



AFRICAN LEADERSHIP AS IMPEDIMENT TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A READING OF AMA ATA AIDOO'S *NO SWEETNESS HERE AND OTHER STORIES*.

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ABSTRACT

The main goal of this paper is to point out the responsibility of Africans in the loss of the continental cultural identity and the bad governance of its leaders. The study argues that the Africans share in the responsibility of the decadence of the continent. Through the analysis of the corpus, the study lay bare the main causes of underdevelopment of contemporary Africa. To conduct this study, the qualitative research method is used basing reflection on existing articles, books, thesis and website sources. Postcolonialism which is 'the study of the effects of colonialism on cultures and societies' has been used to conduct the current research that has come up with the result that the adoption of the western culture by Africans is an obstacle to the emancipation of the continent. The study concludes that women which constitute dynamic tools of sustainable development have been neglected, oppressed and marginalised. The research also reveals that the leaders of African continent must consider themselves as the servers of the population rather than absolute masters, a behaviour that leads to ideological, political and socio-cultural deviation.

Keywords: Cultural identity, women, responsibility, management, Africa, self-inferiorisation.

RESUME

L'objectif principal de cet article est de montrer la responsabilité des Africains dans la perte de l'identité culturelle du continent et la mauvaise gouvernance de ses dirigeants. L'étude soutient que les Africains partagent la responsabilité de la décadence du continent. A travers l'analyse du corpus, elle met à nu les principales causes du sous-développement de l'Afrique contemporaine. Pour la réaliser, la méthode de recherche qualitative est utilisée en fondant la réflexion sur des articles, livres, thèses. Le postcolonialisme, qui est "l'étude des effets du colonialisme sur les cultures et les sociétés", a été utilisé pour mener la présente recherche qui a abouti au résultat que l'adoption de la culture occidentale par les Africains est un obstacle à

l'émancipation du continent. L'étude conclut que les femmes, qui constituent des outils dynamiques de développement durable, ont été négligées, opprimées et marginalisées. La recherche révèle également que les dirigeants du continent africain doivent se considérer comme les serviteurs de la population plutôt que comme des maîtres absolus, un comportement qui conduit à une déviation idéologique, politique et socioculturelle.

Mots-clés : Identité culturelle, femmes, responsabilité, gestion, Afrique, auto-infériorisation.

INTRODUCTION

In the context of contemporary African societies, the issue of sustainable development stands at the forefront of global challenges. With rich cultural diversity and abundant natural resources, Africa possesses immense potential for growth and prosperity. However, the intricate relationship between leadership and sustainable development in African nations remains a complex and critical concern.

Against this backdrop, an exploration of African leadership impact on sustainable development becomes essential. Ama Ata Aidoo's thought-provoking collection of stories, *No Sweetness Here And Other Stories*, offers a lens through which we have analysed the dynamics of African leadership and its implications for long-term development. Aidoo's narratives delve into the social, economic, and political realities faced by ordinary Africans, shedding light on the role leadership plays in shaping their lives and influencing the prospects for sustainable development. The analysis offers a unique perspective on the intricate interplay between leadership, governance, and the sustainable growth of African nations.

In order to achieve this research, the following question has been asked: what are the root causes and shared responsibilities for the erosion of African cultural identity and the governance challenges faced by the continent, and how can these issues be addressed to facilitate sustainable development? This problem highlights the need to explore the underlying factors contributing to these challenges and suggests that the study has aimed to propose solutions for sustainable development in Africa.

The research aims to address the multifaceted issues of African cultural identity, governance, and sustainable development. The objectives include identifying and analysing the factors contributing to the erosion of African cultural identity, investigating the shared responsibilities among Africans for governance challenges, assessing the influence of Western culture adoption on African societies and development, examining the historical neglect and marginalization of African women in sustainable development, and evaluating the behaviours of African leaders and their implications for the continent. Ultimately, the research seeks to provide recommendations and strategies for preserving African cultural identity, improving governance, and advancing sustainable

development. These objectives have guided the study in uncovering the complex interplay between culture, governance, and development in Africa.

