

Social Indicators Research Series 71

Olayinka Akanle
Jimí Olálékan Adésìná *Editors*

The Development of Africa

Issues, Diagnoses and Prognoses

 Springer

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Editors

The Development of Africa

Issues, Diagnoses and Prognoses

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*This book is dedicated to everyone laboring
positively to understand, contribute to,
and achieve Africa's development.*

Preface

For generations of Africans (policymakers, intellectuals, and ordinary people), the development of the continent has always been an urgent task and a challenge that needs to be met. While there might have been divergent opinions on the most appropriate ways to ensure this objective, the focus, nonetheless, is broadly shared. That this collection of essays by two generations of African scholars would return to the issue is to be understood within the context of this long-term concern. The context, local and global, remains in flux and elusive, but as Mwalimu Nyerere observed, we must run while others walk.

As Samir Amin once noted, “‘Economic development’ was an important item in the nationalist programs and since every known path of economic development has involved industrialization and also partly because in no other sector was colonial blockage so transparent, the struggle for independence closely linked nationalism with the ‘right to industrialize’.” It was a matter on which the nationalists asserted themselves. While it is common to argue that development was an imperial agenda by Western powers, it is important to remind ourselves that the impulse for “catch-up” is grounded in the emancipatory aspirations and that the dominance of the West is underpinned by its developmental advantage. Victims of colonialism and persisting imperial order know that their technological disadvantage is a major factor in their subjugation and humiliation. The impulse that was eloquently expressed at the 1956 Bandung Conference would find expressions in the demand for “the right to development.”

While Africa’s efforts at industrialization have been out of sync with the international trend, the first generation of post-independence nationalists in Africa were animated by it. Between 1960 and 1975, Africa’s industry grew at an annual rate of 7.5%, albeit from a low base. This growth rate masks significant variation on the continent. Over this initial period, five countries accounted for 53% of Africa’s industrial output. In 27 other countries, the share of industry was less than 1%. Performance over the 15-year period was also unsteady, with much of the growth happening in the first decade of independence. In Nigeria’s case, the growth rate in manufacturing value added increased from an average of 7.6% between 1963 and 1973 to 12% between 1973 and 1981. For all its weaknesses, in the first decade of

independence, wage employment growth surpassed the population growth rate. Nor was development to be understood only in terms of industrialization; ultimately it was about reducing poverty and, in Arthur Lewis's terms, extending the "range of human choices." The understanding of "catch-up" in its wider sense of addressing human needs in the former colonies was aptly captured in the phrase "better life for all" that was common among early nationalists.

The balance of payment crises that emerged from the mid-1970s (first among oil importers) and fiscal squeeze at the end of the decade coincided with the rise of the New Right in the West. Africans, at all levels, were themselves aware of the development stumbling that the continent faced. Much of the response was driven by the demand for a more radical nationalist commitment to development. At the policymaking level, the consensus response was framed in the Lagos Plan of Action (1980) that sought to place development within a regional framework, transform the inherited colonial economic structures, and internalize the growth engine of the African economies. This effort was overtaken by the regime of structural adjustment and the neoliberal ascendance. Rather than the promised "accelerated development," what the wholesome deployment of market forces (liberalization, privatization) and state retrenchment produced was two lost decades, deindustrialization (of the limited industrial efforts of the first two decades of independence), explosion in the absolute number of people living in poverty, growing inequality, and widespread social dislocation. As soon as the growth rate in Africa ticked up, those who disavowed responsibility for the socio-economic collapse of the adjustment years claimed patrimony for it. While there has been some recovery from the depth of the economic crisis, Africa's economies remain dependent on external demand for Africa's resources, and the state of industrialization is fundamentally not much different from the mid-1970s. Manufacturing share of GDP is lower in 2011 than in 1974. Production of capital good remains rare.

After more than two decades of disavowing the value of intentional planning, we are back to the issue of the urgency of rapid economic development, with its attendant objective of expanding human choices. At national levels, "planning" is back on the agenda. At the continental level, we seem to have returned to mapping out long-term strategic framework with the African Union's *Agenda 2063*. What is required, beyond recovery, is long-term structural transformation of Africa's economies and society, one that deepens democracy, enhances equality, and expands human choice. Development, and development planning in particular, requires a measure of sovereignty and autonomy and focused commitment to the agenda; it requires the intentionality that market is not capable of delivering; it requires state capacity not only to plan and regulate but to constantly learn; it requires public leadership in mobilizing the social compact necessary for navigating the long road ahead and ensuring that the proceeds of development are shared equitably in society. Knowledge is central to the catch-up and latecomers can avoid the groping in the dark that marked the

efforts of pioneers. This requires significantly high investment in higher education and skill. It vests Africa's institutions of higher education with a crucial role in meeting the challenge of Africa's development—in innovation and production of critical skills necessary for transforming Africa's economy and society.

The current volume reflects the persistence of the concern with development among Africans and I commend it to the reader.

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Thandika Mkandawire

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We, the editors, together with the publisher would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all those who contributed to this book. Without their contributions, commitment, understanding, and willingness to contribute, it would have been impossible to publish this very useful and important book. Thank you for your knowledge and dedication. It takes great effort and sacrifice to contribute to a book of this status, yet all contributors took time out of their often heavy and busy schedules to deliver their chapters, working under pressure as they did so. In all cases, the contributors were in addition required to revise and rework their chapters for resubmission after peer and editorial reviews—still under tight deadlines within their other busy schedules. We appreciate you all! We, the editors, are also especially grateful to Team Springer for their commitment, expertise, and professionalism in handling the publication of this book. They have been very helpful throughout the process, always following up with us and providing support. Hence, we would like to acknowledge everyone who has contributed in one way or another to the publication of this book. In many instances, some of these contributions were behind the scenes yet the publication would not have been possible without them. Thank you all very much.

