personal gain. Museveni has been able to consolidate his support among top state personnel by allowing them to appropriate public resources for their own personal benefit. State House has also intervened frequently in governmental decision-making and the allocation of public resources. In exercising his powers, the President has been able to act non-transparently and without much political account-ability in the area of public governance. By flouting public rules, regulations, and procedures, and manipulating situations of weak transparency and accountability, Uganda's current rulers have been more concerned with serving their own interests than with establishing honest and effective state institutions (Tangri, 2010)

Despite the wide spread reports of rampant corruption in Uganda as evidenced in the embezzlement of 50 billion Uganda shillings meant for the Peace, Recovery and Development Programme (PRDP) (Kakaire, 2012), and consequently the suspension of Aid to Uganda by Denmark, Norway, Ireland, Sweden and United Kingdom (Mugerwa, 2012), the IMF argued that:

''Uganda's economy was set to expand by 5 percent in the 2012/13 fiscal year from 3.4 percent in the previous period, driven by falling lending rates and higher government spending(The New Vision, 2012)''. As usual the IMF did not explain how the increased growth was translating into the welfare of the citizens. In addition the World Bank also vaguely retorted that:

it is reviewing its development assistance to Uganda while also strengthening its own measures to ensure that its funds are used for their intended purposes. The World Bank Group is concerned about recent allegations of misuse of public funds in Uganda and is calling for remedial action. The World Bank, however, said it will continue to work with the government of Uganda and

other development partners to help the country deliver on its national policy of "zero" tolerance for corruption (Wanambwa, 2012).

Injustice was further manifested in the resolve of the executive to use tax payer's money from the consolidated fund in order to refund the billion of shillings stolen in the Office of the Prime Minister (Nalugo and Mugerwa, 2012).

When economic growth thrives in Uganda amidst Heinous Human Rights Violations

Although Uganda boasts of persistent economic growth over the years, the country is slowly but steadily moving away from the rule of law to rule by law. Despite the fact that the 1995 Uganda constitutions guarantees Ugandans the rights to freedom of assembly, association, freedom from torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment among others, the government has often used the police force to curtail all these rights. Members from the opposition are always in and out prison for standing out against the abuse of constitutional human rights.

All institutions of the state are enmeshed in presidential appointment powers. For example, the head of the Uganda Electoral Commission and all the commissioners in that institution are appointed by the president. One can imagine such an injustice where members of opposition political parties participate in an election where the incumbent president controls the referee and all liners. Despite all this farce about elections in Uganda, western countries such as the USA and western election monitoring institutions have always gone ahead to applaud free and fair elections in Uganda.

Chomsky aptly reiterates that ''neo-liberalism works best when there is formal electoral democracy, but when the population is diverted from the information, access, and public forums necessary for meaningful participation in decision-making (McChesney, 1999)''.   He further opines ''that the US has repeatedly overthrown democratic regimes because: The more a country is democratic, the more it is likely to be responsive to the public, and hence committed to the dangerous doctrine that "the government has a direct responsibility for the welfare of the people," and therefore is not devoted to the transcendent needs of Big Brother (US). We have to do something about it. Democracy is okay but only as long as US can control it and be sure that it comes out the way US wants(Chomsky, 2010)''.

It must be noted that Uganda has simply made a transition from a pseudo broad base movement (a single party in practice) system to pseudo multiparty political system. In addition the state continues to use extra constitutional organs such as the Kiboko squad to harass individuals excising their right to freedom of assembly. The state had persistently used illegal safe houses to torture citizens and although victims of torture have been awarded compensation by the Uganda Human Rights Commission tribunal, 2012, the state has not compensated a majority of the victims of torture (UHRC, 2014: 208-214). During the walk to work protests in 2011, the world was shocked by the brutal arrest of Kizza Besigye and the incredible human rights abuses that were committed by the police and army on the citizens. Because of this brutal repression, many people wondered whether Uganda has simply made a transition from Amin to *Aminism*.

