PREDICTING AFRICA'S BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

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Abstract

Myopic leadership, selfish leadership, and ethnic-oriented leadership constitute the underlying problem of African nations' business atmosphere and poverty-stricken environment. However, the make up of the African environment, as we know it today, is in the process of great change. The change agents are already in place, and such a change will have both positive and negative implications for business and life in Africa. The cultural, political, economic, technological, and marketing atmosphere of the continent will certainly change with time. However, the prediction is that most Africans will regret some of the changes because of the social problems and cultural crises that will follow. Either way, the changes will effect alterations in business strategies, one closer in similarity to the tactics employed in the United States and similar nations than it is now being done in Africa.

Predicting Africa's Business Environment In The New Millennium

Introduction: Africa is Ill

How can a continent with such an enormous endowment of natural resources (crude oil, gold, diamonds, other precious metals, wonderful climate) represent an utter dismay in its poverty level? Recently, the G-8 leaders (USA, France, Russia, Germany, Japan, Italy, Britain, and Canada) met in Genoa, Italy and forged a partnership to address critical issues about Africa. In this meeting, which was also attended by three African leaders, the partnership was to tackle issues relating to eradicating poverty in the continent of Africa, which is said to be one of the most important challenges to be faced in the new millennium. Like one other writer, this paper posits that poverty hazard in Africa is a symptom not the problem (Smith-Otunba, 2001). According to Smith-Otunba, the Executive President of the African Citizens Development Foundation, the poverty problem in Africa is just a manifestation of corruption and bad governance in the continent.

Africa has not done well. A place where civilization began is home to the world's label of most third-world nations -- countries that are infested with extremely poor standard of living and political instability and mismanagement. In comparison with any other continent, Africa has the lowest economic, political, and technological development. This is the perception of the average world citizen (Oguhebe, 2001), and aware Africans at home and abroad wish to do something about it as they observe progress within and among other nations. Africans abroad are really becoming shameful of what is happening in their continent and they are beginning to think "Africa" instead of "self" (me and my family alone, and then my ethnic group) -- which most Africans see as one of the real thorns in Africa's any wheel of progress.

Africa is always at the receiving end of world assistance. The United Nations/The World Trade Organization are always bothered with Africa problems and how to help the continent to rise up to its responsibility of taking care of its citizens appropriately. There is a general perception that Africa and its people may not understand their problems and are incapable of solving them. This is an easy conclusion to reach by anybody who has been following African issues since Africa problems seem to linger forever in world's minds. Why is this so? The answer is not independent of Africa's environmental status quo and its selfish operating system.

Readings on African problems by an aware African certainly indicate that Africa is sick and it's in search of any healer. There is an atmosphere filled with an exclamation, HEEELP! The overwhelming reports and personal observation clearly suggest chaos, dismay, nervousness, frustrations, deaths, crises management, and a crying continent (Anugwom, 2003; Pul, 2003; Isa and Arowosegbe, 2002; Onu, 2001; Jua and Nkwi, 2001; Vatala, 2001), requiring the attention of anyone who can offer real help. Because of the confusions and the anxieties, we are saying that Africa needs to go back to the basics of the problem-solving process as successful businesses and nations usually do it. Using Figure 1, this paper summarizes the authors' 47 years of combined experience in observing Africa's environment in relation to the processes of the world. What change is expected and what implication may it have on business operation?

To answer the above questions, Africa is treated here as a business unit competing with other nations, which are also regarded as business units. A business approach is used simply because companies are known to constantly and extensively analyze their problems to determine how they are doing in relation to competitors. The underlying assumption is that most nations, especially those of Africa, have almost operated as closed systems, not really understanding how the rest of the world affects their actions, and vise versa. There is a need to get African leaders to think "open system" not "closed system."

