



Modern Theoretical Approaches to African Development: Navigating Contemporary Challenges

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Abstract

The article explores the theoretical thinking in the domain of African development on issues of sustainability, governance, and economic growth. It critiques crucial approaches such as post-colonial theory, the capability approach, human development theory, and the social exclusion framework intended to remedy Africa's developmental dilemmas. Anchored on this conceptual approach, postcolonial theory emphasises the persistence of colonialism on issues of governance and seeks to redress historical injustice by advancing equity policies toward social groups. There is a focus on the improvement of individual abilities, mass-based citizen involvement in democratisation, and investment in vital sectors like health and education towards innovation and growth. Human Development Theory focusses on people-orientated and pro-poor development that advances economic development in harmony with environmental sustainability for sound long-term human and ecological well-being. Social exclusion frameworks inform developmental policy by emphasising the incorporation of previously excluded persons into the economy and society. Post-colonial theory provides another criticism of Africa's economic dependence by canvassing for self-reliance, economic autonomy, and regional trade as a means of bypassing the cartels of external powers. By synthesising these perspectives, the article gives an all-rounded framework on how to manage the complex challenges that prevent the realisation of development in Africa. Again, it emphasises the blending of theoretical insight with practical solutions to bring about more equitable and sustainable development results. This research contributes to the current debate on African development by bringing theory into alignment with 'actionable policies' and strategies meant to drive long-term sustainability and inclusiveness.

Keywords: African development, Post-Colonial Theory, capability approach, human development, and sustainability