COVID-19 CRISES AND A SEARCH FOR AFROCENTRIC LEADERSHIP IN AFRICA: USING RELIGIOUS VALUES TO CHECKMATE HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

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Abstract

The common cry from the African Continent is that of poor governance rooted in gross abuse of human rights. Good governance and religious values are fundamental factors for development and sustainability in the quest for a prosperous Nation such as Africa. The primary purpose of this paper is to underscore the importance of religious values in promoting good governance and peace in this age of COVID- 19, as well as to checkmate human rights abuses. The paper argues that African and religious values are prerequisites to good governance and often used to checkmate bad governance. It suggests that human rights abuses; and violence; have come about largely as a result of frequent leadership change, lack of African ideology, policy reversal and weak institutional patterns. The study adopts systematic and descriptive methodological approach of enquiry in presenting a framework for the study. To achieve the aim of this study, qualitative data were generated and collected from published and unpublished literature and analyzed accordingly. Using structural conflict theories the researcher argues for how it affects religion and COVID- 19 crises that leads to the use of religious values to checkmate the polity (Government). The paper also examines the nexus between corona virus pandemic lockdown; violations of human rights and religious values. Hence, the decline in African moral and religious values during the periods of the lockdown and this weakened the system of governance. The paper lays emphasis on COVID- 19 crises, religious values, governance and abuse of human rights in some selected African countries. The paper observes that for African countries to overcome the COVID- 19 crises; Afrocentric leadership governance is key, proper utilization of the religious values in the Country. The paper concludes that religious values is not the only factor to use to checkmate human rights abuses and only resources that have maximum empathy for the people can be relevant to the qualitative movement of African countries from COVID- 19 crises.

Keywords: COVID- 19 Crises, Afrocentric leadership, Religious Values, Fundamental Human Rights

Introduction

The paper is a critical examination of the nexus between corona virus pandemic lockdown; violations of human rights and religious values. Indeed, the common cry from the African Continent is that of poor governance rooted in gross abuse of fundamental human rights. African and religious values are fundamental factors for development and sustainability in the quest for a prosperous Nation such as Africa. The primary purpose of this paper is to underscore the importance of religious values in promoting good governance and peace in this age of COVID-19, as well as to checkmate human rights abuses. Using a systematic and descriptive methodological approach of enquiry in presenting a framework for the study and to achieve the aim of this study, qualitative data were generated and collected from published and unpublished literature and analyzed accordingly. Using structural conflict theories the researcher argues for how it affects religion and COVID- 19 crises that leads to the use of religious values to checkmate the polity (Government). The paper argues that Afrocentric leadership and religious values are prerequisites to good governance and often used to checkmate bad governance. It suggests that human rights abuses; and violence; have come about largely as a result of bad governance, crises and frequent leadership change, lack of African ideology, policy reversal and weak institutional patterns.

Governance is a people to people movement. It is a vibrant interaction between people, between structures, processes that support the exercise of legitimate authority in provision of sound leadership, direction, oversight, and control of an entity in order to ensure that its intention and purpose is achieved, and that there is proper accounting for the conduct of its affairs, the use of its resources, and the results of its actions. Good governance needs "goals" (cooperative endeavor) effort to realize its objectives. It is a proposition. Although there is no 'one size-fit all' solution to governance, however it must be a "Good" endeavor, which means all:- the government, the private sector, chamber of commerce and all stakeholders have to participate, respond and contribute positively. Good governance may be defined as the running of the affairs of government in positive and progressive manners beneficial to the governed, and which delivers the public goods (Gaya, 2006).

Bad governance has implication or effect on the economic growth, increase corruption and sands the wheels of development in our society and the world at large. According to Jespersen (1992), Africa performed well in the early years of its independence, but failed its performance tests Post 1973 as the region is now characterized by low growth rates, declining agricultural production, stagnating manufacturing, rising imports, and rapidly expanding external debts. The region has had many coups, civil unrests, violations of fundamental human rights, ethnic violence; and widespread bureaucratic corruption alongside administrative inefficiency, and institutional ineptitude or outright failure. Kuka (2018) analyzed this and said:

> We have no comprehensive history of the civil war. We have no exhaustive history of the various coups that took place in our country. We have no complete narrative of the history of political formations and culture in Nigeria. Every phase of our recorded national history is a mish-mash of half-truths, stratagems, and incomplete stories, drawn from rumor, allegations, and outright lies fed to the public, as well as of course the fact that each of us sees reality from our diverse perspectives. Indeed, as Napoleon Bonaparte stated, "History is a set of lies agreed upon" (p. 2).

