

# Does Development Aid Help Poor Countries to Develop? A Critical Analysis of Africa's Situation

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## Abstract

This paper examines the illusion of relying on development aid by least developed countries in their development agenda. The paper makes a theoretical analysis of aid by utilising a fusion of Dependency Theories and the Chinese dirge “give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime”. Using the historical, political, economic and capacity building contexts in Malawi as a proxy, the paper contends that development aid is not doing aid enough to development but that it could be perceived just as another masked trap to neo-colonialism. The paper hence recommends that developing countries together with partners of good will should help break this chain of neo-colonialism so that the end of the tunnel, meaningful development possible.

**Key words:** neo-colonialism; dependency; development; historical; political; education.

## 1. Introduction

This paper uses historical, political and human capital perspectives to examine the contribution of donor aid to perpetuating dependency syndrome in least developed countries with bias to Malawi. In this paper, critical incidents in African history, development policies, foreign manipulation of African leadership and education policies have been analysed and suggestions have been made on what could be done to promote development in developing countries and Malawi in specific. While emphasizing that external influence exacerbates dependency, the paper does not spare internal factors like corruption, poor leadership and laziness as complementary factors perpetuating dependency and slow strides to development.

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## 2. Theoretical framework

This study milked wisdom from Dependency Theories of Development with reference to neo-Marxism. Dependency Theories of development were developed around the late 1950s mainly due to study findings by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (UNECLA) which was that time led by Raul Prebisch [1] These studies came in the wake that the modernisation theories that were advocated for development use like those developed by Rostov in 1960 contended that poor countries were poor because they were not following development stages that countries were supposed to pass through to develop. The irony was that while following the prescribed neoclassical theories like modernisation theories still poor countries remained poor. The study by the UNECLA repudiated the *trickle-down* approach to development in the theories as they contended that [2]:

*dependent states supply cheap minerals, agricultural commodities, and cheap labor, and also serve as the repositories of surplus capital, obsolescent technologies, and manufactured goods. These functions orient the economies of the dependent states toward the outside: money, goods, and services do flow into dependent states, but the allocation of these resources are determined by the economic interests of the dominant states, and not by the economic interests of the dependent state. This division of labor is ultimately the explanation for poverty and there is little question but that capitalism regards the division of labor as a necessary condition for the efficient allocation of resources.*

While there have been so many theories and criticisms against the dependency theoretical paradigm, this paper argues that the assertions made by the theories make a lot of sense in understanding why poor countries like Malawi remain poor. With reference to capacity of the developing countries that often receive aid like Malawi; the paper avers that most African countries are underdeveloped because developed countries chain the countries with their aid to perpetual dependence in favour of the developed nations. It is in this light that Ngugi wa Thiongo contends [3]:

*“The present predicaments of Africa are often not a matter of personal choice: they arise from a historical situation. Their solutions are not so much a matter of personal decision as that of a fundamental social transformation of the structures of our societies starting with a real break with imperialism and its internal ruling allies. Imperialism and its comprador alliances in Africa can never develop the continent.”*