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Chapter 1

Introduction: The Development of Africa: Issues, Diagnoses and Prognoses

Olayinka Akanle and Jimí Olálékan Adésinà

Background

Africa's development is one of the most critical and important issues on the global agenda. This point has been attested to by the global adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the immediate adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on the expiry of the MDGs, to drive development in Africa and other developing countries, while simultaneously not isolating the developed countries. This is because the underdevelopment of Africa is a problem that does not affect Africa alone, but directly or indirectly affects the world at large. Today, Africa remains largely mired in underdevelopment rather than showing the needed signs of development. Generally, independence struggles in most African countries were contingent on the belief that decolonization and independence would lead to the requisite development on the continent. However, more than half a century after the demise of colonialism, development is still elusive on the continent despite repeated efforts.

In other words, over half a century after most African nations became independent, large parts of the continent remain underdeveloped despite the fact that Africa was originally projected to grow faster than Asia. Asia today has in the main has shown more promise (and signs) of growth and development than Africa, especially against the backdrop of the ascendancy of the Asian Tigers and the Asian transition economies such as India and China. These Asian countries have in particular been able to lift many of their populations out of poverty in contrast to Africa, where

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many remain in poverty. While Asia has shown resilience and focused development attempts and wealth creation, many parts of Africa, especially Sub-Saharan Africa, appear stuck at the level of negative development indicators.

What Africans and the world at large have come to realize is that Africa cannot and should not continue on the path of fixated underdevelopment. Unfortunately, the road to development is also not clear-cut or easy. While the issue of African development has become a universal demand and the need for positive change has become more urgent and profound, trajectories of development have also become more complex and more dynamic as the stakes of development have been raised and are constantly changing owing to the interface of local and global currents, undercurrents and political economy. While the manifestations of development are easy to identify, the processes and pathways are not. Hence, while the debates about African development exist and continue (OECD 2015; Africa Institute of South Africa [AISA] 2002; Muriith 1997; Moss 1997), the objects, natures and times of the debates are changing rapidly, as African development realities continue to emerge and evolve and thus necessitate continuous examination and interrogation.

For about the last 30 years most African nations have demonstrated underdevelopment potentiality rather than development capability, as can be seen in objective development indicators like the Corruption Index, poverty prevalence, unemployment rate, gender equality and literacy rate. According to the World Bank, even the economic growth rate witnessed in some parts of Africa has not translated to an improved standard of living for the people. Indeed, 48.5% of Sub-Saharan Africans continue to struggle with poverty while even more struggle with absolute poverty. Job creation has not kept pace with the booming population, which has reached the 1 billion mark – or 15% of the world's total population – and is projected to increase to 20% by 2030, in light of falling labor productivity figures and the fact that the manufacturing sector has remained largely stagnant since the 1970s. In addition, many African economies trail the rest of the world in competitiveness.

Unless specific, current, established and fresh comparative development problems confronting the continent are well examined, properly researched, well documented, and sufficiently understood, there cannot be positive development achievement in Africa. It is against this background that this book engages the development challenges confronting Africa with a view to presenting fresh and current examination, narratives, interpretations and pathways to the continent's established, current and evolving development problems. This book will interrogate and answer critical, current and pragmatic problems confronting Africa in definitive ways and provide workable pathways for resolving development problems that will have a positive impact on scholarship, policy and practice. The book adds depth to and broadens the knowledge base on development in Africa. Students, academics, scholars, practitioners, thinkers, policymakers, development partners and all those interested in issues affecting Africa's development should find this book very interesting, relevant and useful.

This book seeks to contribute to research and policy by expanding scholarly and practice knowledge on Africa's development trajectories. It is an academic, pragmatic and practical policy *toolkit* for Africa's development problems, providing new depth, and fresh theoretical, methodological and conceptual frameworks for

understanding and resolving Africa's development quagmires within broader global sustainable development strategies. Generally, the book is relevant to people seeking a comprehensive, relevant, workable understanding of Africa's development issues. Certainly, Africa's development issues are complex, complicated, evolving, and dynamic. Thus, this book adds new on-the-ground, multilevel and multidimensional perspectives to the relevant issues hampering Africa's development. This book is practical and pragmatic yet methodical and scholarly; it is also highly comparative in ways that will account for problems, issues and solutions to Africa's development trajectories both multinational and transnational. It is current and contemporary and engages cutting-edge issues in great detail in ways that are very useful for teaching, research, policy, practice and general knowledge on development in Africa.

Structure and Orientation of the Book

Together with this introductory chapter, this book comprises 22 chapters. This chapter, frames the orientation and contextualizes the issues in the book, Chap. 2 conceptualizes and intellectually frames the development realities of Africa, while Chap. 3 accounts historically and theoretically for the occurrences that have come to shape and define development issues confronting Africa. Chapter 4 continues the focus and argument of Chap. 3 given the importance of the issues of interest to the two chapters. Chapter 4 further theorizes on Africa's development problems.

Chapter 5, 'Poverty in Africa', confronts, both theoretically and practically, one of the most definitive development issues of Africa. Poverty is one of the most significant issues confronting Africa today. In fact, poverty is key signifier of Africa's underdevelopment and is an overarching problem facing the continent. This chapter therefore examines the subject of poverty on the continent both empirically and theoretically. Chapter 6 discusses education in Africa. Education is at the very heart of human and material development for Africa, especially in view of the development experiences of China, India and Malaysia, among others. Therefore if Africa is to develop, education will have to play a central and important role. Against this backdrop, this chapter examines the state of education in Africa, adopting empirical data and descriptive/analytical approaches. The chapter is detailed, pragmatic and contemporary while also being future-oriented. The chapter is also analytical and problem-solving in a scholarly and a practical manner.

