MANAGING FOR TRANSFORMATION OF AFRICA’S SUBMERGED OR SUBMERGING ECONOMIES INTO EMERGING ECONOMIES – THE PRIME MOVER ROLE OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR

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Abstract

The present study examined the prime mover role of the public sector in African states in transforming Africa’s submerged or submerging economies into the status of emerging economies. It was found that the public sector in many countries has played the transforming role for their economies, as in the case of Singapore and other Asian countries (Lerner, 2010). The study also established that, nations who immersed themselves in learning, competently responded to challenges in the business environment, and were determined to succeed achieved development. Actors and agencies in the public sector were, therefore, urged to provide good governance, employ strategic management for efficiency, beat development paths, and get the business environment right for entrepreneurship to flourish. They were further urged to reform public sector institutions, build universities for development (of Science and Technology), professionalize the management of the public service, simplify management procedures, develop or encourage innovation or creativity, re-orient the societal value system, develop the capacity for negotiating at the WTO for favourable terms of relationship with the developed countries, and implement decisions competently.

KEYWORDS: The development marathon; African modernization; African submerged economies; African emerging economies; public sector management; twenty-first century.
INTRODUCTION

“If our civilization breaks down, it will be mainly a breakdown of administration”, so warned Donham (as quoted in Ejiofor, 1981: 140). The public sphere in which the political/administrative power and authority reside constitutes the superstructure of the nation-state. The state has a major role to play in creating performance-enabling environment, given that only the state can, for example, establish the rule of law, provide law and order (security) through its monopoly of violence (Harvey, 2007), enforce contracts, provide education and health care services which are accessible to most citizens, provide correctives for market failure, and an enabler of growth in the era of globalization (El-Mefleh, 2005; Intarakumnerd, 2005; Meyer-Stamer, 1997; White, 1984:100).

A landmark development in enlisting the state for development was the publication of the World Development Report of 1997: The State in a Changing World in which the World Bank (WB) emphasized that institutions matter in determining the development process and urged government agencies in developing and transition economies to adopt strategic management for efficiency (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/World Bank, 1998).

In many countries, state agencies play the institutional role in the development process. The state also formulates policies and provides the framework that makes development possible. For example, The Singaporean government has been able to intervene in the development process and successfully transformed its economy into an industrial power with Singapore generating ten times more GDP per capita. Yet, in the early 1960s, Singapore and Jamaica were at the same level of GDP; Singapore had little by way of natural resources but Jamaica had rich or vast natural resource endowment (Lerner, 2010).

In the UK, the Government’s Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004–2014 (HM Treasury, 2004 as quoted in Lockett et al., 2008) places premium on “an economic imperative (which) is to make sure that scientific knowledge is used by business to create wealth” and concludes that it is the reason “why knowledge transfer – both the science base ‘push’ and the business ‘pull’ – is such an important element of Government’s science and innovation strategy”.

Reconstructed, it seems to convey an unprecedented aspiration to transform the economies of contemporary nation states into entrepreneurial economies whose dominant, defining, or pervasive features are entrepreneurship and knowledge-ability for creating knowledge economy or knowledge society and knowledge worker for generating employment and wealth.

Can the public sector of African states play the pivotal role and midwife socio-economic development? What reforms are necessary for translating the visions of African states into concrete socio-economic development on the ground? The modest objective of this paper, therefore, is to explore the development phenomenon, identify the key roles of the state in the development process and suggest how the state or public sector can play the pivotal role for facilitating and ensuring the transformation of Africa’s submerged or submerging economies into emerging economies.
After this introduction, I structure the rest of the paper as follows. First, I embed the study in the metaphor of the Battle of Marathon in which I relate the development activity to the long-distance race, requiring determination, stamina, a long period of training, and discipline. Second, I suggest that the public sector is positioned to play the prime-mover role for starting off the transformation of African “submerged or submerging economies” into “emerging economies”. Next I suggest how public sector actors and agencies may play the pivotal role in the development process.

In particular, I suggest that state agencies and individual actors consider the urgent necessity for providing good governance, employing strategic management for efficiency, beating development paths, and getting the business environment right for entrepreneurship to flourish. I also suggest the need for reforming public sector institutions, building universities for development (of Science and Technology), professionalizing the management of public service, simplifying of management procedures, developing or encouraging innovation or creativity, re-orienting the societal value system, and implementing decisions. The next section concludes the paper.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

I ground the present study on the marathon metaphor, which Tausch (1999) employed in his analysis of the world development landscape from 1960 to 2000. The hypercompetitiveness of the global economy makes this metaphor a useful way of seeing the issue of interest to this conference. Tausch (1999) himself drew on the ancient Athenian mythology on the Battle of Marathon. The myth has it that in 490 BC, the Athenian army won victory in the Battle of Marathon. Miltiades sent an Athenian soldier, who is thought to be Phaedippas, to take word of the victory back to Athens. He ran a distance 42.192 km from the battlefield to Athens and after shouting out, “we have won”, fell dead from exhaustion.

This story has a dubious origin but the Greek Historian, Herodotus, wrote a story of a long-distance runner, who was sent to seek military help from Sparta when the Persian army was approaching to attack Athens. The messenger ran a distance of 140 miles to reach Athens the next day. His plea was rejected and he ran back to Athens. Now, the Marathon is celebrated in the Olympic Games, where long-distance runners compete for a prize. Those who win the prize are the people with stamina, discipline, long periods of training, and strong determination. As with the Marathon race so is it with the development race. That is, the Marathon race has a close affinity with the hard and long road to the development destination. Some have fallen on the way many times along the way. Others have declined or slumped and collapsed altogether. Still others have returned to the start-line, where they took off from in the first place.

The “lost decade” of development for Africa and Latin America is now well known (Weisbrot and Rosnick, 2003). The United Nations declared a decade of universal development for the 1960s based on the successful Western development approach, which it thought could just be replicated in the rest of the world. It did not materialize (Bezason, 2004). Rather, many countries of Africa and Latin America even suffered regression in the development race; even sinking or submerging, as it were, and are worse in situation today than where they were in the 1950s (Weisbrot and Rosnick, 2003).
Why do we need a conceptual framework? The whole effort involves creating a vivid image that has a closely affinity with the subject of interest to deepen appreciation or understanding of the issues being investigated. According to Conklin (2007), a theoretical (or conceptual) framework is like a beacon to which the captain of a ship orients himself and is guided in navigating the vast expanse of the sea. To the researcher, the conceptual framework is an “epistemological or cognitive beacon” to which he orients and guides himself in investigating the vast expanse of the world. In an uncertain world with temporary and diverse truths, stances, or perspectives, we never seem to agree with one another. No body can engage the whole world. As such, without selecting a theoretical or conceptual perspective, we can easily veer off to an exercise in hydroponics (Conklin, 2007). That is, taking a stance helps all to focus on a way of seeing or perceiving things. Being focused avoids distractions and illuminates the search path that can lead to the truth.