We have employed a documentary approach, drawing from a wide range of sources, including articles, books, and online materials. The use of postcolonialism as a theoretical framework has helped analyse the impact of colonialism on African cultures, societies, and governance. Simultaneously, feminism provides a lens to examine the historical and contemporary neglect of women in Africa, especially in the context of sustainable development. These two complementary theoretical perspectives, in conjunction with the documentary method, offer a comprehensive analysis of the complex issues surrounding African cultural identity, governance, and sustainable development. The paper has been articulated into three main sections that correspond to the research objectives. The first section has dealt with the adoption of Western values as a hindrance to sustainable development in Africa. The second one investigates the role of bad governance and politics in impeding Africa's development. Finally, the third one focuses on the integral role of women in the development process and highlights how their marginalisation and oppression have clogged the continent's progress.

1. Adoption of Western Values as a Hindrance to Sustainable Development

Culture is the identity card that characterises a people. Africa, fortunately, is not an exception to this reality; instead, the problem is with its people. The contact with the western world through colonialism has affected negatively people's cultures, traditions, ways, minds and many other things. Nowadays, it is difficult for Africans to expose their roots, to assume what they are and to promote it. There is such an acculturation and such a self-inferiorisation which make them consider whatever is from Africa as bad, as outdated, as demoniac, as negative. This state of thing is like a gangrene that infects increasingly the continent. As a result, African prefer imported goods which are not necessarily safe to the detriment of their own local production. Additionally, a problem in the producer's country affects them back automatically. In fact, one spends all his or money abroad in order to buy appliances, food, clothes and many other services. There is no problem with importation, but the nature of what is imported.

Africa is the rubbish dump of the western world where they drop whatever they do not want, and this is not always free but costly. In the first story of the series, that is, *Everything Counts*, Aidoo portrays this fact through the character of Sissie as follows: "She would just think of the words of that crazy *highlife* song and laugh. The one about the people at home scrambling to pay exorbitant prices for second-hand clothes from America" (Aidoo 1). Unfortunately, this is the reality of African people today. As a

consequence, the continent faces several problems such as heart disease, cancer, hepatitis, tension, etc. On the one hand, it exposes Africans' incapacity to produce their clothes and their unconsciousness towards their own health. It is not to be demonstrated that clothes receive body secretions and thus can contaminate whoever else wears them. One can affirm undoubtedly that most of dermatological diseases and sexually transmissible diseases derive from those clothes. Wentengere during his presentation found that "some participants claimed to have suffered from some skin diseases on their 'secret parts and foot fingers due to use of second-hand clothes (SHC). Some participants mentioned that, this was one of the reasons why they were not using undergarments SHC" (Wentengere 130). Thus, number of the infectious diseases, cancers and others are due to the use of second-hand clothes creating additional problems to those poor people. As an evidence, one can consider the following quote:

In most countries, Ministries responsible for trade and commerce, customs departments, textile and garment workers unions and manufacturers associations have tried severally to restrict the sale of imported second hand clothing and counterfeits. Some of their objections involve hygiene and public health issues, for example, in 2001 Latvia banned imports of second-hand clothing and footwear from countries in Europe affected by foot-and-mouth disease. The government of Tanzania recently banned the import of used underwear, in order to prevent skin problems and even venereal diseases (Mburu, Marandu and Amanze 40)

The main reason of the choice of the second-hand clothes (SHC) is their availability at lower cost. However, the resistance and durability of those clothes give them a place of first choice. As an example, Beninese comedian Simplicie Béhanzin, in one of his songs, stated "when one buys underpants at Missèbo (the International second-hand market in Bénin), it lasts long". Though he said this for entertaining purpose, it is unfortunately the truth and those who know can testify it. The use of SHC constitutes a cultural colonialism. In fact, the countries that import them adopt indirectly the fashion, the style and the culture of their provenance. This creates lots of problems like the loss of African values characterised by weird dressing style as well as for men as women. As an example, "some of the SHC, particularly for women, do not comply with African culture. Some are too short, too transparent, too tight and some designs keep women's body half naked. This is likely because the physical body of Europeans women is different from that of Africans" (Wentengere 131). The time has then come that African leaders take their responsibility and make the wise decision on banning a category of SHC in order to protect their people, because no people, no leaders. Katende-Magezi came into the same conclusion when he said:

The SHC ban can therefore be justified as protecting the life and health of East Africans, as the clothes are usually of low grade and a threat to skin infections, as well as the fact that the bales are heavier than the ILO recommendations of 23kgs, which is a threat to the persons who carry the weight. (Katende-Magezi 30)

Katende-Magezi recognises that one cannot ban, that is to say, eliminate totally the importation of SHC, but at least, the ban of underwear should be harsh (radical) in order to protect the dignity of the people. The absolute ban should come gradually. The fight should not be limited to SHC, but takes into account all the products that affect the African value.