Chapter 7 covers agriculture, industrialization and the economy. Common narratives and interpretations of Africa's development and underdevelopment hinge on the role played by agriculture and industrialization in the economy. This is important as many accounts of development are centered on the state of the economy and, generally, most African nations are still agrarian and rural. What then is the interface between agriculture, industrialization and the economy in Africa? Can agriculture sustainably drive development in Africa? Can agriculture lead the industrial paths of Africa? What is the state of agriculture and industrialization in Africa? What is the

missing link in the economy and can agriculture and industrialization reconnect the severed chain of Africa's development? What is the state of Africa's economy and what role can agriculture and industrialization play in it? What are the policy issues and what are the solutions? Are there country-specific issues that can drive home the points and the contours of Africa's development? At the end of the development tunnel is there any hope for the alignment of agriculture, industrialization and the economy in Africa? If yes, what is to be done? If not, what is to be done? Through a relevant up-to-date case study, this chapter engages the background issues.

'Politics, Democracy and Governance' in Africa is the title of Chap. 8. This chapter is very important because governance issues are central to Africa's development and underdevelopment. Nations' governance systems, processes and structures will ultimately determine how resources are aggregated, shared and distributed. They will also determine how resources are mobilized for development outcomes. Central to governance, however, are politics and democracy. Thus, this chapter uses a case study to examine the relationships among politics, democracy and governance in Africa as they affect the development realities on the continent. This chapter is conceptual, theoretical and empirical, dealing with the relevant data and cases in comparative terms. Chapter 9, 'Violence and Terrorism' boldly confronts unique issues confronting Africa. These two issues remain intractable in Africa today (see Akanle and Omobowale 2015). Unfortunately, most African countries appear to lack understanding of these problems and also have poor capacity for solving them. There is virtually no sub-region of Africa that is totally exempted from violence and terrorism. From North Africa to Southern Africa, West Africa to Central Africa, the Horn of Africa to East Africa, violence and terrorism exist and they certainly have various impacts on development and underdevelopment. This chapter is conceptual, theoretical and academic, yet practical and relevant to policy. Germane data are used as is a case study to drive home the relationships between the twin issues.

Chapter 10, 'Africa and the Media', also examines a very relevant issue at the center of Africa's development – the interface of Africa and the media. The role of the media in affecting and effecting change and development has been widely acknowledged and appreciated. This is particularly so in Africa against the background of the Arab Spring and the emergence of transparent elections driven by new media. The media¹ has, however, become a double-edged sword in Africa, playing both a positive and a negative role. In other words, while the media was instrumental in driving the change during the Arab Spring, it is also the engine of negative representations of Africa, the propagation Africa's negative image and the dissemination of propaganda, which has affected investments and development on the continent. Yet, the media is also sometimes positively implicated in directing development values to the continent. It is therefore very important to engage the manifestations, developments and ramifications of the media in Africa in search of sustainable development.

In Chap. 11, issues relating to childhood, youthhood and social inclusion in Africa are discussed. A major development issue in Africa is that of social inclusion.

¹ *CNN effects* on the continent, state TV [media], private media, social/new media and so on.

While most African countries are underdeveloped, it is the children and the youth in particular that suffer the consequences of underdevelopment of Africa. Children and youths are often excluded outright from the development processes of Africa and suffer more as a result of the underdevelopment outcomes of the continent. This is why, according to Alcinda Honwana, there is a prolonged period of waithood and youthhood in African countries as many youths are trapped, finding it difficult to transit to adulthood due to their large-scale disproportional experience of Africa's underdevelopment. The case is similar and sometimes worse for children, who suffer negative socio-cultural, economic and physical constructions on the continent; even the laws have failed to successfully address negative constructions and experiences of children in Africa (see Akanle 2012). Since childhood and youthhood are development flip sides, it is important to examine their development, socioeconomic and intergenerational interfaces in African countries. The background issues are discussed in this chapter through the life experiences of different individuals and groups across Africa.

'Health and Diseases in Africa' is the title of Chap. 12. Africa is one of the countries of the world with significant health and disease burdens. This may be traced to the living environments, health belief systems and health infrastructure on the continent. These health and disease burdens have development implications especially seen against the backdrop of the axiom *health is wealth*. This chapter therefore examines the health and disease trajectories of Africa and demonstrates and documents their development implications. The chapter is strong, conceptual, empirical, engaging, polemic, theoretical and methodical with relevant data and perspectives for scholarship, policy and practice across the countries of Africa. Chapter 13 is entitled 'Corruption and Africa'. Corruption, like poverty, is among the most pervasive and dangerous problems confronting Africa today. In terms of causality, no other problem retards development in Africa like corruption (see Akanle and Adesina 2015). This chapter therefore critically examines corruption as a development issue in Africa through a comparative analysis of African countries. The chapter is empirical, theoretical, conceptual and comparative with specific case studies and transnational examples. Issues discussed include: What is corruption? How prevalent is corruption in Africa? Is corruption a way of life in Africa? How has corruption manifested in Africa over time and what is the trend? What data are available to demonstrate corruption in Africa? Are there differences among nations and sub-regions of Africa relative to the processes and nature of corruption? How has corruption affected development in African countries? Are there solutions to corruption in Africa? Specific examples are also discussed.

'Africa and the Climate Change Dilemma' is the title of Chap. 14. Climate change is a major issue confronting the world today and no continent or community is immune to it. In fact, climate change is one of the few issues on which it was very difficult to get global consensus until very recently. Implementing the consensus however remains a challenge. Despite contributing little to climate change in the world, Africans are among the most affected and yet capacity to understand and ameliorate its effects on the continent remains weak. It is against this background that this chapter investigates the trajectories and consequences of climate change on

the continent. The chapter is comparative (continentally and intercontinentally), empirical, polemic, analytical, conceptual and theoretical.