**PRIME MOVER ROLE OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR**

As suggested before, the political/administrative power and authority needed to create legal instruments, institutions, structures, and frameworks and systems for achieving development reside in the public sphere. The state alone can establish the rule of law, provide law and order (security) through its monopoly of violence (Harvey, 2007), enforce contracts, provide education and health care services which are accessible to most citizens (El-Mefleh, 2005; Intarakumnerd, 2005; Meyer-Stamer, 1997; White, 1984:100).

Gerschenkron’s observation (as paraphrased in White 1984: 97) in relation to the state’s role in determining development is relevant to the present discourse,

That successful “late development” takes a form very different from that of earlier industrialisers, notably the United Kingdom. The development process is less ‘spontaneous’, more subject to teleological determination, with the State as a major agent of social transformation in both capitalist (Japan, Germany) and socialist (Soviet Union) contexts.

In a similar vein, Mayer-Stamer (1999) suggested that firms cannot compete without the support of the state.

**HOW PUBLIC SECTOR INSTITUTIONS MAY PLAY THE ROLE**

Providing Good Governance

The concept of “good governance” is a sweetened and broadened version of corporate governance which has been prescribed by the World Bank and the United Nations, as a route to development of nations. It has influenced much institutional founding and administrative reforms, as in the case of the Africa Union (AU) for addressing the development-related problems of the continent (Moolakkattu, 2010).

At the level of the public sector, good governance should embody deliberative democracy involving healthy debate of issues [rather than governing people with the “unexamined prejudices” of a few persons, to use Mason’s (2005) words], rule of law, due process, and equity. These should be cultivated as core human values and made sacrosanct or inviolable. It is worth
re-examining or taking a second look at the governance practices in Africa to see and assure ourselves whether it contains these ingredients of good governance. From my observation, it is doubtful whether there is much good governance in Africa, as the popular uprisings in Libya, Syria, Egypt, Yemen, and Algeria would suggest. In Nigeria, post-election violence has lingered and morphed into terrorism. Due process for addressing grievances is yet to be imbibed in the democratic process. Electoral fraud is detraction from democracy and democratic culture. African countries are yet to develop a high democratic culture. Yet, a sound or deep democratic culture facilitates development. For one thing, it provides political stability. The developed countries of the world also have a deep democratic culture. African countries almost always go to war to change their political leadership, as in the cases of Libya, Egypt, Syria, Yemen, Cote d’Ivoire, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. In the process, vital resources (capital stock such as bridges, roads, factory buildings) which had been built over the years are destroyed and lives lost. So, African countries need to reflect on this area of development with a view to making improvements.

Besides the political and legal dimensions of good governance just mentioned above, good governance of the citizens should entail the provision of basic necessities of life for the ordinary people in each country and their easy access to these necessities of life (water, electricity, roads, education, health care, and jobs). This is the ultimate end of development (see World Bank, 2001). But in Nigeria, for example, the quality of education is on a downward slope leading to a running battle between the Academic Staff Union of (Nigerian) Universities (ASUU) and the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN); subsidy on fuel is being withdrawn, portending escalation of cost of living; and government is unwilling to implement a new national minimum wage of N18, 000 (USD 112.50 at NGN160 to USD1.00) per month despite the biting and increasing poverty. Of course, there are challenges. But governments must brace up for the fact that their citizens will make increasing demands on them. The question to be asked for purposes of reflection is, “what is the purpose of the existence of the public sector?”

The Nigerian democracy is said to be the most expensive and wasteful in the world (Odunlami, 2010), which denies the ordinary Nigerian the benefits of his/her tax money. Add to this waste, the well-publicized corruption in official quarters (Ayorinde, 2011), then the ordinary Nigerian suffers a double jeopardy. Corruption robs the ordinary citizen of his/her tax money and the social benefits that can flow from paying his/her tax. And those involved in massive theft are persons in positions of governance. Thus, it is doubtful whether there is good governance in Nigeria or any country with a high incidence of corruption in official quarters. Development cannot thrive in such a circumstance because funds for investment are diverted to unproductive ends.

I think that there is too much politics but too little of good governance in Nigeria. In Nigeria, everything is politics. To select a good national team to play the world cup tournament, for example, involves politics. But when the team fails, the blame is heaped on the coach. In like manner, there is too much self interest but too little public or common interest. There is also too much ethnicity and ethnic nationalism. People generally think only in terms of what they will gain personally from the system rather than their contribution to it. The common good is all but gone. This is another area that state actors need to look into and do something about.
Employing Strategic Management for Efficiency

Wars are won or lost on the relative strength of strategies that are deployed at battles. It is not surprising that strategy has been the art of the generals. The use of strategy in the theory and practice of management is an emulation of its use in the military sphere. Thus, in business too, corporate strategy is the art of the top management team (TMT).

In management and business, it is simply conceived in terms of a firm’s response to environmental cues. It came to the fore in the 1980s. For example, as the 1980s got underway, numerous signs suggested that company prospects for prosperity and growth would become tougher in the years ahead [Kotler and Singh, (1980)1995:65-83]. It turned out to be so. The 1980s came to be marked with marketing wars, and business became increasingly competitive, which made marketing scholars [for example, Kotler and Singh, (1980)1995:65-83] to suggest that successful (marketing) competition would involve competition-centred strategy as the decisive factor.

The role of strategy in achieving performance can be seen or demonstrated from the dynamic of the Popperian “self-fulfilling prophecy” operating in the social world (Romm, 2001: 20), the operation of Bandura’s “decision making self-efficacy” (Locke, 2007), and the working of the “effectuation logic” as discussed in Sarasvathy et al. (2008).

