COMBATING CORRUPTION IN AFRICA THROUGH INSTITUTIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: PEERING IN FROM BUSINESS-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

ABSTRACT

Corruption remains a significant barrier to the socio-economic development of Africa, despite efforts by various local, national and international stakeholders to combat it. Mishra and Maiko (2017), in their article which was published in *Africa Journal of Management*, suggest that business schools could serve as institutions of change by incorporating students-elders partnerships in their curricula to develop ethical business leaders who will help fight corruption. In this article, I respond to Maiko and Mishra by refining their idea to make it more feasible within the current African context. I also outline why their idea might not be effective for combating systemic corruption in Africa, and propose an alternative focused on training business students to become institutional entrepreneurs in Africa's political arenas. This article is intended to start a dialogue that will facilitate the development of novel and effective ways of using business and management education to combat corruption in Africa.

Keywords: Corruption, institutional entrepreneurship, business-government relations, corporate citizenship, Africa

INTRODUCTION

Corruption is highly endemic in Africa. It is not only prevalent among the political class and the public sector, but it is also common within the private sector. Having become so prevalent in African societies (van den Bersselaar & Decker, 2011), corruption has evolved into an institution of its own (Teorell, 2007). In other words, corruption has become "normal" in Africa (Apter, 2005; Hasty, 2005; Smith, 2007). It is a way of life which manifests through informal payments to government agencies and personnel or fraud and misappropriation in the public and private sectors. Though some level of corruption is recorded or expected in all countries in the world (Mishra & Maiko, 2017), it has to be mentioned that corruption in Africa is very high. According to Transparency International (2016), 41 of the 47 SSA countries in its Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) scored below 50 on a scale ranging from 0 to 100 where 0 is "highly corrupt" and 100 is "very clean". Similarly, in the 2016 Competitiveness Report by the World Economic Forum, 25 of the bottom 38 countries for ethics and corruption are African, which illustrates the pervasiveness of graft and bribery in the region.

A lot has been written about corruption in Africa (e.g. Abdulai, 2009; Albert, 2016; Mishra & Maiko, 2017; Okogbule, 2006; Shehu, 2004) and considerable work has been done to curb it, but the gains are not significant. Therefore, newer and more effective methods for combatting bribery and corruption in Africa are needed, and in that respect I commend Mishra and Maiko (2017) for suggesting the development of ethical business leaders as a strategy for dealing with the menace. In this paper, I respond to the Mishra and Maiko's (hereafter MM) article in *Africa Journal of Management* with the aim of starting a dialogue about the role of business education in the fight against corruption in Africa. While I applaud their idea, I discuss its weaknesses and present an alternative approach.

The remainder of the paper proceeds as follows. Next, I evaluate MM's proposal, which I refine to account for some realities in most African countries. Thereafter, I critique why, generally, student-elder partnerships aimed at developing ethical business leaders might not be effective for combating corruption in Africa. Subsequently, I propose an alternative idea which focuses on training business students to become institutional entrepreneurs in Africa's political arenas. Though I integrate MM's ethical leanings into my idea, I emphasize the promotion of corporate citizenship and activism as a more effective way business schools can be useful for combating systemic corruption in Africa.

MM's IDEA - "COMBATING CORRUPTION WITH CARE: DEVELOPING ETHICAL LEADERS IN AFRICA"

MM's article highlights the worsening state of corruption in Africa and outline how other challenges in the region are often linked to corruption (e.g. violence, hunger and starvation, preventable diseases, high infant and maternal mortality rates, illiteracy). Based on literature (Andersson & Heywood, 2009), MM define corruption as the "abuse of positional power for personal gain" (p.2) and argue that corruption persists in both private and public sectors. They acknowledge the complexity of the roots of corruption in Africa, and assert that finding the means to combat the menace should supersede exploring its sources.

MM also argue that Africa lacks revolutionary leaders who can address the problem of corruption (Rotberg, 2004), making it necessary for all Africans to take responsibility and not rely on political leadership only (Maathai, 2010). They believe that despite the possibility of a dysfunctional system compelling otherwise good people to engage in corruption, individuals can challenge and change norms through appropriate behaviour (J. M. Weber & Murnighan, 2008). Subsequently, they propose that business schools could provide a sustainable and long term solution to corruption by "training business students in Africa to act ethically" (p.5). Such ethical training should be grounded in typical African values of care and collectivism (West, 2014) in order to address the adverse effects of self-interested and egoistic values which students can develop through current business curricula (Krishnan, 2008; Wang, Malhotra, & Murnighan, 2011). Precisely, they propose that business students should be allowed to "observe how people actually live by their ethical values especially when they are faced with ethical challenges" (p. 8). To this effect, they suggest that business schools should provide mentoring by promoting student-elder partnerships to enable students engage with their communities and develop ethical values. Practically, MM propose action research projects as the appropriate method for achieving their proposal.