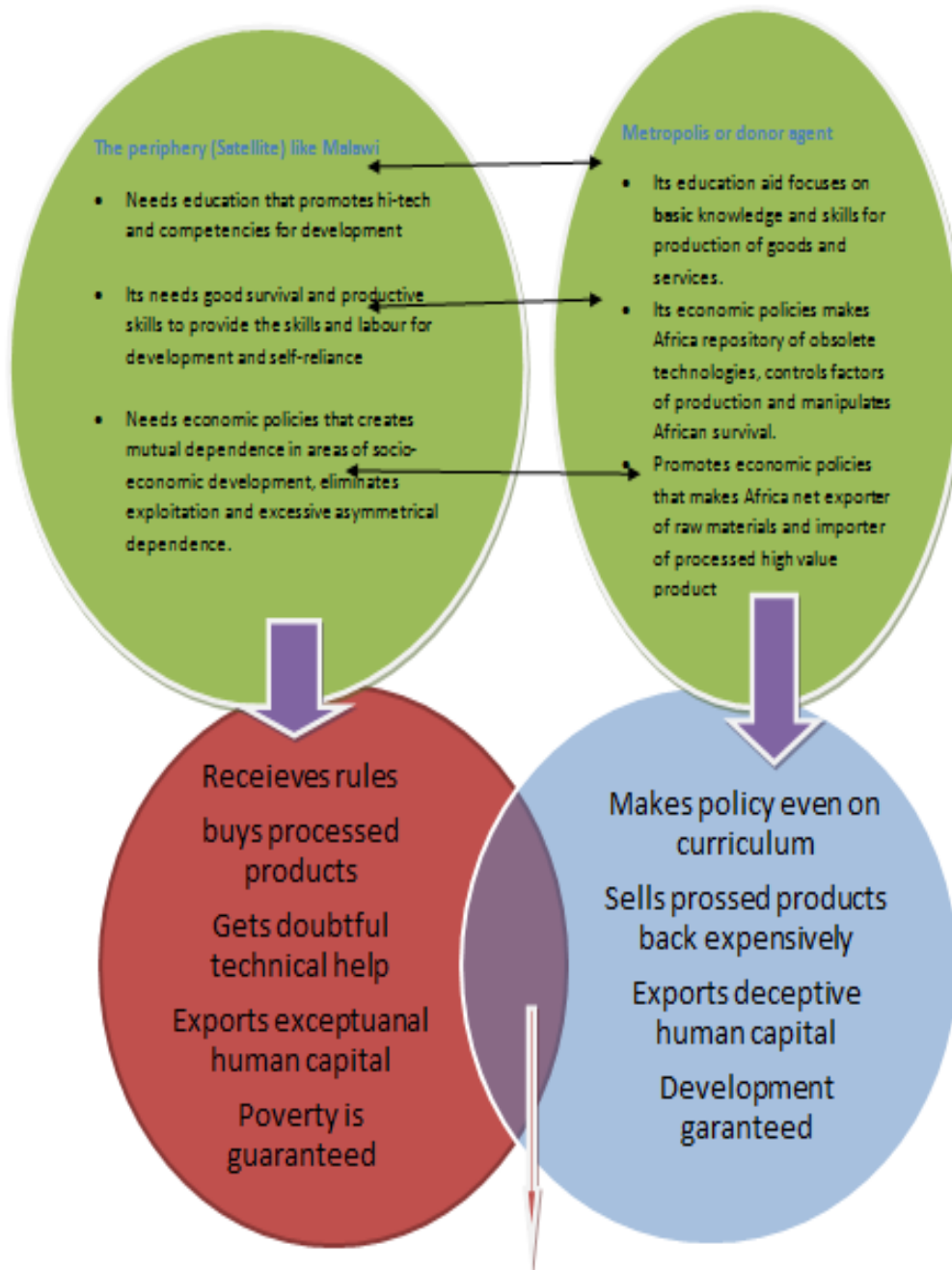
We will examine this stance with the Chinese dirge by assessing whether development aid in the way it is done gives poor nations ‘fish for a day or fish for a lifetime’.

## 3. Conceptual Framework

Using models from Marxist theories and Dependency Theories [4], this paper conceives that super powers still use manipulations of ‘African leadership’, ‘economic policies’ and even ‘education’, among other deception plans, to ensuring that underdeveloped countries remain dependent on the interest of the donor. We argue that there are many subtle manipulations that can be suspected to be purposefully designed to creating and perpetuating dependency. As one may note from the model below, the metropolis like the west, uses the existing poverty in Africa to chain their aid to policies and activities that will make African counties continue to rely on

them. For example, conditions for giving most projects do not allow full ownership by Africans thereby ensuring that Africans do not develop the needed capacity to be independent [5, 6]. For instance, Malawi like many countries produce agricultural and mineral products which are taken away for processing in Europe only to be sold back at obscenely high prices. This is done by making processing aid not focus on having processing plants in the courtiers that produce such crude commodities.