In addition, during the celebration of 50 years Uganda's independence, a number of members of the opposition were detained in the homes under a colonial law called *preventive arrest*. Many Ugandans looked at this as an amazing paradox. In 2012, Ssemuju Nganda, a member of Parliament was arrested like a *chicken thief* for consulting members of his constituency (The Observer, 2012). In August 2013, the Parliament of Uganda that is popularly known as a rubber stamp of the president, passed a Public Order and Management Act (POMA) that greatly curtails the right to freedom of association and assembly. According to this law, Ugandans gathering in groups of more than three people need police permission or else will be arrested, prosecuted and imprisoned. Sad still, the law brings back section 32(2) of the Police Act[iii] that was successfully challenged in courts of law. Such incidents show that the current government presided over by Museveni has nothing to do with human rights and social justice. Its major aim is entrenching its self in power using the USA and her client states as protectors. Sarah Tangen a former resident representative of Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, has astutely described Uganda as a pseudo democracy with authoritarian traits (Schmidt, 2013).

Development induced displacement in the name of GDP growth

Despite the availability of the 1998 Land act which provides security of tenure to peasant squatters, Uganda has witnessed massive evictions of peasants from their land over the years in the name of development and GDP growth. For example:

On August 18, 2001, the Government of Uganda acting through the Resident District Commissioner (RDC) deployed its army which brutally displaced 392 peasant families (approximately 2041 persons). Their houses were demolished, properties destroyed, and staple crops such as cassava and potatoes were confiscated. Several of them were beaten up during the eviction. They were living on a small portion of land which was too leased to

the Kaweri Coffee Plantation Ltd, for the purpose of establishing a coffee plantation (FIAN, 2010).

After the eviction, some peasants were employed on the coffee plantation as casual labourers. These peasants face labour exploitation on the plantation while the payment they receive is so low that they are unable to feed themselves and their families adequately. They are forced to accept labour exploitation because their land, which was their primary means to feed themselves, was brutally appropriated. Since the forcible eviction in August 2001, the displaced peasants have been fighting with all the means at their disposal to gain their right to food. After their attempts to reach a settlement by political means had failed, they filed a court case, directly against the Attorney General of Uganda in his capacity as representative of the Ugandan government on the one hand, and against Kaweri on the other. However, the hearings were postponed several times without any prior notice, making the long and expensive journey to the court futile. These Peasants in Mubende were awarded 7 billion Uganda Shillings in compensation in a court judgment delivered by Justice Anup Singh Choudry. However, the file has since disappeared. Justice Anup Singh Choudry opines that:

Last year in March, I gave a judgment in the case in favour of the peasants of Kaweri farmers and ordered that the sh20m that they paid into court for security of costs be paid out forthwith. I was informed that the file was required by Nakawa court before the monies could be released. However, I was most reluctant to part with the file as I knew fully well that once this sensitive file left my chambers it would disappear, because we have mafia in the Judiciary. In the end I released the file to Nakawa court with a provision that it must be returned to my chambers…... "But, now the farmers cannot be paid because the file is missing. I note that the lawyers for the farmers are being tossed from one place to another or from one court to another each day for the last one year. "I fear we have mafias in the court, otherwise there is no rhyme, for such a massive file to be misplaced or to disappear (The New Vision, 2014).

Environmental degradation in the name of GDP growth

President Museveni has pursued a policy of modernisation of the economy for GDP growth even at the expense of environmental sustainability. He has accused the opposition of being development saboteurs and enemies of modernisation because they delayed the construction of Bujagali power project under 'flimsy' environmental concerns. He has come up with a legal proposal of making the offence of economic sabotage a

non-bail able offence contrary to the bill of rights in the 1995 Uganda Constitution. President Museveni's support of GDP oriented capitalism is eminent in his famous statement that:

Madhvani is an Indian by colour, but he is more African than 2 million Africans combined because he is doing more value for the Africans. By producing sugar, soap and a number of other products he is paying the government of Uganda 45 billion Shillings in taxes. What is the wage bill of Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces (UPDF)? UShs 120 billion the whole year. Madhvani alone can pay you for five months! (The New Vision, 2014).