Chapter 15 is called 'Gender in Africa'. Africa is a heavily patriarchal continent and this has huge implications for gender equality/equity and development (Akanle 2011). Traditional norms and values exist in Africa that always makes the gender question relevant in Africa's development engagements. It has been variously maintained that it is impossible for Africa to understand its development problems and develop without answering the gender question. This chapter therefore engages the gender question in Africa's development. Indicative questions include: What is gender? How does gender manifest in Africa and how has it affected the development of nations on the continent? How is gender affecting Africa's development? What are the conceptual, theoretical, and empirical and policy issues around gender and development in Africa? Are African countries different or the same in terms of gender and development? How can Africa manage its gender and development issues so that inclusive sustainable development may be possible in the short and the long run?

Chapter 16 engages the issue of 'Non-state Actors as the Strategic Realm in Africa's Development'. Non-state actors have been variously recognized as important engines of growth and development across the world. This is because they have an objective and critical existence that makes it possible for them to engage/disengage with the state in driving the development of nations and continents. Thus, this chapter examines the contributions of non-state actors to development on the continent, Africa. Their contributions are examined over time across African nations in terms of both positive and negative contributions. Issues relating to the abuses that have marked their contributions are also examined. Some of the questions asked in this chapter are: What is/who are non-state actors? What are their typologies? What development philosophies guide their existence and operations? What is their political economy? To what extent have they/have they not contributed to the development of countries in Africa? What are their challenges? What are their successes? Have there been abuses? Are they very important to Africa's development? How can they better drive development in Africa? Where are the cases of best practices in Africa and other developing and developed countries and what can be learnt from the best practices?

'Globalization and Africa's Development' (Chap. 17) discusses one of the most sensitive and controversial subjects in the social sciences and development studies—globalization. This is partly because of its multifaceted manifestations, as well as its global political economic and generalized impacts on developing countries. Thus, this chapter engages the many elements of globalization in policy, scholarship and practice manners. It traces the development of globalization, the place of developing countries, the role of developed nations and the overall implications of globalization for Africa in development terms. Indicative questions posed in this chapter include: What is globalization? What are the historical and developmental specificities of globalization? What are the drivers of globalization? What are the forces and elements of globalization? What are the theoretical contours of globalization? How has globalization influenced Africa's development to date? What roles

has Africa played in globalization? To what extent has Africa benefited/not benefited from globalization? How can Africa positively appropriate globalization for sustainable development?

Chapter 18 gives a broad overview of regional and sub-regional organizations and Africa's development. It has been generally recognized that regional and sub-regional organizations are very important in driving growth and development. This is particularly so judging from the experiences of the European Union (EU). Africa is certainly a continent of regional and sub-regional blocs. However, the extent to which Africa's regional and sub-regional blocs have contributed to development on the continent remains a big question. This chapter therefore critically, theoretically and pragmatically engages the interlinkages of regional and sub-regional blocs and Africa's development, leveraging on continental and national issues through a case study of trade agreements.

'International Organizations and Africa' are the subject of Chap. 19. The chapter examines the implications of global/international organizations for Africa's development. The debates around the contributions of international organizations to the development of Africa are objectively engaged in this chapter. Chapter 20 examines 'African Development Initiatives'. This chapter interrogates the development philosophies and operational frameworks of development initiatives of Africa as the continent struggles to aggregate policies to drive common development on the continent. It links the continental development initiatives with global ones to prevent lopsided and vacuous analysis.

Chapter 21 engages the subject of 'Africa and International Migration' through a case study set in Cameroun. Africa is a continent of migrants. A significant proportion of international migrants in Europe, the United States of America (USA), Latin America, the Caribbean and Asia are Africans. While Africans immigrate to other continents, the continent is also a major recipient of migrants whether as a transit point or as a destination. Hence, due to large-scale migrations from Africa, the continent is among the highest recipients of remittances from abroad to the extent that remittances from migrants of African origin dwarfs foreign direct investments (FDIs) into Africa. Hence, a number of African countries may actually not be able to survive without remittances from their nationals abroad. Apart from remittances as development gains of international migration, Africa also benefits from extra-financial gains just as it suffers some losses from international migration. This chapter examines the relationship between international migration and the development of Africa from a historical perspective.

Chapter 22 is headed 'Aid and the Development of Africa'. Aid is among the most controversial development strategies in the world today (see Easterly 2006). Yet, Africa seems to be trapped in the aid web as many African countries remain, to varying degrees, somewhat dependent on aid from developed countries (Easterly 2006). Major issues around aid and development are whether they are necessary drivers of growth and development (by providing important materials and supports) or disablers of growth and development as they build a dependence syndrome and foster corruption. This chapter engages the trajectories of aid as development strategies and frameworks for Africa. Indicative questions this chapter will answer include: What is aid?

What are the philosophical, policy, empirical and practice issues around aid? How has aid driven or not driven development in Africa? How sustainable is aid in driving Africa's development? What are the established and emerging issues and debates around aid, especially in Africa? How can aid be made conformable and in tune to drive the development of Africa? Is aid necessary at all for Africa's development? And so on. This chapter, like the others, is detailed, polemic, objectively balanced, engaging, comparative, empirical, policy and practice-oriented and scholarly.