The basic purpose of every nation is to provide its citizens with security, economic health, and physical health as she competes with other nations for world's resources. Nations that perform their functions well tend to achieve this purpose, thereby placing themselves toward the top of world's scale of development. Those that have not taken this purpose seriously have found themselves at the lower level of the development scale; the lowest members are referred to as the "third world," consisting of many African nations. What is happening to Africa?
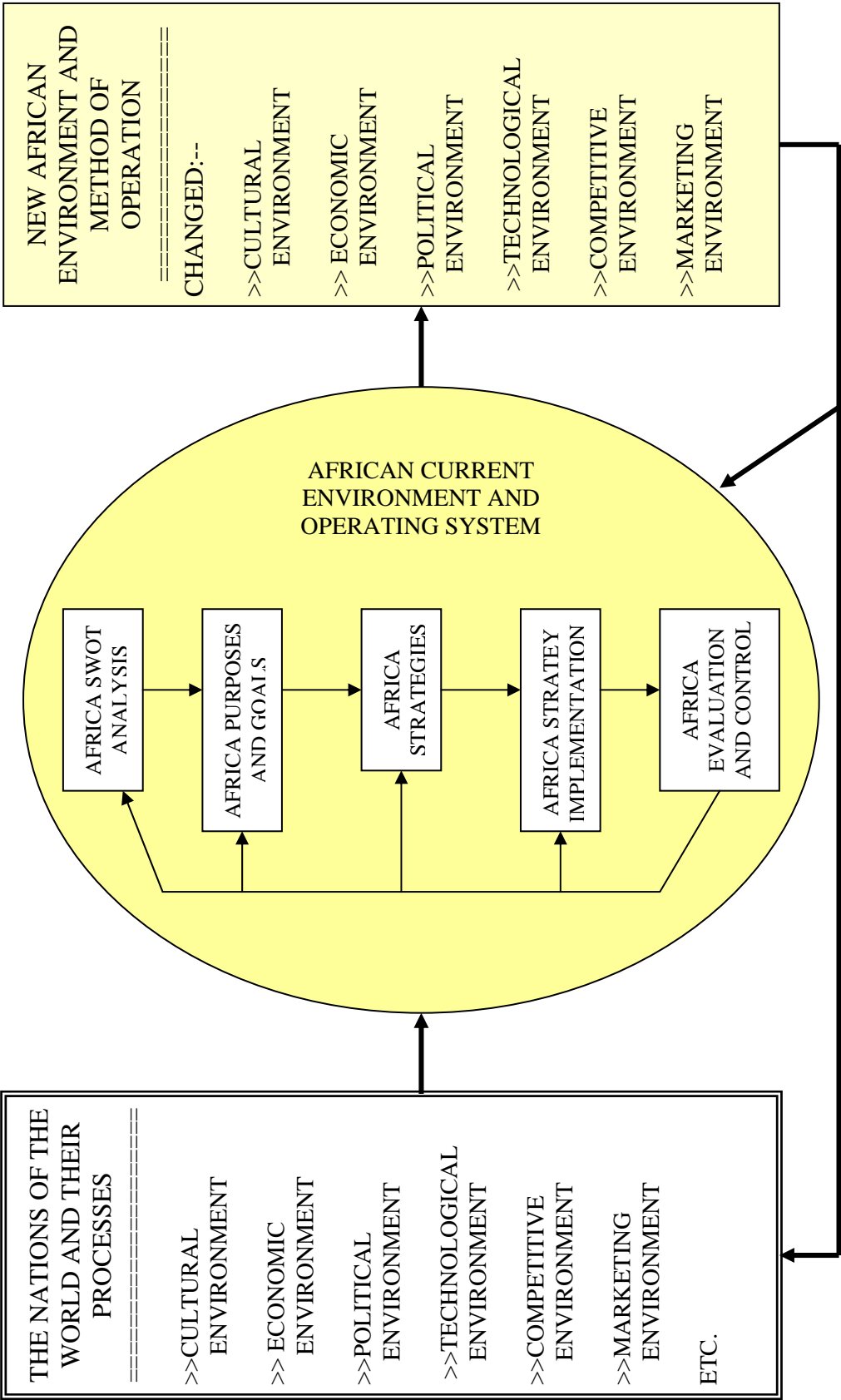
Identifying the Problem