On April 12th 2007, thousands of people in Kampala took to the streets to protest against the plan of government to give away 7100 acres of Mabira forest to Mehta, an Asian sugar investor .The investor intends to cut down the forest in order to facilitate sugar canes growing for his sugar corporation. The demonstration turned into a bloody riot that claimed the lives of one Indian and two Ugandans (The New Vision, 2007, The Monitor, 2007).

This event is a clear demonstration of the conflict between GDP growth oriented modernisation and environmental sustainability. President Museveni has demonstrated his commitment to the modernisation paradigm in the Plan for the modernisation of Agriculture when he vowed that he will not be intimidated by the riots about Mabira forest give way. He has categorically stated that, *'' I shall not be deterred by people who do not see where the future of Africa lies. They do not understand that the future of all countries lies in processing (BBC, 2007=)''*. The pressure exerted on the state by the people of Uganda to give up the leasing of Mabira forest is reflective of the tensions between the choices of the people and the private sector motivated modernisation demands of the state. This is indicative of the fact that modernisation should be based on dialogue instead of coercion.

In addition, according to a report by Friends of the Earth International, the World Bank has provided millions of dollars in funding and technical support to palm oil expansion in forested islands off the coast of Lake Victoria in Kalangala, Uganda. Nearly 10,000 hectares have already been planted covering almost a quarter of the land area of the islands. Palm oil plantations have come at the expense of local food crops and rainforests. Local people have been prevented from accessing water sources and grazing land. Despite promises of employment, locals have lost their means of livelihood and are struggling to make ends meet.

David Kureeba from the National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE) / Friends of the Earth Uganda opines that:

People's rights to land are being demolished despite

protection for them under the Ugandan Constitution. Small scale farming and forestry that protected unique wildlife, heritage and food of Uganda is being converted to palm oil wastelands that only profit agribusinesses. The Ugandan Government must prioritise small scale ecological farming and protect people's land rights (Friends of the Earth International, 2012).

John Muyiisha, a farmer from Kalangala, tells of how he woke up one morning to find bulldozers destroying his crops. He had on the land for 34 years. Other community members were contracted to plant palm oil and then forced to sell their land because of debts, low income from palm oil and no food crops. Kirtana Chandrasekaran, Friends of the Earth International Food Sovereignty Coordinator opines that:

These Ugandan testimonies show the fallacy of trying to make land grabbing work for communities or the environment. Decades of policies to privatise land and promote industrial farming from the World Bank have set the stage for a massive global land grab. Governments around the world need to stop land grabbing, not just try to mitigate its worst impacts. Governments must abide by their Human Rights obligations on land and drastically reducing demand for commodities such as palm oil from the West (Friends of the Earth International, 2012).

The project is a joint venture between global agrofuels giant Wilmar International and BIDICO, one of the largest oilseeds companies in Eastern Africa with funding from International Financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Ugandan Government (Friends of the Earth International, 2012).

Conclusion

This study has been premised on the contention that the global development policy paradigms that are reinforced on Sub-Saharan Africa disguise the nature of social injustices against the poor. These positivistic neo-liberal development policies use economic growth as a yard stick for measuring human wellbeing and flourishing and virtually ignore issues of social justice and human rights promotion and protection. This study has expounded on how heinous social injustices against the poor prevail in countries like Uganda despite commendable performances in the promotion of economic growth. This study has also contended that meaningful development must be centered on social justice and human rights.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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[i] Article 1(1) of the 1995 Uganda Constitution categorically states that power belongs to the people.

[ii] Social justice is an umbrella term that encompasses notions such us; distributive justice(fairness and justice when it comes to allocation or distribution of resources, privileges and burdens), commutative justice(justice and fairness when it comes to making and execution of agreements and contracts), empowerment to participate and influence decisions, equality and equitable treatment, curtailing structures and strictures of social oppression ,social exclusion and asymmetrical power relations between persons. It must be noted that social justice is inextricably linked with human rights. Human rights refers to claims or entitlements possessed by all human persons irrespective of gender, sex, age, tribe, nationality, opinion or social status. Human rights and social justice are founded on the principles of non-discrimination, human dignity, equality, equity and justice and fairness.