To examine the extent of bad governance, we assume that leaders in some of our countries today still holds discretionary power in their rule and implementation of public policies that they have the ability to extract economic rents. They also control all relevant branches of their economy- civil service, electoral commission, judiciary, media, security forces, and the central bank (Ayittey, 2012). Bad governance results to huge loss in economic growth, records of human rights abuses. And not only that, it also affects the human resources, the human ingenuity and the personality of the citizens. Bad governance and corruption deter investment, waste national and the continent resources and forebode allocation and increase insecurity. The poor suffers most from the consequences of bad governance and violations of fundamental human rights during corona virus lockdowns.

Therefore, paper recommended that we do not know how bad the increasing spread of COVID-19 will be in Nigeria and in Africa in the coming months if not years. But what we do know is that whatever happens to the economy at the height of the crisis and whatever damage is done, would show that we have to use this crisis as an opportunity to reconstruct the country and the continent politically and

its economy. The Afrocentric leadership mentality should be intensifying for critical thinking and positive movement of the African States particularly the African traditional medicine.

Corona Virus Crises (COVID-19)

The friction arising from actual or perceived differences or incompatibilities is said to be conflict. According to Corti et al. (2020) coronavirus (COVID-19) has continued to spread across the world following the first infections in Wuhan city in Hubei province of China in December 2019. As of 9th May 2020, over 280,000 coronavirus-related deaths had been registered globally, with more than 4 million laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases, portraying not only the alarming levels of spread of the virus, but also its severity [World Health Organization, 2020] (P. 1). The World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic on the 11th March 2020. Given its geographical spread, the pandemic is projected to have devastating effects on the global economy. According to the IMF global economic Outlook, the world economy is projected to contract sharply by 3% in 2020 as a result of the pandemic. In the same vein, the Sub-Saharan African economy is expected to contract by 1.6%. UNECA (2020) observed that African businesses are being severely impacted by the COVID-19 crises. Four out of five businesses in Africa are significantly affected by the current COVID-19 crisis, rating the effect as highly severe or severe. The proportion of severity is relatively uniform across the size of enterprises and the sector of business (p. 2).

Brief History of Coronavirus in Africa
Coronavirus, or the disease which it causes 'COVID-19', originated from the Wuhan Province of China in December 2019. It began spreading rapidly in China and to other parts of the world through the movement of people. The spread of COVID-19 affected economic activities in Chin, and in February, the Chinese economy came to a halt. China is a major exporter of commodities to African countries, and therefore, a major economic contraction in China will severely affect businesses and companies in African countries. Many African countries have been affected by coronavirus and the number of confirmed cases have been rising rapidly with a particularly severe situation in South Africa (2,003 cases), Egypt (1,794 cases), Algeria (1,761 cases), Morocco (1,448 cases) and Cameroon (803 cases) on the 11th of April in 2020 (Ozili, 2020).

Again Ozili (2020) argued that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic most of the healthcare infrastructure in African countries had deteriorated. Currently, in Africa, 65% of health care expenses are made from out-of-pocket expenditure compared to Europe where the national and regional authorities are responsible for the health policies and expenditure. During the COVID-19 pandemic, despite the quarantine and other measures adopted to stop the spread of COVID-19 in African countries, the number of infected cases continued to increase significantly. This situation mounted unprecedented pressure on the public health systems in many African countries. Some private hospitals refused to admit infected patients while public hospitals exceeded their capacity. "This pressured the government to build isolation centers in large open fields around the country; notably, football stadiums were converted to isolation centers in countries like Cameroun and Nigeria" (p. 2).

In African countries where good health care systems exist, the governments had to scale-up intensive care units and provide more resources for hospitals and health care systems to control the spread of COVID-19 disease. Some restrictive measures that were imposed to control the spread of the disease include restricting non-essential activities, closing schools and universities, encouraging people to stay home, the lockdown of entire cities, requiring essential businesses to run skeletal operations and employees should work from home. These measures inevitably affected economic activities in African countries, to which economic policy both fiscal and monetary policies had to be used to mitigate the negative effect on the economy. Many African countries deployed the national budget and Central bank's support in developing policies to mitigate the health and economic crises. This means that African countries used broad fiscal policies or large government spending to control the spread of coronavirus and the resulting economic crises that followed. In sum, the responses in African countries were country-specific because African countries were not closely intertwined (Corti., et al 2020).