I commend MM for bringing business education to the fore of the fight against corruption in Africa. Their proposed idea of integrating ethical values in every business subject is laudable. Although corporate social responsibility (CSR) and ethics have increasingly been taught in business schools (Matten & Moon, 2004; Palthe, 2013), they are often treated as a strategy or a source of competitive advantage (e.g. Martinuzzi & Krumay, 2013; Saeidi, Sofian, Saeidi, Saeidi, & Saaeidi, 2015). Moreover, it appears most ethics courses are electives (Rasche, Gilbert, & Schedel, 2013), so students are not compelled to enrol. Hence, incorporating selfless and others-values into business education could reduce the cheat tendencies (i.e. copying in exams, plagiarism, etc.) of business students (McCabe, Butterfield, & Treviño, 2006), and help combat corruption.

However, MM's proposal does not reflect some of Africa's socio-cultural realities, hence its implementation might not offer the breakthrough needed to combat corruption. Therefore, I advance a refined approach – community service learning – which fits better with the institutional circumstances of most African countries.

Community Service Learning: A Refined Approach

MM's idea of utilising student-elder partnerships as a launchpad for ethical education faces some practical challenges. First, many students in Africa perceive business education as a route to wealth and good life. Relatively limited job opportunities for other professionals other than health care workers (e.g. doctors, nurses, pharmacists) and business experts (e.g. accountants, marketers, human resource managers, financial analysts, bankers, etc.) accentuate this perception. Therefore, there is high demand for and enrolment into business programmes in Africa, which makes it difficult for business schools to pair or connect large numbers of students to the few supposedly least-corrupt elders and mentors (i.e. traditional and religious leaders).

Second, religious and traditional leaders in Africa are corrupt too (Pring, 2015). For example, some pastors in Nigeria have been accused of supporting corruption by promoting the view that profit or gain comes from how much religious offerings one gives to the church (Windsor, 2015). They reportedly preach immoral values such as materialism, which drives wealth accumulation and leads people into unethical behaviour. Third, the centres of higher education in Africa are few and are mostly located in cities, which limits the number of potential elders or mentors whose ethical life could possibly be observed by students. The partnerships could be rendered ineffective if students are required to travel out of their study locations on a regular basis in order to observe or meet their mentors, mainly as this could strain their meagre budgets. It is also highly unlikely that African universities and business schools will cover related expenses, considering their own financial constraints (Darley & Luethge, 2016). Furthermore, poor research culture in African universities (Puplampu, 2015; Sawyerr, 2004) could render action research, as suggested by MM, very difficult to conduct.

In refining MM’s idea, I advance that students, prior to entering higher education, mostly live with their parents and extended family members. Also, most of them go back to their communities during school breaks and holidays. Therefore, African business students do not experience a lack of exposure to ethical decision making. For much of their lives, they see their parents and family/community elders make ethical decisions in the face of temptation. Moreover, over the past three decades, African countries such as Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, Lesotho, Swaziland, Zambia and South Africa integrated religious and moral education into their primary and junior secondary school syllabi (Adeyinka & Ndwapi, 2002; Potgieter, 1980), but that has not reduced corruption. Thus, the important issue here is not about seeing or observing ethical behaviour, but about doing.

Consequently, I suggest that community service learning whereby groups of students are allocated to selected communities and tasked with collaborating with local leaders or elders to address development problems could be used to teach care and ethics in business schools. Such projects could span the entire period of study or a single semester depending on appropriateness, and could help students develop a sense of awareness and empathy towards others (Seider, Gillmor, & Rabinowicz, 2011). Some universities in Africa already have community service embedded in their curricula, albeit in non-business programmes such as development management. For example, the University for Development Studies (UDS) in Ghana has a project called Third Trimester Field Practical Programme (TTFPP) which requires students to live among rural people and collaborate with community leaders to find solutions to pertinent development problems.

More subtly, business schools in Africa could teach care, compassion, and generosity by promoting social entrepreneurship (Elmes, Jiusto, Whiteman, Hersh, & Tor Guthey, 2012; Worsham, 2012). This will entail tasking students to engage with local communities to turn socio-cultural problems into business ventures. Social ventures will have the twin effect of strengthening community identity and sharpening business acumen among students. As students become deeply connected with communities, they are more likely to be considerate and collectivist and less likely to be capitalistic and greedy.