[iii] This section required one to get police permission before stating a demonstration or assembly. In a famous constitutional petition 9/2005, this section was nullified by court. Its reinstatement is an infringement on article 92 of the 1995 Constitution which categorically denies any legislations that aims at defeating a decision of court.

Full Length Research Paper

Barriers to parent-child communication on sexual and reproductive health issues in East Africa: A review of qualitative research in four countries

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The increasing rate of risky behaviours among the East African adolescents has greater burden to the adolescent, family and the society. Young women in this region are exposed to potential sexual and reproductive health problems including sexually transmitted infections, unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, contraception, sexual abuse and rape, female genital mutilation, and maternal or child mortality. This is attributed by failure of communication of most parents in this region with their adolescents on issues of sexuality and reproductive health like condom use, puberty, STIs and physical development. On the base of academic literature and other materials, this paper argues that parents'-adolescents' communication on sexual and reproductive health issues in this region is circumscribed by various factors including gender differences, level of education among parents, occupations, traditional norms and religion. The paper concludes that, parents and other adults' discussion with adolescents on reproductive health issues is imperative in reducing risky behaviors among adolescents. For effective communication on reproductive health issues, parents and adults need to be educated on their roles as primary source of information to their children. Furthermore, there is a need to address gender differences and socio-cultural norms that hinder effective communication.

Key words: Parent, adolescent, sexuality, reproductive health, communication, barriers, East Africa.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescent sexual and reproductive health has emerged as an area of key concern in the world. According to UNFPA (2011), one person in five worldwide is an adolescent, which translates to a global adolescent population of about 1.3 billion. Nearly half of all people worldwide are younger than age 25, which means that the current youth generation is the largest in history and the majority of whom live in developing countries (UNFPA, 2011). The sub Saharan Africa has higher proportion of adolescents and young people of 10 to 24

years of which constitutes more than 20% of the Africa population (UNFPA and PRB, 2012). In East African countries to mention Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania, a third of the population is aged 10 to 24 (UNFPA and PRB, 2012). Adolescence as a period of growth is characterized by major physical, emotional and psychological changes that make young people vulnerable to many health and social problems (Nanda et al., 2013; UNFPA and PRB, 2012). These include unsafe initiation into sexual activities leading to early pregnancies, unsafe abortions, sexual abuse and sexual transmitted infections like HIV/AIDS. They are also challenged with restricted mobility, female genital cutting and circumcision, early marriages and violence, lack of schooling and drop out from schooling (UNICEF, 2013; Nanda et al., 2013; Jejeebhoy and Santhya, 2011).

Open positive parent-adolescent communication on sexual and reproductive health issues has many positive effects to adolescents, family and the society. A range of studies (Seloilwe et al., 2015; Jejeebhoy and Santhya, 2011, Velcoff, 2010; Hindin and Fatusi, 2009) have shown that adolescents who discuss with their parents on sexual and reproductive health issues are more likely to make healthy decisions on the use of reproductive health services such as condoms when they want to have sex than adolescents who do not talk to their parents often. Furthermore, with the constant efforts by the parents in knowing their teens' friends help report fewer sexual partners, fewer coital acts and more use of condom and contraceptives among adolescents (Bastien et al., 2011; Biddlecom et al., 2009).

Adolescents prefer to receive information about sexuality and reproductive health issues from their parents (Tesfaye et al., 2014; Bastien et al., 2011; Velcoff, 2010). However, in reality, few have this privilege because many parents do not applaud talks on these issues with their children (Nundwe, 2012). Many factors prevent parents from communicating SRH matters with their children. These include, lack of information about sexuality, cultural taboos and beliefs (Nolitha, 2014; Mbugua, 2007). Studies done by UNICEF (2013), Romo et al. (2010), Kareen et al. (2004) in Asia and Tesfaye et al. (2014) and Kumi-Kyereme et al. (2007) in Africa show that the education level, religion and gender of the parents, restrict parents communication with their children on sexual and reproductive health issues.

