Abstract

In the postwar period, the countries around the world experienced political, economic and social transformation, shaping or adapting different political economic models. On the one side of the world, East Asian developmental states, such as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore, shaped developmental states model, experiencing miraculous economic development though strategic state intervention. African states on the other hand adapted neoliberal economy, which turned out to be a failure, resulting economic backwardation. In this paper, we propose that African states should follow the footsteps of East Asian developmental sates model in order to achieve social, political stability and economic development. For the study, secondary data from international organization has been used, and theories of international political economy is outlined to test the credibility. Although African states face structural problem on the key actors of developmental states model, social, political and economic structure, they can overcome these issue with the effective use of social network service (SNS).

Keywords : Developmental States Model, East Asia, Africa, SNS

1. Introduction

Although there are various political economic models to achieve its development, it is undeniable that developmental states model is one of the most successful model that led to national development in the post-war era. From 1960s to 1990s, East Asian developmental states, such as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore, experienced miraculous economic development through effective use of capitals. At the same time, African states, the ones who followed neoliberal political economic strategy, are still stagnated at the moment, still remaining
as the poorest region in the world.

Thus, there has been increasing number of scholars, such as Adébayo [3] and Chang [8], who argue that African states should adapt developmental states model, as East Asian developmental states have done. Contrastingly, others argue that it is impossible to emulate East Asian developmental states due to change in political, economic and social environment. This paper will argue that African states have possibility to follow the footsteps of industrial transition of developmental states in East Asia via current ICT trend over the world, Social Network Service (SNS). Although there are vast obstacles to overcome, it is possible for African states to experience miraculous economic development via emulating pillar factors of developmental states model; social, political and industrial structure.

2. Background

2.1 Social Network Service (SNS)

Social Network Service, a kind of communication by sending pictures, videos and comments through computer, positioned as the major trend in the recent decade [24]. SNS allowed people in the global society to keep strong ties with their friends and meet new people around the globe by sharing their ideas and information through the Internet. SNS today is not only being used for the social relationship and entertainment, but is also being used as an important tool for social, economic and political engagement [24].

2.2 East Asian Developmental States

In the post war period, there have been massive economic growth among four East Asian countries; Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore. From 1960s to the late 1990s, these East Asian developmental states sustained over 6 percent of annual growth rates of output per person, growing 2 to 3 times faster than other parts of East Asia [26]. They are the only economies in the world that have experienced high growth and declining inequality; along with the economic development, there has been increasing property rights and living standards, fall of poverty rate, rise in life expectancy, and greater quality and quantity of education [22]. As it can be seen on Figure 1, the growths of East Asian developmental states are often explained in terms of economic nationalism, government and bureaucrats playing pivotal role to guide their businesses to successfully integrate in the global market [33]. With the guide of the
government, developmental states successfully transitioned from labor-intensive industry to capital-intensive industry, and are moving vigorously towards Information Communication Technology (ICT) industry, which can be understood as HCI industry as it involves the integration between human (communication) and computer (information technology network). Without a doubt, these ICT or HCI-related industries are the core of current industry which is crucial for the future industry as well.

![Diagram](image)

[Fig. 1] East Asian Developmental States Model

2.3 African Political Economic States

On the other part of the world, Africa, is still the poorest region in the world, with half of the population living on less than $1.25 a day [28]. Indeed, it is necessary for the African states to develop because many believe that due to the globalization, the social, economic and technical gap between states, of global North and global South, can lead towards a global problem, such as terror, pollution, and spread of diseases. Thus, as the gap between global South and the North diminishes, the conflict between them would be dealt better and global well-being would be maintained. However, Africa, the countries which adapted neo-liberal policy for the development, turned out to become a failure. Chang [8] for instance argued that the main cause of underdevelopment of African economy is because of Real Semi-periphery, the developed economies who encourage liberal economic policy although they experienced the development via nationalist policies. Thus, many academics believe that African states should follow developmental states model in order to achieve major growth as East Asian developmental states have experienced [3].