Though I suggest social entrepreneurship, I acknowledge its weaknesses (e.g. Dacin, Dacin, & Tracey, 2011) For instance, social entrepreneurship may not be entirely altruistic as portrayed by some scholars (Tan, Williams, & Tan, 2005). In this respect, entrepreneurs could use social causes to achieve economic goals (Dacin et al., 2011), which suggests that business students could fake community identity and care as a means to profitability or financial prosperity. Accordingly, even though I offer the above refinements to MM's idea, I still have reservations about combatting corruption through ethics. As businesses do not seem to evaluate the ethics of the candidates they recruit (Unruh, 2008), business schools may not treat MM's idea with the seriousness it deserves.

WHY TEACHING ETHICS IN BUSINESS SCHOOLS MIGHT NOT ERADICATE CORRUPTION IN AFRICA

Probing the Theoretical Foundation of MM's Idea

MM do not explicitly articulate the theoretical underpinning of their idea. However, their focus on Africa's collectivist cultural values and norms of caring, sharing, compassion, generosity, cooperation, cohabitation, tolerance and respect suggests that they implicitly draw on institutional theory (Scott, 2005) while their treatise of intrinsic motivation and behaviour is rooted in theories of psychology. For clarity, I will probe their theoretical foundation from an institutional perspective, and then show how institutions shape motivation, behaviour and psychology.

African countries are dominantly collectivist (Eaton & Louw, 2000). Individuals consider themselves to be part of broader communities to which they are loyal (Takyi-

Asiedu, 1993). The sense of belongingness to a larger group nurtures values such as love, care and empathy which, according to MM, have eroded over the years. Consequently, the decadence of these cultural values accounts for the prevalence of corruption in Africa (Mishra & Maiko, 2017).

Though MM acknowledge that corruption has become "deeply entrenched in the system" and has become part of life in Africa (Simplice, 2014), they seem to treat the problem as an "alien" phenomenon which can be eradicated through the reaffirmation of traditional African cultural values. The truth is that corruption has evolved into a functioning institution of its own in Africa's dysfunctional institutional environment (Teorell, 2007; van den Bersselaar & Decker, 2011). In this sense, corruption is "normal" and people have come to accept it as common practice (Mulinge & Lesetedi, 2002).

As institutions are seen as a source of stability and order (Scott, 2001), I argue that reaffirming and promoting traditional African values, as advocated by MM, might only maintain the status quo, which will not change the trajectory of corruption. Long-held African values of compassion and community did not prevent corruption from thriving, and there seems to be little these values can do now to curb it. In fact, the pressure to engage in corruption, a principal route to private wealth accumulation in Africa (Mulinge & Lesetedi, 2002), seems stronger than the pressure of community and intrinsic ethical motivation, especially as African people have increasingly become materialistic and individualistic (Maathai, 2010).

The strong forces of corruption eventually lead to institutional isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) whereby individuals and organizations facing the same dysfunctional institutional conditions become homogeneous in their behaviours, especially in their corrupt practices (Venard, 2009). Two of the three mechanisms of institutional isomorphism identified by DiMaggio & Powell (1983) are particularly useful for understanding the prevalence of corruption in Africa. The first is coercive isomorphism whereby formal institutions exert pressures of legitimacy and homogeneity on dependent actors. In Africa, it is very common for government agencies to compel other parties to collude or pay bribes. The second mechanism is mimetic isomorphism whereby firms and individuals model themselves after others who or which they perceive to be successful. In this respect, corruption in Africa is entrenched by firms and individuals imitating the unethical practices of others in order to receive fair or equal treatment. In business, mimetic mechanisms are common when strong market competition increases pressures for homogeneity and imitation (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Gao, 2011; Venard, 2009). For example, a firm may decide to pay a bribe after knowing that another firm has received favourable treatment through bribes (Venard & Hanafi, 2008).

From the foregoing, I argue that coercive and mimetic pressures to engage in corruption cannot be addressed by informal institutions of care and community. For instance, the power of the State and its involvement in coercive isomorphism renders individuals' intrinsic ethical motivation impotent in the fight against corruption. After all, the State plays a more crucial role in determining the "rules of the game" (North, 1990), and if the State legitimizes corruption, cultural values may have little influence on the practice. Further, as intrinsic motivation reduces when people are faced with threats, coercion or punishments (Deci, Ryan, & Koestner, 1999), the motivation to behave ethically will be hampered by coercive isomorphism and other powerful forms of social control. In sum, MM's idea will mainly reinvigorate traditional African values, but those values will be part of a set of institutions, which includes corruption, and thus will not do much to address the problem.