In East Africa, literature expounding the constraints on parent-adolescents' communication on sexual and reproductive health issues are very limited. The few found (Seif and Kohi, 2014; Bushaija et al., 2013; Nundwe, 2012; Velcoff, 2010) are country based. With that nuances, further research exploring common barriers to parents-adolescent communication on SRH in East Africa should be explored. Moreover, the study will help come up with the general recommendations required in reducing the existing barriers and consequently, help improve the adolescents' sexual and reproductive health in the region.

METHODOLOGY

A review of qualitative studies on barriers to parent-child communication on sexual and reproductive health issues was conducted on the base of literature containing the relevant studies. A total of 31 articles that met the inclusion criteria (adolescent, youth, parent, parent-child communication, caregiver, sexuality and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, Africa and East Africa) were identified. These studies were reviewed and grouped according to whether they reported data which related to the process of sexuality communication, behavioral outcomes associated with sexuality communication and intervention data related to improving parent-child sexuality communication. These categories were subsequently used to structure the presentation of the results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Parents-adolescents discussion on sexual and reproductive health issues in East Africa

In comparison with other issues related to life such as politics, sport and games where parents are free to communicate with their adolescent children (Bushaija et al., 2013; Nundwe, 2012), there is no good communication existing between parents and adolescents on sexual and reproductive health issues in East Africa. According to Nundwe (2012), Velcoff (2010), Bushaija et al. (2013), five barriers to mention gender differences, education, traditional norms, religion and occupation are linked to crippling communication between parent-child on sexuality and reproductive health issues in this region.

Gender differences

Communication between parents and adolescents on sexuality and reproductive health issues in East Africa exists, however, is limited by gender. Mothers and fathers of the adolescent in this region, far more discuss with the youth of the same sex. Mothers communicate more often with girls than boys and fathers very rare communicate with boys than girls (Bashaija et al., 2013; Nundwe, 2012; PRB, 2011; Vecoff, 2010; Luwaga, 2004). The major reason of this sort of communication is that, both parents feel shy hence, find it difficult to openly talk to their children. As revealed by parents:

"… My child will not understand me as she or he will feel shame too. If she is a girl she might feel something different like I need to have an affair with her, and for the boy, he will not understand me" (Father from Tanzania) (Nundwe, 2012: 23-24).

"… How can I start to tell my child that "siku hizi umeota ndevu" and you have big voice. I can't anymore, it is

shame for me even my child will say mother want to have an affair with me (Mother from Tanzania) (Nundwe, 2012: 24).

"...you know sometimes we are both shy to tell her something. Because you see, as it is not something good to share with her…." (Mother from Kenya) (Velcoff, 2010: 109).

"*I find it very difficult and wonder how to talk about sexual related topics with adolescents, yet I know the biology of reproduction*" (Father from Rwanda) (Bushaija et al., 2013: 3).

"Most parents are shy and find it difficult to talk and open up to their children" (Mother from Uganda) (Damalie, 2001).

"Some mothers feel shy and others have a feeling that we are still young" (Adolescent from Uganda) (Damalie, 2001).

"It will depend on the sex of the child, if the child is a girl then I will talk with her, and if it is a boy then his father has to talk with him, because it is easy for each parent to talk with the child of his or her sex. It is shame for me to talk with a child of the opposite sex issue relating to reproductive organs" (Mother, 36 years old from Tanzania) (Nundwe, 2012: 28).

"*Now those issues (referring to sexuality) I find them difficult because I cannot figure out how to start the conversation. As I have already explained that I find it difficult to introduce such issues with my daughters*" (Father from Uganda) (Luwaga, 2004: 46).

"*That is the duty of their mother because as I told you earlier I have mainly daughters. I talk to their mother, who also talks to them as girls*" (Father from Uganda) (Luwaga, 2004: p 37).

According to Velcoff (2010), three factors make the mother-daughter communication in these countries possible. Firstly, is the close relationship existing between mothers and their daughters, secondly, mothers feel that their daughters need advice and third, the importance of the issues to be discussed and their effects to a daughter child (that is, pregnancy and easy STIs contaminations). The discussion with boys is limited as boys face less reproductive health challenges than girls following puberty. Similar observation was noted by Tesfaye et al. (2014) in Ethiopia, Turnbull (2012) in Britain, and Jejeebhoy and Santhya (2011) in India.