The field of food also needs some reforms. In fact, most of African countries are literally dependent vis à vis food imports. Making of a good produced or manufactured abroad one's everyday food is an aberration and alienation that constitute a real drawback for Africa. Despite the abundance of fertile and diversified lands for every sort of production, the productive capacity of the continent is still underutilised. Olaoye confirms this point in her work on Nigeria when she asserts the following:

No nation can develop without giving due attention to agriculture. Unfortunately, many developing countries, especially Nigeria, have great potential for agricultural development but are not maximising the opportunities. This is evidenced in the favourable weather and large cultivable lands, a large percentage of which is grossly underutilised. (Olaoye 34)

The political leaders at each level should work at putting an added value to their local production. They should work on agricultural policies that attract producers. Producers need to be encouraged, secured and insured because they are the real backbones of the economy of the continent. Furthermore, there should be some enforced limitation policies around the importation and the exportation of agricultural products. This will enhance the use of local products and will make the countries save a lot of currency. Another reality is that, even when African countries produce some goods, the produces are exported crudely and one has to pay expensively to buy the finished goods that derived from them. There is no need to recall the condition in which those finished goods are produced; nor conserved. Aidoo through the character of Kobina raised this problem which seems simple but is quite deeper than it seems. "I'm mad but I think I'm sane enough not to drink pressed, homogenised, dehydrated, re-crystallised, thawed, diluted and heaven-knows-what-else orange juice, imported from countries where oranges do not grow, when I can eat oranges" (Aidoo 17). This passage simply shows how alienated we, African, are. It is high time to change the minds in this sensitive period where sparks of freedom thirst and hunger are at all point of the continent. Here, Kobina criticises the consumption of manufactured and imported orange juice when fresh oranges are readily available. He highlights the idea that people often choose processed and convenient products over natural and locally sourced alternatives. It implies that such consumer choices are irrational and that individuals should prioritise freshness and authenticity over convenience. Aidoo raises a broader issue in modern society, where the allure of processed and foreign goods frequently overshadows the value of local and natural

resources. This critique of consumer behaviour invites reflection on the environmental and economic consequences of such choices and serves as a reminder to make more sustainable and conscious decisions in our daily lives. The stress is put on the importance of supporting local agriculture and embracing nature's offerings rather than opting for highly processed and imported substitutes. On the other hand, using locally produced goods in most cases is synonym of consuming natural, what guarantees a good health and develops the economy of the country because this increases the opportunity of setting up factories.

Another problem is that the imported goods are in most case, available or could be produced locally; however, one prefers the overseas'. This is how Covid-19 and the conflict between Russia and Ukraine succeeded in flooding most African countries as report (Mhlanga and Ndhlovu 8):

Africa's promising recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic has been disrupted as a result of Russia's war in Ukraine, which has led to an increase in the price of food and fuel, disruptions in the trade of goods and services [...] The fact that some African countries rely on Russia and Ukraine for the importation of essential goods, mainly wheat, fertilizers, and steel, is an issue. A disturbance in the flow of these products hurts the countries of Africa, for example. (Mhlanga and Ndhlovu 8)

Instead of relying totally on some countries for this or that, the African leaders could find alternative solutions. Why do they not think of other goods or resources that can play fully the role of wheat for example? Why do they not think of an alternative to produce it in Africa given that some researches demonstrate that they could be produced? To those questions, the answers may vary from leaders to leaders. All one notice is that, instead of healing the evil, instead of uprooting it, they try to care its symptoms, that is, negotiate a corridor to be delivered. Balma *et al.* suggest that one lesson of the current crisis is that countries should avoid being overly dependent on any single supplier of food and should diversify their imports of crucial goods and commodities to be more resilient to idiosyncratic shocks (Balma *et al.* 14). Unfortunately, we do not approve this idea because, as we said above, it is a kind of treating symptoms. Africa should take her destiny in hands in this changing world.