**Conceptual framework designed to show Dependency Syndrome Chain using Education**



Dependency is chained here with the exchange

#### **4. Leadership and the development of Africa**

History indicates that Africa and Asia were developing at their own pace and levels until Europe intervened in the 1850s [7,8,9,10]. From that period, there is mammoth evidence that Europe was bent to getting rich through so many inhuman means including the infamous Partition of Africa. History will always remind us that at that time, Europe under Otto Von Bismarck shared Africa among themselves as if it was a wedding cake [11, 12]. In 1446, the Portuguese were the first Europeans to establish settlements, trade posts and ports of call along the oceanic coasts of African continent. Africa seemed attractive to European rulers for economic and racial reasons. Africa offered Britain, France, Germany and other countries an open market for trade, a market that bought more from colonial power than it sold overall [13]. From then on, African territory was randomly divided between European countries that tried to impose elements from their culture. This background is important because it helps us argue that from that period, there have been and still are so many manipulations to exploit Africa using different strategies of neo-colonialism like 'divide and rule' to ensure that European interests and now other rich countries exploit developing countries for their benefits [14, 15, 16]. In this section, we will argue that historically, leadership in Africa has been getting manipulated deliberately by the west so that good leaders with interests of Africa at heart do not last. We will also argue that instead, the west apparently supports 'mediocre' leadership in Africa because that is a kind that they can easily manipulate and 'plunder' African resources. To understand this, some forthcoming rhetoric questions should be able to elucidate how leadership manipulation has been used as a way of promoting dependency and underdevelopment in Africa.

##### ***4.1 Specific reflections on Leadership Manipulation in Africa***

In this section, we argue that there is overwhelming evidence in history that Western Powers have been exploiting African countries since the partition of Africa in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Through the process of colonialism, different African regions fell under different European countries.

There are many questions that many scholars continue to ask. For example, why was Africa divided and shared by Europe? Which mandate did have? Is it not true that under Otto Von Bismarck, the then Chancellor of Germany, Africa was divided by European countries because they wanted to get raw materials for their industries, to find markets for their products and to protect their strategic interests? Is it not true that after independence, African leaders who questioned these manipulations were either eliminated or weakened to serve the interests of the Western countries? For example, why was Patrice Lumumba of the Democratic Republic of Congo removed from power [17]? Why was Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana removed from power after trying to unite Africa? Why was Thomas Sankara of Burkina Faso assassinated in 1987? Why was Robert Mugabe a friend of the West for a long time silent on land issues? Why did he become an enemy of the West when he questioned land issue? Is it true that Muammar Gaddafi [18] was removed because of his support for the United States of Africa which is perceived as a threat to neo-colonialism? Is it true that Laurent Bagbo of Ivory Cost was removed because he wanted Francophone countries to have their own central banks [19]? Why is it that it took some time for South Africans to get independence? We posit that answers to these questions strongly indicate that African leadership has been and is still often manipulated for the interest of the west.

## **5. Overview of economic development policies and african implementation of imf initiated structural adjustment programmes.**

In this section of the research paper we contend that in this post-colonial period, the old forms of colonialism have just transformed into another form of exploitation but intelligently crafted and hidden in the economic development policies that are initiated by liberal institutions like IMF and World Bank and imposed on African countries for implementation to serve their own interests. To justify this assertion, we will use Malawi's implementation of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) as a case in analysis.

Because the focus of this section is to examine how development policies that are imposed by IMF on African countries have consistently created and sustained high levels of African dependency on development aid through the project of neo-colonialism, one question that arises is as follows:

### **5.1 Who designs and develops economic development policies for Africa and for what purposes?**

Intuitively, this question necessitates us to provide answers to a question "who decides African policy direction and for what reasons?" In line with this question, we further advance a follow up question, "who owns and implements the economic development policies for Africa and under what motivations?"

As we argue in this chapter, we will show that African policies are decided by the liberal institutions that advance the interests of the big powers in the international system of sovereign states so as to maintain their supremacy over what Plebisch [20] called as peripheral states. We will rationally paint a picture that the so called economic stability policies as advanced by the IMF and World Bank through structural adjustment programmes are not the appropriate policies that can led to African economic growth and development, but to structured abject poverty. Using this reasoning, we will advance an argument that Africa cannot claim under any circumstance to have developed the current economic development policies, let alone own them. If anything, what we have seen so far is that Africa has been forced through coercion of development aid carrots to implement IMF economic policies for the benefit of its own masters.

We will also persuasively argue that by pursuing the illusion of development aid as mechanism of moving Africa out of the poverty trap, Africa has moved one step forward and two steps backwards because as [21] once put it in *Dead Development Aid*, "development aid has never assisted African countries to develop, but rather to push further the central developed states up the economic development ladder" so that Africa itself does not manage to catch up with the developed countries [22] We will posit that in trying to get hold of the carrots as provided by development aid, Africa in general and Malawi in particular have been coerced to implement economic development policies that are not relevant for the economic growth and development.