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Chapter 2

Conceptualizing and Framing Realities of Africa's Development

Abel Akintoye Akintunde and Ayokunle Olumuyiwa Omobowale

Introduction

The objective realities of Africa's development have remained vague to scholarship because epistemological lenses and levels of analysis continue to represent development as a skewed and ethnocentric and, hence, as a partial rather than an inclusive reality (Harrison 2005; Kolawole 2014; Konadu 2014). Most vivid and prominent in the literature is the representation of Africa's development in terms of the realities of other societies rather than those of Africa itself (Kolawole 2014). Development is hence represented and portrayed not as a subjective and interpretive experience of individual societies but rather as an experience of Africa imaged by non-African contexts when in fact development remains contextual and existential in nature. A projection of hierarchy and the stratification of Africa beneath other societies on the global socioeconomic ladder is the inevitable result of such an understanding of Africa's development in discourse. Such representations negate the tenets of philosophical phenomenology and interpretivism and their customary appeal for penetration into the subjective world of meaning of the actor(s) or research subject(s) as a basis for articulating their reality (Coser 1977, Thompson and Tunstall 1976), and in this case Africa's development reality.

Another consequence of such a representation is that development is construed as polarity between societies of the world. Hence, development is construed as a systemic, quantitative and comparative reality on the other hand, and as a subjective and qualitative experience on the other (Seers 1996). Leanings towards the former at the expense of the latter, however, makes it difficult to articulate anything close to

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Africa's realities of development in an empirical, existential sense. It is also in this sense that sustainable development as a people's subjective experience, particularly of Africans, becomes a mirage.

In this chapter we contextualize the realities of Africa's development as clearly epistemological. Nobles (2006) describes epistemology as a science involving the study of the nature of reality; how truth is defined; the relationship between the knower, knowing, and the known; what can be known; and what should/could be done with the known. Epistemology is a means of approaching knowledge and coming to know what is real from a culturally informed perspective (McDougal 2014). Hence, the articulation of Africa's realities of development requires an engagement with modes of knowledge production on Africa and attendant approaches underpinning this process. This thinking of development as an epistemological reality compels the necessary examination of some vital issues surrounding the realities of Africa's development. Fundamental to all is the concern for the evolution of knowledge production on the larger social reality of Africans but which ironically evolves from non-indigenous African perspectives developed particularly from non-African contexts and experiences (Higgs 2010). This makes it acceptable to argue further that epistemic relativism and intellectual myopia on what objectively constitutes Africa's social realities critically entangles any possible articulation and comprehension of Africa's realities of development (Bakari 1997; Waghid 2014). It is against this backdrop that this chapter examines the conceptual understandings and framings of development as an African reality precisely within the epistemic currents and popular understandings underpinning development as reality in prevailing debates. In essence, this study conceptualizes development initially as an epistemic construction which either enhances or blights the clear articulation of Africa's development realities and, secondly, as a subjective experience of Africa as a society in itself.

This chapter addresses the foregoing concerns in three major discussions under the headings: 'Defining the concept of development', 'Theoretic conceptualizations of development', and 'The epistemic sustainability of Africa's development'. The first section details the definition of the dynamics mediating conceptualizations of development and what these dynamics portend for any understandings of development as a concept applicable to Africa and any other human society. The second section addresses theoretic debates on development and underdevelopment. With development as an uneasy and difficult subject for theoretic pedagogy (Barnett 2005), the subsection provides an ideal framework for discussing, comprehending and critiquing the epistemology of development itself by showing that development is both a structural and an interpretive reality. The third section discusses Africa's development vis-à-vis epistemic sustainability and otherwise. It establishes how the hypothesis and theoretic understandings of development shape what evolves as the epistemology develops, showing how development informs and impedes a comprehensive representation and understanding of Africa's development realities.

The Concept of Development

A custom in definitions of development is its polar conceptualization as both a quantitative and qualitative reality. If development will truly ensue, it must comprise both quantitative and qualitative changes in the structure, composition and performance of the forces of production in any society (Rodney 1972; Harrison and Berger 2006). As a subjective and qualitative cultural process, development involves the innovation of tools, skills and the mobilization of required resources for development purposes. Supportively, Seers (1969) defines development as a transformative and qualitative experience that must be necessarily understood and engaged in view of three questions which for him must inform an adequate definition of development. These are: "What has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality" (Seers 1969, 3)?

The fact that development means different things for different people and that different societies and scholars have differently defined it makes the term conceptually ambiguous (Nieuwenhuijze 1982). Seers' definition for instance purports that development is a qualitative improvement and transformation in the empirical experience of a community, group or society of actors and these must inform their classification as developed. His three prerequisites for development are indicative of Rodney's (1972) and Harrison and Berger's (2006) assertion that development is a qualitative reality. The emphasis on 'poverty', 'unemployment' and 'inequality' depicts development as an existential and experiential concern that is both subjective and relative to a people. This outlook is clearly in contrast to the view of development as an absolute, unilinear or inevitable experience of all human societies. Shionoya and Nishizawa (2008) argue in fact that development is an interpretive reality that can only be fathomed from the perspective of philosophical hermeneutics through the methodological tool known as 'verstehen'. They also present development as a subjective experience of a society in terms of contexts and situations of meaning assignment by actors and members of such groups. For it is only when we know what has been happening to poverty in a society, to unemployment among its members and to inequality between these members that we can adequately and credibly speak of that society's development or otherwise.

Highlighting the subjectivity of development, Rodney (1972) argues that development in human society is a many-sided process. Development is first of all individual; it implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material wellbeing. These categories as he notes are virtually moral and are difficult to evaluate, and they depend in fact on the subjective experience, exposure, codes and standards that inform the outlook of the epistemologist.

At the structural level, the question of development lies at the heart of the political, economic and moral crises of the contemporary global society. Development is also central to the relations of power diplomacy and war in the contemporary world. As a qualitative reality development is decisively connected to the material wellbeing of humanity and the ways some people make a living and the ways some

people hunger. It presents a fundamental dimension of social inequality and struggles for social justice (Archetti et al. 1987). Tony Barnett (2005) in fact presents three approaches for understanding the concept of development which inaugurate a general theoretical understanding of the epistemology of development. In the three approaches, development is proposed as both an internal attribute as well as an outcome of interaction between societies. He speaks of development from within, development as interaction and development as interpenetration.