Education levels of parents

Parent level of education has an influence to parent-adolescent communication on sexuality and reproductive health issues (Bastien et al., 2011; Wamoyi et al., 2010). Studies by Seif and Kohi (2014), Bushaija et al. (2013), Nundwe (2012) and Velcoff (2010) show that, educated parents have the patience to talk orally and face to face with their youths as compared to parents with less or without education. Moreover, they can also converse with their children in different ways away from oral or face to face. For instance, through giving adolescent children learning materials such as books related to the topics something which is missing to parents with low or without education.

"*…I used to bring him materials like books and brochures….. I know that my child understands because the materials are written in a language he knows*" (Educated mother from Tanzania) (Nundwe, 2012: 39).

The low level of education among parents goes hand in hand with limited knowledge on the study topic. This is the other hurdle for parents in the communication of sexual and reproductive health issues in this part of the world. As evident in the quotations:

"...*The problem of limited knowledge among parents prevents them from communicating with their adolescents*" (School male, adolescent from Zanzibar) (Seif and Kohi, 2014: 09).

"Sometimes the parents do not know how to discuss such issues because they are not informed. When they want to discuss about pregnancy, they don't have enough information about reproductive system…" (Mother from Kenya) (Juma et al., 2015: 4).

Similar to this finding was noted by Svodziwa et al. (2016), in Zimbabwe, Tesfaye et al. (2014) and Tesso et al. (2012) both in Ethiopia where communication was positively associated with parents' levels of education.

Traditional norms

Traditional norms and culture is the other barrier that prohibits parents to discuss issues of puberty and sexuality with their children in East Africa. The norms prohibit parents and other health professionals to speak issues of sexuality to youths hence shy away and lack courage. Studies by Bashaija et al. (2013) in Rwanda, Nundwe (2012) in Tanzania, Velcoff (2010) in Kenya, and Kamau (2006) in Kenya reiterate that, it is abomination, shame and insult for parents to talk about sexual issues with their children as they teach children how to act and behave as an adult. As revealed by parents in quotations.

"In our culture discussing about sexual matter is rare. Let alone discussing with your child, husband-wife discussion on this issue is not practiced. Everybody is shy about it.

These culture, taboo and traditions are passing from generation to generation. We were brought up like this and are doing it today. This needs to be done by grandfathers and grandmother or other guardians" (Mother from Tanzania) (Nundwe, 2012; 29).

"You know us in [name of town omitted]; you are not supposed to tell a child straight. In that, you are supposed to use grandmother, which is our tradition. I mean, like in my case, I was not told a thing about sexual health…" (Mother from Tanzania) (Kajula et al., 2013).

"Now parents as culture dictates, find it difficult to explain such issues thinking that it is going to destroy their innocence forgetting that their children get information from different sources when they grow up" (Mother from Uganda) (Luwaga, 2004: 45).

"Our cultures, our minds, our bringing up are playing a very big role in sidelining the adolescents with the kind of services and information we give to them... It is a challenge to us all in the society" (Kamau, 2006: 191).

"Some parents consider it a taboo to discuss sexuality matters with their children. Traditionally, Luo children were socialized on sex related issues by their grandparents, and sometimes uncles and aunts. The situation has changed now with the breakdown of the traditional socialization process". (Mother from Kenya) (Juma et al., 2015: 4).

"My culture, what it does is very positive on us because it's what tells us is about marriage. It is good because my culture says sex before marriage is bad. So what I chose is exactly what my culture says" (Female adolescent from Kenya) (Velcoff, 2010: 86).

"*[Culture] restricts me a lot so that I wouldn't be exposed to [information about] anything that would give me a disease … because in our culture, you don't talk sex. Sex is very private. You don't even talk about it with friends behind closed doors. [Laughter] It's not talked about"* (Female adolescent from Kenya) (Velcoff, 2010: 87).