Based on the foregoing argument, we now turn our attention to African economic policy development, ownership and implementation. We examine how policies as designed by IMF and World Bank have sustained the old objects of colonialism through what is popularly known as neo-colonialism program of the developed states over the peripheral African countries.

## **5.2 Economic Development Policy for Africa and its Development and Implementation Processes**

The most fundamental question this paper is trying to provide answers to in this section is; **“who designs economic development policies for Africa and who owns and implement such policies?”**

In our journey of trying to provide answers to this very pertinent question, we will be guided by the reasoning and assertion of Joseph Stiglitz which he made in the year 2000 soon after resigning from the post of Chief Economist of the World Bank as quoted below [23]:

*“The IMF likes to go about its business without outsiders asking too many questions. In theory, the Fund supports democratic institutions in the nations it assists. In practice, it undermines the democratic processes by imposing policies. Officially of course, the IMF does not impose anything. It negotiates the conditions for receiving development aid. But all the power in the negotiations is on one side, the IMF, and the Fund rarely allows sufficient time for broader consensus building or even widespread consultations with either parliament or African citizens”*

Reflecting on the argument of Joseph Stiglitz as highlighted above, one gets the impression that global economic development policies are to a large extent decided and designed by the liberal institutions and carefully imposed on developing countries through biased negotiations of conditions for receiving aid. Because the policies are pre-designed in Washington without even consideration for consultations and consensus building with African countries, most scholars and African Governments see those policies as being developed through undemocratic processes. But where they are accepted, it's because the donor agencies put the poor countries in a 'do or die' fix; accept the conditions and get aid or refuse and don't get!

The development of economic policies by officials in Washington, Brussels and London is normally not in resonance with the needs of African countries as they are crafted on desks without cross checking with the intended beneficiaries of such policies. This is what probably convinced Bingu Mutharika to believe that the programmes and priorities that the IMF and World Bank develop are just forced upon African Governments by International donor communities such that they don't address development needs, let alone appear to have any relevance to what is actually taking place on the ground [24]. Instead, it would appear that these institutions do not care much about the needs of peripheral states so long as the carrots are still available to entice them to implement policies that are in misalignment with the African needs.

In fact, using the dimension of carrots within the development paradigm of “carrot and stick”, the liberal institutions uses development aid as an attraction or motivation to force and persuade developing countries change or adjust economic development policies that are not working in favour of the liberal institutions' masters. One may ask: where should policies that are already working be adjusted to and for what purpose? Which assumptions are there to determine the direction for policy adjustment?

We believe the direction to which African policies are requested to be adjusted to can best be revealed in the concerns once raised by Mark Lynas in the *Zambian Nation* of the year 2000 as captured by Fred M'membe, editor of the post [25]:

*“It is not right for a Bank to run the whole world. They do not represent anybody’s interests other than the countries they control them. What this means is that the USA and its elites and allies run our countries.”*

It should be understood that this statement was produced by Mark Lynas at a time when the African economies were going through difficulties in adjusting to the newly imposed structural adjustment programme for Africa as initiated by the World Bank and IMF. The lamentation above gives an impression that policy adjustment programmes were geared towards changing African economic development policies so that they could be in line with the aspirations, needs and interests of the powerful global capitalist power houses. The target was to control global economy and finances, perpetuate neo-colonialism with all their eyes on the ball of sustaining global economic supremacy of their masters, through exploiting African states. Although this statement appears to be so strong, it is not impossible to show its validity when one examines how the SAP for Africa was implemented as put forward by the IMF and World Bank through the advancement of macro-economic stability policies instead of promoting macro-economic growth policies. In order to understand the depth of the argument, let us now examine the theory of macro-economic stability policy as a mirror image of IMF structural adjustment programme for Africa.

### ***5.3 The IMF Policy of African Macro-Economic Stability and its Impact on African Economic Growth and Development***

The policy of macroeconomic stability, popularly known within liberal institutions like the IMF, World Bank and WTO as sound macroeconomic development policies for Africa is understood better when discussed within the context of neo-colonialism as embedded in the objects of The Washington Consensus. Therefore, we will discuss this policy concurrently with a discussion on African neo-colonialism as depicted through the elements of Washington Consensus. But what is neo-colonialism?