FIGURE 1

AFRICA IN A STRATEGIC BUSINESS MODEL

NEW AFRICAN ENVIRONMENT AND METHOD OF OPERATION
========
CHANGED:--

>>CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

>> ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

>>POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

>>TECHNOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT

>>COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT

>>MARKETING ENVIRONMENT

AFRICAN CURRENT ENVIRONMENT AND OPERATING SYSTEM

AFRICA SWOT ANALYSIS

AFRICA PURPOSES AND GOALS

AFRICA STRATEGIES

AFRICA STRATEY IMPLEMENTATION

AFRICA EVALUATION AND CONTROL

THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD AND THEIR PROCESSES
========

>>CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

>> ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

>>POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

>>TECHNOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENT

>>COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT

>>MARKETING ENVIRONMENT

ETC.

A major set of basic Africa's problem can be revealed with Figure 1. Most nations of Africa do not operate with a sense of interdependence on other world sectors. The model, which has been used by successful businesses for decades (Wheeling and Hunger, 2003), shows that Africa, as a unit in the world macro system, influences and is being influenced by forces within Africa and outside Africa. Years of operating in the dark, perpetrated by uneducated and unaware African leaders, have kept Africa in the dark, hence being referred to sometimes as 'a dark continent." African leaders must recognize that each African nation is an open system, which can only be governed well if all necessary forces within her and outside her are strategically weighed before adopting any decision. African leaders have ignored this management concept and have relied on leading the nation to benefit self through corruption, intimidations, embezzlements, and lusts for personalized power (Mills, 2003; Smith-Otunba, 2001; Museveni, 2000). In cases where the major forces in the environment are considered, they are often looked at as mostly threats to these myopic leaders' selfish ambitions and dictatorship style of governance:

> Shyley Kondow of Malawi's Institute for Democracy and Economic Affairs stressed the misuse of "sovereignty" by African leaders and governments as a tool "to sustain the oppression of their citizens". He argued that Africa's basic problem was a "lack of capacity to realize good governance and the absence of political will among African political leaders to acknowledge this condition and the courage to explore strategies to address this problem".

> African leaders looked upon intellectuals, civil society and professional bodies as threats to their power, he said, and their governance style was characterized by "preferential access to power and resources determined by religious, ethnic a geographic considerations". Some of these conditions, as Paul Omach of Makerere University In Uganda argued, related to the nature of the colonial inheritance and "dislocated polity" of a state such as Uganda. (Mills, 2003)

The mentality that civil societies and developed world are all threats and not source of examples in many areas of political and economic leadership has blinded many African leaders. As many common Africans would argue, not that these selfish African leaders do not know that there is something to learn from developed economies and political systems, it is that the emulation of such examples can interfere with the leaders' selfish ambitions. As a result, Africa remains in the dark and battling with so many symptoms of such filthy governance such as poverty, health problems, social unrests, poor education, and poor life expectancy.

Every African leader of any African nation must seek for socialized power not personalized style. Personalized power is selfish power designed mainly to keep one in office whether or not one is accomplishing national objectives. Personalized power is corrupt power; the possessor is usually drunk with it to the point of doing any and everything (including murders and all corruptive practices) just to maintain the power.

African leaders are possessed by the demons of this type of power, which has succeeded in dividing and destroying their respective nations instead of synergistically uniting various groups toward the building of a strong society called "nation." Socialized power, on the other hand, seeks to bring people together and leading them toward achieving group goals, not personal

goals. Such power does not suppress people's views, but considers them unselfishly to the benefit of the nation as a whole. The possessor of this kind of power employs anyone who is truly qualified to help the group (nation) in achieving her goals. Once again, the possessor does not feel threatened by the wisdom of others or the suggestions of civil people and intellectuals, but he taps the knowledge of these people toward making the society good for all—for all, not for his immediate family, kindred, or ethnic group.