Unfortunately, it is undeniable that current world political economic circumstances made
difficult for African states to follow the footsteps of developmental states as it can be seen on Figure 2. First, painful history during colonization era led African states to have unstable economic nationalism, and second, government and bureaucracy are extremely corrupted to lead businesses in the right order. Third, it became hard for African infant industry to survive due to over-adaptation of liberal policies, which allowed multinational corporations to dominate the market in their countries. Based on these problematic issues, how to overcome these factors though SNS will be outlined throughout this paper.

![Image]

[Fig. 2] Current African Political Economic Status

3. Discussion

3.1 Economic Nationalism

Developmental states model is considered to be strongly driven by nationalism. The nationalism acted as a motivating force behind economic nationalism, leading towards the developmental goal [38]. Influenced by long-term impact of Confucianism, there is strong emphasis on loyalty and nationalism in East Asian culture [10]. Nationalism among East Asian states enlarged in the post-war period, motivated by the notion of national survival against external powers as well; against the superpower, the United States for Japan, against communist North Korea and colonial Japan for South Korea, against communist China and colonial Japan for Taiwan and against independence from Malaysia for Singapore [35].
3.1.1 Cultural Obstacles to Achieve the Developmental Goal

Africa failed to bind people together to form nationalism due to its historical and cultural background. Unlike East Asians who value loyalty and nationalism, Africans value ethnicity, or tribalism [13]. Africa consists of numerous ethnic groups, and value towards tribalism amplified because of the slave trade under European colonialism [21]. During the colonial era, demand for Africans as slaves increased, which increased the leaders of Africa's incentives to raid their people in order to trade with the Europeans [31]. Due to the fear of being raided to become slaves, African states lost trust among their people, and the trust was intensified into the smaller unit; their family, blood ties or their tribe [31].

With heightened tribalism among Africans, the African states achieved independence, with arbitrarily divided territories that was managed during Berlin conference of 1884-1885 by European states [7]. This territorial division did not consider the ethnic and cultural notion of Africa, and by implementing European political structure, democracy, conflict towards dictatorship between ethnic groups took place, leading to chaotic internal violence, such as secession, genocide and civil war [2]. For example, military coups under ethnic issues had been one of the chronic problem in Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Ghana, Guinea, Chad, Central African Republic, Sudan and many other countries, and post-election violence had become norm [2].

Instead of solidifying towards economic development under nationalism, African countries under tribalism are leading towards economic backwardation. Without solidification under nationalism, it will be difficult for the African states to achieve successful economic development through developmental states model.

3.1.2 Unification towards National Development by SNS

To assess the ability to unify the Africans under nationalism, it is not impossible to build up nationalism with diverse ethnic groups. Unlike South Korea and Japan which is inherently nationalistic under absolute monarchy for a long time, Singapore consists of multi-ethnic groups, and was able to build nationalism in an aspect of globalization [18].

Likewise in Singapore, African states can put efforts to unify nation to head towards developmental ethos using social network service. With the emergence of middle class and increasing influence of media and other forms of information computer technology (ICT), Rotberg [25] argues that there has been increasing will for Africans to catch-up their economy ever then before. Indeed, it is evidential that Africa has the highest annual ICT market growth rate over the world. Africa has highest internet penetration growth rate, increased from 10% in
2010 to 20% in 2014 [15]. This is a significant change considering that the internet penetration rate of the world is only 40%. Rise of internet penetration rate allowed African users to access to the major trend over the world, SNS, the medium of exchange of information and thoughts around the globe. SNS allow Africans to recognize their economic position in the world, which will provide sense of economic survival against the other part of the world. This may emerge nationalistic consolidation towards economic ethos among African states.