Whatever is forbidden oversea is welcomed with applause here in Africa. A motivating factor to all this is that, people continue to consider white people or culture as superior and they want to resemble them. But in fact, there is no superior culture, no superior civilisation. We could, in some ways, qualify a civilisation as an advanced civilisation but nothing more. The cultural alienation has gained, let say, has affected the brain of the African youth. Apart from importing goods, the time is now for the values, culture and civilisation. African people nowadays adopt everything from the western world namely,

hair style, dress fashion, behaviour, gastronomy and now, they hate themselves, they want to resemble the white people. This self-hatred leads to the loss of self-esteem by African in general. This way, the westerners have all the necessary credit not to respect them. For instance, bleaching, strange hair style, western cloth style, homosexuality and thus body exhibition invaded the continent. Given that culture is the identity card of any society, Africa is day after day uprooted. Here is the surprising situation Sissie was confronted to after having spent some years in America to study. "Suddenly, it seemed as if all the girls and women she knew and remembered as having smooth black skins had turned light-skinned. Not uniformly. Lord, people looked as though a terrible plague was sweeping through the land. A plague that made funny patchworks of faces and necks" (Aidoo 4). She was lost and could not understand what was wrong with her people. The worst is what she observed during a beauty competition:

She just recalled, later, that all the contestants had worn wigs except one. The winner. The most light-skinned of them all. No, she didn't wear a wig. Her hair, a mulatto's, quite simply, quite naturally, fell in a luxuriant mane on her shoulders...
She hurried home and into the bathroom where she vomited - and cried and cried and vomited for what seemed to her to be days. (Aidoo 7-8)

Aidoo uses this extract to show that the cultural colonisation has reached its summum. Though the fact that Sissie vomited could be considered as a hyperbole, one can understand it. This Sissie's reaction proved that the Africa she had known has been wiped out. It was the worst, a chaos for her. The following question comes out: what does all this have to do with development?

Oludayo *et al.* quoting (Mabogunje, 1991) define the roles of women towards sustainable development around eight cardinal elements including "education, health, culture politics, economy, agriculture, enhanced environment, quality and peaceful co-existence" (Oludayo *et al.* 2). As said above, our clothing, behaviours, hair style and gastronomy make up our culture. But there is no doubt that all those values are already lost, and have given place to the westerns. The fact is that when one adopts a foreign people's foods without being able to produce it oneself, the only one alternative is to import them. As a result, money leaves the country and goes to develop the adopted area. The same occurs with all the other elements adopted and at the end, one becomes an everlasting consumer, without having anything to give in exchange, nothing to barter with. As a result, Africa contributes to the development of the other continents and to its own extermination. This is the sad fate of Africa.

2. Bad Management Politics

Before entering in the development of this section, it is of paramount importance to clarify the concepts of governance, political management. On the one hand, to govern means to lead, manage, and make decisions to ensure the orderly functioning of a group, organisation, or a state, typically involving rule-making, enforcement, and the provision of essential services to serve the interests of the governed. Fukuyama (3-4), defines governance as a:

government's ability to make and enforce rules, and to deliver services, regardless of whether that government is democratic or not. I am more interested in what Michael Mann labels "infrastructural" rather than "despotic" power.³ The reason I am excluding democratic accountability from the definition of governance is that we will later want to be able to theorize the relationship between governance and democracy. The current orthodoxy in the development community is that democracy and good governance are mutually supportive. I would argue that this is more of a theory than an empirically demonstrated fact, and that we cannot empirically demonstrate the connection if we define one to include the other. (Fukuyama 3-4)

From this definition, one can see that the concept of governance is introduced as the government's capacity to establish and enforce regulations, provide essential services, and manage the functioning of a state, irrespective of its democratic or non-democratic nature. The emphasis is on what Michael Mann categorises as "infrastructural" power, rather than "despotic" power, implying a focus on the government's ability to effectively implement and maintain services and rules that benefit the population. Notably, the definition deliberately excludes democratic accountability, as it aims to allow for later theoretical exploration of the relationship between governance and democracy. The reasoning behind this omission is based on the argument that the prevailing belief in the development community, suggesting that democracy and good governance are inherently interlinked, is more of a theoretical assumption rather than a thoroughly demonstrated empirical fact. By keeping governance and democracy as separate entities in the definition, the author seeks to enable a more rigorous empirical examination of their interconnectedness.