Wise socialized leadership must conduct SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis of a nation, determine the nation's goals and strategies, implement and evaluate strategies based on thorough understanding of the nation's internal environments and external forces. Most African nations have been governed based on the perceptions of the leader's ethnic group and religion, thereby alienating and oppressing the other groups.

The result is that the nation is employing only a part of what she has in trying to compete in the world arena. The intellectual asset of the oppressed group is usually not part of the average African nation's strategy. What one usually sees in most African nations is a national strategy that most of the nation's right-thinking individuals do not support and usually do not wish to help implement. The result has always been cosmetically high-sounding good goals on paper, which are usually not implemented, leaving Africa where she has always been—"third world."

African leaders must learn to operate their respective nations by attending strictly to the following strategic business principles:

a) Carefully analyze your nation's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats as a function of the talents of all ethnic groups in your nation (do not exclude any race or creed), the forces in the external environment such as what other nations are doing that have been working to improve their economy and politics, and your intellectuals in the Diaspora.

b) Together with proper representation of all ethnic groups, formulate goals that are consistent with analysis in number "a." Do not skip or jump as too many African leaders do in order to satisfy ethnic pressures or their own personal ambitions.

c) Together with proper representation of all ethnic groups, formulate strategies that are consistent with achieving the set goals. Such strategies must be good enough to help withstand the threats, minimize the impact of weaknesses, take full advantage of your national strength (not ethnic strength), and take full advantage of opportunities. The underlying motive must always be to satisfy macro group purpose and goals not sectional treatment or nepotism.

d) Conduct wise evaluation of what you are doing, always letting the nation know that you are for all not for a section. Answer the following questions in your evaluation and control process: Am I achieving what I set out to achieve as carefully determined in steps "a" to "c" above? If yes, how must I continue to strengthen the nation toward this kind of lifestyle so others will continue with it after me? If not, what must be done to correct the situation—Do I have the guts to stand against corruptive pressures and do what I know is

right or do I have to succumb to such pressures and continue with the degraded status quo? How does my nation's accomplishment stack up with the rest of the world? Have I made my nation significantly better than when I first took the leadership position? What will history say about you after you are done in your position—a destroyer of Africa or a builder?

e) In all you do, the objective should be to work to build leaders out of your citizens, and desist from accumulating personalized power. African leaders hate to see any other person lead but themselves. Let it not be so with you! Work to train others to be better leaders than you are.

Africa's Current Environmental Situation

Change is coming to Africa, almost forcibly. Africa cannot withstand the current forces coming from her citizens in the Diaspora, the processes of the rest of the world, and the cries of those within Africa's borders. Time has come for Africa to change in many respects. The time of dictatorship and selfishness may gradually come to an end depending on several forces. New Africans are getting increasingly frustrated and ashamed of Africa's condition. They are becoming less afraid of their vicious leaders, and they are beginning to speak out. Change is emerging, and African leaders must manage Africa rightly to avoid destroying the existing good aspects of Africa as they solve the continent's problems. To help understand the coming change, let's summarize Africa's current environmental condition under some standardized categories.

Social/Cultural Environment. Highly family-oriented, paternal authority, elders highly respected and honored, group-orientation, extended family system, modesty of men and women, marriage highly honored with little or no divorce, high belief in deity, large family with males working hard to take care of others (especially the first son), highly respectful children (children respecting each other and adults), African time—coming late to meetings and long greetings before the meeting ever begins, friendship–before-business attitude, long weddings (lasts a week in some instances), long burial ceremonies (lasts a month in some instances), long Christmas holidays, multiple religion, minimal university education, apprenticeship and business start-up, no nursing home for parents, no daycare centers, intolerance of female head of household or out-of-wedlock child-bearing, multiple languages, bribery and corruption/injustice at all levels (leadership, courts, police, banks, customs, etc.), the big-got-the-mic culture (the richer you are, the more likely you have the chance to speak and influence), high nepotism and high IM (Ima Mmadu—an Ibo dialect slang for "no employment unless you are related to the boss or some influential person in the company"), very low intermarriage among different ethnic groups, group-oriented culture, students wearing uniforms in schools, multiple religious affiliation.

