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Evaluating Governance and Management in Africa

A utilitarian Perspective

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Abstract Due to the positive roles governance and management are expected to play in societal transformation, evaluation becomes imperative, because evaluation is about assessment and judgment that bring about the need to make amendments or plan for the future. Governance and management could be discussed under a single umbrella because they both represent acts of getting things done, irrespective of the fact the fact that governance is tied more to decision-making and management tied more to implementation. The main aim of this article is to evaluate public governance and management in Africa. Adopting a utilitarian perspective helps to evaluate the good or bad consequences of public governance and management in Africa. In addition, is to proffering ways public governance and management can be improved in Africa, which is for the main reason of improving citizens' wellbeing in Africa.		
Keywords Governance, Management, Utilitarianism, Evaluation, and Africa		

Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	1
UTILITARIANISM AS A DOCTRINE	2
GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA.....	4
EVALUATING PUBLIC GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA	6
CONTEMPORARY WAYS OF IMPROVING PUBLIC GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA	9
REFERENCES	11

INTRODUCTION

Evaluation is the act of making assessment or judgment in relation to the amount, value, or reliability of something or a phenomenon of interest. Evaluation can act as a link between, expectation and reality, intervention and feedback, need and fulfilment, interest and sacrifice, past and present, future and reform, cost and performance, and many others. Evaluating governance and management could take different dimensions, especially, as it relates to Africa. However, a utilitarian perspective in evaluating governance and management in Africa can create a rational and narrow focus towards the contribution of good or bad consequences of public administrative practices or values and mechanisms that are represented by personnel, institutions, laws, actions, and policies.

To realize the narrow and rational objectives, governance and management are evaluated in the public domain along with a historic overview, and then supported by some current findings from key international organizations. Achieving the main objectives helps in answering the following questions:

1. Why do we discuss public governance and management in Africa?
2. To what level have public governance and management yielded good or satisfactory consequences in Africa?
3. What are the key ways of improving public governance and management in Africa from a contemporary standpoint?

Governance and management are terms often used interchangeably in most discourses. But to avoid unnecessary mix-up, it is meaningful to discuss governance and management under a single umbrella, because they both represent act and framework for getting things done. Public governance and management in Africa represent acts and frameworks for getting public business done in Africa; public business relating to the provision of basic amenities, improving citizens' wellbeing, protecting territorial integrity, planning for the future generation, improving national pride and respect in the international circle, and many others.

We discuss public governance and management in Africa, because of different reasons; but most importantly, because of the problems of corruption, poverty, insecurity, political dictatorship, and high level of illiteracy among the citizens.

UTILITARIANISM AS A DOCTRINE

Utilitarianism is often discussed as an ethical approach or theory in moral philosophy, because of its ideological influence on evaluating actions, laws, policies, governments, and institutions. The main proponents of utilitarianism as an ethical doctrine are Jeremy Bentham, James Mill, and John Stuart Mill. Utilitarianism rose in mediaeval England as an attack on the existing legal system. Therefore, a utilitarian approach to the study of governance and management primarily aims at evaluating and criticizing.

Utilitarianism originated from the Latin word `utilis'; which stands for utility, usefulness, helpfulness, convenience, or benefit. Utilitarianism as a doctrine from a historical thinking perspective has an intellectual pedigree that goes back to the hedonic and eudaimonic schools of thought, which are represented respectively by Epicurus and Aristotle who are classical Greek philosophers. While hedonism is the doctrine of pleasure, eudaimonism is the doctrine of happiness and wellbeing. The good life according to Epicurus is the life devoted to pleasure, while the good life according to Aristotle is a life devoted to happiness and wellbeing. It is rational to say that utilitarianism is the reappearance and marriage of the principles of hedonism and eudaimonism.