Political management, on the other hand, can be defined as the application of management principles and strategies to the realm of politics and government. It involves the planning, organizing, directing, and controlling of resources and activities within the political arena to achieve specific political objectives or to govern a nation or jurisdiction effectively. Political management is crucial for maintaining order, implementing policies, and addressing the needs and concerns of a society while navigating the complexities of the political landscape. It encompasses campaign management, public administration,

policy formulation, and the leadership of political parties and government institutions. Quoting Gale and Buchholz, Oliver and Holzinger (3) defined it as follows:

Strategic political management refers to the set of strategic actions that are planned and enacted by firms for purposes of maximizing economic returns from the political environment. Strategic political management enhances a firm's potential to improve its performance or competitive advantage by "provid[ing] a means of competing not permitted by the pure market pursuit of objectives" (Gale & Buchholz, 1987: 39). (Oliver and Holzinger 3)

This approach enables companies to achieve better performance and competitive advantages, allowing them to gain benefits beyond what a pure market-driven pursuit of objectives would offer. In essence, the idea underscores the importance of a proactive and strategic approach to navigating the intricacies of politics and regulations, as this can provide a unique avenue for businesses to excel and succeed. However, it is worth noting that strategic political management also raises ethical and accountability concerns, as it may involve lobbying, campaign contributions, or other activities that could influence political decisions in ways that may not align with the broader public interest. Therefore, a critical analysis would need to consider the potential ethical implications and societal impacts of this strategic approach.

The common roots to all ill-governance problem remain corruption, favouritism, nepotism, ignorance and others. The first seed that rises from those roots is probably corruption attended by favouritism. African leaders are attempted to favour only those who bribe them or only when this favours them. In this logic, development cannot be at rendezvous since one cannot be pleased in everything. Those who really want to work, who are aware of well doing rarely have money to waste or to bribe. Thus, numerous carriers of ideas found themselves rejected, blocked or ruined. If some cope with corruption, that is, bribe civil servants or leaders to get a service or set up their business, the network of corruption is spread and thus their activities, whether good or bad are certified by the government since they have been bribed. The problem is so serious that even the least problem remains without solution just because there are no interests for them inside. Embezzlement is an immediate companion to this problem. When they decide to complete a task and raised funds for it, less than half of this funds really enters the project. It is not worth asking the destination of the remaining funds. What is clear is that the task is bungled putting the people's life in danger and worsening the problem than it had been, because treating symptoms does not necessarily heal the disease itself.

Another kind of discouragement which constitutes an important hindrance to the development of the continent is the one related to the treatment reserved to our brothers graduated from abroad. While the governments hire foreign (white people) at high costs

to work for them, the elites of Africa are not valued. The conditions of work, the wages and many other protocols oblige them to stay away and put their talent, their know-how and leadership at the disposal of other countries. At the same time, they are 'well' received and 'well' treated abroad. Due to such a situation, most of African elites after their graduation seek jobs abroad and the continent remain a "desert of competence". This fact is in substance the brain-drain of the continent. How can Africa be developed if every day, it has its young worthy, its elites deported? In the same vein, even abroad, those who tried to invest in their hometown meets so much hindrance that they give up. This way, a place is being set for a new kind of colonialism. In fact, when most of the companies and industries in a country are owned by foreigners, the country lays on an argil foundation. Those multinationals just have to decide around a table of the fate of the whole country. They may go up to impose candidates for any political election because they have economic power that allows them to manipulate the results of the elections.

"The Education for All (EFA) and Education for Sustainability (EFS) campaigns become more imperative and indispensable" (Oloruntegbe, *et al.* 817). Through this assertion, Oloruntegbe raises the problem of an effective and efficient education. One can go deeper, on the one hand, explaining the importance for all to go to school and get out of ignorance, that is to say EFA, and on the other hand, the necessity to institute practical and technical educations, and more importantly education for purpose. This should be the new waybill for every education system in Africa. The Emergency is there because, generally, even after graduating with the baccalaureate, most of the students do not know why they have been going school for. The worst is that, they register in some programmes at university and it is after getting the bachelor they start wondering what to do. The new educational system should sensitise the youth of on fact that, one does not go to school to become rich, and also that, everybody cannot go to school. A local saying in Benin suggests that "if everybody is *Voodoo*, who will enjoy, who will appreciate and applause the celebration".

African people use to complain about everything but rarely implicate themselves. It is true that white people have been responsible of some facts but beyond this aspect, what of the responsibility of Africans themselves? How do they manage when they finally or once have the opportunity to lead?