The self-fulfilling prophecy operates because people can act on the knowledge that certain actions (causes) would produce some desirable results (effects) and thereby contribute to shaping those effects (Romm, 2001: 20). Similarly, Sarasvathy et al. (2008) stated that the effectuation logic “starts from the position that the future is contingent upon actions (taken now) by wilful agents seeking to reshape the world and fabricate new ones”. As such, the future is not a given. Bandura (1997, as cited in Locke, 2007) conducted experiments to show that decision making self-efficacy has causal efficacy; the former is “not an epiphenomenal by-product of other causes or simply a description of past performance.” An epiphenomenon is a secondary phenomenon that accompanies another but incapable of producing results by itself. By self-efficacy is meant that the actor has self-knowledge about his skills and capabilities.

Related to the self-efficacy theory is Ajzen’s (as cited in Audet, 2000) theory of planned behaviour, which suggests that an individual’s intention to perform a given behavior is a quite accurate predictor of the actual performance of such behavior. In the context of this study, it suggests that the intention of the public sector actors, as development actors, can lead to the transformation of the submerged African economies into emerging economies.

Strategy-making, long-term decision-making, and long-term planning are one and the same things, which are path-seeking or path-finding activities. They involve reflecting on where the organization was previously from which it moved to where the organization is at the present time and, finally, trying to determine the most promising path to where it wants to be in the future. Strategy is forward-looking or future-orientated with a visioning of the desired end-state. African states have already launched their strategic management initiatives by their vision statements such as Nigeria’s vision 20-2020 with an aspiration to be one of the top greatest economies by the year 2020.
The future and the path to the future are characterized by uncertainty, indeterminacy, or agnosticism. Part of the indeterminacy or agnosticism suggested above regarding development paths can be illustrated with the trilemma, which African development policy makers face. This consists of whether African countries should take the tried and successful paths, which early developers had trodden and reap the benefits possible, which the “advantages of backwardness” theory (Williamson, 1998: 105-131) would lead us to expect; beat their own fresh path; or take a “middle way”. I hurry to suggest a middle way approach in terms of adaptation. Are we condemned to copying and not for once think for ourselves? As Moruku (2011) reflected with respect to the first option, African countries have modelled their development on the template of their colonializers, with little to show for it.

For most of 50 years, the development think-tank of the already developed world urged Africa to modernize, concentrate on “basic needs” for its development, wait for “trickle-down” benefits from the advanced industrial world or tie its coach to the development “locomotive” of the developed world, adopt “sustainable development”, restructure its economy, and ape its tried and successful development path. Africa did all that but moved from crisis to tragedy (Leys, 1994 as cited in Gibson, 2004; Stren and Halfani, 2001 as cited in Gibson, 2004).

Even the industrialized countries that took the modernization strategy or path to development, with its accent on large scale industries, industrial conurbations, and urbanization, failed to achieve much in terms of human wellbeing and progress. The mass production technologies employed made work external to the worker, alienating, and dehumanizing. Child labour was rampant and the condition of factory workers was so depressing that Robert Owen, a British industrialist, for example, introduced a number of reforms in his factory to alleviate these problems (Koontz and O’Donnell, 1972: 32; Newby, et al., 2002). As the largest and most populous country in Africa, and newly independent, Nigeria attached prestige value to large scale industrialization (Hodder, 1968: 183; Kemp, 1989). Today, the state capitalist model based on large-scale industrialization strategy has failed and largely abandoned for private capitalist approach based on small scale industrialization strategy with SMEs in the centrepiece of development (Okafor, 2000).

The Great Depression of the 1930s, the global financial meltdown (2007-?), the ongoing Euro crisis and so on attest to this observation that there has been no flawless development path must be copied. European leaders have reportedly rushed to stop a rampaging debt crisis that threatens to shatter the European Union’s experiment with common currency and unleash devastation on the world economy (Keller et al., 2011). These are happening to the great economies of the world who had assured themselves that economic recessions are a thing of the past (Gabriel et al., 2010). There is growing turmoil in the world economy.

These disappointments, with the paths sometimes hitting “culs de sac” (see Hart, 2001) or blind alleys, have led even the developed countries to come up with new development strategies and are still searching for the path to sustainable development. Economic growth replaced modernization. But the economistic paradigm of economic growth over-focus on material growth at the expense of human growth progress or wellbeing, which taints it by producing the phenomenon of “growth without development” which is characterized by a disconnection between economic performance and social development (Deneulin and McGregor, 2010; Olopoenia, 1983). People-centered approach replaced or is going side-by-side with economic
growth. The *people-centered approach* is advocated by the World Bank (2001: 6-7), and incorporates the capabilities expansion thesis associated with the economist, Amatya Sen (Qizilbash, 1996). Critics suggest that it is inadequate in conception. As recent as 2008, the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress or “the Sarkozy Commission” challenged politicians, academics and policy makers to engage in a renewed debate on how we are to understand and shape social development in a world beset by social, economic, and environmental crises (Deneulin and McGregor, 2010).

Among the social crises raging in the contemporary world is increasing global poverty. It is taking place through various *mechanisms of impoverishment* such as mass retrenchment, casualization and feminization of labour, payment of *starvation wages*, and *sweatshop practices* (paralleling the use of indoctrinated infant soldiers in many militarized conflicts) (see Gabriel et al., 2010; see Lazarrato, 2009). Poverty-reduction, therefore, has become an avowed development policy around the world. Thus, one current trend of development policy involves the use of entrepreneurship, especially, enlisting and empowering or attending to the growth needs of small scale enterprises (SSEs) to create jobs, generate wealth and reduce social inequality (Ogun and Anyanwu, 1999). In fact, the characteristic capitalist economic crises in the Western world (Barrell and Davis, 2008; Tausch, 1999) occasioned by sluggish growth, recession or depression, rising unemployment, and underemployment have led its governments to develop a strong interest in, and dependence on, SMEs for creating jobs.

**Beating Development Paths**

This follows naturally from the strategic management process discussed in the preceding subsection. What development path should Africa take? There is a temptation to employ development models. But I am not comfortable with the admiration of (development) *models*, as they encourage a “herd mentality” which fosters sheepish, mimetic behaviors. As secondary (“second-hand”) data are to research practice so are development models to the development practice. Primary (“first-hand”) data are more powerful than secondary data, in being self-made and defined for the specific research.