African governments can also use SNS as a tool to educate their people, on how bringing diverse ethnic groups into harmony is crucial in order to increase their quality of life [2]. Some African states, such as Nigeria are already taking steps to educate their people; Nigeria established National Youth Service Corps and stimulated other similar policies in order to acknowledge the country's vast ethnic diversity [2]. With 250 ethnic groups with over 500 languages in Nigeria itself, it might be challenging due to the large scope to implement the policy, costing a lot of money and time [14]. However, with the belief of the power of SNS which easily spread the information among the people, SNS may effectively educate the population towards nationalism.

3.2 Politics

Moving on to the next major factor of the East Asian developmental model, East Asian developmental state's government and bureaucracy played active role, taking responsibility and enthusiastically guiding their economy towards planned transition, moving through various developmental phases, shifting production from land-intensive to capital-intensive industries [9]. For example, from 1961 to 1961, South Korean government and its bureaucracy, Economic Planning Board (EPB), directly and actively managed 'Five-Year Plan' to successfully transit Korean economic structure from import-substitution industrialization to export-oriented industrialization [29]. As a result, with efficient distribution of resources, the average annual GDP growth rate was rated as 10 percent from the early 1960s to late 1990s, per capita increasing from $100 to $10,000 [17]. Likewise in Singapore, compared to when Singapore was considered as a Third World country in 1960s, Singapore grew dramatically, becoming the world's seventh wealthiest country in terms of GDP per capita, even surpassing its former colonial ruler, the United Kingdom [30]. Taiwanese government, Kuo Min Tang (KMT), on the other hand adapted bottom-up strategy which encouraged the development of the small-medium businesses for the development.
3.2.1 Political Barriers towards HCI Development

However, academics, such as Ake [4] and Williams [32] believe that African states' ideology towards 'developmentalism' are either exploited or lacks inherently. In fact, African states are often criticized of lacking responsible leadership and good governance towards economic development, showing rent-seeking behavior on natural resources [12]. Most African countries are resource-rich countries, rich in oil, gold, diamonds and industrial minerals [20]. However, with these natural resources, African governments are not engaged to formulate economic strategy to form firm economic structure but rather leave their resources into the hands of foreign multinational corporations [11]. Instead of sitting and collecting rents and taxes from foreign firms, African states need to pursue the economic strategy to use the natural resources efficiently by adding values, and successfully shift their developmental phases as East Asians have done.

3.2.2 Political Potential towards Development

There has been increase in role of SNS on political shaping in recent decade. For instance, SNS played crucial role on democratization of Egypt. Facebook played central role to inform Egyptians about their political position, increase their will to be democratized, and allowed them to communicate, providing information on when and where they will protest against the government [5]. Thus, with the increase in fear of the African government who are cautious about the possible collective movement that criticize about the ineffective government, the government could be more encouraged to guide their countries towards economic development. Indeed, as Sebola, Tscheoa and Molopa [27] argue, the spread of SNS can work as a watchdog on government, which encourage government to serve their people's interest publicly.

Some may argue that this trend will unavoidably lead to violent movement towards democratization like South Korea or Egypt, remaining those countries into chaotic position [6]. However, this violent democratization is not necessary, because countries like Singapore, where the government fulfilled their people's material interest still maintain peaceful relationship with their people regardless of economic development and information exchange in the globe [6]. Apart from fulfilling materialistic interest, unlike South Korean case where the government reacted repressively which led violent democratic movement of the working class, Singapore changed their policy from a paternalistic or authoritarian style during 1959-84 to a consultative style of government after 1984, which made people that they are being cared by the government [23]. Most significant change during in 1985 was the creation of the
non-parliamentary institution, the Feedback Unit (FBU) in the Ministry of Community Development, which encouraged people to communicate with the government. Likewise in Singapore, it is necessary for African countries to fulfill their people’s materialistic interest and change their repressive military position to consultative position to guide their country towards development in a peaceful manner. Herein, the use of SNS can be an effective tool to communicate with their people fulfilling their peoples’ psychological need that the country is putting much effort to communicate with their people, allowing them to feel that they are being nurtured by the government.

