# The Youth and Africa's Development in the New Normal

**By**

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**Abstract**

The COVID-19 shut down various governmental and non governmental activities. It inhibited various activities, development and numerous innovations particularly as it concerns the youth. The youth has an onerous task ranging from political, social, technological in the African Continent. The Paper using an analytical methods argues that the contributions of the youth in the New Normal World cannot be overemphasise because of their political, technological, educational, social and economic roles. Notwithstanding corruption, bad administration, migration to the Western world continue to affect developments in Africa. The work finds and conclude that various government in Africa countries should give maximum support to the youth in many dimensions just to ensure they adapt and adopt the new normal world technologies and applications. This will checkmate the factors that are inimical to youth developments in Africa. In addition, it was noted in the paper that various governments in Africa nations should embark on a programme that will discouraged the mass exodus of the African youth in search of greener pastures in developed countries.

**Keywords: Youth, Corruption, Development, Africa, New Normal**

## Introduction

The coronavirus disease was detected in China in December 2019, it spread throughout the world within a short time. Later it was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organisation on the 11th March 2020. Numerous companies, some government establishment and institution were closed00000000 down. Many African states imposed temporary or full shutdowns of education systems to contain its spread. At least 53 out of the 54 African countries took measures that canceled or partially closed schools. Kenya, for example, canceled the 2020 academic year in March, before changing its directives six months later to allow schools to reopen.

Development in various strata is the aspiration of everybody most especially in this era that has witnessed and brought a system called the New Normal. In the past, many Africans have hurl recrimination on the impacts of colonialism as the cause of Africa's

underdevelopment. Since the continent has become independent from the colonialist, it become pertinent for her development to be glaring virtually in all field. This is because some countries like India, China, Japan that were once under the leadership of the colonialist, but presently such countries have witnessed a great level of development.

The future of Africa lies on the youth, as result proper attention should be given to the young people in the New Normal World particularly in the technological and educational sector.

**Conceptual Analysis**

There are vital terms that are important regarding the topic of discussion. Such terms will aid the reader to quickly understand the research paper.

Some of the terms can be briefly explain as follows.

**Human Migration**

Generally there is mass movement of youth to the Western World in search of a greener pasture. This continues to occur in many dimensions. It remains one of the reasons for the choice of human migration as it concerns this article.

Human migration is the movement of people from one place to another with the aim of settling in a place either permanently or temporarily. The movement often occurs over long distances and from one country to another, but internal migration (within a single country) is also possible; indeed, this is the dominant form of human migration globally ("World Migration Report 2020" 2022)

Migration is often associated with better human capital at both individual and household level, and with better access to migration networks. Age is also important for both work and non-work migration (Linh Hoang et al, , 2015) People may migrate as individuals, in family units or in large groups ("Migrations Country Wise", 2021)

**Development**

There are various aspects that concerns development but I will confine my discussion to economic development since some countries in the New Normal World are currently facing the issue of underdevelopment in the area of their economy. Economic development generally refers to the sustained, concerted actions of policy makers and communities that promote the standard of living and economic health of specific areas. Economic development can also be referred to as the quantitative changes in the economy ( Sen, 1983 745-762.) Such actions can involve multiple areas, including development of human

capital, critical infrastructure, regional competitiveness, environmental sustainability, social inclusion, health, safety, literacy and other initiatives in a war-turn Sudan. These actions and activities appear to have been stalled ( Sen, 1983 745-762.). Economic development is different from economic growth. An economist, Amartya Sen, posits that "economic growth is one aspect of the process of economic development" ( Sen, 1983, 745-762). The scope of economic development includes the process and policies by which a nation improves the economic, political and social well -being of its people (O.Sullivan and S.M Sheffrin, 1983,471)

R.Mansell and U.When are of the opinion that "economic development has been understood since the World War II, to involve economic growth, namely the increase in per capita income and the attainment of a standard of living equivalent to that of industrialized countries" (R Mansell and U When 1998, 20) Economic development can also be considered as a static theory that documents the state of an economy at a certain time. Economic development can as well be described as a process that influences growth and restructuring of an economy to enhance the economic well- being of a community. The main goal of economic development is based on improving the economic well- being of a community through efforts that entail job creation, job retention, tax -based enhancements and quality of life (R Mansell and U When 1998, 20)

**Political Instability**

Development cannot fully occur in a country that is facing crisis. Political instability has inhibited development in many dimensions in Africa. Political instability is a situation whereby a country experiences political turmoil. It may also involve the death of people within that country and in many cases the country deteriorates in terms of its economic progress. In the 21st century, terrorism has become an important issue affecting the stability of the political and economic order. Political instability in Africa may owe much of its causes to internal factors especially geo-political and economic interest of the international community constantly playing a significant role in undermining the very process and institutions that are expected to nurture democracy and to instill a sense of stability for societal development in Africa (Claude E. Welch, 2012)

Political instability has led to mass exodus of people particularly the youth in many African countries.

**Catalyst of Youth Development and the New Normal World**

The youth in Africa countries have made an ample impacts in many fields. Development does not come on a platter of gold. It needs series of factors and catalyst particularly as it

concerns youth development. Many African countries are characterized by dominant trends that include economic expansion accompanied by important improvements in social and political areas and fast technological innovation. The priority of African Governments should be focus on technology innovation, as advances in technology, particularly ICT, have resulted in global interconnectedness and increased opportunities for self-actualization. If harnessed properly, technology and innovation can offer opportunities for dealing with the challenge of youth unemployment, while a growing economy provides fertile ground for innovation and risk-taking by Governments and citizens.

The section will be open for various factors that serves as a catalyst to youth development in Africa.