Moruku, (2010) has identified two limitations of policy models, which have equal applicability to development models, namely (i) opacity, embeddedness and idiosyncrasy of model policies, and consequently, (ii) limits to the efficacy of model policies in alien environments; that is, different national cultures and subcultures (see Hofstede, 1987: 2-19; McSweeney, 2002). Copying almost always means that the copier does not understand the copied object well and would lack the flexibility needed to fix it when problems develop. This is not to say that one cannot *draw lessons* from others. According to White (1989),

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The development (approach) of a nation may be a product of its culture. As with organizational culture so is it with a national culture. For example, an organizational culture is a *fuzzy but deeply held* complex set of core values, beliefs, tacit assumptions, ideologies, and *ways of doing things*, which are *shared among organizational members* (in the form of shared visions)
and creates the norms for behaviour. It provides the direction for the enterprise and shapes the context within which the enterprise formulates and deploys strategy (Bednar et al., 2010; Walsh, 2004). This culture is part of firm-specific resources that can be inimitable, non-substitutable and normally non-transferable (Foss and Ishikawa, 2007).

As such, development models can be disappointing to outside copiers. The “Asian Model”, for example, was once the envy of developing countries until it was shattered in the financial crisis of 1997. I know no case of a country that successfully copied it. In view of the circumstances that surrounded the development of the ‘Asian model’ of economic development, it has been observed that the model was not amenable to copying and may not be replicable (see Bello, 1990).

First, the US was flaunting capitalism as a success economic system by ensuring that the capitalist frontline states on the borders of the USSR succeed in industrial development. For example, capitalist South Korea was heavily supported to achieve industrialization. The US propaganda was proved: In stark contrast, the communist North Korea remains underdeveloped while sapping its energy on preparation for a nuclear holocaust and its people remain starved and malnourished. Its political ally, the USSR, also collapsed under the heavy weight of arms race with the United States; with little to spare for civil industrial production and social services (see Andor and Summers, 1998:3-16), driven more so from its feeling of ‘defeat’ in the Cuban missile crisis of 1962. Even China is an amalgam that is a capitalist-communist nation. Russian has embraced capitalism.

Second, the US was compensating these Asian countries for their role in the cold war against the Soviet Union. The US did so by throwing its market wide open to the Asian countries (Bello, 1990). And these countries seized the opportunity: reformed their land tenure system, the legal system and all to create a friendly investment climate and reaped the benefits.

The collapse of these economies effectively ended the so-called ‘Asian model’ (see Bullard, et al., 1998). The collapse itself was orchestrated by the global financial institutions and footloose investors. The liberalization of the capital account allowed a massive influx of short-term fund which were massively withdrawn at the slightest hint of financial problem. There was a run on the financial system of these countries. It is difficult for a bank to withstand a run on it. So was it with the Asian countries, economic model, notwithstanding. With unsustainable trade deficit with these countries and the rest of the world, the US also severely restricted its imports from the Asian countries. This “open and close” policy created economic development and economic disaster in the Asian countries in turns.

The African Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA), which President Bill Clinton enacted for Africa was such a temporary import window that the United States opened for Africa to stimulate economic growth for the Continent. But Africa was unable to seize it. So, the most useful lesson to draw from, instead of copying, the Asian Model, in my view, is that development can be achieved by seizing the development opportunity, as it arises, by taking the necessary actions.

It is frustrating to copy an uncopiable model and traumatized by repeated implementation failures in consequence. Perhaps, this is why our model development policies of the past 50 years ended in tragedy. Yet, the “Asian Model” still has its admirers, possibly because “love is blind”.
African policy makers have noticed the dismal development failures with the first option and are contemplating alternative development paradigms. This conference is part of the effort to chart the course of development, as suggested in the theme: “Reform, Innovation and Modernization of Public Services and State Institutions to Support the Transformation of African States into Emerging Countries”. But African countries vary in their socio-economic, socio-cultural, and politico-legal characteristics. Each country will go back to the drawing board and chart out its preferred mode of development within the broad understanding of the issues involved in the politics of development, namely, that nobody will develop your country for you and no copiable models exist; only lessons can be drawn from successful developers.

**Getting the Business Environment Right**

The business environment consists of the political, economic, social, and technological (PEST) elements or dimensions; this particular arrangement is due to Bhalla et al. (2006), perhaps to show that the environment poses great challenges. The legal component is subsumed in the political dimension. The financial component is part of the economic dimension and the cultural is part of the social dimension. The total environment system is created by government policy and may be hospitable or hostile to performance. Thus, the public sector is the major driver for performance.

From a systems theory perspective, the public sector would need to align the four dimensions of the environment properly so that the working of one can reinforce the working of the other. This is necessary to avoid sub-optimization, a situation where attention is paid to some elements while neglecting others.

But getting a national environment right is a challenge because it is a sub-environment of the global business environment system, which is dynamic and complex-changing. Thus, the state has no complete control of its national business environment just as individual firms have no control of the national external business environment. The tsunami-like shock waves from the turbulence of the global business environment keep lashing at and causing a dislocation in the national business environment.

Thus African countries need to adopt strategic response flexibility to the external environmental contingencies. This strategic flexibility is modeled as depicted in the over-simplified model below.
As the model suggests, the strategic flexibility process cycle is a dynamically adaptive capability. Taking a social embeddedness perspective, which suggests that economic activities take place in social contexts, I suggest that the national business environment is umbilically connected to the global business environment. Each country stands in a systems relationship to others in terms of trade, investment, transportation, and communication flows. Thus, no nation is an island and none is buffered from the working of the global economy.

This working of this model can be demonstrated with the following example. The international business environment that permitted or provided the context for the development of the Asian countries took a different turn at the approach of the 1980s. Kaplinsky (1984) reported that while the Western countries increasingly closed their doors to the developing countries and virtually traded with one another, they were increasingly nudging the developing countries to open their economies up for the exploitation. Thus, Kaplinsky (1984) suggested that the international context would be inhospitable for the industrialization in the Third World, as they would be opening their economies to a closing Western world. This largely accounted for the problems of the Asian countries.

Thus, a country may experience economic difficulties just because the global business environment is turbulent, as demonstrated in the case of the 2008/2009 global financial meltdown, which originated from the financial crisis in the US economy and rippled out to the rest of the world. This is an example of the phenomenon of distant correlation suggested in Shelton and Darling (2001).