Utilitarianism in the days of its founders was a radical ideology for advocating and implementing reforms that would offer citizens pleasure, happiness, and good wellbeing. As a doctrine of the ultimate good, utilitarianism defines the good action or conduct as the action or conduct that maximizes happiness and minimizes pain or suffering. Utilitarianism is a yardstick for assessing the conducts or actions of nations, governments, public institutions, and officials as to which such actions or conducts could be said to be just or unjust and moral or immoral.

According to Mills and Bentham (1987), nature has placed humanity under the governance of two sovereign masters, which are pain and pleasure; therefore, we ought to determine what we should do on the one hand the standard of right and wrong, and on the other hand the chains of causes and effects. One good utilitarian reason for doing good to people is that it benefits the society at the long-run. Act utilitarianism states that it is the value of the consequences of the particular act that counts when assessing if the act is right or wrong. Rule utilitarianism states that an action is right if it agrees with the rule that yield the greatest good.

According to Hyyryläinen (2010), the consequence approach of utilitarian ethics has developmental model that emphasizes the hoped-for consequences as a point to begin, that then results to a certain kind of action, which is then justified in connection to what was aspired for. He further argues that the main measure for

preserving ethics and integrity in organization from a consequence approach perspective is setting organizational goals that contribute in maximizing the well-being of individuals and the their patrons; and suitable ethics management tool example in relation to the consequence approach is social accounting and other measures to support social responsibility of governments and institutions along with ethical training.

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA

As earlier mentioned governance and management could be used interchangeably, because governance and management are strongly interlinked; in public administration, governance and management are more aligned to the public sector, public institutions/enterprises, international organizations, and public and humanitarian services. In Business studies and economics, governance and management are more aligned to the private sector, private institutions and services, and multinational organizations. However, in some circumstances governance and management could form unique argumentations in relation to meaning and definition.

According to Rhodes (1997), governance or management is the self-organizing, inter-organizational network represented by interdependence, intra-organizational collaboration, resource exchange, rule of the game and significant autonomy to achieve a particular set objective.

From the perspectives of World Bank (1989) and Selznick (1949), public governance and management concern using political or delegated power to coordinate public issues. Since a good framework has been lacking; top public personnel in most African countries have served their own interests without fear of being called to account for roles and results they represent in the governance process. Based on this notion, politics become personalised, and patronage essential to maintaining power. The leadership assumes broad discretionary authority and loses its legitimacy. Information is controlled, and voluntary associations are co-opted or disbanded. In return, the environment becomes so corrupt and true development becomes unrealizable.

Public governance and management in Africa has a long history, because of the different phases like the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial phases. According to Kisangani (2002), historical accounts of public administration in Africa often stipulate that the colonial setting overlooks pre-colonial Africa; but the fact is that the African civil service has its roots in pre-colonial institutions on which the European powers relied to build the colonial state and consolidate their administration. According to Peters (2001), the traditional concepts of public administration in many African states and regimes differ significantly; because from the perspective of Chiriyankandath (2007), the contemporary governance and management of the Global South (Africa) bear the imprint of the legacy of colonialism, but are also marked both by their pre-colonial heritage and their different post-colonial experiences.

We talk about public governance and management in Africa, because of the various challenges the continent had witnessed in the past and still witnessing in re-

cent times. According to Issahaq (2010), one critical period that represents an era of challenge in this continent was between 1950 and 1980, when most nations in this continent fought to put an end to colonial rule. However, at the present moment, most African countries are confronted with the task of transforming the region into one that would chart its own growth path in order to determine its destiny. But such changes are only attainable with a framework. That is why the birth of the African Union (AU) in July 2002 was really welcomed by most Africans and their well-wishers. To a great extent, the occasion was likened as a re-appearance/re-occurrence of the Pan-Africanist philosophies; and an indication of the willingness by the new generation of African leaders to put a stop to the horror of poverty, relegation and under-development in the continent.

According to Adamolekun (2002) a leading African public administration scholar, the governance context of public administration in Africa has attracted considerable attention of late, because of the persistent underdevelopment that is attributed to the poor governance environment. The key issues to understand about governance and management of which popular opinion supports are rule of law, freedom of expression and association, electoral legitimacy, accountability and transparency, development leadership based on integrity, participation and collaboration, expertise, and motivation.