The Inadequacy of Ethics Education: Practice in Perspective

In as much as I agree that good ethical values are useful in the fight against corruption, I hold the view that teaching ethics to business students will not make significant in-roads in arresting the type of corruption that plaques Africa. My reasons are two-fold. First, the corruption that is most inimical to the socio-economic development of Africa exists mainly in the public sector. For example, hunger and starvation, lack of access to drinking water, outbreaks of preventable diseases, maternal and infant mortality, poor transport systems, and high illiteracy among others are not caused by the pilfering or greed of private businessmen and women in Africa. In fact, most businesses in Africa are informal and family owned (Bruton, Ahlstrom, & Obloj, 2008; Khavul, Bruton, & Wood, 2009). The capital for these firms comes from family members, which renders the consequences of private sector corruption idiosyncratic and limited to a small social group, unlike public sector corruption which has systemic effects. Business executives in Africa may be perceived to be highly corrupt (Pring, 2015), but their actions do not harm the public as much as those of politicians and public agencies. The only exception to private sector corruption is banks whose corrupt and unethical practices could cause systemic shocks as seen around the world in the 2007/08 financial crisis. Nonetheless, there are no major cases of scandalous corruption and systemic effects in Africa’s banking industry.

I argue that bad public governance is the major cause of systemic bribery and corruption in Africa (Mbaku, 2010). The socio-economic problems of Africa are caused by corrupt and visionless political leaders who use their positions power to distribute, allocate or appropriate public resources to enrich themselves (Lopez-Claros, 2014). This can be hypothetically illustrated by a Minister of health using funds for eradicating malaria and infant mortality to buy a new official car or to furnish his/her office, a Minister of agriculture commercializing (for personal gain) fertilizer earmarked for rural farmers or even a President diverting State funds which could be used to fight HIV/AIDS to build personal palaces and estates. Bad political leadership can also manifest through corrupt politicians allowing their countries to be exploited (Mishra & Maiko, 2017), such as condoning the extortions of the police force or accepting the shoddy execution of public contracts by private business people.

In 1991, the United Nations estimated that US$200 billion was stolen by Africa's ruling elites, an amount that was more than half of Africa's total foreign debt at the time. Fast forward in 2016, the United Nations reported that corrupt practices cost developing countries about $1.26 trillion a year – money which could be used to fund public infrastructure, provide social services or alleviate abject poverty. The main argument here is that, the private sector is not a major source of the corruption-related problems in Africa, as implicitly assumed by MM. Instead, the private sector is often a victim of corruption (Faruq, Webb, & Yi, 2013). In this sense, developing ethical business leaders will have little to no effect on combatting "substantial" corruption in Africa.

Second, even if business schools develop ethical leaders, systemic corruption might render ethical values worthless. As noted by MM, "when a system has become corrupt – for whatever historical reasons – people who don't want to engage in corruption feel compelled to engage in it because it becomes essential to surviving" (p.4). In Africa, corruption is highly entrenched to a level that minorities or individuals who try to combat it often get isolated, victimized or "burned out". The very people with power and authority to fight corruption – the political elites – are the ones who seem to benefit most from it, and as a typical African proverb goes: *why bite the fingers that feed you?* In other words, why change a system that is beneficial to you? The lack of political will to fight corruption (Abdulai, 2009; Lawal, 2007) and the resultant pervasiveness of this menace gives little opportunity for firms and individuals to escape it. Corruption has become normal and part of everyday life in Africa (Hasty, 2005; Lawal, 2007; Smith, 2007).

As such, businesses are subjected to the contextual influence of corruption. Global competitiveness and corruption surveys by Transparency International and World Economic Forum reveal the struggles businesses face in African countries. World Bank's Enterprise Surveys also capture the extent to which corruption obstructs business in Africa. Subsequently, I argue that ethical business leaders may find it hard to beat the system and change the trajectory of corruption. This is because agency responsibilities require managers to maximize shareholder value by advancing business interests and making profits (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). Additionally, managers' own remuneration and job security is often tied to firm performance (Kroll, Simmons, & Wright, 1990). The resultant pressures could compel business leaders to indulge in unethical behaviour to increase their firms' profitability, especially when every other firm is doing so or has to do so in order to survive (Hess, 2009). The concept of institutional isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 2001), as discussed previously, explains how this situation can occur.