Correspondingly, the response (adaptive strategy) from the actors in the public sectors must involve (i) change in its knowledge base, (ii) change in its skills set, (iii) change in its human attitudes or motivation, (iv) change in its human capabilities or competencies, (v) change in its organization structure, and (vi) change in its behaviour to match relevant variables of the global business environment.

Public sector agencies and their actors need to adopt strategic (response) flexibility to environmental contingencies. Strategic flexibility would require structural flexibility (e.g., adopting virtual organization structure using IT infrastructure), behavioural flexibility (or multiskilling by developing and using a skills repertoire), ideological flexibility (by changing core beliefs in light of new learning), systems flexibility (by using general purpose machinery), HRM flexibility (by changing the human resources management practices) and HR flexibility (Beltrán-Martín, et al., 2008; see Han et al., 2009).

Thus, to achieve the status of emerging economies, African countries must negotiate in the World Trade Organization (WTO) for reciprocal openness of the economies of the developing and developed countries. In the negotiations, African countries have been short-changed. One of the notorious areas is the trade-related intellectual property rights (TRIPS), which is used for extracting uxorious rent and creating monopolies for companies in the developed countries (Morrissey and Baker, 2003; Weisbrot and Rosnick, 2003). This accounts for the up-flow of billions of dollars annually from the developing countries, and sapping their capacity to achieve
development. African countries must develop the expertise needed for negotiating with the sophisticated negotiating team from the developed countries.

At the country level, the business environment in Nigeria, for example, is not yet right for industrialization to take off or for achieving the emerging economy status. For example, Akinbogun (2008) found that the Nigerian business environment is inhospitable to the survival and prosperity of small scale ceramic firms such that almost all such firms in the South-western geopolitical zone have collapsed.

**Reforming Public Sector Institutions**

A wind of change in the administration of the public sector or public administration is blowing across the world. This change is bringing about a convergence between public administration and business administration (management). It is happening because public sector agencies are turning to the management practices of the private sector business organizations. In short, this is a process of *modernization of the public sector*.

Thus, recent efforts at reforming public sector institutions (ministries, parastatals, research institutes and the like) have involved the modernization or corporatization of these institutions. Various terms have been coined to describe this phenomenon. These include “new public management” (NPM), “managerialism”, “market-based public administration”, “public service management” (PSM), and “entrepreneurial government”. The direction of these reforms is remarkably similar. According to Samaratunge et al. (2008), these reforms have been inspired by the idea that private sector management techniques and market mechanisms increase public sector efficiency and have influenced public service management in OECD countries in a very large way.

In particular, as practiced in the OECD countries, elements of the private sector management being urged upon public sector agencies include cutting costs; capping budgets and greater transparency in resource allocation; disaggregating traditional bureaucratic organizations into separate agencies; decentralizing management within public agencies; separating the function of providing public services from their purchase; establishing market and quasi-market mechanisms; emphasizing performance management targets, indicators and output objectives; introducing term contracts, performance-related pay and local determination of pay and conditions; and increasing emphasis on service quality, standard setting, and responsiveness to customer needs (Pollitt 1995: 134, as cited in Lowe et al., 2008).

These practices have brought about what is now clearly the convergence of public administration with business administration (business management), as public service organizations adopt business practices such as *customer* service (see Bishop and Hoel, 2008) or responsiveness to customer needs. The customer is enthroned as the sovereign king who reigns over the business domain and invested with infallibility, as expressed in the business creed: “the customer is always right”. In Nigeria, a service compact (SERVICOM) has been created between public service agencies and their clients, which evidences the adoption of the customer service philosophy and practice in public service organizations.
The modernization process I would like to see involves the process of *improving performance through the use of better knowledge*. In particular, it involves *new and better ways of doing things*. This contrasts with traditional or old ways of doing things. This is different from the ideological modernization of neoliberalism, which modernization is corporatization or managerialization of the public service; meaning that the public sector should emulate the management practices of private corporations. This kind of corporatism suggests that the new knowledge is the property of private corporations. Yet, knowledge is the common heritage of humankind. Modernity need not be defined as a fixed era because modernism is or should be defined by contrast with traditionalism. Thus, every period is modern in contrast to its immediate past.

Part of the *reform would involve the adoption of information and communication technologies (ICT)* for easing the accessing and dissemination of information, which has enabled public sector agencies to overcome the problem of bottleneck in the processing of documents and enhancing efficiency. For example, since the Nigeria Immigration Services (NIS) adopted *e-passport processing*, it has reduced the long and winding queues of applicants; passports are issued in a matter of hours instead of processing one for months. University courses can be taken from the house, which can mitigate the problem of limiting availability of lecture halls. In electoral processes, citizens can vote from anywhere in the world. It was reported that President Barrack Obama, the President of the United States signed an important bill into law while he was on a foreign trip, using an autograph machine. Bank queues have been drastically reduced as customers now withdraw funds using the Automatic Teller Machines (ATM), anytime and anywhere of the day. The examples are inexhaustible.

**Building Universities for Development (of Science and Technology)**

Capacity building involves human capital development. The usual mode of human capital development involves education and training humans for shaping their skills, drives, dispositions, attitudes, and behavioural orientations (regarding the *theoretical* relationship between human capital and socio-economic development, see Moruku, 2011a).

This is so important that when countries face challenges, they normally turn to their universities to provide the solutions. In Nigeria, visitors of public universities have asked universities at their convocation ceremonies to come up with the solution to the socio-economic problems of the country. But the visitors have not backed up this assignment with the resources the universities require to perform, which gives rise to the running battle between the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) and the Academic Staff Union of (Nigerian) Universities (ASUU). In the rest of this subsection, I take few case studies on how some countries built human capital for socio-economic development, using their universities and other higher education institutions (HEIs).

**Britain**: The trigger for renewed scientific education for building technical manpower (human capital) was the poor performance of Britain in both the Paris International Exhibition of 1887 and the London Great Exhibition of 1851. Of the ninety classes at the Paris Exhibition, Britain was hardly prominent in twelve (Gowing, 1978). The London Exhibition showed the growing dependence of industry on scientific and technical human competence: Britain’s needless loss of markets, technological leadership, and various growth opportunities awakened
her to increased scientific and technical education (Landes, 1969: Chs. 4-5). Babbage had led a movement for a decline in science in Britain (Cardwell, 1972 as cited in Gowing, 1978).