It would be difficult to separate public governance from public management in Africa in relation to evaluation, because of the inseparable bonds that exist between regimes, elected and appointed officials, and civil servants; since they all network, collaborate, and brainstorm in doing the public business. The common obligations between politicians and administrators on one hand and collectively to citizens on the other hand are treating citizens equally, serving public interest or common good, keeping promises, avoiding the waste of public resources, and being accountable.

EVALUATING PUBLIC GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA

Evaluating public governance and management in Africa could start with an attempt to answer the question as to what level have public governance and management yielded good or satisfactory consequences in Africa. The level to which public governance and management have yielded good or satisfactory consequences in Africa is poor and needs a lot of improvement.

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) for example through its Public Governance Reviews assist governments in pinpointing areas they have perform good and areas they could enhance the performance, sustainability, and delivery of public value. The reviews allow interested governments to make process amendments in key areas through the OECD recommendation framework. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international organization that was established in 1961, with headquarters in Paris, France. The main goal of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is to promote policies that will positively uplift the economic and social well-being of people around the world.

The most recent report of the OECD published in 2014 shows that public governance and management in most African countries are still way back in meeting the basic needs and expectations of their citizens. With the main exceptions of South Africa, Botswana, Egypt, Seychelles, Tunisia, Cape Verde, and Algeria that have made some fair improvements in enhancing the economic and social wellbeing of their citizens; but poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, infant mortality, insecurity, power outages, and many others are still major issues in other African countries.

Evaluating public governance and management in Africa from the United Nations' perspective could take different dimensions because of its unique surveys and reports. The United Nations, which is the most famous global organization normally brings forth (not specifically on annual basis) values (in terms of rating) under its development programme to judge different countries of the world on how their government have been able affect their citizens through an all-round development and well-being assessment. In this arrangement, the country with a higher value on the Human Development Index (hdi) is assumed to have affected its citizens more positively in terms of development and well-being compare to a country with a lesser value on the Human Development Index (hdi). Some of the components or indicators of human development index are life expectancy and birth, mean years of schooling or expected years of schooling, and gross national income per capita.

From the United Nations different most recent surveys and reports published in 2014, it is derivable that public governance and management in Africa have not made the most important positive impact on general development and citizens' well-being enhancement. Specifically, focusing on the Human Development Index in the 2014 Human Development Report, it is visible that Seychelles is the best ranked African Country, which is on the 71st position on the global rankings. Other African countries like Algeria, Tunisia, Botswana, Egypt, and Gabon have average positions in the global rankings; while most other African countries need a lot of improvement.

We cannot talk about evaluating public governance and management in Africa without addressing the issue of corruption, because corruption is the main obstacle to all round development and enhanced citizens' well-being in Africa. Transparency International is a global agency with headquarters in Berlin, Germany; the agency plays the role of global watchdog in relation to corruption and unethical practices. Transparency International annually evaluates the prevalence levels of corruption and unethical practices among many countries of the world through index scores. In this arrangement, the country with a higher score is assumed less corrupt in comparison to a country with a lesser score.

According to the latest report of Transparency International published in 2014, it is deducible that corruption and other unethical practices are still major issues and on the increase in public governance and management in most African countries. From the corruption perception index 2013, published in 2014 Botswana is the least perceived corrupt nation in the continent of Africa occupying the 30th position on the global rankings; and the appearance of Botswana as the least corrupt nation in Africa has almost become a tradition, judging from different indexes on good governance and the reality regarding her citizens improved wellbeing. This is possible, because Botswana has one of the best anti-corruption strategies in Africa. Botswana is followed by other African countries like Cape Verde, Seychelles, Rwanda, Mauritius, and Lesotho on the corruption perception index 2013 on African countries categorization basis; while most other African countries must improve their ineffective anti-corruption strategies in order to reduce corruption and other unethical behaviour in public governance and management.