Political Environment. Weak leaders/zip-thru leaders (Some Africans contend that the CIA's code number for African leaders is "Zip-Thru," meaning that it is very easy for them to read the minds and to go through the heads of African leaders), ethnicity and ethnic loyalty (instead of allegiance to the nation), constant religious troubles (Islam versus whoever), government struggles and wars (assassinations and instability of governments), no respect for human rights, autocracy and dictatorship, cover-up tradition, no free speech or press, very poor support for one another, weak OAU (Organization for Africa Unity), unfair elections and manipulation of ballot

boxes, injustice by the courts (judgment is usually for the one that gives most bribe to the judge), weak security and corrupt police force, uneducated and wealthy leaders, citizens generally unaware of political impact of their votes (generally enticed by immediate money—bribery—received from the politician), ruling by intimidation, embezzlements without accountability/punishment, general fear of their leaders by the masses.

Economic Environment. Generally very poor economy in terms of GNP/capita and other economic indicators, poor labor condition (unhealthy working environment, workers usually left to tend to themselves if injured), poor labor market (generally unskilled and uneducated), centralized market place, small-small business atmosphere (over 90 percent of businesses are started with or have total assets of about $1,000 compared to the USA's average small business which can account for over $20,000), subsistence economy/reliance on farmland, a noncompetitive economy (mainly imports rather than exports), an agricultural economy, poor support of invention and innovation.

Technological Environment. Poor process of manufacturing (converting inputs to outputs)—causing Africa to ship almost all of her raw materials to other nations and end up buying them back in a different way, few computers (lag all other continents), few technical education, manual farming environment (a family can farm two acres with hand hoes not tractors—time consuming), very poor infrastructures (generally poor road condition, telephone system, electricity, and health maintenance technologies).

Contingency Factors of Change

Most of the facets of the African environment described above will change drastically within the next 20 years. Just like a business organization that must operate to survive in its environment, Africa cannot help but to either go into extinction or operate to survive in the world environment of which she is a part. As shown in Figure 1 earlier, the forces of change are coming from within and outside Africa's borders, which the continent cannot ignore any longer.   The forces of change are America's television and culture, America and the United Nations, globalization challenge, computers and the internet, women's movement, Islamic terrorism, the EU and the Euro, and the Africa's drained brains/today's Africans. Each of these will be briefly discussed in relation to the changes they will bring to African environment and leadership as presented above.

Effects of America's Television and Culture

Africa's airway is wide open to the invasion of all kinds of American movies and television shows, feeding millions of Africans daily. African homes are usually very free of promiscuities and nudities; children are raised without invasions of the TV culture—American style. This is about to change on a massive scale. Africans, on a continuous basis, can view at will the nuances of American culture and the events happening all over the world. Positive impacts of this force includes the exposure of Africans to political processes in other nations, how other nations' citizens protest their governments if the if the later is not doing right, the essence and need for free speech and individual freedom, how people should have rights and not be intimidated, how the economy and political systems can be managed for effectiveness, etc. These benefits have helped to motivate Africans to begin to resist their governments and to fight for their God-

ordained rights. The change, therefore, is toward a new democratic Africa where leaders respect general opinions or face mass riots and removal from office, a better management of African political and economic systems as significant number Africans learn from developed nations like the USA, United Kingdom, Japan, etc. Major costs, which are already affecting some parts of Africa, will be the deterioration of African homes and marriages, breeding of wounded children, and the wounding of society morals as the masses consume the values, beliefs, and attitudes of the single-parent, divorce, violent, and sex-filled horrors of the American television and culture, which mainstream Africans usually hate.

Effects of America and the UN's Political Presence

The presence of America, in particular, and the United Nations serve as brakes to the potential atrocities that most African leaders have intended to commit. If they had committed 1000 useless killings or corrupt practices, what they had intended to do is much more than a thousand. The scrutiny and demands of the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank are coming to bear stronger and stronger on helping to cub corruption in Africa (Corey, 2002). The watchful eyes of the American commitment and the UN laws are limiting majority of African selfish and greedy leaders from getting worse. This force will create future leaders of Africa that will abide by the rules of law and must strive to minimize human rights abuses. This means that the common African citizens of the future will have a more active voice in handling the affairs of respective African nations usually reserved for the big tugs and their riches.