Structural Conflict Theory
The structural conflict theory has two main sub-orientations; one is the radical structural theory represented by the Marxist dialectical school with exponents like Marx and Engels, V.I Lemn and others. Two is the liberal structuralism represented by Ross (1993), Sear borough (1998) and the famous work John

Galtung (1990) on structural violence. It is also sometime similar transformative theory which addresses the reactions of individuals groups, cultures, institutions and societies to change. It further sees incompatible interest based on competition for resources, which in most cases are assumed to be source, as being responsible for social conflicts (Collier, 2000).

Afrocentricity/Afrocentric Leadership
Afrocentrism: This concept means African centeredness, does not violently confront any person or people but is a resolute attempt to put the records right, it is about placing African people within their own historical framework. It is a demand that the contribution of Africans in all areas of civilization be reflected in world history (Onyewueyi, 1993).

Afrocentricity: "Afrocenticity" is a philosophical perspective associated with the discovery, location and actualizing of African agency within the context of history and culture Asante (2003) by Agency he meant attitude towards action originating in African Experiences. He further stressed that, "Afrocentricity" is a revolutionary idea that tends to study ideas, concepts, events and political and economic processes from a view point of the "black people". It enthrones the centrality of the Africa that is the blacks and values are expressed in highest form of African culture, and it activates consciousness as a functional aspect of any revolutionary approach to phenomenon. Afrocentricity also known as Afrocentrism is seen as a shift in thinking capacity proposed as a constructional adjustment to black disorientation, dementedness and lack of agency. Thus the central question is Afrocentricity is what is natural; resources would occur in relationships, African values, attitude towards environment, Kingship pattern and historical pattern for African people if there had not been intervention of colonialism or slavery (Asante, 2003).

Thus, Afrocentrists tend to assure that all relationships are based on centres and margins, and this then means that until black people begin to see themselves as centred (Superior and significant), it is then they will see themselves as agents, actors, manufacturers and participators, rather than marginal (Molefi, 1999).

> It is impossible to discuss Afrocentricity without dealing with Eurocentrism, it acknowledges eurocentrism only as one voice among the other voice not as a Universal perspective in understanding reality. And that is why Asante,

a radical Afrocentist voiced his fulfillment "African people for 300 years have lived on the intellectual terms of European. The African perspective has finally come to dinner", accordingly he (Molefe Asante) sees Eurocentrism as a complete dislocation, self-alienation, disorientation and misinformation of the Afroamericans (p. 42).

However, the European colonialist experiences left Africa with two main experiences, namely the denial of African identity and the imposition of Western thought and cultural realities and perspectives, what is today referred to as colonial mentality away even in leadership, and Africans took to denying and rejecting their intellectual and cultural prowess, thus those who got trapped in Europe and American during slave trade were constantly made to develop low-self Esteem (Chukwuokolo, 2010).

Africaness: "We are not Africans because we are born in Africa; we are Africans because Africa is born in us". This was a statement by Chester Higgins Jnr (2011), a pan-Africanist advocating for the reconstruction of the indigenous African heritage. "Africaness" is a concept with no definite definition. According to Nkrumah (2005), he posited that African communities are increasingly being dismembered by the everyday practices of Euro colonial and Eurocentric institutions that require the derailing of Africa from its indigenous African culture and customs, social values and religious values. These statements are indicative of the nature of the pre-existing African society and the paradigm shift infused by colonialism, and the implication of colonialism viz-a-viz neo-colonialism on Africa. Rodney (1972), affirmed that:

> "How Europe Underdeveloped Africa" is a concept that explains the typical African representations (which includes socio-cultural, economic, political configurations and influenced African and religious values) that depicts the typical African society in its traditional state before colonialism. He argued that Africa had its own suitable societal frameworks (Africaness) which was suitable for Africa's development in contrast to the exploitative mechanisms introduced to the Africa's domain by Europe, which eroded the "Africaness" of Africa, thus submerging Africa into perpetual impoverishment (p. 22).

Eurocentrism: Is a set of beliefs that places Europe at the centre and relegating all other ways of thinking or abilities to the periphery position by setting standards in which reality can be tested (Shohat and Stam, 1994).