Kenneth D. Kaunda , former president of Zambia once described better in 1966 what neo-colonialism is all about and how over the years it had impoverished African economies when he posited that *“it is an attempt to undermine the sovereignty of African states through the guise of subtle economic and political tolls”* [26].. This statement should be understood in light of what African states had been losing in the economic sector as a result of neo-colonialist behavior advanced by the developed states in Africa. In his reasoning, Kaunda felt that neo-colonialism could one day render political freedom insignificant when “they could wake up one morning after independence only to find itself enmeshed in a series of economic and political quagmire [27].

From the perspective of Kenneth Kaunda as depicted in the statement highlighted above, there is strong indications that developing states are undermined through economic and political mechanisms that control its direction of economic development. The silent policy of neo-colonialism provided an opportunity for developed states to advance development of dependency syndrome in Africa. The dependency theory as discussed in concurrence with neo-colonialism indicates that the objects of the latter is to use foreign capital or aid so as to maintain old economic links with former colonies [28] with the whole purpose of securing and accessing cheap sources of raw materials while preserving markets for their finished and value added products. Essentially, the raw materials are secured to facilitate continued economic growth and development in centre states while

markets are preserved and monopolized through emphasis on creating areas of free trade preferences and economic zones for controlling global trade and finances. It is these characteristics of neo-colonialism that traps Africa in the mesh of abject poverty.

Having discussed the concept of neo-colonialism, there is need to understand how this concept is related to the macroeconomic stability policy as imbedded in the Washington Consensus. Bingu Wa Mutharika considered and emphatically described the Washington Consensus as a set of neo-colonial dogmatic principles imposed by the developed countries on developing countries through the World Bank and IMF with the sole purpose of keeping African economic development policies under control. It would appear that Bingu believed that African states have got the capability and expertise to develop their own policies, but fearing that the African countries could catch up with centre states if they could be allowed to implement good and relevant policies; liberal institutions have been used as tools to control the economic development path of African countries [29].

One of the mechanisms that they have used to achieve this intended goal is the advancement of dogmatic principles in the Washington Consensus which require an African state to receive aid only if it has adopted and implemented sound macroeconomic policies as contained in the Structural Adjustment Programmes for Africa. These kind of policies are what is called macroeconomic stability policy. The Macro-economic stability policy is considered as an economic development policy based on the concept of zero-economic growth. It assumes that African economies can only grow if it could be stabilized first. The aspect of stabilization demands that Africa has to achieve zero growth first and start all over through the process of economic growth. In our view, this is counterproductive to African initiatives to achieve macroeconomic growth.

What is striking is that the IMF and World Bank think that growth can take place on its own so long as the economy is liberalized and stabilized. In the thoughts of IMF economists, they seem to be convinced that economic stabilization could be achieved through liberalization of trade, allowing the free inflow of goods from industrialized countries that compete with infant African industries, promote cash budget system in Africa while developed countries implement their budgets through deficit financing. This is very dangerous situation because allowing the market forces to dictate the competition between African and developed industries when they have substantial amounts of differences in terms of technological and capital resources is tantamount to providing a dosage prescribed for an adult to a child with the hope that both of them will recover from their illnesses. Obviously, the Child would be suffocated by high levels of dosage such that he can easily weaken and die. This is the situation that IMF through concepts of market liberalization, privatization of Government assets and businesses, adjustments of exchange rates, interest rates and inflation is trying to create for African economies to suffocate and weaken for the benefit of perpetuating dependency [30].

The IMF seems to fail or pretend not to understand that infant African industries cannot compete with advanced developed industries in the liberalized markets because of high levels of structural differences and technological development. IMF also pays a blind eye to the fact that macroeconomic stability policy induces distortions in the African economic environment such that increased income and productivity issues are relegated to the margins of macroeconomic growth and development thereby creating fertile ground for zero-economic *growth*.



Although they argue that African economies cannot grow without being stabilized first, we contend that this notion has proven over the years that it hinges heavily on level of growth of economy such that weak economies cannot rely on implementation of such a policy to grow. The focus of policy stabilization is on managing expenditures and consumptions and in line with this; African countries were silently made to abandon putting much of their focus on managing productivity and income generation. This has been a case over the years such that most countries had been pursuing social projects without much attention on income generating projects. But how do you expect African economies to grow when the orientation of the policies are towards eliminating sources of income generation and achievement of high productivity?