Many Nigerians, for instance, are less afraid of their murderous and mob-style leaders because they know that at least the United States of America will respond to help if they get in trouble of human rights abuse. For instance, they recently gathered the nerve to stop the former, and one of the most wicked, Presidents of Nigeria, General Ibrahim Babangida, from running for office because of his previous governance problems (Oguhebe, 1999). Without the watchful eyes of America and the UN, this man and his followers must certainly intimidate Nigerians once again. Even now, in Nigeria, he is still very highly feared not respected. However, this type of fear will continue to minimize as Nigerians and Africans learn to stand their rightful grounds as they continue to be emboldened by the American education and the UN laws. Africans of the future will learn to critique the actions or achievements of their Presidents, which is a major ingredient in improving a nation's operating mechanism (evaluation and control in Figure 1). No critique, no improvement. Africa of today lacks this quality because of the intimidation and wicked qualities of their leaders.

Effects of Globalization

Globalization is a term used to describe the recent moves of multimillion-dollar companies into any part of the world with ease, as the G-8 nations and the World trade Organization work to remove trade barriers among nations. Globalization will bring serious changes to Africa (Mayer, 2001; Yusuf, 2001). Globalization comes in with big companies and high technology, occupying most of the society's space. For families to survive in such an environment, they have to structure to fit the changing system.

African homes must now learn to send their children to universities and to learn the skills needed by globalization. It is no longer going to start a business through apprenticeship or marrying too many wives and having many children for help in the farm, but it is going to school and obtaining higher degrees to meet the demands of big foreign businesses. It is also going into mechanized farming as most people go to schools and get jobs with global companies. There will be significant advance in technology brought in by foreign companies and disseminated to the average African. This advance will certainly promote further development in Africa.

As described above, globalization may sound as a big benefit to African nations. It will bring serious economic and social problems for the continent (Stiglitz, 2002; Xinhua News, 2002; Doan, 2000). African nations will be stripped of their power to limit huge western businesses from coming in and destroying infant African firms or industries. The average African firms and entrepreneurs will lose every motivation to compete with foreign companies and entrepreneurs who will come into Africa with huge capital. Over 90 percent of current African businesses are small-small businesses; the average capital is between $1000 and $2000, and millions of Africans are able to be happy and to feed their families and extended families. Globalization will wipe out these tiny ventures and centralized African markets. How can millions of businesses with average trading space of 70 square feet compete with Wal-mart who imposes with over 200,000 square feet and their super-duper storage and buying power? Almost all Africans will be marginalized a lot worse than now, and their pride will almost be gone as western companies, with their economic power, push them against the walls. Poverty and lack of self-worth are very likely to increase with time. One Wal-mart may employ about 200 people. But over 50,000 small firms that one Wal-mart will destroy in Africa can boast of employing over 100,000 people. Do the rest of the math.

Effects of Computers and the Internet

No doubt, the introduction of computers and the internet will help to change Africa. A new computer manufacturing company was launched in Nigeria in 1999. African environment will become more technologically oriented as numerous computer applications invade the African environment, which was usually the privilege of many other nations. Recent observation in 1999 showed a massive push by Nigerians toward embracing computer knowledge and applications. This means improvements in African education, production processes, and innovation.

Through the internet, Africans can very easily learn the processes of doing things (e.g. solving problems) as employed by other nations and companies and the consequences of various behaviors as nations and individuals report on the web. In fact, the Internet thoroughly opens Africa to the rest of the world and vise versa. Interactive learning will increase, and Africans will certainly move further toward development than underdevelopment. African nations will become more and more like America and the western world, politically and socially. However, many Africans will regret the promiscuities or sexual immoralities, which are exported by the Internet, and their various consequences.