General Characteristics of Afrocentricity as Well as the Practical Application of the Field- By Asante Molefi (1999)
There are **five** general characteristics of the Afrocentric method:
1. The Afrocentric method considers that no phenomena can be apprehended adequately without locating it first. Phenomena must be studied and analyzed in relationship to psychological time and space. This is the only way to investigate the complex inter-relationships of science and art, design and execution, creation and maintenance, generation and tradition, and other area's passed by theory.
2. Afrocentric method considers phenomena to be diverse, dynamic and in motion and therefore it is necessary for a person to adequately note and record the location of the phenomena even in the mist of fluctuations.
3. Afrocentric method is a form of cultural criticism that examines etymological uses of words and terms in order to know the source of an author's location. This allows us to intersect idea's with actions and actions with idea's on the basis of what is prerogative and ineffective and what is creative and transformative at the Political and economic levels.
4. The Afrocentric method seeks to uncover the mask behind the rhetoric of powers, privileges and position in order to establish how principal myths create place.
5. Afrocentric methods locates the imaginative structure of a system of economics, bureau of politics, policy of government, expression of cultural form of the attitude, direction and language of the phenomenon. This could be text, institution, personality, interaction or event.

Leadership
The concept of leadership is conceptualized in education to mean the use of power, authority and influence in the process of managing human and material resources at work in order to produce result. In other words, leadership is about the use of strategies with the view to arrange human, material and financial resources to achieve organizational goals. Again, in education a leader is expected to utilize manpower and material resources in school to achieve the school objectives (Agada, 2018).

The Practice of Religious Values

The concept or term "value" is exposed in different life situations as significant in fulfilling our mental, emotional, spiritual or practical requirement. It may also simply be described as that which we find good or meaningful. It is very common to comment on the value of things that one prefers or likes and for which one may make conscious effort to acquire. But as human beings we are particularly struck by the values which we discerned in human relationships or in men's actions and behavior.

> Therefore, 'value' is a concept which is widely applied in man's life. In view of the variety and diversity of human life, the concept cannot be easily explained. Therefore, religious values reflects the beliefs, practices and frameworks which a community or religious adherent partakes in. Most of these values originated sacred scriptures of each respective religion or faith (Roubickez, as cited in Dajwan, 2018, 12).

Values are precepts, beliefs, moral and spiritual principles and standard criteria of behavior/conduct which determine how people of a society, nation or state think and relate with one another. Examples are honesty, contentment, faithfulness, justices, tolerance, integrity, hard work, perseverance, and so on. The most important to remember is that "values are priceless, while valuables are priced" (E.g. of priced valuables are clothes, laptops and computers, houses, lands etc). In today's fast paced competitive world, man seems to have compromised on his values, integrity and character, in a bid to earn, use and possess more and more of material wealth, as a result, we see rampant corruption, unlawful activities, inhuman behavior and immoral consumption, which is slowly breaking the very structure of our society, nation and the world (Dajwan, 2018).

Values are what a person or group of persons consider worth doing in order to make life worth living and pleasant. It is a standard or quality of way of living considered to be worthwhile by a person or a group of persons by which he or they judge what is good and worth doing. Roy puts it (as cited in Yamsat, 2012) "A value is a belief, a mission or a philosophy that is meaningful" to a person or a people. Thus, what we take as of value to us as individuals or as a group affects our work, attitude, our relational attitude to others, those in leadership positions or those not in leadership positions. According to Yamsat (2012) said,

"A value expresses the significance of things-great or small which man ascribes to matters related to a particular activity or experience or to his life in general and thus provides him with guidance for his behavior" (p. 10).

The Practice of Compassion and Love (Assessment of the Good Samaritan Luke 10:30-37)

African masses may not be literally lying as victims of armed robbery on the road to Jericho, but many of them are lying critically injured by COVID 19 crises, bad governance, violations of fundamental human rights with social injustice on the roads of socio-economic and political life. This paper argues that for just peace to return in this African State, compassionate measures and love must be taken by the authorities concerned to radically address issues concerning those who are marginalized, rights violated, idle, and hungry, thereby feeding terrorists with manpower. If the authorities concerned will engage the idle hands that roam our streets and bring those on the margins of the society to the center through practical compassion and love, terrorists will do so by employing such idle hands to destroy our peace through human rights abuse (Pokol, as cited in Dajwan, 2020).