The Mo Ibrahim Foundation was established in 2006 in London, United Kingdom with the main objective of supporting progress in leadership and governance along with promotion of meaningful change in the continent of Africa. The Foundation's annual prize of 5million US dollars for good governance in Africa has been won by just three former democratically elected African presidents since its inception; the leaders are President Pedro De Verona Rodrigues Pires of Cape

Verde, President Festus Gontebanye Mogae of Botswana, and President Joaquim Alberto Chissano of Mozambique in 2007, 2008, and 2011 respectively. Although, Late Nelson Mandela, a former president of South Africa was given an honorary award, and from 2012 to present no other African President has been able to fulfil the requirements for winning the prize. The main requirements for winning the prize are winners must be former African Executive Head of State or Government, have left office in the last three years, democratically elected, and demonstrated exceptional leadership; in addition, to the 5million US dollar star prize, winners are also entitled to 200,000 US dollars per year thereafter.

From the Ibrahim Index of African Governance, which is a framework for citizens, governments, institutions, and private sector to accurately evaluate the delivery of public goods and services, and policy outcomes, across the continent. In addition, is to help discuss and determine the performance and decision-making instrument through which governance is carried out. The latest published 2014 Ibrahim Index of African Governance shows that Mauritius is the best governed and managed state in Africa, and Mauritius is followed by Cape Verde, Botswana, South Africa, Seychelles on the scores and rankings order.

CONTEMPORARY WAYS OF IMPROVING PUBLIC GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT IN AFRICA

Improving public governance and management in Africa is important to the well-being of its citizens. Different recommendations have been put forward by development experts and institutions. Transparency International through its National Integrity System Assessment and United Nations through its Human Development Programs have primarily stressed viable anti-corruption measures in Africa's public governance and management, because corruption is the main challenge to smooth and developmental administrative practices in Africa. Viable anti-corruption measures that include right policies and institutions are needed at all levels of governance and administration in order to turn around the poor performance outlook and citizens' low trust toward public personnel and establishments.

Allowing true and determined experts and institutions to formulate and implement development programs is another contemporary way of improving public governance and management in Africa. Public governance and management must be able to meet needs and expectations of citizens, which makes development planning very imperative. Responsibility as a concept must become part and parcel of every developmental idea and process, because it concerns the ability and act of being responsible individually, corporately or institutionally, societally, and governmentally. To be responsible is to be trustworthy and reliable; in addition, is to be legally, ideologically, and morally accountable. Responsibility can help in increasing trust and performance through integrity and compliance approaches of ethicality.

Public governance and management require finance to effectively run. Therefore, another way to improve public governance and management in Africa is to improve governments' revenue and income sources. The sole dependence on primary products and natural resources by most African states needs to be corrected. African countries need to diversify their economies and tap the global markets more effectively to strengthen their economies; in addition to opening up foreign direct investment.

Improving public governance and management in Africa also requires the enhancement of ethical governance's values and mechanisms on one hand and good management principles on the other hand. The add-up of the values, mechanisms, and principles are accountability, participation, independence, equality, trust, efficiency, performance, motivation, integrity, openness, collaboration, sanction and ethical codes.

Improving electoral process that produces political office holders is another way of improving public governance and management in Africa. Leadership illegitimacy arising from various kinds of electoral manipulations and military interference in the political process is a major governance and management problem in most African countries; because it is the main cause of political dictatorship and corruption. Improving the electoral process should also go with reducing the attractions in political offices, because this would help aspirants to see winning elections as a not “do-or-die” thing or affair.

Finally, improving public governance and management in Africa requires poor performing African countries in relation to public administration to copy best practices from other Africa countries like Botswana, Mauritius, and Namibia. There is also the need for the “African big four”, which are Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, and Egypt to step up their games in relation to economy, education, entrepreneurship and opportunity, governance, health, personal freedom, safety and security, and social capital.

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