But listen, my young Master, this place was not like this when I first came here. There was only one block to this main house with two rooms, A and B. With this front room here where we are sitting now. It was later, the first year of two years after we had the freedom that they built C and D, and the other kitchen. It has never been used - I mean the other kitchen. If it had been built in the days of the white people, someone might have brought his own cook

here with him some time to use it. But our people do not care about that kind of thing. And there has always been me (Aidoo 30).

Evidence has shown that at every moment in history when black have been in power, only chaos has reigned. The narrator reflects on the transformation of a physical space over time. The expansion of a house from two rooms to additional blocks and the construction of an unused kitchen is symbolic of broader changes within the society. The mention of "the first year of two years after we had the freedom" hints at a post-colonial or post-independence era, and the reference to "the days of the white people" suggests a historical shift. The fact that "our people do not care about that kind of thing" raises questions about cultural shifts and lifestyle changes. The narrator's presence in the house suggests a sense of continuity or responsibility. This exposes the negligence of African people by developing the attitudes of the westerners to value things, that is, to attribute things to their due value. On the contrary, African people prefer to concentrate their energy on what satisfy their immediate interests instead of planning or acting for sustainability.

3. Women and Development Process

Women have always been the backbone of the family. They are naturally full of love and source of wellbeing in any family. As a result, if a woman is not well treated or does not feel at ease, peace cannot be set in this house whatever the means and wealth of this family. Additionally, whatever the situation, their love towards their children is most of the time unconditional. For this reason, they are ready to face any intricaded situation to bring in their children's well-being. Such situations have been illustrated through several chapters in the collection of stories. For instance, in *A Gift from Somewhere*, Gyaawa (Mami Fanti) having lost several babies was abandoned with her last staying one. She fought a lot to keep him alive and thanks to Allah, a saviour came to her and saved her baby. The idea of losing this baby reveals a sad situation on women. They are not valued and are considered for very few things. For her case, she was just there for procreation and she would be useless if not:

Now all I must do is to try and prepare myself for another pregnancy, for it seems this is the reason why I was created... to be pregnant for nine of the twelve months of every year... Or is there a way out of it at all? And where does this road lie? I shall have to get used to it... It is the pattern set for my life. For the moment, I must be quiet until the mothers come back in the evening to bury him. (Aidoo 96)

This treatment women are subject to does not encourage their contribution to development. The same fate was lived by Hawa who was abandoned with Fuseni her first born. In fact, her husband decided to go to the South and find some job but finally, never came back. This situation does not guarantee a good life condition to children. This

affects their health, education and in most cases, they are not instructed. Each uneducated child is a problem for the society and consequently a hindrance to the development of the area somehow. Given that women spend more time with children, they should be considered and empowered so as to fully complete their task. Unfortunately, in most African societies, women are associated with secondary role. Gotame confirms this when he asserts: "They are regarded as the second-degree citizens of the country having a subordinate role. [...] majority of women are involved in the household works most of the respondents do not involve in politics" (Gotame 59). The absence of women in the key development sectors has a drawback on the development of the continent. It is true that nowadays, all over the world, governments are doing their best to introduce and promote women in state management. Despite this open will, the number of women at the head of important offices is still very low. The reason is that, one has to promote competence and not gender. If competence is not at the centre of all development promotion, sustainable development will remain a utopia. To support this idea, (Oludayo *et al.*) conclude that it is not evident that women succeed where men failed. However, they recognise that men have been indicted in corruption than women, but the solution is not to replace men by women, but rather associate them all with as criterion: competence and not gender. This means that, the question is not to recruit women just because of gender equity reason, but to value them, to give them the same chance as men so as to select the most competent.

However, (Ukpore 268) states that the first three strategies ranked as most important for improving women's role in sustainable development are based on educating the girl child in order to liberate women from poverty and become more involved in politics, social and economy of the nation. We can easily agree that education remains the basis of everything. Our governments are required to concentrate much effort in education, especially girls' education.

First of all, it is important to clarify what is called education. We can define education as the fact of breeding and training someone in order to develop his or her moral and intellectual faculties. Having said so, moral and intellect are included while addressing education. It (education not to be confused with literacy) starts from birth and there is no diploma for it. It takes into account social knowledge, culture, customs, tradition, economics, realities of life and initiation. The only one certification that serves as proof of being educated is the individual's behaviour, whatever his social level. Then, it is clear that what matters is the deeds and not diploma. In addition, one shall not confuse education with schooling. In fact, education is before and after school instruction. One can be good at all disciplines in school but still be uneducated. And without education, it is not possible to live easily in society, while without school degrees, and even without

ever having been to school, one can live easily in society. Whatever one does not have for not being at school, he or she can learn it later but there is nothing to do with someone who failed the basic education. What Africa needs is an educated people and not necessarily a literate one.