Pokol's affirm (as cited in Dajwan, 2020), one of the root causes of human rights abuse and social injustice in Nigeria is lack of compassion because some people are taking more than their share, while the majority is asked to perpetually beg in order to survive. He further stressed that "Poverty is the worst violence" quoting from the words of Mahatma Ghandhi; and no almighty religio-political authority can deny its citizens basic needs and expects to have peace amidst corona virus pandemic. At least, it cannot deny them violence (corona virus experience) because violence or crisis is the only thing that everyone can access without hindrance. This paper also argues that all the security camouflaging as "peace-keepers" while worsening the security situation in the Nations through human rights violation in trying enforcement of COVID 19 lockdowns. Like in Nigeria they security tax forces should return to the barracks and allow Nigerian citizens sort out their disagreements through amicable practical compassion and the use of other religious values like love and forgiveness. This is often because the presence of the military tax force in the streets of Nigeria has worsened security challenges in the country especially collecting brides during the COVID 19 experience. According to Pokol (2019), how would one explain situations where

citizens are attacked, human rights destroyed and killed in military uniforms while they should serve as protectors? It appears like some of them have turned into mercenaries taking sides instead of being neutral agents of peace promoters particularly during the pic of the pandemic. African States the Nigerian experience, citizens can no longer rely on the presence of military personnel for security, protection and peace because they are no longer able to differentiate real military officers from fake ones since the same uniforms are being used to kill citizens (p. 444). 1Corinthians 13:3-13 (cf. John 13:1-20) Paul instructs on the practice of love.

The Practice of Integrity, Respect for Life against Violations of Human Life: We, as human beings, do not live alone; we live in groups or societies. We all have our own rights and duties in the society in which we live. The enjoyment of our rights may be denied or violated of other people's rights. We should therefore be careful and imbibe the values of tolerance or patient so that we do not deny anybody his rights. We should show concern for other people's rights so as to live peacefully in the context of pluralistic society as one community. Therefore, we intensify respect for life, polite and courteous in our behavior. Being polite and courteous shows our regard or respect for others rights Friday (Tokden, as cited in Dajwan, 2018).

Religious freedom a myth or reality: The Nigerian Experience

Let's dispense with a misconception: the Nigerian constitution guarantees freedom of worship as a basic right of citizens. Similarly, there is no specific institutionalized hindrance or barrier to the right to worship in any part of the Country that can be defined as a genuine barrier to freedom of worship. The issue therefore is not to attempt to located problems relating to the exercise of freedom of worship outside the laws of the land. Disputes over freedom of worship have basically not been about what the law provides or fails to provide but rather on practice! Freedoms of thought, conscience and religion or belief, including the rights to propagate, practice and teach are guaranteed. Citizens are protected from being compelled to receive religious instruction or to partake in religious ceremonies other than those to which they profess or subscribe.

> What this suggests is that disputes over the application of the provisions on
> freedom of worship, to the extent that they exist in that form, are social and

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political, not legal. In a nation with multiple religious and social categories which are substantially shaped by faith, it is important to ask a question: are our problems with co-existence of different faith failures of the law to protect the exercise of freedom of worship, or are they symptoms of deeper social problems which are predicated on political competition for resources and power? (Ekwunife, as cited in Dajwan, 2018).

It will be misleading to assume, however, that flashpoint do not exist in relations between major religious groups in a manner which will suggest that the right to freedom of worship has not been abridged. When faith boundaries converge around other issues which encourage competition for political power, control and accumulation and allocation of economic resources, faiths of competing groups are counted among victors or losers. Groups which prevail or predominate in particular geo-political formations often define parameters for allocation of resources and conduct in such a manner that minorities feel that their faith, among others, are being punished by the majority. It is often the failure of the state to mediate relations between groups identified by specific social demographics such as faith lead to stresses and conflict (Kanu, 2017).

There are also inevitable and endemic sources of friction which are part of the fabric of a multi-cultural and multi-religious nation. Our constitution is built outside a religious context, and specifically demands that the state shall not adopt a religion. It operates on the basis that Nigeria is a multi-religious nation, and on the basis of multiplicity of legal systems which have their roots in western, Islamic and traditional values. Conflicts arise around the degree to which the application of a type of legal system impacts on others, and the manner citizen's interprets their interests in changes in the dynamics of multiple legal systems. When many states in the North expanded the scope of Sharia, many Muslims welcomed it, and Christian groups worried over its likely impact over their lives. Significantly, not a single Christian has been deprived of his right to his faith since then, and it is arguable whether Muslims in the affected states became better Muslims as a result of the changes. More significantly, hundreds of lives were lost in riots and inter-religious conflicts because elites in both religions portrayed the development in terms of major achievements or setbacks for their respective faith (Kanu, 2016).

The Concept of Human Right Abuse: Conceptual Review

According to Andrew and Scott (2001), the movement towards greater corporate social responsibility is now entering a phase where the parameters of this responsibility are being defined. In the field of human rights, there are growing expectations that corporations should do everything in their power to promote universal human rights standards, even in conflict situations where governance structures have broken down leading to often a times violent structural conflicts (p. 339).