Effects of Women's Movement

Jane Fonda of the United States was once reported of visiting Nigeria and talking to the Nigerian women on how to stand on their own. This is Jane Fonda who divorced her husband, Ted Turner, for the simple reason that she just wants to exercise freedom. American television and some aspects of the western women movement will cause millions of Africa's women to be more like the west and the Americans. It means that they will go to school and gain education, keep jobs, make a lot of money, and have independent life; these are good aspects. The negative aspect is that some side of the movement breed issues that destroy godly homes (cherished by Africans) as everyone goes out making money and no one raises the children. The result will be what now exists in the United States—divorce rate going up to the roof, single-parent (mostly female-headed) homes, completely messed-up children and adults, violent crimes, immoralities of all kinds, and destruction of manhood, etc.

Effects of Islamic Terrorism

Africa, over the years, have been experiencing attacks and killings by Islamic terrorists. Nigerian environment has seen Christian Ministers and Christians murdered in the northern part of the country for one reason or the other. Sudanese Christians are almost under siege. If Islamic terrorism is not curbed, if the rest of the world is subdued by Islamic terrors, then one must expect many Africans to join Islam for the sake of saving their lives as many Africans are doing now (Oguhebe, 1998). In other words, Islamic growth and its consequences (positive and negative) will be expected in Africa if the current terrorist battle is not won. It is critical that Islamic terrorism to stop or Africa will face an upsurge in Islamic membership in order to avoid the iron fists of the jihadists. People can join any religion, but Islamic terrorists employ force in their campaigns for world Islamic evangelism.

Effects of the EU and the Euro

The European Union (EU) has certainly grown in size that it is challenging the United States in trade area. The Euro, the newly adopted monetary unit of the union, is now almost equal to the dollar (BBC News, 2002). Like the dollar, it is now being used by some nations as a central reserve asset, challenging the dollar as the only safe-haven currency. Africans, which are wholesomely addicted and sold-out to the US dollar, now have an emerging alternative. This means that some African nations and individuals will divide their allegiance between the EU and the United States, thereby minimizing the US influence on Africa. Wealthy Africans may be tempted to now move toward investing more in Europe than they usually do since the distinctive competency in safe-haven status usually accorded to the USA is being reduced (see Oguhebe, 2003 for thorough analysis). More African nations may decide to peg their currencies to the Euro instead of the US dollar.

Effects of Drained Brains/Today's Africans and the Force of Shame

Educated Africans in the western world are learning all they can, and their learning is no longer independent of what they can do to better Africa. As they see other nations' citizens struggle to better their countries, the selfish value system that these Africans possess is beginning to wear

away. They now hate to think just for themselves and their immediate families and extended families; they are thinking for Africa as a whole. Many Africans in the Diaspora are very ashamed of how other nations struggle to help Africa while they themselves do nothing. Through certain organized efforts of themselves, some of these Africans are beginning to contribute their resources toward helping any African nation in need (African Christian Fellowship USA—1990-2003). Educated Africans within African borders are also beginning to cry out better than before against the evils of their governments even when they are being slaughtered by these dictators. This is a major force of change, strongly indicating that the end of corruption and selfish leadership (leadership that ignores the governed) is coming to Africa. In other words, life will be better for Africans of the future, ceteris paribus.

Implication for Strategic Management

Expatriate firms should monitor these forces of change as they impact Africa. Business firms that are proactive will be the first to cease the moments and position to profit from the expected changes. Management and marketing styles will change. As women become more liberated in Africa to fully join the corporate world, companies should not hold back to treat these women with the same diversity strategies that are currently applied to American female employees. It means that the African women should be able to earn as much as men, become heads of departments, and run corporations. Contrary behavior will stimulate resentment and problem in the cohesiveness of the system. Corporate strategies with respect to time off for pregnancy, single-parent provisions, and marketing strategies targeting independent and divorced men and women must be in place. All the social problems that affect America today will have to taken into consideration as Africa tends toward resembling the face of America in the new millennium.