I contend that business executives are most likely to bend their ethical values and engage in corrupt practices if these practices are "normal" within the contexts they operate. Holding onto ethical values and resisting to join the corruption bandwagon will only defeat the purpose of enterprise, as it could lead to losses and business failure (Unruh, 2008). Imagine a situation whereby firms have to pay bribes to get oil exploration licenses and permits. If other firms in the industry are paying up, would an ethical manager resist the temptation even if it will result in his/her firm never getting a license? Resistance will be tantamount to closing shop (Control Risks, 2016). In sum, ethical business leaders will struggle to fight systemic corruption if their response is mainly passive resistance (i.e. refusing to collude or pay bribes).

A plausible way teaching ethics in business schools could help combat corruption is if business students eventually become political leaders who will instil ethical values in their appointees and the public sector. However, a quick glance at the biographies of African Presidents shows that most of them have law, political science, and international relations backgrounds. So, what is the way forward? I propose that business schools are still relevant in the fight against corruption, but their role has to focus on developing institutional entrepreneurs in Africa's political arenas.

DEVELOPING INSTITUTIONAL ENTREPRENEURS IN AFRICA'S POLITICAL ARENAS

Combating corruption in Africa will require a change in institutions, not a reaffirmation of existing institutions which may only lead to stability and maintenance of the status quo. Emphasizing and promoting traditional African values (Mishra & Maiko, 2017) will not necessarily bring forth the radical reforms required to curb corruption. Rather, institutional actors (i.e. individuals and organizations) must consciously exert effort to buffer and change the dysfunctional institutional frameworks which allow corruption to thrive. Therefore, in advancing the way forward in the fight against corruption, I draw on neo-institutional theory, and specifically on institutional entrepreneurship (Dacin, Goodstein, & Scott, 2002; DiMaggio, 1988; Garud, Jain, & Kumaraswamy, 2002).

Institutional entrepreneurship refers to "activities of actors who have an interest in particular institutional arrangements and who leverage resources to create new institutions or to transform existing ones" (Maguire, Hardy, & Lawrence, 2004: 657). These actors – institutional entrepreneurs – use their resources and capabilities to change formal and informal institutions (DiMaggio, 1988; Greenwood & Hinings, 1996; Powell & DiMaggio, 1991) and alter the rules of the game (George, Rao-Nicholson, Corbishley, & Bansal, 2015). The change occurs through a political process which reflects relationships between interests, agency and institutions (Maguire et al., 2004). Institutional entrepreneurs lead this process by identifying and framing problems, mobilizing other stakeholders and spearheading collective attempts to change values, norms and beliefs in social structures (Fligstein, 1997; Rao, Morrill, & Zald, 2000).

The literature on institutional entrepreneurship has dominantly focused on crafting, transferring or shaping organizational practices (Canales, 2016; Fortwengel & Jackson, 2016) or advocating multi-stakeholder response to healthcare (George et al., 2015; Maguire et al., 2004). Institutional entrepreneurship has rarely been applied in the fight against corruption, even though there is sufficient expectation of its potential efficacy. In business, institutional entrepreneurship can be likened to political-CSR (Frynas & Stephens, 2015) whereby firms (mostly multinational firms) play political roles to address socio-cultural problems such as famine, healthcare deficiencies, illiteracy and environmental degradation (Margolis & Walsh, 2003; Matten & Crane, 2005; Scherer & Palazzo, 2011). However, political-CSR has yet to go beyond addressing idiosyncratic problems to tackling systemic issues such as corruption. Combating corruption in Africa will require overt political influence, which socially responsible multinational firms are most likely to avoid in foreign countries.

Since corrupt practices affect firms (Fisman & Svensson, 2007; Spencer & Gomez, 2011), business schools in Africa should nurture students into future institutional entrepreneurs by exposing them not only to the sources of corruption and the effects of corruption on firms and communities, but also to the approaches and strategies that could be deployed by the business community to bring about political transparency and public accountability. Fighting corruption in Africa is unlikely to succeed unless the underlying political imperatives are reformed (Szeftel, 2000). Such reforms can be achieved by teaching business-government relations to impart a sense of political awareness and citizenship in business students.