**Belgium:** In the midst of economic crises in Belgium, academic institutions were given specific technical assignments to build the economy. The Ghent University and Liege University were assigned the tasks of developing technical manpower in industry, civil architecture, roads, and bridges (Pollard, 1981). The Ecole Industrielles, a technical college, was founded to produce skilled technical manpower. The Verviers Ecole Superieure des Textiles rapidly expanded its student’s intake (Betts, 1981). In the opinion of Scholler (as cited in Betts, 1981), the innovations made by these educational institutions transformed Belgium into a great industrial nation.

**Japan:** The Japanese approach to the development of technical manpower was instigated both by the demands of the New Era and the insecurity posed by foreign threats of invasion. The technical accomplishments of the West and the efforts to breach her seclusion were powerful drivers to the development of technical manpower in Japan. Allen (1978) reported that the bombardment of Kagoshima by British warships in 1862 and the helplessness of Japanese authorities before the assault drove them mad about the acquisition of technical know-how.

Samson (1950, as cited in Allen, 1978) documented the enthusiasm of the Japanese technical education, which was designed to acquire new techniques and skills for *matching the West* in practical accomplishments, compel the abrogation of the “unequal treaty” signed after Japan’s defeat in the Second World War and *confront the barbarians on their own terms*. Meiji and his leaders realized that education needed to play a major role in the overall development and modernization for Japan to catch up with the West (Shimizu, 1992, as cited in Jeynes, 2008).

Emperor Meiji then petitioned hundreds of Western educators to come to Japan and *construct a Japanese education system* that would be based on the Western model (Amano, 1990, as cited in Jeynes, 2008). She sourced for technical journals around the world and translated them into Japanese; dismantled, studied, and reassembled equipment and machinery and ‘copied’ them. It may not have been straightforward copying but involved some adaptation so that the final outcome was a Japanese education system, which is now admired and envied in the Western world, particularly in US (Jeynes, 2008). Her manufactured products were very low in quality and were called *japani* in Nigeria, meaning inferior quality. So, Japan was associated with inferior or low quality products. Today, the situation is different; everybody wants to buy Japanese cars for their fuel efficiency and high quality.

What was the outcome? In 1872, the Meiji Restoration resulted in the establishment of the Japanese education system (Shimizu, 1992, as cited in Jeynes, 2008). Japan rose, phoenix-like, from the ashes of defeat in the world war, sealed with the Hiroshima and Nagashaki nuclear holocaust, to rebuild its economy. Japan faced, and is still face, other challenges with determination: terrific natural disasters such as earthquakes and tsunamis (the Fukushima tsunami-induced nuclear disaster is the latest); absence of sizeable natural resources; small land mass; and a territory comprising innumerable islands, which are had to be linked with long bridges. Because of limited land mass, Japan routinely embarks on land reclamations from the Pacific Ocean. One of its airports, reckoned to be one of the biggest in the world, was built by sand-filling the Pacific Ocean. The Japanese hold their beliefs strongly. For example, their belief that Emperor Hirohito, whom they believed to their incarnated god, would drive away the
invading allied forces with the *kamikaze* wind, which gave them the confidence to fight until their
defeat was sealed with the dropping of the atomic bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima.

But she picked up herself and bounced back after the disasters. Thus, it can be seen that
the Japanese are *resilient* and *determined* people with an *enormous response capacity*. They are
workaholics and often suffer work burnout (*). As a result of these factors, Japan attained
industrial and technological greatness, and maintained these. Stevenson and Stigler (1992, as
cited in Jeynes, 2008) noted that during the 1970s and 1980s, Japan possessed the fastest growing
economy among the major industrialized nations of the world. The exports of her industrial
giants such as Toyota and Sony caused Western automobile and electronics companies to lose
their competitive edge and billions of dollars in consequence. Thus, many economists and
educators maintained that the concurrent trends of increased Japanese educational standards and
slumping of those of American bore a good deal of the blame for these economic realities
(Jeynes, 2007, as cited in Jeynes, 2008).

**Other Countries:** For many other countries, the economic pressures of the 18th and early
19th centuries drove the reorientation of their education systems. For example, the Ecole
Polytechnique of France (1890), the Institute of Civil Engineers of London (1810), and the
Charlottenburg Technische Hochschule of Germany (1884) among others were established in
further reported that national apprehensions about industrial and commercial competition from
abroad and obsessions about German technological and technical progress motivated appraisals
of technical education (concerned with skills) and technological education (concerned with the
theory underlying skills) about the turn of the 20th century. The determination in the German
character has been described when someone once said, for example, that the belief of Germans is
dangerous because they *believe in what they do and do what they believe in*.

The European project of modernization coalesced from many complex strands into the
Enlightenment of the 18th Century. One of these strands was a *rebirth of learning* (the
Renaissance) in Europe. The outcome of this rededication to learning has been far-reaching and
this period marked one of the turning points in history of humanity. The Enlightenment was the
outcome or process of this relearning. It *relied on and benefited from science* (*theoretical
knowledge*), *technology* (*applied scientific knowledge*) and *reason* (*thinking for oneself rather
than surrendering to religious indoctrination*) for an “ineluctable progress towards the good
society” and comprehension and control of nature (Scambler, 1996). It engendered a revolution
of ideas and achievements that were unprecedented in human history up to that time.

For example, the age of the Enlightenment was the age of the machine (which spawned
the industrial revolution), democracy, Smithian free market (see Taylor in Ross, 2008). In
particular, Adam Smith published *The Wealth of Nations* in 1771 (which empowered classical
capitalism); Thomas Paine wrote *Common Sense*, which is thought to be the sacred text of
modern democracy; James Watt perfected his steam engine in 1776, which started the Industrial
Age.

What can we conclude from the above historical tour of the development of nations? It
seems that nations that immersed themselves in learning, competently responded to challenges,
and were *determined to succeed* achieved development. This observation is consistent with the
observations or findings of Hermanowicz (2006) to the effect that *persistence explains success*.
Persistence here is an *unyielding determination*. So, we need strong determination and an African Renaissance to start the process of development.

**Professionalizing the Management of Public Service**

Professionalization of the management of the public sector is critical to the success of transforming Africa’s submerged or submerging economies into emerging economies. Professionalism promotes ethical practice and efficiency. Professionalization of management is the rule in developed systems rather than the reign of patronism, amateurism or quackery.