Introduction of development strategy is very vital as it concerns youth development in the New Normal. This will occur by effective provision of quality and reliable education that has a nexus with development in all starter. Many of our youth in the Africa are yet to reason regarding this trend. Still on this, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa notes on the followings regarding the important of education;

> Providing quality education with many African countries struggling to meet Goal 2 of the Millennium Development Goals (universal primary education), already tightly stretched budgets are being spent on providing basic access to education, rather than ensuring quality education. To tap their full potential, African youth need to receive an education that is relevant and directed towards developing the skills needed to be productive adults. National curricula must be reviewed and adapted to current global situations. This could be achieved by, for example, introducing business concepts and teaching computer literacy in the early stages of education. Schools should also organize workshops so that students can experiment with the practical applications of theories learned. (United Nations Commission for Africa, Youth and innovation in Africa: 2014, 6)

Various government in Africa need to place premium on youth education, this is the only way youth will be enlightened and as well project them into the mainstream of development.

Access to funding will go a long way to facilitate youth development in Africa. Many youth have lost their vision and dream because of lack of proper funding. Carrying out a research, formulating of business plan and embarking on marketing requires finance. Most African banks practise collateral-based financing, making it nearly impossible for young people to apply for loans and grants. Youth-dedicated funds should be set up to provide young innovators with the seed money to help them realize their aspirations. Additionally, youth-targeted workshops on applying for funding and grants (locally or abroad), budgeting, forecasting and accounting should be provided (United Nations Commission for Africa, Youth and innovation in Africa 2014, 6).

This era many do not want to be mentored. African youth need to be mentored on issues that concern development particularly those who are interested in mentoring initiatives.. Young people in Africa must also be encouraged to actively seek out mentoring opportunities, as the lessons learned and guidance received from such experiences are invaluable ("Aiki Nigeria and Paradigm, 2022). Those who are enlightened in development cadre should be willing to mentor youth that are willing.

**Challenges of Youth Development in Africa**

There are a lots of challenges inhibiting development as it concerns youth in Africa. Most of the issues continue to occur and surface. Some of these factors are as follows;

Mass Exodus of our youth to the developed countries is seriously affecting youth development. Some of our youths do not believe they can excel in the country of their birth. Rather they keep migrating in search of greener pasture. This factor is affecting our development because human resourcing are drifting away to the developed nations.

Language barrier is another factor affecting development as it concerns African youth. Language barriers continue to impede access to advancement in science, technologies, ICT and business transactions. There are various facets to the language debate. Some have argued that innovation in Africa predates new technologies, and that emphasis should therefore be placed not on determining which language is better suited for innovation in science and technology, but on providing education – including scientific education and technological training–in local languages, which will facilitate the use of tacit knowledge and local knowledge towards achieving innovation. Focusing on local languages may be effective for new innovation. (United Nations Commission for Africa, Youth and innovation in Africa 2014, 6).

The governments of many African nations should reinforce the role of local languages in their educational system and other important agencies in the government. This requires the provision of primary to tertiary education in local languages, translation of modern science and technology terms into local languages.

Corruption has eaten deep into the fabric of every facets of our nation. It continues to affect the administration of many African nations. Corruption in government, in public parastatals, in schools have all rubbed our youths. It has changed the mindset of average youth to something negative. The government also being corrupt has ways in which they negatively affects youth development. Even with a good mindset as a youth, the right things have not been put in place by the government to ensure better treatment that encourages youth development.

Another factors inhibiting African youth development is unemployment. In most cases, people who fall in the category do not get a good job. It is either there is no job opportunities or the job has been given to unqualified based on familiarity rather than merit thereby leaving the qualified ones completely out of jobs.

In addition, the social media has contributed positively and negatively in the life of African youth. But majority are abusing and misusing the social media. Many youth have been exposed to many negative vices that are linked to the social media which are inimical to development. Most African youth spend more time on the internet than their studies. Some young boys and girls in Africa have been influenced negatively by the internet. It has led some into prostitution, while some have become fraud. Internet was developed to foster learning and technological advancement.

Lack of access to fund is another challenging bedevilling youth development. There are many talented youth that needs the support and financial assistance, but it is unfortunate that such youth lack such financial opportunity. As a result the vision of many young boys and girls have been buried and forgotten. Financial assistance to technological inclined youth in Africa particularly those with great plan will bring about development in many dimensions

Examination malpractice is inimical to youth development in Africa. Many of our teachers are corrupt as a result they continue to encourage examination malpractice because of money. The educational system in many Africa countries has not completely equipped our young people with vital developmental tools and beneficial skills to compete with the 21st century academic trend.

More so antisocial behaviour and negative lifestyle is another vices that is inhibiting development in Africa. Many Africa youth want to live an influential life by all negative means without considering the implications. This development has led many youth into drug trafficking, killings for money ritual and armed robbery. Every youth wants to drive a Benz even without working.(“10 Problems of Youth Development in Nigeria and Possible Solutions” 2021)

**Recommendations**

- Many of our youth are migrating to the developed counties in search of greener pastures and purposes. As a result various government should checkmate this mass exodus by providing the necessary facilities that will be conducive for Africa youth in their various countries.
- It is very glaring that some wealthy people Africa countries do not want their children to study in their mother land. Rather they usually send their children to study in developed countries. In the light of the above statement I suggest that government of various Africa nations should bring such omen to an end because it has led to negligence of our educational system, thereby it continues to affect our economy in many dimensions.
- Development did not just occur in a day in the developed countries. It was well planned. Government of African nations should send some of our talented youth to learn their technologies. Many developed countries like Japan and China adopted this pattern. This means can equally motivate our youth in many areas.

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