The concept of institutional entrepreneurship, however, raises the paradox of embedded agency (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Seo & Creed, 2002), which is summed up by the question "how can actors change institutions if their actions, intentions, and rationality are conditioned by the very institutions they wish to change?" (Holm, 1995: 398). Putting this paradox into perspective, it is imperative to address whether teaching business-government relations can really help students to change the corrupt institutions within which they are embedded.

Institutional embeddedness is defined by an actor's "awareness of alternatives, openness to alternatives and a motivation to change" (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006: 29). By this definition, highly embedded actors lack knowledge of institutional options, exhibit low tolerance towards boundary-spanning ideas and have a strong inertia to change. I argue that teaching business-government relations will reduce embeddedness, as it will expose students to institutional voids, increase their interest in national policy issues and equip them with strategies for successfully influencing change in Africa's political and public arenas. Importantly, leaders who are knowledgeable of business-government relations will think or see things differently. Due to their low embeddedness, they are more likely to be peripheral players with strong tendencies to disengage from institutionalized practices (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006). They will have weak ties to other institutional actors and less awareness of institutional expectations (Galaskiewicz & Wasserman, 1989; Westphal, Gulati, & Shortell, 1997), such as bribes. As outliers or non-conformers, they are also likely to be disadvantaged by prevailing norms, which will bolster their efforts to advocate for change (e.g. D'aunno, Succi, & Alexander, 2000).

What to teach in Business-Government Relations Classes

As the name suggests, business-government relations simply refer to the links between government and business. Governments' actions and inactions affect firms (Liedong, Rajwani, & Mellahi, 2017), which makes it imperative for the latter to find ways of influencing political environments where policies and regulations are formulated (Doh, Lawton, Rajwani, & Paroutis, 2014; Hillman & Hitt, 1999). Business-government relations involve constructive engagement between business, governance systems and civil society, with the aim of solving economic, political and social problems.

Unfortunately, the role of political institutions in business and the inter-connectivity between public governance and commercial markets has not received adequate attention in business schools, leading to a generation of managers with good knowledge of market strategizing but insufficient understanding of how they can influence political systems to shape society (Schepers, 2010). In Africa, business schools need to develop managers who understand and can change their political systems to find sustainable solutions to the problem of corruption.

In teaching business-government relations, one of the first things to address is the concept of corporate citizenship. Past scholarship has described firms as corporate citizens (Matten & Crane, 2005; Moon, Crane, & Matten, 2005; Wood & Logsdon, 2008), mainly as they perform political roles to ensure common good (Scherer, Baumann-Pauly, & Schneider, 2013). Corporate citizenship aims to influence the "design and implementation of rules and public policy...for the public interest" (Scherer et al., 2013, p. 477), which is consistent with institutional entrepreneurship. On the grounds that firms are citizens, they are permitted, if not required, to participate in political processes (Alzola, 2013). Advocates of corporate citizenship recommend that firms should not consider the interests of their shareholders only (Alzola, 2013), but also make contributions to promote social justice, environmental responsibility, and economic development (Moon et al., 2005). Corporate citizenship education should thus address the fact that regulatory power does not reside solely with the government but also with firms which contribute knowledge and resources to the resolution of policy issues (Scherer et al., 2013).

The conception of firms as corporate citizens obviously comes with some rights. First, firms should be able to engage in open dialogue with political and non-political actors (Alzola, 2013). They should participate in political processes to advocate appropriate laws and regulations (Neron & Norman, 2008). In doing so, firms can utilize various political strategies such as lobbying, advocacy advertisements, press conferences, commentary on white papers or sponsorship of politicians (for political strategies, see Hillman, Keim, & Schuler, 2004; Keim & Zeithaml, 1986; Rajwani & Liedong, 2015). For instance, they could lobby for the right set of regulations and sponsor or endorse "best political candidates" (Alzola, 2013). They could also use advocacy advertising or press conferences to sensitize and mobilize communities or constituencies for political action.

Corporate citizenship also imposes obligation on firms. On one hand, firms are expected to represent their stakeholders (e.g. customers, communities, etc) in political arenas, share their knowledge of social problems with politicians, and be responsible for outcomes within their areas of involvement with society (B. Hamilton & Hoch, 1997). On the other hand, firms are expected to meet economic, legal, and ethical responsibilities imposed on them by their stakeholders (Maignan & Ferrell, 2000). In this regard, business-government relations syllabus has to address ethics, as advocated by MM. There is strong potential for firms to use their influence on government to pursue idiosyncratic, greedy and selfish ends (Alzola, 2013; Barnett, 2013), and since business students have higher cheating tendencies (Krishnan, 2008; McCabe et al., 2006; Rasche et al., 2013), they need to be exposed to ethical frameworks regarding lobbying and corporate political activity. These ethical guidelines should be grounded in utilitarian perspectives and must address the morality of the purpose of political engagement, mechanisms of influence and appropriateness of outcomes (see Gao, 2008; Keffer & Hill, 1997; Oberman, 2004).