The importance of developing a cadre of professional managers and administrators can be seen when one contemplates the alternative of using quacks in management and administrative positions. One would not present himself to a quack physician for a surgical operation in the place of a qualified physician. Quacks will almost always collapse with the office, institution, or organization because he is not trained and prepared for the position he is placed in.

In order words, professionals have an *esoteric body of knowledge* which is not available to members of the public. Members of the profession must acquire and be certified to have acquired this knowledge before they can be licensed to practice the profession. A *licensing or certification system* ensures that a member has all it takes to practice before issuing him/her the license to practice. As Lauwerys (1969: 32-35) reason, there is a world of difference in terms of systematic and demonstrable knowledge between the gifted amateur and the average professional. Thus, professional training prevents the grave danger of “amateur dilettantism”. They have a *code of conduct*, based on the ethics of the profession, which members respect and observe and erring members are nudged into line. So, there is discipline and control over members of a profession.

There are jobs that a person with good general education can perform with training and retraining. But it takes training and retraining to increase competence. In the civil service, in Nigeria, for example, graduates with good liberal education are taken as general administrators. But they must take qualifying entry examination conducted by the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON). A continuous retraining system is installed such that promotion is based on passing promotion examinations. This is a professionalization process. But in accounting area, a staff must obtain the professional accounting qualification from say, the Institute of Chartered Accounting of Nigeria (ICAN).

**Simplifying of Management Procedures**

The world is *complex and is increasing in complexity towards multiplexity*. This is more so with the onward march of globalization. But someone once suggested that complexity has it value in being multidimensional each of these dimensions constitute points of entry. Thus, there arises the issue of perspectives and possible conflict of views. This complexity is defined in terms of the number and variety of issues, products and services and the density of interactions.

The characteristics of the environment, in a continuum, according to Mador (2000) and Walby (2007), comprise, in the main, dynamism, complexity, and munificence (DCM). In terms of polarities, dynamism (changeability) is opposed to stability; complexity is opposed to simplicity; and munificence is opposed to hostility (also see Boyne and Meier, 2009). Thus, the
opposite polarities are stability, simplicity, and hostility (SSH). Their interactions lead to four clusters of characteristics, which, in terms of simplicity, are being simple-stable or simple-changing; and in terms of complexity are being complex-stable or complex-changing. In the contemporary world, the environment is complex and changing. How can we cope with it?

According to Wilson (2004), “it is precisely because the world is so complex that we need theories to avoid becoming overwhelmed by it. These theories are invariably simpler than the world itself. They partially succeed and their failures are used to add complexity as needed”. As Wittink (2004:3, as quoted in Tadajewski, 2008) once reflected, “Our lives would be subject to enormous difficulty and ambiguity if we did not use rules, simplifications, and various mechanisms to make sense of a complex environment. For that reason alone, it is understandable that we exhibit certain biases in judgments that sometimes reduce the quality of our decisions” (italics for emphasis; words in original).

I here draw on Smith (1976b [1776]: 13, as cited in Loasby, 2007) in the fundamental proposition that the division of labour (simplification and assignment of work) increases productivity and innovation. That is, by its differentiation of focus, division of labour is a prime enabler of knowledge. The division of labour, according to Loasby (2007), is an organizational principle, which has applications far beyond economics and economic systems.

The virtues of work simplification were well-demonstrated during the First World War. Drucker (1968) reported that unskilled Black women were able to participate in the production of fighter aircraft when complex engineering works were broken down to simple bits, which the women could understand and execute.

There may be no simpler ways to simplify procedures than employing the art of teaching in managing people and human organizations. This involves communicating clearly in terms of setting of achievement objectives, clear assignment of responsibilities so that conflict and duplication of efforts are not inadvertently created; instructing, directing, motivating for performance above and beyond the normal call of duty; leading by examples for emulation so that followers just copy or imitate what they have seen done, and mentoring.

Developing or Encouraging Innovation or Creativity

Progress comes from innovations, creativity, and discoveries. Thus, sustainable competitive performance requires being creative. Creativity can flourish through deliberate stimulation. This is the basis of brainstorming and other management approaches to innovation management. Challenge is a good progenitor of ideas. It is often said that “necessity is the mother of invention”.

Robinson Crusoe, the major character in Daniel Defoe’s now classical book with that title is a portrayal of how necessity led to creativity when the character survived a shipwreck in the sea and swam ashore a lone uninhabited island.

Someone once observed that when all sorts of problems are thrown to scientists, they come up with innovative solutions, using their scientific approach at systematically analyzing and tackling things. For this purpose, universities can be asked to come up with a certain kind of machine, for example, and then given the resources to work on it. This was the kind of challenge
the government of Sir Winston Churchill gave to scientists in England during the world war, to find the answer to the German challenge in the war, which gave birth to the operations research as we know it today.

We will not always succeed but we can learn from the failures and improve on our performance indefinitely. Carmeli and Sheaffer (2008) suggest that “preoccupation with failures is a crucial, but often ignored, mechanism that generates a sensitive system with which to develop organizational capabilities designed to advantageously cope with the task environment”. Failure causes reflection and strategization to overcome obstacles to success. Strategic decision making (SDM) process is a planning process, which is never perfect. But universities can continuously fine-tune their decisions in the light of environmental dynamics and learn in the process.

Thus, as stated earlier, recent strategy scholarship sees strategy as practical coping (Chia and Holt, 2006; Regner, 2008). Again this is a way the developed countries use in gaining dynamic capability.

For example, Hänninen and Laurila (2008) studied a case of fourteen successive failures of the bow visor technology in the Baltic ferry traffic that culminated in the capsizing of the Estonia ferry in 1994. It is interesting to note that a topflight German firm was involved in this technology failure. But the engineers have not relented.

Entrepreneurs are often compared to non-entrepreneurs (Kikooma, 2010). In this comparison, entrepreneurs are seen to be more innovative, courageous, and efficient than the non-entrepreneurs. Thus, Antonacopoulou (2006) suggested that everybody needs entrepreneurial education.

Reorienting the Societal Value System

In Nigeria, there is a federal government agency called the National Orientation Agency (NOA). It was established by Decree 100 of 23 August, 1993 which aims at public enlightenment, social mobilization, and value re-orientation. In particular, the vision of the NOA is “to develop a Nigerian society that is orderly, responsible, and disciplined; where citizens demonstrate core values of honesty, hard work, and patriotism; where democratic ideals and principles are upheld; and where peace and social harmony reign”.