Ruwa (2001) affirm that the Ten Commandments are the basis of the moral, civil and religious laws that human persons live by (Ex 34; Jn 13:13-34; 15:14-17). The human race is one. The fact of its oneness is not altered by secondary differences in the various families that compose the human race. The whole human race has the same origin, the same nature, the same basic rights and duties and the same destiny {Heaven or Hell}. The whole humankind is united by the common fatherhood of God and by a common brotherhood of Christ.

According to Ruwa (2001), one of the primary virtues of every human person is to exercise the virtue of justice, which means respect for the rights of others. The Church emphasizes that biblical teachings on human rights are an important aspect of the proclamation of the Gospel in ensuring that justice is triumphant (Mtt 12:20) close reference is (Mtt 7:12). As the prophet Isaiah puts it, "I love justice and hate oppression and crime" (Is 61:8). This is because the human person possesses rights that are conferred to them by God (p. 21).

Human rights are freedoms established by custom or international agreement that impose standards of conduct on all nations. Human rights are distinct from civil liberties, which are freedom established by law of a particular state and applied by that state in its own jurisdiction. The concept of human rights include the right to personal liberty and due process of law; freedom of thought; freedom of expression; freedom of religion; freedom of organization and movement to freedom from discrimination on the basis of race, religion, age, language, sex, to basic education; to employment, and to possession of property. Human rights laws have been defined by international conventions by treaties, and organizations particularly, the United Nation. These laws prohibit practices such as torture, slavery, summary execution without trial, and arbitrary detention or exile. Human rights are a right which is believed to belong to every person. They are inherent, fundamental human rights. Human rights are about equality, justice

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leading to development as a result of social transformation and it is an inheritance (Churchill, as cited in Theresa, 2007).

The abuse of human rights refers to the maltreatment or pervasion of the fundamental human rights as enshrined in article 1 to 5 of the United Nations charter. Human rights advocates agreed that, sixty years after its issue, the universal declaration of human right is still more of a dream than reality that is to say it is still a myth. Violation/human right abuse exists in every part of the world. For instance, the amnesty international 2009 world report and other sources has showed that individuals are being tortured or abused in at least 81 countries, face unfair trials in at least 54 countries and restricted in their freedom of expression in at least 77counries. Not only that, but women and children in particular are marginalized in numerous ways, the press not free in many countries and dissenters (Gideon, 2015).

The Dilemma of Bad Governance and Human Rights Abuses in Africa

The post-independence Africa, we assumed that leaders in some of the African countries hold discretionary power in their design and implementation of public policies and those they have the ability to extract economic rents. Additionally, they control all relevant branches of their economy – civil service; electoral commission, judiciary, media, security forces, and central bank (Ayittey, 2012). However, as soon as these countries gained independence post 1960s and 1970s, the struggle for political leadership and the desires to retain power for life became the overriding objectives of many African leaders. In post-independent Africa, it appears as if Africa reached its threshold in the 1960s when it replaced the European colonialists with black neocolonialists that were more corrupt, despotic and they disregarded or discarded the checks and balances which existed during the colonial period (Ayittey, 2012).

According to Calderisi (2006), the persistent problems of inept leadership, institutional failure, and pandemic (e.g handling of corona virus resources for its fight in Africa) corruption in Africa, these problems intensified with the incursion of several thuggish dictatorial leaders upon gaining independence. In his words, "the simplest way to explain Africa's predicament is that it has known good government" and that "no other continent has experienced such prolonged dictatorship and human rights abuse (p. 23)."

Leadership and Institutional Failure in Africa: The Foundation of Human Rights Abuse

Meredith (2006) opines that the first generation of African nationalist leaders also enjoyed great prestige and high honor. These include Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah (1957-1966), Egypt's Abdel Nasser (1956-1970), Senegal's Leopold Senghor (1960-1980), Cote d'voire's Houphouet-Boigny (1960-1993), Guinea's SekouToure (1958-1984), Mali's Modibo Keita (1960-1968), Togo's Sylvanus Olympio (1958-1963), Kenya's Jomo Kenyatta (1963-1978), Tanzania's Julius Nyerere (1961-1985), Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda (1964-1991), and Malawi's Hastings Banda (1963-1994).