Though corporate citizenship in Africa has been documented (Visser, 2005), it rarely occurs in political settings. One of the ways corporate citizenship and institutional entrepreneurship can be used to tackle systemic corruption in Africa is by firms and business leaders advocating for transparency in the financing of political parties. This sort of advocacy can be done on the basis of reciprocity. As government agencies expect firms to file audited financial reports, so should firms insist on political parties complying with campaign funding regulations.

In most African countries, political or campaign financing is not transparent. At best, some countries have laws regulating the formation, operations and financial reporting of political parties, but compliance is typically low. The laws may require political parties to file financial reports with independent electoral commissions but these commissions lack the capacity to enforce compliance. Consequently, individuals and organizations donate funds to political parties, with implicit or explicit agreements to be compensated with political positions, sole-sourced public contracts or misappropriated State funds. Due to a lack of information about these donations, public scrutiny is limited, political accountability is low and systemic corruption is high. The anecdotal truth is that, corruption that is linked to political financing costs the State much more money than other forms of public sector corruption (e.g. police bribes). Therefore, closing this loop hole will lead to significant progress in the fight against corruption. When politicians are no longer able to divert State funds for personal use, they will have a stronger motivation to stop everyone else from doing so.

Business students should be taught to know that exerting political influence can be done collectively or individually (Hillman & Hitt, 1999). In other words, firms can choose to pursue institutional entrepreneurship alone or with others. African countries have collective cultures (Eaton & Louw, 2000; Triandis, 1989), which makes it easier or perhaps useful for firms to collaborate with other stakeholders in the fight against corruption. Collaborations, particularly industry-wide coalitions, will make it difficult for African governments to persecute, victimize or discriminate against individual firms. Collaborations will also enable firms to pull their limited resources together for political action. Forming coalitions or even the process of institutional entrepreneurship requires managers to use political tactics such as bargaining, negotiation and compromise (Maguire et al., 2004). These tactics are not distant from traditional African values (Mishra & Maiko, 2017; West, 2014), and should thus be reinforced in business-government relations classes.

How to Teach Business-Government Relations

The popular tools that almost all business students around the world remember are PESTLE and Porter's frameworks[1]. The former and even some of the latter address political environments as well as the effect of government policy on business. However, students are mainly taught to use these tools or frameworks to assess business climates for the purpose of identifying opportunities and threats (e.g. Grant, 2016; Johnson, Whittington, Regner, Scholes, & Angwin, 2017). Though recent scholarship has gone further to depict a two-way relationship between business and government (L. Hamilton & Webster, 2015), the treatise of how business can influence government is still narrow and shallow. It is therefore important to integrate institutional entrepreneurship and corporate citizenship into the teaching of

[1] PESTLE is acronym for Political, Economic, Social, Technology, Legal, and Ethical/Ecological. Porter's frameworks include Porter's generic strategies, Porter's Five Forces, Porter's Diamond

political environments in African business schools, in order for business students to understand that the role of corporations in society goes beyond profit making.

In the fight against corruption, much emphasis has to be placed on doing, not talking. In this sense, teaching business-government relations in classrooms will not produce the desired effect if students are not engaged in practical activities. African students might not have knowledge or experience of legitimate corporate political activity. In fact, there may not even be stories or examples of institutional entrepreneurship in Africa's political arenas. Hence learning can be abstract and ineffective. This raises the importance of experiential learning in the fight against corruption (A. Y. Kolb & Kolb, 2005).

Experiential learning is a process whereby students learn through experimentation (D. A. Kolb, 1984). In line with MM and consistent with my refined approach to teaching ethics (discussed earlier), business schools should give students first-hand experience in the mechanics of governing. This can be achieved in three ways. First, students could be given the opportunity to observe parliamentary sessions and interact with legislators, especially when bills and papers are being read. Second, students could be assigned to the public or government affairs departments of selected African firms and tasked with helping those firms address specific issues or influence government policies that have political, social or economic consequences for business and society. Finally, students could be grouped and tasked with politically influencing the resolution of specific problems at the local government level. This will require them to form coalitions with community leaders and non-governmental organizations, sharpen their issue-selling skills and draw upon political tactics such as bargaining, negotiation and compromise.