3.3 Infant Industries

Apart from nationalism and rent-seeking government, another major barrier for Africa to emulate the East Asian model is the market structure of the economy. The economic development of East Asian developmental states could be achieved by intensifying the involvement of the private businesses into the global market [16]. Some developmental states, such as Japan and Korea, empowered their existing potential private sectors, creating conglomerates that can successfully compete in the global market [9]. While others, such as Taiwan, promoted small to medium sized industries to compete foreign competitors [9]. Although their strategies were slightly different, they equivalently first focused on their domestic market, protecting their infant industries or limiting access of foreign businesses, and gradually liberalized their economy when their industries became compatible in the global market [35].

3.3.1 Industrial Barriers towards Development

Contrastingly, African countries pursued ‘industrialization-by-invitation’ strategies in post-colonial period, where foreign capital played the central role through neoliber ideology [19]. Most African economies are structured by centralized multinational corporations, leaving scarce space for African countries to compete in the domestic market [1]. With lack of ability of African businesses that can compete with the multinational businesses that maximize their productivity with their advanced technology, African states are finding difficulties to integrate with domestic firms that can compete in the global market.

3.3.2 Potential for Industry Development via SNS

Unlike liberalizing economy from protective economy, it now has become hard to change
liberalized economy to protective economy due to global pressure towards liberalism. However, African states can take several steps to put restriction on other MNCs and develop their infant industries' capacity to compete in the global market by the effective use of SNS.

First, African countries can use SNS as tool to pressure the multinational cooperation (MNC) to manage their business fairly by persuading the global citizens with human right issue. MNCs tend to abuse human rights for labour exploitation. For instance, although human rights abuse is famous in Democratic Republic of Congo only the minority of the people who are interested into those issues are engaged with it. Through use of SNS, people can pressure those companies to protect those labors from human right violation, restricting Africans from severe labour exploitation and invest more money on other management factors rather than on the production process. For example, human rights abuse of Nike vastly spread along the globe, leading to mass boycott against Nike shoes. Herein, Nike had to change their management style towards manufacturing countries. Likewise, African states should limit MNCs unrestricted behavior at certain stance, reducing their influence.

Second, human capital is the central key factor for the development of the infant industries. Without educated human capitals, they would not be able to survive in the global market. SNS can play crucial role on providing aid. Thus, potential African leaders can seek to be educated by granting scholarship through SNS. As long as they are educated, and as long as African states prevent the 'brain-drain' which is mainly caused by the poor repressive governance, it will be more likely for African states to achieve its developmental ethos.

![Fig. 2 Expected Political and Industrial Effect](image-url)
4. Conclusion

In conclusion, although African countries had been experiencing difficulties to develop via emulating the developmental states model, several steps can be taken to for African states to overcome these problems by the effective use of SNS. Firstly, Africa had been experiencing difficulties to formulate nationalism, the key driving force of developmental state model, due to its historical and cultural context. Here, SNS can increase people’s will to catch-up their economy, and combined with the education educating ethnic diversity through SNS, unified economic nationalism that aims to achieve developmental ethos can be made. Secondly, African governments and bureaucracies had been criticized of lacking responsibility, using their natural resources as a tool for rent-seeking behavior instead of using it competently for economic transition. However, the fear of collective movement that criticizes inefficient governance through SNS can encourage the politicians to effectively distribute the resources. Likewise in Singapore, it is necessary for the government to fulfill their people’s material interest and treat their people consultatively. Finally, African governments have been facing challenges to find compatible potential domestic firms that they can integrate with due to the centralized market structure. However, SNS can help African countries to regulate MNCs by pointing at human right abuse issue. They can also seek to increase the number of educated Africans who may find sponsors through SNS. Thus, although it might be costly in terms of time and money to change cultural, political and economic structure, there are great potentials for African states to successfully emulate the East Asian developmental model through the effective use of SNS.

References