Its mission statement is uplifting the spirit, namely: “To consistently raise awareness, provide timely and credible feedback; positively change attitudes, values and behaviours; accurately and adequately inform; and sufficiently mobilize citizens to act in ways that promote peace, harmony, and national development” (National Orientation Agency, 2011).

It is laudable on paper but on the ground, there is not much to write home about. As Moruku (2011a) has pointed out,

The most daunting problem (in Nigeria) is how to tackle the value crisis in the country. The reading culture is gone (Egeonu, 2011). There is value for acquiring instant wealth at the expense of education; schooling at the expense of education; and reading for examinations at the expense of studying and reflection for developing the human person.
Professor Olu Aina (Agbedo, 2011) observed this irrational axiology and suggested that what goes on in Nigeria is schooling, not education. He is right.

There is also value for consumption at the expense of production. In Nigeria, this comprises the acquirement of the latest this and that, such as the latest car (jeeps, utility service vehicles or SUVs), cell phones (Blackberry), television (plasma TV). The value for instant wealth also feeds corruption in the Nigerian national life. For example, about 16 ex-governors in Nigeria have been arraigned by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) alleged offences ranging from money laundering, embezzlement, outright theft, and misappropriation of public funds (Ayorinde, 2011). These involve trillions of naira, which could be used for providing infrastructure, education, and whatever else that would benefit the ordinary person. The waste is such magnitude that the Nigerian democracy is said to be the most expensive in the world (Odunlami, 2010).

There are also value for commercialization at the expense of social or community value and corruption at the expense of honesty. Corruption robs the ordinary citizen of his/her tax money and the social benefits that can flow from paying his/her tax. And those involved in massive theft are persons in position of governance. Thus, it is doubtful whether there is good governance in any country with a high incidence of corruption in official quarters.

Following the corruption and stupendous waste, there are muted hints that many states in Nigeria may be heading for bankruptcy, which may necessitate the merging of some states. In one state of Nigeria, the government has illegally implemented a new tax regime, in which civil and public workers are taxed arbitrarily. Consequently, an industrial action from one sector is dangling like the Sword of Damocles over the ‘head’ of the government.

But the value system, just described above, is at odds with the preconditions of development, namely, immersion into learning, as it was in the European renaissance, competent response to the challenges in the environment, as was the case with Germany, Japan, Belgium, France, and the United Kingdom, which made them to succeed. So, we also need an African Renaissance to jump-start the development process. Thus, this is an area that the public sector agencies and actors need to work on. To do so requires reversing the awry value system from schooling to education; predilection for instant wealth to acquisition of wisdom; community/social service to commercialization; reading for examination to studying and reflection for human development; consumption orientation to production orientation; and corruption to honesty. These values must be taught in the school system, preached in seminars, presented in films, displayed in billboards, and …

Implementing Decisions

Public actors should search for researched solutions and implement policy recommendations. For now, good research findings in academic research journals lie unused and staling away in libraries across the world. These research findings turned out by African academics or intellectuals are found in foreign and local journals.

The search for researched solutions should involve commissioning African academics to conduct research on African problems. At the present moment, African policy makers in the public sector prefer commissioning foreign academics or consultants to conduct research on
African problems. Yet, they know little or nothing about Africa. For example, even many educated North Americans do not know where Africa is physically situated in the world. Their love for America, (as Al Gore would say, “for the sake of America”) causes them to turn inwards and become ethnocentric. Paradoxically, foreign bodies provide grants to Africans to conduct research in Africa on issues of interest to them. As the saying goes, he who pays the piper calls the tone. The foreign bodies do benefit from the findings but Africa does not.

Even this conference is part of the search process. But the findings will make little or no impact if they are not implemented to the letter.

This role cannot be overemphasized because one of the debilitating problems in Africa, particularly in Nigeria, is the inability of policy makers to effectively implement policy decisions. Government programmes have a history of dismal failure in Nigeria. For example, Akeredolu-Ale (1975: 26) cited four studies in which it was found that all major government programmes yielded disappointingly low results even when the evaluation criteria are modest. As Moruku (2010) observed,

There is what seems to be a simmering feeling among many Nigerians that nothing good works in the country; it is soon counterfeited, devalued, or destroyed. The implementation of good policies becomes the opportunity for graft and self-enrichment among members of the policy-implementing agency. Despair can become closure. Policy makers must, therefore, keep striving for success.

This appears to be part of “the Nigerian factor”, which (Nwabuisi, 2008) suggests that bedevils the implementation of laudable programmes and policies.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined the prime mover role of the public sector in African states in transforming Africa’s submerging economies into emerging economies. What can we conclude from the above historical tour of the development of nations?

It was established that the state has a pivotal role to play in creating performance-enabling environment, given that only the state can, for example, establish the rule of law, provide law and order (security) through its monopoly of violence (Harvey, 2007), enforce contracts, provide education and health care services which are accessible to most citizens, provide correctives for market failure, and an enabler of growth. The public sector in many countries has played the transforming role for their economies, as in the case of Singapore and other Asian countries (Lerner, 2010).

The public sector agencies and actors would consider the urgent necessity for providing good governance, employing strategic management for efficiency, beating development paths, and getting the business environment right for entrepreneurship to flourish. There is also the need for reforming public sector institutions, building universities for development (of Science and Technology), professionalizing the management of public service, simplifying of management procedures, developing or encouraging innovation or creativity, re-orienting the societal value system, and implementing decisions.
The study also established that, nations who immersed themselves in learning, competently responded to challenges, and were determined to succeed achieved development. So, we also need strong determination and an African Renaissance for transforming Africa’s submerged or submerging economies into emerging economies.

Finally, African countries would need to develop the capability to negotiate with the sophisticated negotiating team from the developed countries for favourable terms of trade between the two blocs of countries. In particular, there should be reciprocal openness for both African and developed countries.
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At the close of the Second World War, a US general commented that there are too many men of science and not enough of the liberal arts. He made this comment after surveying the needless carnage, destruction of property, and the general human tragedy. The very best brains of the human race are deployed in creating the means that can wipe off the human race several times over.

Excessive self interest begets corruption fed by an irrational primitive zeal for accumulation of *money* in a bid to permanently escape poverty, buy political power, and acquire material property at whatever price.