Based on the aforementioned quotations, one can reasonably argue that, in East Africa, traditional norms play a great role affecting negatively the effective communication on sexual and reproductive health between parents and their adolescents. Similar findings have been reported in other African countries as it was noted by Svodziwa et al. (2016) in Zimbabwe, Tesfaye et al, (2014) in Ethiopia, Ojo et al. (2011) in Nigeria, and Jejeebhoy et al. (2011) in India.

Religion

Religious belief often stands as a stumbling block to communication between parents and adolescents on issues of sexuality and reproductive health (Svodziwa, 2016; Juping, 2008). Like other part of the world, the common and big religions are found in the East African region with the large number of believers being Christianity and Islam. Both religions prohibit their followers from not committing adultery before marriage, practicing abortion and use of contraceptive methods such as condoms (Obonyo, 2009). As it is evident in the quotations:

"My religion helps me very much in communicating with my child as it prohibits adultery which is a sin to God. My religion also prohibits me to use condom, so I can't direct my child about condom use and I don't like him to use condom as it is not the will of God" (Mother from Tanzania) (Nundwe, 2012: 29).

"*As a Christian, you cannot advise your adolescent child to use condoms which is immoral*" (Parent from Rwanda) (Bushaija et al., 2013: 3).

"…*if you teach to use condoms it is like you are encouraging them to practice* '*that act*', *while our mission is to prevent* '*that act'. Even in our religion, it is not allowed, our Lord tells us to stay clear of this act*" (Male adolescent from Zanzibar) (Seif and Kohi, 2014: 9).

"Religion says no sex at all before marriage. I think that has helped a lot to keep me in check. Because, I'm Christian, I try to do what's right. I know that it has really helped me remain abstinent" (Female adolescent from Kenya) (Velcoff, 2010: 86).

"They (church) are saying that [sex is] not a good thing because when those small children start to do that (sexual), they can take some diseases and it is not good…they will be pregnant and is not good. So I'm telling her, you choose to be Christian because in church we Christian are waiting to be married" (Mother from Kenya) (Velcoff, 2010: 116).

From the aforementioned findings one can reasonably argue that, extreme religious practices have prevented parents to communicate with their children on the best ways to reduce sexual and reproductive health risks in the region. Similar observation was noted by Juping (2008) from Scotland and Wang (2009) from South Africa who found religious practices to be a major stumbling block to parents' failure in communicating sexual and reproductive health issues to their adolescents.

Occupation

Parents' occupations account for the other barrier for

parents to discuss with their children on issues of sexuality and reproductive health. The parents who are self employed have regular returns to their homes hence they may have time to discuss with their youths. This is contrary to those who are publically employed with tight working schedule who have little time to be with their children. As evidenced in the quotations:

"*Truly, economic activities keep me busy. I used to travel frequently, which make me to have little time to be with my children and discuss with them* (Nundwe, 2012: 30).

"*Some parents have no time to talk with their children because they always arrive home from work late and tired*" (Adolescent male from Uganda) (Luwaga, 2004: 47).

"*They have no time to talk with their children and do not see their value in future so they take them as invaluable*" (Father from Uganda) (Luwaga, 2004: 47).

Therefore, like in other places, life keeps parents busy in the region. This makes them spend much of their time and find little or no time to discuss issues of sexuality with their children. Similar results were noted in Zimbabwe and Ghana by Svodziwa et al. (2016) and Kumi-Kyereme et al. (2007), respectively.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study results showed that, the East African countries to mention Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania encounter almost similar barriers that affect effective parent-child communication on sexual and reproductive health issues. These include gender differences, cultural norms, and levels of education among parents, religious viewpoints and occupations among parents. The study has noted that open supportive communication between parents and adolescents on sexual and reproductive health issues can postpone sexual activity, protect from risky behaviours and support the healthy sexual socialization of the youth. It is therefore recommended that, for effective parent- adolescent communication on issues of sexuality and reproduction in East Africa and Africa in general, there is a need to address socio-cultural norms and religious beliefs that hinder the communication. Moreover, programs to support parents to become more involved in the lives of their adolescents and to better talk to their children's sexuality need to be implemented.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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