- **Development from within:** Development can come from within, as in the case of China, where universal adherence to Confucianism as a religion instructs and motivates the indigenous development of ideals, thus fostering development leading to a potential change in society's form (Sanderson 1999). Accordingly, development can result only from processes within a given society.
- **Development as interaction:** Here the development of anything results from the interaction between an agent and his environment. Here the society changes as a result of the combination of the equalities and potentials within the object and the opportunities and resources available in that environment.
- **Development as interpenetration:** This view holds that we cannot really draw a sharp distinction between an object and its environment. For example, an animal is made of materials from outside itself; its actions in feeding and housing itself alter its environment. When applied to society, this view raises the question of where the boundaries of any society are located. How can we distinguish sociologically between, for example, Egyptian society—which is predominantly Muslim—and its 'environment' which also contains many other Muslim countries, the ideas, concerns and people of which may affect what goes on in Egypt.

These classifications provide an imperative for engaging development in epistemology as a theoretic concern in this section. Barnett's first construction of development is suggestive of development as an evolutionary process, the second is of development as an outcome of interaction between societies, and the third is of development as an outcome of a complex and interwoven interconnectivity of societies. We now turn to examine some theoretic epistemologies on development and its corollary underdevelopment.

Some Theoretic Conceptualizations of Development

The question of what constitutes development, and especially of the distinction between development and its flipside underdevelopment, has informed various debates, discourses and thought patterns (Archetti et al. 1987). With the general categorization in the literature of Africa, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa, as a developing region (Amin 1976; Rodney 1972), it becomes imperative to understand development within theory in order to articulate its implications for understanding and comprehending Africa's reality. This section therefore explores development as a theoretical subject that enhances understanding on Africa as a region within the

global order. We therefore examine development and underdevelopment as two major concepts by which societies, including Africa, are engaged in modern debates. The two concepts are also customarily presented as a basis for classifying societies apart from one another. It is also on this basis that classifications are assigned to societies and by which distinction is made between them. While the economically prosperous nations of the Global North are often portrayed as the privileged side of such debates, the economically dependent nations of the Global South, and particularly Sub-Saharan Africa, are often painted as the disadvantaged category (Kolawole 2014).

In classifying societies, emphases in these debates often situate Africa and other developing countries apart from countries of the West in terms of their polar internal social and economic realities. This form of differential representation echoes one of Barnett's (2005) postulations that sees development as an internal experience that takes place 'from within' a society. Modernization theory, which emerged as a specialized version of an even broader theoretical strategy, the functionalist evolutionary approach (Marshall 1998; Sanderson 1999), is a prominent case in point. There is no one modernization theory, instead the term is shorthand for a variety of perspectives that were applied by non-Marxists to the Third World in the 1950s and 1960s (Harrison 2005). Modernization entails a total transformation of traditional or pre-modern society into types of technology and associated social organization common with the advanced, and economically prosperous and politically stable, societies of the Western world (Moore 1964). Among many definitions, modernization refers to what is 'up to date' in a specific location at any given time. It is usually the result of a process of 'Westernization', involving economic, political, social and cultural changes which contrast with a previous 'traditional' stability. Indeed, any reference to modernity somewhat implies some kind of contrast with a pre-existing order, and in such circumstances conflict may occur (Harrison 2005).

Modernization theories assume that development results from the internal presence of something—development ingredients—while underdevelopment in a society results from the direct opposite—certain internal deficiencies. They see underdevelopment as an original state and a condition of a society that has always existed at some point. These internal deficiencies responsible for underdevelopment include insufficient capital formation in which underdeveloped societies fail to successfully generate the capital required for experiencing a 'take off'—a point for inaugurating rapid economic growth (Sanderson 1999). Another deficiency is the use of outmoded techniques and practice for doing business. The failure of a society to adopt rational business practices impedes its chances for development and keeps its productivity and profit low. Ultimately, modernization theorists argue that underdeveloped societies generally lack the kind of consciousness and worldview on the world that promotes their development (Moore 1964; Sanderson 1999). By and large, modernization theory often tends to equate modernization and 'development', making them seem quite interchangeable (Harrison 2005; Shionoya and Nishizawa 2008). The position of modernization theory is generally that underdevelopment predates the emergence of modern capitalism and capitalist societies; that in fact the problem of underdevelopment became resolved with the arrival of capitalism, and

that development and underdevelopment acquire meaning only when applied to nations incorporated into the capitalist world economy (Sanderson 1999).

For its rather generalizing position on development, the modernization approach is criticized for being too optimistic. In ascribing underdevelopment to those societies which fail to imitate the five stages of economic progress in the West, the theory is criticized for being too over-simplistic (Marshall 1998). In fact, Rostow's modernization approach, "in all its variations, ignores the historical and structural reality of the under-developed countries" (Harrison 2005). But modernization theory's assertion that imitation of the West is a *sine qua non* for development in any society is queried by Barnett (2005), who argues that it may be possible to perceive or postulate a developmental sequence in history, but it is another thing to say that sequence must happen that way or that it ought to cut across other societies. To say the latter is to make a value judgment. And in fact, exactly that kind of judgment has been made, and is made, about the development of political arrangements in many parts of the world (Barnett 2005, 13). Yet this trend is common with the evolutionary theorists of development in Western Europe and North America, who explain societies of the world according to Western ideals and histories. In fact, the epistemology of development reflects an essential ethnocentrism that weighs heavily on contemporary social sciences (Rodney 1972; Archetti et al. 1987).