Furthermore, women are gifted for resource saving, for accounting and sustainable spending. Saying so, we put the stress on the fact that, women know the value of resources and know better than men how to manage them. We can assess the results that a man may get with a given amount of money to the ones a woman would get and then, the evidence is clear. Of course, when we say women, one shall not take his own case or a specific case, but instead women in general. It happens most of the time where some husbands complain about the fact that their wives spend the money supposed to cover a month in a week. At this level, studies prove that when the roles are inverted and men decide to take in charge the purchase of goods for their home, they quickly realise that if they continue so, they will soon be broke. Women may seem spendthrift but it is important to note that whatever they spend is for home, that is food, clothing, crockery and others. Unfortunately, we cannot state same for men.

Another surprising fact with women is the fact that they are successful than men in terms of enterprise management. They are gifted in negotiation, bargaining and management in general. In addition, in terms of figures, there is no approximation for them. Whenever you undertake to work for a woman, be sure to explain the least spending from your part and do not be surprised if she asks you to use the remaining money of the eve or a long while ago to perform a task. It is not a hazard if the first calculators in the world were a woman. As Light (458) has put it, "The famed astronomer Maria Mitchell was employed as a computer for the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey in the late 1980s. The term computer, meaning 'one who computes,' originally referred to the human who was assigned various mathematical calculations". One could wonder what all those 'qualities' have to do here. To answer such a preoccupation, let us just assume a moment the management of the resources of a country were entrusted to women or at least, women are associated to every activity related to resources and economy and this, independently to men. They achieve better results than men do. All this is possible for their sense of care and their perfectionist character.

For a good and balanced education, the contribution of both parents is required. As an African proverb states, there are two things we need to league to a child: wings to fly and roots to remember his origins. The wings and the roots constitute the background of a good education. So, any handicap at their level would hinder children's development. Children are sensitive beings who learn by seeing, listening, following and by

reproducing. It is then important for them to live in a sound and safe atmosphere. Unfortunately, there are several problems that hinder such an atmosphere namely women's ill-treatment, their abandon with children and sometimes divorce.

Everything starts from home whether good or bad. As an example, we have corruption. Corruption is the highest evil every African country has been fighting against for decades. As said, to fight an evil, one should cut its roots, that is, wipe out its causes and not treat a symptom. Indeed, corruption is a consequence of a dysfunction in basic education. It is not difficult to prove it. The way we treat and manage our children matters a lot in their education process. A proof that corruption is part of humans is children's corruption by their parents. How does it take place? When a parent orders his or her child and the latter is not willing to perform the task, it is sufficient for the parent to make a promise or to make a gift to this child and he performs automatically the job. But the problem is when this habit becomes a use with children; they get accustomed and it is difficult to order them the least thing without a promise. Further, some even refuse to perform tasks just because they found their rewards insufficient. At this level, the situation is quite serious and it is difficult to get any single service from such children without payment. And with the age, when those people reach higher position in the society, they simply enlarge their circle of corruption and their bid. It is no more question of requesting a sweet, a chewing gum or simply performing their duty but even before undertaking it, they should be sure to be bribed enough. It is then important that parents know how to manage their children so as to bequeath them good values.

The other problem that impacts negatively the education of children is ill-treatment. The ill-treatment may be towards them or their mothers in most of the cases. A child who attends his or her mother's ill-treatment or his parents' fight repeatedly sooner or later will finish by taking position. Whatever the side he or she supports, whether he supports his father or his mother, it is a shock to his education. A child should not have to choose between one or the other parent. Later on, he will be attempted to reproduce the scene, and, if it is a girl, she may be attempted to inherit her mother's character which may not necessarily be good. In most of the cases, a man who beats his wife has once observed his father or a parent do so. Whatever the situation, children are innocent and parent should know how to solve their problems without implying their children in their quarrels.