In our opinion, we argue these economic policies were meant to perpetuate neo-colonialism since as they put it; IMF SAP for Africa not African Programme implies that ownership of the development process has never been in the hands of African states. To this effect we logically ask; *“who owns the development process if policies are crafted and designed by IMF and World Bank without due respect for thorough consultations and consensus building in the states receiving aid? [31]”*

Contrary to sound macroeconomic stability policies, we posit that Africa needs to pursue macroeconomic growth and development policies that create jobs and produces high productivity levels through conscious management of the economy and development processes that could not take away the sources of income for governments.

So far, we have argued against imposition of economic development policies on Africa by IMF and World Bank. However, because of the short and medium term benefits that development aid provided, we saw that a number of African countries including Malawi implemented IMF SAP in anticipation of resuscitating economies. Was the implementation of such programmes beneficial to a country like Malawi which at the time of implementation SAP had just started witnessing some level of economic growth and development? The answer to this question is a resounding “NO” because there is overwhelming evidence that SAP did not help Malawi as a country. For example, Ng’ong’ola [32] indicated that SAP had advocated for economic and public policy reforms that eventually lead to privatization of state owned companies, rendered some employees in those companies redundant and drastically reduced the support that were being provided to local farmers through Agricultural subsidy. Although we feel subsidies are not the strategic solution to alleviating poverty, we still notice that the developed countries provide subsidies to their farmers and this is what could be described as double standards in the application and implementation of global economic policies by the Western powers.

In his study, Ephraim Chirwa also revealed that SAP had brought negative impact on the formal and private employment sectors as both contributed to massive levels of high unemployment since some employees were rendered redundant during the adjustment period. By implication, those employees that had lost their jobs had no regular source of income, thereby impacting negatively on their living standards.

Ng’ong’ola did put it comprehensively when lamented that SAP had created difficulties for African countries to the developed countries because while it promoted free market economy, there was still strategic protection of developed markets such that few African countries could manage to export their products to those markets.

Worse still, there was little initiatives for technology transfer that could be utilized in the African processing industries to add value to African raw materials.

It could therefore be argued that the IMF/World Bank initiated SAP did not bring any positive impact on Malawian and African economies, if anything; it perpetuated chaining these economies on the pole of excessive development aid manipulation in favour of developed countries, thus confirming the reasoning of George, S [33] when he argued that:

*“Debt is an efficient tool of exploitation of peripheral countries. It ensures access to other raw materials and infrastructure on cheapest terms. Dozens of countries must compete for shrinking export markets and can export only a limited range of products because of Northern protectionism and their lack of cash to invest in diversification. Market saturation ensues reducing exporters’ income to a bare minimum while the North enjoys huge savings”*

Having argued that SAP and IMF economic policies have not helped African to develop, we strongly recommend that IMF and World Bank should create room for African countries to develop their own economic policies that could be in line with their respective challenges and needs. Indeed Africa should be allowed to develop and implement policies that facilitate creation of employment, value addition, elimination of unequal economic benefits out of free market economy and facilitate peripheral economies to grow so that poverty could be eliminated and tangible develop witnessed.

## **6. Dependency syndrome and education**

This section scrutinizes whether there are elements which suggest exterior pressure on education policy, planning and practice that could be interpreted as attempts to perpetuate dependency of the developing countries by the developed nations. Education is analysed here because as some scholars argue, the one who controls a curriculum, controls future generations [34, 35]. While we understand that aid is important, we also think that aid can be counterproductive in education when it undermines needs of the people and ownership of education programs and policy by the indigenous beneficiaries. Firstly let us look at the introduction of universal primary education (UPE) in most African countries with focus on Malawi. Generally, UPE was introduced in least developed countries because access to basic education was low and studies mainly sponsored by World Bank suggested that primary education has better economic returns than higher education like tertiary education. It should be understood that after attaining independence, most African countries invested in higher education including secondary so that Africans would responsibly take over the posts that were previously held by colonialists [36]. For Malawi:

*The main objective of education at that time was seen to provide middle level manpower to fill posts left by colonial government. In the second education development plan, covering 1985-1995, priority shifted from secondary and tertiary to primary education.*

The unfortunate part is that policy change mainly after multiparty democracy was generally bohemian. There is persuasive indication that multinationals and other agents were deliberately used to ensure that education focus

was not on the much needed areas for development. For instance, UPE which most countries embarked on with huge financial costs has been generally a real flop as quality and relevance of education seems untraceable. In short, we may agree with Polelo that higher education was killed on the altar of efficiency and equity. The period of focus on primary education was also one of a decline of higher education in Africa and worldwide [37].