African leaders often acted in contempt of constitutional rules and agreements they had sworn to uphold to enhance their own power. Constitutions were either amended or rewritten or simply ignored." These leaders succeeded in removing or ignoring the checks and balances, that existed pre-independence, because they preferred to rule not through constitutions or through state institutions like parliament but by exercising vast systems of patronage; and in the process, they wielded enormous power and authority which allowed them to subjugate all relevant institutions and prevent the necessary checks and balances common to good governance .As a result of their autocratic leadership, they helped lay the unstable foundation of bad governance and corruption felt in their economies. Today, corruption remains unabated in Africa because of its weak or failed institutions cannot control the excesses of their dictators. Arguably, one can consider Africa as a continent built on an unstable foundation of bad governance and pandemic corruption (Meredith, 2006).

Dictatorship and Human Rights abuses

Dictatorship whether as in one man ruling for decades to be replaced by another man who is either a party loyal who could keep up the works of the former strong man. The real damage dictatorship governance could and has done to people is make them depend on the idea, one man, one family, or on political party (Her-Lao, 2011). Human rights abuses, particularly mass atrocity crimes, have been occurring in various intensities in Africa over a long period. Furthermore, these abuses and crimes have been occurring violently and have escalated in recent times. For example, gross human rights abuses and mass atrocity crimes have been committed repeatedly in most African countries include: torture; official impunity; rape; female genital mutilation; child abuse; trafficking in persons; use and

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recruitment of children in militias and other fighting forces; and unlawful killings of non-combatant civilians and sometimes combatants especially in Nigeria by Boko Haram, including aid workers and civil society activists (Oluwole, and Nicole, n.d).

Gideon (2015) in a submission said, various forms of human rights abuses and mass atrocity crimes have been committed in numerous African states, ranging from genocide and crimes against humanity to war crimes. Most notable of these crimes have been unlawful killings of civilians and aid workers (the targeting of humanitarian workers seems to be a new tendency of parties involved in conflict), the use and forceful recruitment of child soldiers, sexual violence against women and children.

General Assessment of Leadership: Implications of Bad Governance and Human Rights Abuse Durin Lockdowns in Some Selected African States

According to Ozili (2020), the corona virus pandemic which has affected the global economy has also affected the Africa economy through spillovers to African countries. Many African countries has taken bold quarantine and lockdown measures which are not free from violations of human rights to control the spread of COVID-19 although this has come at a cost such as the collapse of health systems and a painful economic crisis or recession (p. 1). Therefore, the paper briefly examines some of the implications in some selected African countries as follows:

Nigeria: The implications of bad governance in the Nigerian experiences are that of corruption, abuse of human rights because some are threatened not to vote their candidate, mismanagement of resources, manipulation of the electoral process and not accountable and transparent. The Nigerian Government also needs to do more in the area of handling the crisis of Fulani herdsmen and Farmers because even in lockdowns there are issues of attacks. This is because it appears as if government has not given enough attention to this crisis. The fact that agricultural activities have increased in the country calls for strategies to check the deadly relationship causing violations of human rights that has come to exist between the Fulani and the Farmers (Pokol, 2019). Some women and girls were being abuse during the lockdowns either by their Landlords because they are not able to pay house rent and to have food on their tables. A 100 level student of the University of Jos Plateau state was killed by military a personnel who was trying to enforce COVID-19 lockdown rule.

According to Ozili (2020), the Nigerian experienced of COVID-19 is that of financial crisis. The economic downturn in Nigeria was triggered by a combination of declining oil price and spillovers from the COVID-19 outbreak, which not only led to a fall in the demand for oil products but also stopped economic activities from taking place when social distancing policies were enforced. The government responded to the crisis by providing financial assistance to possesses, not to households that were affected by the outbreak. The monetary authority adopted accommodative monetary policies and offered a targeted 3.5 trillion loan support to some sectors. These efforts should have prevented the economic crisis from occurring but it didn't. Economic agents refused to engage in economic activities for fear of contracting the COVID-19 disease that was spreading very fast at the time. The paper discovered that the COVID-19 spillovers to Nigeria and the structural weakness in Nigeria's infrastructure that helped bring on the current economic crisis (p. 2). The great challenge is how can a government lockdown her citizens without providing for her? Bauchi State Governor said "I will not enforce lockdown to my citizens because my religion suggests as you lockdown a person in the house give him/her food".

Therefore, the paper also discovered that before the COVID-19 outbreak, there were major social problems in Nigeria which include human rights violation, child abandonment and abuse, armed robbery, homelessness, mental health problems, divorce, and problems of single parenting. Nigerian lack of social welfare program intensified the gravity of the COVID-19 crisis. These social problems can only be addressed with serious social welfare policy and program (Ahmed et al., 2017).