The last and recurrent problem that also constitutes a hindrance to children development is their abandon by one or both parents or divorce. It is known to all that, children need both parents to have a balanced education. But when one comes to miss, it creates a disequilibrium. A mother is not fully capable to take care of a child and mind totally his or her education. Analogically, a father is not quite tooled to take care successfully of

children. In effect, both father and mother contribute half in a child raising. In Africa, a mother dotes his children while the father is there to keep an eye on them so as to howl them when necessary. This synchronism guarantees a safe atmosphere and the development in the right for children. But the contrary case creates a lack in the life of children. This lack may be the love from a parent or both or it may be lack of resource necessary for their growth or in last, they may lack parental control and thus will become problems for the society. Most of the people engaged in outlaw activities have had difficult childhood.

Africa needs to have well-educated women because they are and remain the backbone of the development of the continent since such a development begins at the level of each single person, each single family, village, before coming to the broad side. It is crucial that we guarantee to our children a good education. Such an education starts from educating women since they are those in contact most with children. A good woman will league good education background to his or her children. Generally, morally speaking, when parents are not at top, the consequences on children are analogically negative. Within men, the children have violence tendency, deliquescence and sometimes alcoholism. Within women, the consequences are quite disastrous than men's. There are often prostitution cases which the parents may be informed of or not. Sometimes, it is the parents themselves who send their young daughters to town fetch money for the family. This initiative itself is not bad but it is the jobs their girls venture into that constitute the real problem. The young people, nowadays, do not want to suffer, do not want to perform hard jobs before getting a lot of money, and the possible issues to satisfy such desires are everything but good. In some cases, the parents are aware of such dirty jobs but try to close their eyes on them. What matters for them is not the jobs their daughters perform but the money they send home. As we said, children themselves are innocent. It is most of the time their parents the real responsible. They are there to guide their children who are allowed to commit errors and mistakes. Unfortunately, (the conditions of) life obliges them to make less recommendable things. Among those things are marrying their daughters against wealth, for their own happiness to the detriment to their children's.

"Her brother was right. She is a good woman. Like most of our women, she always believes in a woman having her own little money, so that she does not have to go to her husband for everything. On the coast, she mostly sold roasted plantains and groundnuts. Here, she makes kaffa" (Aidoo 29).

Aidoo suggests here through the character of Zirigu that empowering women will have a positive impact on the family; rendering women independent financially and thus relieving men. Guaranteeing a financial stability to African women will consequently lead to a peaceful family life. If fact, when African women possess money, it is easy for

them to invest in the household and in their children. They concentrate most of their energy on the family's wellbeing and spend more time in educating children. This has been the case of Setu whose husband was satisfied and then made her praises to Kobina, the young Master.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research has addressed the critical issues of cultural identity, good governance, and women's roles in Africa, all of which play a significant role in the quest of the continent for sustainable development. It has become evident that the adoption of Western values has posed challenges to the preservation of African cultural identity, leading to a deviance from traditional values. The prevalence of bad governance and self-serving leadership has hindered progress. The study has also underscored the vital, yet often neglected, contribution of women to the development process.

The primary objective of this research is to highlight the responsibility shared by Africans in the decline of their cultural identity and the hindrance caused by poor governance practices. It also aims to emphasize the critical role women should play in driving sustainable development. By investigating these areas, the study seeks to contribute to a better understanding of the challenges Africa is facing and sheds light on potential pathways to overcome these obstacles, ultimately leading to a more sustainable and prosperous future for the continent.

The research has unveiled several key findings of paramount importance. Firstly, it is evident that many Africans have forsaken their rich cultural values, traditions, locally produced goods, and indigenous practices in favour of imported alternatives. This shift has negatively impacted the development of the continent, contributing to various issues such as the widespread use of second-hand clothing, which has led to skin infections, diminished self-esteem, and a decline in local industries.

Secondly, the study has highlighted critical shortcomings in the African educational system. It has revealed that the current system is ill-suited to address the unique realities of the continent, resulting in inefficiency, ineffectiveness, and an overall lack of productivity.

Thirdly, the research underscores the significant challenges faced by African women, who have historically been relegated to secondary roles. Empowering women represents a crucial avenue for fostering development, as they possess remarkable skills and capabilities, particularly, in areas such as child education. Their advancement has the potential to greatly contribute to the overall progress and prosperity of the continent.

The implications of these findings are clear: African societies must focus on revitalising cultural heritage, improving the education system, and empowering women to secure a more sustainable and prosperous future for the continent.

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