### **6.1 How is education used to perpetuate dependency?**

Education is worldwide considered to be a *sine qua non* for the development of all sectors of the economy and life in general. But by putting almost all our eggs into one basket vis-à-vis, free primary education, the human capital that is produced is not as productive because they miss critical and hi-tech skills that go with higher education. As the 2002 World Bank Report summarises:

*Sustainable transformation and growth in all sectors of the economy are not possible without the contribution of an innovative tertiary education system which helps build the absorptive capacity required for a lasting productive impact of private sector investment and donor resources (World Bank, 2002, p.xi).*

In other words, it can be taken with suspicion that not much is happening in higher education in preference for UPE which is not yielding much dividends. One may think that this is a new scheme by an exploitative mind from the west to ensure that the huge population only knows basic production skills and survive in the process of being good producers and not processors. In this an approach, most developing countries produce human capital that can only produce crude resources like tobacco and cheap services like labour so that only the west can make more profit after processing them. In other words, basic education is preferred so that people from the poor countries do not die because they need to live so that they continue to produce crude and cheap products. But they should not have what Freire alludes to as a liberative education, otherwise, they will know that their products are being stolen away by the same people who pretend to be their sources of help [38]. Ngugi wa Thiongo rhetorically summarises about this deception by the west on Africa by wondering [39]:

*Why does needy Africa continue to let its wealth meet the needs of those outside its borders and then follow behind with hands outstretched for a loan of the very wealth it let go? How did we arrive at this, that the best leader is the one that knows how to beg for a share of what he has already given away at the price of a broken tool? Where is the future of Africa?*

We also argue that the other way some developed countries continue to underdevelop poor countries is through the scholarship conditions. In this case, by creating poverty in developing countries and transferring good jobs away, fine brains move out of their countries to learn and work in developed nations. Even education means taking these fine brains away from their countries and their research is often done in the host countries thereby making their knowledge and relevance exported away systematically. No wonder we have countries in Africa where there are very few doctors, professors, engineers and other professions because they have been given a 'do or die fix' of poverty which makes them stay away from where they most belong to in Africa. But as Ngugi summaries; to develop "Africa needs back its economy, its politics, its culture, its language and its patriotic writers". For this to happen, it's essential that we understand and act on what Walter Rodney 1973 book argues

in *How Europe underdeveloped Africa*. In his summary [40]:

*A ... more indispensable component of modern underdevelopment is that it expresses a particular relationship of exploitation: namely, the exploitation of one country by another. All of the countries named as 'underdeveloped' in the world are exploited by others; and the underdevelopment with which the world is now preoccupied is a product of capitalist, imperialist and colonialist exploitation. African and Asian societies were developing independently until they were taken over directly or indirectly by the capitalist powers.*

We therefore assert that for African communities to develop, they need an education that helps them understand these manipulations which make them dependent on super powers. The education system should help them break off the yoke of the subtle colonialism that has a different shape and grip now. The education should help them unite and fight their common problems together. That would mean crafting an education system by Africans for African needs. Otherwise, depending continually on multinationals like World Bank and IFM will simply make education plans and development plans continue to serve interests of emperor powers.

## 7. Conclusion

This paper has argued that while Dependency Theories have received criticisms from different quarters, the theories still stand tall in helping understand how rich countries use the same principles explored by dependency theories to exploit least developed countries. The paper has further contended that there is massive evidence of manipulation by the west from history, leadership, economic policies and education to support that there is a shift from colonialism to neo-colonialism in how development aid is done in Africa. By sifting examples from many parts of the Africa and Malawi in particular, the paper concludes that unless African countries see the 'deception plans' in some aid development policies from the west, Africa may continue to suffer the yoke of neo-colonialism and underdevelopment. On the whole, this conclusion does not imply condoning internal weaknesses in the countries like corruption, laziness and lack of accountability.

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