Marxists known as dependency theorists also offer an alternative explanation of development which extensively criticizes tenets of modernization theory. Their assumptions are founded on the economic determinism of especially the historical materialism of Karl Marx, which posits that every society is characterized by a history of contestations known as dialectics—the thesis and anti-thesis. They see the historicity of societies as the imperative for understanding their development. They believe that the dialectics of societies rooted in their specific histories help to understand their development in terms of changes (synthesis) in material life occasioned by two major forces in history (thesis and antithesis). At the international level, they argue that in development and underdevelopment occasioned by the dialectics (bourgeoisie and proletariat), capitalism manifests as an unequal mode of interaction and as a mode of production exploited by the minority rich countries of the Global North to the detriment and disadvantage of the poor nations of the Global South.

Others, like Samir Amin (1976), construe development and underdevelopment more loosely as open rather than fixed experiences of any society in general, not necessarily any one society in particular. The concept of center and periphery is central to Amin's thoughts on development and underdevelopment and he begins his analysis with the international division of labor and the consequent unequal exchange between center and periphery. As he notes, technologically advanced heavy industry is concentrated in the center while the periphery is confined to light industry, the production of raw materials for the center, and an undeveloped agriculture. But again Amin argues that it is wrong to identify the underdeveloped countries with exporters of basic commodities. This is because many of the advanced capitalist countries also export basic commodities. From his Marxian outlook, Amin consequently defines underdevelopment as the blocking of the transition to

capitalism of the peripheral social formations by the advanced capitalist social formations. In essence, underdevelopment is not simply non-development, but is a unique type of socioeconomic structure brought about by the integration of least developed countries (LDCs) into the world capitalist system (Marshall 1998).

Unlike the view of modernization that underdevelopment is an original state of a traditional society, dependency theorists identify underdevelopment as something created within a pre-capitalist society that relates economically and politically with capitalist societies. From the dependency thesis, underdevelopment results from the dependency of one society on another (Harrison 2005). Using concepts like metropolis-satellite and core-periphery to describe the world's rich bourgeoisie and the world's poor proletariats respectively, dependency theorists argue that underdevelopment is the flipside of development or, put differently, underdevelopment and development are two sides of a coin brought together by economic dependency of one society on another (Cardoso and Faletto 1979; Ritzer 2008). Dependency scholars also critique the writings of underdevelopment by showing that accumulation at the center (the advanced capitalist countries of the West) prevents development in regions like Africa and Indochina. This happens particularly within what they call the peripheral social formations—a description for underdeveloped countries (Amin 1976).

As Rodney (1972) argues, Africa as a developing country in Africa is often represented by the West as the proletariat society of the capitalist world from which countries of the core/metropolis expropriate surplus from which they extract raw materials. Yet the world's capitalist system is craftily designed to favor the West and to exploit Africa's wage labor as a part of the Global South. But as argued earlier, Africa's regime of underdevelopment in the satellite and periphery is not a fixed and inescapable fate. Rather this regime of exploitation, as argued earlier, is contingent on Africa's own level of class consciousness and, in this case, her epistemological class consciousness. It is in this consciousness that she potentially acquires the label of developed or underdeveloped, though this time as a self-imposed reality not as hegemony or direct exploitation from another. And since development and underdevelopment are jointly construed in this study as epistemological realities of Africa, then it follows automatically too that whatever in development discourse represents modern hegemony and the proletarianization of Africa is effectually contingent on the epistemic posture and disposition of the African scholars and scholarship towards the representation of their fate within the development epistemology.

For criticizing modernization theory and for taking a more hostile attitude to Westernization, dependency theorists are also classified in some quarters as underdevelopment theorists. Nevertheless, in concentrating on the mainly detrimental links of Third World with the world system, Marxists are criticized for paying relatively little attention to the domestic structures of Third World societies (Harrison 2005). Using the concept of class consciousness, Marxian thought also reveals that underdevelopment can however translate into underdevelopment if the proletariat (poor working class societies) do not move from a slavery mentality (of a class in itself) to a freedom mentality (class for itself) (Ritzer 2008).

The comparative analysis offered by the foregoing theories as an explanation for development and underdevelopment and their tendency to see development and underdevelopment as systemic processes within and between societies only succeeds in accounting for the structural nature and dimensions of development. Beyond their ethnocentric tendencies and oversimplification and overgeneralization of the development realities of societies, these structural explanations scarcely account for the qualitative (Harrison and Berger 2006) and the intrinsically interpretive nature and dimensions of development within societies they propose as developed and underdeveloped. In fact, as Shionoya and Nishizawa (2008) argue, economic sciences such as modernization are inherently and generally limited in providing an inclusive accounting of development as a historical experience of a people or society, because in equating evolution with development they limit and narrow down the qualitative realities of development. To this end, Archetti et al. (1987) note that the concepts of developing and underdeveloping or emerging societies are suffused with teleology which privileges parts of Europe and the USA as developed over developing nations in Africa. In portraying the world as a unilinear rise from barbarity to modernity as a substitute for the analysis of actuality—real and everyday experiences of people—modernization theory is weak. The evolutionary focus of modernization theory ignores the fact that in reality, the fundamental questions of the ‘developing societies’ are not of difference only but of relationships past and present with countries of advanced capitalism and industrialization. Indeed these very puzzles remain central to the sociology of development itself.