Companies must be wiser as they deal with African governments, which will become wiser, being led, not by the soldiers and the mostly uneducated mass who happened to have money or guns, but by well-educated people who understand world affairs and the interactive impacts of world contingency forces on Africa's well being. Africans are getting wiser and ready to fight for themselves and not to be deceived into accepting bribery for personal gains. They will therefore formulate laws that that must be vigorously implemented toward achieving African nations objectives. Companies that identify such objectives and their accompanying strategies will be better able to adapt to the African environment of tomorrow. We will expect Africa's environment to have better infrastructures to support expatriated businesses. Water, telephone systems, roads, and electric power will not be as deplorable as they are today. In general, companies should be ready to make significant changes in their planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling processes if they are to be effective in tomorrow's Africa.

The marketing ingredients of product, price, promotion, and distribution will change. For instance, advertising strategies will change as Africans move from group-oriented culture to a more individualism-dimensioned American culture. Business ads can be directed not to families as it is currently done, but also to individual members of the society—single women, single parents, divorcees, children, etc. Today in Africa, an ad for children's items should be directed to parents for it to be effective. However, if in the future Africans fail to control their children (but let the children control the homes as it is in most American homes today), companies should plan to direct ads directly to African children of the future. Fast-food restaurants, which have not been

able to make it in today's Africa can get ready for tomorrow as many both husbands and wives take to work in Africa of tomorrow. Distribution strategies will change as better roads, communication systems, and electric supply get better and better and more widely dispersed in African communities.

Conclusion at the Crossroads

Africa is now truly at the crossroads. She must either change and change well or change and become worse. The continent must change. Positive changes will be toward eradication of dictatorship and corrupt leadership styles as millions of Africans become influenced by the massive waves of American and western education, challenging governments to produce. This means that the economic and the technological atmosphere and poverty level will experience favorable change. Africans are tired of being dependent on other nations, and always being at the receiving end. Educated Africans, especially those in the Diaspora, are very ashamed of the condition of the continent and breeds of selfishness that have left Africa in the dark since civilization. They are ready to take over and to actually commit their lives to seeing that Africa will be a force in the new millennium. As the U.S. Trade Representative, Robert B. Zoelick, noticed, there is a new generation of leaders rising up across Africa, ready to take up the challenges facing the continent in order to come to par with the rest of the world (Corey, 2002). They are hungry and smart. Zoelick stated:

> The new mindset of African leaders gives the United States a wonderful opportunity to link into that new generation, to gain a sense of how they want to transform their countries and to see how we can help. ..I meet a lot of Africans now that sound very different than the Africans of ten years ago, and they see their goal as being different from the post colonial generation which was focused on forming independent nations and fighting apartheid in South Africa (Corey, 2002).

With time, poverty and corruption, as they are currently reported in Africa, will be highly minimized. The forces of change, as enumerated earlier, are actively at work. Unfortunately, some of the changes may resemble the American and western social culture with their family destructions and sexual promiscuities, which Africans will certainly hate to have. Most Africans in the United States hated the lifestyle and seriously regret getting their families associated with America (Oguhebe, 2003). The money is good, but they generally believe that the demolition of family values, marital life, and breeding of immoral children/adults have destroyed their lives. Like most Muslims, Africans dislike the American culture for this reason.

It is therefore left to the emerging African leaders to carefully use the strategic model of Figure 1 to scrutinize and operate to the benefit of Africans, taking the best from the outside world and leaving the rest alone. They must stand intolerantly tough against anybody forcing them to accept anything that will negatively affect their Africa-specific plans, but must also be wise to welcome good counsels.

If African leaders follow the strategic model carefully, the corruptive and selfish behaviors that have infested African governance over the years will be significantly minimized, and the forces of change described above can be well managed to tap their benefits while strictly dealing with the negative aspects associated with them. Every effort must be applied to eradicate any aspect of any force, which will bring a dent to the strong family values, which are usually associated with the African environment. When the family is ruined, the nation is ruined, and the continent will be in hellish history.

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