The Challenges and Limitations

Teaching business-government relations in business schools can help in the fight against corruption, but this approach will face challenges. First, Africa is home to dictators and despots (Rotberg, 2004). The extent to which these rulers will tolerate a challenge to their authority from the business community will determine the success of institutional entrepreneurship and corporate citizenship in the fight against systemic corruption. In weak democratic countries, institutional entrepreneurship in political arenas could be perilous, especially when institutional entrepreneurs fail to form coalitions and constituencies that are strong and large enough to deter authoritarian governments from crashing dissents and activists.

Second, emerging countries typically lack the institutional frameworks that are required for firms to be able to influence government policy (Rajwani & Liedong, 2015). Hence, even though some countries in Africa are democratically governed, the presence of weak institutions could frustrate institutional entrepreneurship. For example, the absence of communication channels such as "comment windows" (McKay & Webb-Yackee, 2007) could prevent African firms from playing any meaningful role in policy formulation. This accentuates institutional voids (Khanna, Palepu, & Sinha, 2005) and allows bad practices such as corruption to continue unchecked. Third, it is possible for governments that do not want a surge in political activism to disapprove the inclusion of business-government relations in the syllabus of African business schools.

Theoretically, institutional and social entrepreneurship may not produce desired results due to the paradox of embedded agency (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Holm, 1995). For instance, it is possible for students and business leaders to be conditioned by corrupt practices, which will render endogenous change unlikely. Additionally, institutional and social entrepreneurship are not altruistic (Dacin et al., 2011), hence change could be driven by parochial self-interests instead of collective interests. This is particularly true for lobbying which mainly focuses on the interests of the lobbyist (e.g. Hillman et al., 2004). In this respect, business leaders could buffer institutions, but mainly in ways that benefit them regardless of the consequences for the wider public (L. J. Weber, 1997). Moreover, the most resourceful entrepreneurs could wield undue influence on institutional change and policy making (L. J. Weber, 1996), to the disadvantage of less resourceful entrepreneurs (see Alzola, 2013). Further, institutional entrepreneurship could lead to the development of political connections, which could result in bad corporate governance and consequently corruption (Liedong & Rajwani, 2017). Despite these limitations, institutional entrepreneurship is potent enough to tackle Africa's weak institutions. Once the institutions are strengthened, the challenges discussed above can be addressed.

CONCLUSION

Africa is a continent whose progress and advancement have been held back by systemic corruption in public governance. Initiatives and efforts to eradicate the menace have not yielded satisfactory results. According to MM, corruption still persists because current anti-corruption strategies are extrinsic in nature and overlook the intrinsic reasons why people engage in unethical behaviour. They propose the development of ethical business leadership to emphasize fundamental African morals such as care, compassion and generosity in order to deal with corruption.

I agree that ethical values are important in the fight against corruption, but I do not agree that corruption among business elites, regardless of how prevalent it is (Pring, 2015), undermines the socio-economic development of Africa as much as corruption in public governance. Barack Obama, in his address to Ghana's parliament, said "Africa doesn't need strong men, it needs strong institutions”. I echo his words, in the sense that the key to eradicating corruption in Africa is good governance and well-functioning institutions. Strong institutions will provide pillars that will allow ethical values to be upheld in the fight against corruption. Without them, unethical norms will prevail and dominate. In effect, ethical business leaders, when faced with systemic corruption and their agency responsibilities, are likely to bend their ethical values in order to achieve corporate goals (Hess, 2009). This logic is supported by a recent study which found that employees in higher hierarchies show low compliance intentions than those in lower hierarchies (Hofeditz, Nienaber, Dysvik, & Schewe, 2017). Hence, the anti-corruption fight in Africa should focus on removing the institutional factors which could demotivate people from behaving ethically.

I contend that human beings are intrinsically and naturally opportunistic, thus anti-corruption strategies should make corruption a high-risk and low-gain practice as opposed to a low-risk and high-gain endeavour (Lawal, 2007). The penalties for unethical behaviour have to be institutionalized in order to deter people from indulging in bribery and corruption. Similar to MM, I propose that business schools can serve as change agents, but I advance that developing institutional entrepreneurs who will push for changes to Africa’s political and governance institutions will be more effective for reversing the trajectory of corruption. I believe that incorporating business-government relations into the current curricula and exposing students to political strategies can give future managers a strong sense of citizenship and expertise that will bolster the fight against corruption.

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