Uganda: COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown in Uganda has reduced business activity by more than 50 percentage points. This could be largely attributed to the corona virus containment measures such as transport restrictions, quarantine, social distancing and ban on weekly markets, which have hindered farmers access to input and output markets, thus undermining their productive capacities. Micro and small businesses reported experiencing a larger decline in businesses activity compared to medium and large firms (Mutegeki, as cited in Corti, 2020).

Zimbabwe: According to Collet (2020), the Zimbabwe experience of COVID-19 came to the Nation with their perennial economic and health challenges. Social distancing through lockdowns appeared to be the major strategy applied to "flatten the curve." COVID-19 laid bare the frailties in Zimbabwe, exemplified by

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dilapidated health care infrastructure, shortage of health professionals' personal protective equipment (PPE), and much more. Therefore, although the COVID-19 storm is ravaging the entire world, African countries such as Zimbabwe are in a different boat compared with that of China and other advanced economies said Buffin and Letzing in (p. 2).

Collect (2020), further stressed that in the case of Zimbabwe, COVID-19 arrived against a background of deteriorating health infrastructure and facilities and a worsening epidemiological profile. Morbidity and mortality trends showed that the population was still affected by infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, lung diseases and tuberculosis, diarrheal conditions including nutritional deficiencies, and non-communicable diseases such as diabetes CDC, JICA as in (Collet, 2020). Citizens and residents in Zimbabwe are supposed to seek health care along the four tiers starting with the primary level. However, the public health system has collapsed while private health care appears to be on life support at present. In contrast, Zimbabwe has one of the most admired education systems in Africa, which produces a wide range of skilled professionals including health care professionals, bio-medical scientists, and skilled humanities and social scientists (p. 3).

South Africa: In South Africa when decision makers responded to the COVID-19 crisis, the needs of "informal" traders and their important contribution to food security were clearly not considered. This reflects a lack of knowledge about the sector and entrenched negative attitudes towards it. Despite the high concentration of corporate ownership in the food and grocery sector in South Africa, especially when compared to other African countries, the "informal food sector" still accounts for 40 to 50% of sales and is worth around R360 of their operating budget and profits on local businesses from farmers, to local shops, and bars (Jacobs, as cited in Marc, 2020) that create safer and more hospitable public spaces.

On the 23rd March 2020, the President of South Africa announced a national lockdown effective from midnight on 26th March. Fresh produce traders lost all stock that they hadn't sold or eaten. As well as immediate challenges of poverty and hunger, it won't be easy for these businesses to start operating again once the lockdown is lifted, given the depletion of their capital. In terms of the regulations – passed under the Disaster Management Act, 2002 (Act No. 57 of 2002)-spaza shops were allowed to operate, but had to get permits. Therefore, despite this

statements by a government minister, which implied that only South African owned shops would be allowed to open, and confusion around the varied permitting systems, prevented many spaza shops from working. Some security forces that were either not well informed or took advantage of the situation, tried to extort bribes or close shops owned by non-citizens (Sizani, as cited in Marc, 2020). This is gross violations of fundamental human rights by the security forces.

Kenya: Marais, as cited in Caroline, and Loren, 2020) the Kenya experience of the COVID-19 crisis reveals both the reasons we have governments, and our reasons for fearing them. Without collective action we cannot save lives, but the brutality and repression exercised in the name of saving lives is disquieting. In Accra deaths by police have been reported, including a 13 year old boy shot dead by a stray bullet fired by police while enforcing the lockdown. In Durban's working-class Cato Manor township, South African police arrested twenty-nine women and their children. Their crime was sleeping outside and contravening the lockdown after local authorities ordered their eviction from their homes by (Socialist Revolutionary Workers Party, as cited in Caroline, and Loren, 2020). In fact, there are a lot of human rights violation during this coronavirus lockdowns which could have been averted by right thinking Afrocentric leadership not just copy and paste leadership (p. 4).

Conclusion

As the paper implies "COVID-19 crises and a search for Afrocentric leadership: using religious values to checkmate abuse of human rights in Africa". The paper explored the relevance of compassion and love, integrity and respect. Therefore, paper recommends that we do not know how bad the increasing spread of COVID-19 will be in Nigeria and in Africa in the coming months if not years. But what we do know is that whatever happens to the economy at the height of the crisis and whatever damage is done, would show that we have to use this crisis as an opportunity to reconstruct the country politically and its economy. Afrocentric leadership mentality should be intensified for movement of African countries out of COVID-19.

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