It is crucial to note at this point that although the foregoing theoretical efforts to understand development realities across societies (especially from the structural and macro-perspectives as already seen) are commendable, theories of development are bound by the selfsame limitations that bind social theory formulation, which is that their formulation is contextually informed and therefore also contextually relevant (Pratt 1978). Development theories too, because they are socio-culturally informed and specific, are thus inherently limited in explaining and comprehending African realities which naturally fall outside the province of the mostly Western cultures motivating their postulation. Tony Barnett (2005, 12–13) captures this reality aptly when he established the link between limits of social theorizing on development theorizing, arguing that:

A ‘theory’ is never ‘true’—rather it should be seen as being a very special form of language which sketches out the words we can use to discuss a particular problem and the ways in which we can test our language description against our experience. In the same way that it would be faintly absurd to ask whether the English, Russian or Swahili languages are ‘true’, so it is not relevant to ask whether the specialized ‘theory language’ we use in sociology or any other area of study is ‘true’. Rather, we should be asking whether it is adequate for the job it is being asked to do. The English language is not very good at describing the life-world of, say, the !Kung* people of Southern Africa, because it was not invented to do that job. Similarly, the theoretical language of functionalist sociology has difficulty in describing and making sense of a society undergoing rapid change. In these senses, both English and functionalism are inadequate for those purposes. This problem becomes rather more complex (and interesting) in social science because social theory, being a produced thing—the result of people working/thinking together—reflects the experience and particular view of those who produce that theory. It often tends to support the beliefs which the theory producing group or groups hold about the way society is or ought to be working.

Implicitly, an inclusive understanding of Africa's development realities requires an interpretive turn in epistemologies on development in general and on Africa's development in particular. Owing to the impediments besetting comprehension of Africa's development realities within the macro-perspectives espoused earlier, Barnett's (2005) argument instructs an urgent turn towards a theoretical conceptualization of Africa's reality that acknowledges Africa's internal, compositional and historical attributes and situations. To therefore understand the realities of African development, epistemology must commence from the level of the subjective, micro-level interactions of African societies rather than setting out from the large-scale processes and systemic accounting of development and underdevelopment in societies (Shionoya and Nishizawa 2008). Theoretical representations would necessarily devote their commitment to subjective and interpretive understandings of development from the actors themselves, what Max Weber in the German sense aptly describes as *verstehen*, which depicts an understanding that is subjective and that pays tribute not to the researcher's position but to the research subject's meaning and interpretation of social reality (Coser 1977). Adherence to the tenets of *verstehen* would inspire interpretive understanding and interpretation of Africa's development that supports African studies based on what Peter Berger defines as the 'calculus of meaning', that is, social construction development according to the subjective meanings attached to reality by Africans themselves.

Hence, Rodney (1972) explains that every people have shown a capacity for independently increasing their ability to live a more satisfactory life through exploiting the resources of nature. Because every continent independently participated in every epoch of the extension of man's control over his environment, and because in effect every continent can point to a period of economic development, it means that even in economic considerations, development is a subjective and not a corporate experience of societies of the world relative to themselves as modernization theory argues. For Rodney (1972), Africa being an original home of man, was obviously a major participant in the processes in which human groups displayed an ever increasing capacity to extract a living from the natural environment.

Sustainability and the Epistemology on Africa's Development

To achieve sustainably in the conceptualization of Africa's development realities, this subsection argues for inclusiveness in the epistemic articulation of African realities of development as an imperative for development. Although the drive towards sustainable development is topical in literature, we contextually conceptualize sustainability of development loosely as sustainable epistemology. Seeing development as an epistemological reality, achieving a sustainable epistemology of African realities enables the easy attainment of sustainable development in reality. Central to this conceptualization of development is the mode and patterns governing the representation of Africa in development scholarship and discourse. Epistemology is important because in discourse it not only shapes how a group is represented but also what becomes the fate of such a group as directed by policies prompted and

driven by such discursive representation. Three important concerns connected with the prevailing representation of Africa's realities of development, especially those relative to the imaging of African in African studies and scholarship, are discussed. Representation is discussed vis-à-vis epistemic imperialism as the underdevelopment of Africa, the need for an articulated epistemology and the need for Africanizing the epistemology on Africa's development.

Epistemic Imperialism as the Underdevelopment of Africa

The central argument here is that a new form of imperialism, namely, epistemic imperialism constitutes a major impediment to the sustainable conceptualization of Africa's development realities. In his work, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (1972), Rodney (1972) posited underdevelopment of Africa by the West. This study moves further to posit an epistemological underdevelopment of Africa through the medium already described as epistemic imperialism. Epistemic imperialism is indeed orchestrated through the Eurocentric epistemological enterprise. In the literature alluding to the epistemological underdevelopment of Africa through knowledge production and modes of knowledge production, misrepresentation, underrepresentation and denigrating representation are forms in which Africa witnesses underdevelopment. The mangled explanation of Africa, especially through the use of methodologies informing epistemic explanations that originate from outside Africa, and particularly from the West, remain the principal tools for perpetrating underdevelopment (Airoboman and Asekhauno 2012). As Kwasi Konadu (2014) argues, Eurocentric epistemology of Africa has its origins in the inception and development of African studies in the academy. Given the academic character of African studies in the USA and its geographical and cultural construction outside of Africa, it is evident that the 'founding' of the field lies ostensibly in anthropology and through agents of the European colonial enterprise. For him, the surest way of relocating Africa back into African studies is to relocate African studies back to Africa. But, even if African Studies cannot be relocated back to Africa geographically, the relocation could be done epistemologically and paradigmatically. He calls for an indigenous anchoring and ownership of the study of African(s) by Africans. Decrying epistemological imperialism, he notes that if the study of Africa has been and continues to be driven by paradigms and theories established by non-African scholars, then African studies are an invention of academia, which ultimately serves its own interests and those of non-Africans.

Kolawole (2014) for instance identifies orality, visibility and gestuality as cultural forms that express the African reality. There is therefore a need to contextualize issues from historical, political, sociological and cultural dimensions that add value to the specificity and validity of African data and concepts. Context mediates values and addresses the call for the authentication of African studies. Konadu (2014) aptly captures the colonialism and imperialism driving the discursive representation of Africa in African studies when he argues: