

International Journal of Applied Management

Volume 2 Issue 2

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Furthering Peace and Prosperity in Sub Saharan Africa: A Marketing Perspective

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ISSN 1742-2590

Abstract

A recurrent view has been that increased Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflow would fundamentally mitigate the development quagmire which Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is currently grappling with. Paradoxically, FDI inflow is critically dependent on creating and effectively managing a market-enabling environment. With this as a point of departure, this paper explores the imperatives of peace as an antecedent factor in engendering a growth-inducing and prosperous environment in SSA. It develops from the premise that the unfolding emphasis on collaborative approach to global development holds great promises for the development of SSA. Although the region is still enmeshed with debilitating economic conditions and uncertainties in political institutions, the continued belief in the immutability of SSA's circumstances has persistently deprived the region of investment patronages. Accordingly, the paper reviews the marketing/management possibilities to instigate prosperity in the region. It does this by advocating a market-led repositioning in order to create a favourable mindset, underpinned by a broad perception of a peaceful operating environment that supports positive development partnership.

Key Words: Sub-Sahara Africa; Marketing; Peace; Prosperity; Development

Introduction

In the face of the emerging 'new world order' in which economic competition and cooperation are respected as credible paths to world development, frantic efforts are now being directed at enthroning peace and prosperity among the citizens of the world. While some sections of the world community have recorded very remarkable progress in this regard, others are lagging behind, almost to a point where it has become contentious as to whether the economically-challenged regions will ever catch-up with the rest of the developed world. Sub Saharan Africa (SSA) is a notable member in the community of economically-challenged group of nations. Indeed, every official statistics on development published inside or outside the region are indicating gloomy conditions. The questions most policy makers are asking are: *can African claim the 21st century?* What intervention strategies (from within and outside Africa) are likely to help the continent to undertake the cultural-rite-of-passage from the margin to the mainstream global economy?

Scores of prescriptions have been made; the most notable being myriad adaptations of *adjustments* and *liberalisations*; none of which seems to be providing the much awaited panacea for development problems in the region (Nwankwo and Richards, 2001; Bennel, 1997; *The Economist*, 2000; Balogun, 1996; Choudhury, 1999). As a consequence, intervention-policy developers such as the World Bank have started to advocate "adjustment with a human face" in order to mitigate the debilitating effects of poverty and weak institutions and thus engage more effectively "the economies of SSA that are refusing to respond to growth-enhancing prescriptions" (Nwankwo and Richards 2004:118). Understandably, past efforts seem to have focussed disproportionate attention on 'manufacturing and construction' as if they represented the only antidote for development problems. Very little attention has been paid to marketing as a development tool. In contradiction, marketing has since been argued to represent a veritable tool for development, even for deprived regions of the world (Drucker, 1958; Moyer, 1965; Bauer, 1968; Baker, 1996; Shultz and Pecotich, 1997; Onah, 2000; Ogwo, 2000; Nkamnebe, 2003). Such neglect has resulted to a situation where marketing technology has not been fully applied by public policy makers in

their development planning. In the circumstance, serious gaps are evident in the literature insofar as researching how marketing should be applied in solving the problems of deprived region of the world is concerned. Understandably, the early notions propagated by the likes of Bartels (1983) who argued that marketing is entirely a developed country phenomenon helped to prolong the unfortunate era of *marketing myopia* (Levitt, 1960). However, emerging evidence in the literature is debunking such orthodoxy. For instance, Shultz and Pecotich (1997) demonstrated that market oriented public policies in the then impoverished Southeast Asia economy played a catalytic role in transforming that society to its present status of a region with improved quality of life for the citizens.

In the context of this paper, and following the tradition of the humanistic tradition (UNDP, 2004; Seer, 1972) we share in the orthodoxy that development which seek to improve the quality of life of a people is most likely to act as a reliable purveyor for furthering peace and prosperity particularly in such a deprived region as SSA. On this basis, this paper seeks to contribute a marketing perspective to the debate of SSA's development conundrum; such as to facilitate the attainment of peace and prosperity to the region. Accordingly, the paper extends this point of view by utilising evidence from a synthesis of marketing and development literature to: (1) highlight the potential utility of marketing in the development of SSA economy, (2) proffer marketing-based solutions to some of the key drivers of underdevelopment in SSA, and (3) draw attention to the opportunities and strengths arising from recent changes in the region which unfortunately have been overlooked. We start with a discussion of the major drivers of underdevelopment in SSA, afterwards, we proceed with possible proposals to ameliorate the dangers of these catalysts.

Drivers Of Underdevelopment In Sub Saharan Africa

The subject of economic development has attracted wide ranges of theorization right from the classical to the contemporary economists; resulting to various perspectives (for a review see: Meier and Baldwin, 1957; Buchanan and Ellis, 1955; Idode, 1989). The result is that development is embedded by economic growth as often demonstrated by some identifiable statistical economic indicators such as per capita income, GNP, etc. Others prefer to look at it from the point of growth in some explicit human indices that promotes quality of life. In the context of SSA, any approach that does not pay sufficient attention to the living standard of a people should be judged inadequate in appraising development in the region. This is consistent with the prevailing orthodoxy that "people are the real wealth of nations. Indeed the basic purpose of development is to enlarge human freedom" (UNDP 2004, 127). Accordingly, economic development, particularly for the deprived people of SSA makes meaning only when 'human development' occurs; and absence of such development retards peace and prosperity. Seer (1972) aptly captured the true essence of this orthodoxy thus: "What has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all three of these have become less severe, then beyond doubt this has been a period of development for the country concerned. If one or two of these central problems has been growing worse, especially if all three have, it would be strange to call the result "development", even if per capita income had soared" (p. 21-36).

To put our discussion into perspectives, we shall briefly review some of the causes and drivers of underdevelopment in the region under the following abridged themes:

Poverty Level in SSA

By 2004 about 70 per cent of the world's poorest countries are from SSA (UNDP, 2004). This is predicated upon the fact that average earning in SSA is about US\$0.65 a day. This is quite below the internationally recognised poverty line of US\$1 a day. Political and economic antecedents of the region contributed to this scenario, coupled with the present day manifestations such as institutional failures and emergence of "misappropriating class" in most SSA countries (Nwankwo and Richards 2004). In comparing SSA with the other developing countries, Table 1 provides a graphic picture of the appalling position of the region. Given this scenario, it is not surprising that out of 27 countries that are failing in several Millennium Development Goals, 21 representing 78 per cent of the countries are in SSA (UNDP 2004).

Declining Share of the World Market

One major explanation of SSA's poverty is its tragic loss in world trade. Today, Africa's share of world trade has been reduced to less than 2%, with its loss of market for primary products, and total loss of grip on industrialisation. In 1955 SSA's share of world trade was 3.1 percent. This, however, dropped to a meagre 1.2 percent in 1990, translating to a loss of US\$65 billion in current prices (Yeats et al. 1996). One major implication of all these is that the number of poor people in Africa has been growing relentlessly, causing Africa's share of the world absolute poor to increase from 25% to 30% in the 1990s (World Bank 2000).

Unemployment in SSA

Perhaps one of the most serious phenomena impacting on SSA development is the increasing neglect to the development and employment of human resources. The recently published (see Table 1) *Human Development Index (HDI)* shows that the region scores the lowest when compared with the rest of the developing regions of the world. The picture in Table 1 is rather disturbing particularly in the realisation that development in the region can only be sustained by SSA's human capital. Many of those who trained overseas are refusing to come back, while many of those who trained locally have either travelled to the developed countries in search of employment or are seeking opportunities for that purpose.

Table 1: Human Development Index for Developing Economies at a Glance

Region	Living on less than us\$1 (PPP US\$) a day	Total proportion undernourished a	Primary age children not in school	Primary age girls not in school	Children under age five dying each year	People without access to improved water sources	People without access to adequate sanitation
SSA	323	185	44	23	5	273	299
Arab States	8	34	7	4	1	42	51
East Asia & the Pacific	261	212	14	7	1	453	1004
South Asia	432	312	32	21	4	225	944
Latin America & the Caribbean	56	53	2	1	0	72	121
Central & East Europe & CIS	21	33	3	1	0	29	-
World	1100	831	104	59	11	1197	2742

a. 1998-2000

Sources: World Bank 2003, Global Economic prospects and the Developing Countries, Washington DC.

_____ 2004, World Development Indicators 2004, CD-ROM, Washington DC.

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) 2003, Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2003/2004, Paris.

UN (United Nations) 2003, World Population Prospects 1950-2050: The 2002 Revision Database, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, NY.

Income Inequality in SSA

According to several World Bank publications, SSA is one of the regions in the world with a high level of income inequality. This is corroborated by the findings of Deininger and Squire (1996) as shown in Table 2 – clearly showing that SSA is the second region with the highest rate of income inequality. Under such situation, conflict is bound to result, and peace and prosperity will be a tall order. It is not, therefore, surprising that 9 out of 22 countries in SSA (classified as priority countries) experienced violent conflict in the 1990s (UNDP 2004), and this usually happens after economic stagnation and decay, as exemplified in Rwanda.

Table 2: Income Inequality by Region

Region	Gini Coefficient	Share of top 2%	Share of Middle%	Share of bottom 20%
Africa	45.0	50.6	34.4	5.2
East Asia And Pacific	38.1	44.3	37.5	6.8
South Asia	31.9	39.9	38.4	8.8
Latin America	49.3	52.9	33.8	4.5
Industrial Countries	33.8	39.8	41.8	6.3

Source: Deiniger and Squire, 1996.

The most disturbing aspect of this inequality lies in the fact that it may still take a long time of concerted effort to bridge; and such level of effort is hardly in place in most SSA countries. According to Ali and Elbadawi (1999), the expected per capita income that must be attained before the gap will start to take a natural disappearance is US\$1, 566.00. This figure is still several times higher than the 1997 average of about US\$336 (excluding South Africa).

HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa

Among all the indices of underdevelopment, HIV/AIDS pandemic appears to represent the single most threatening driving force against Africa's development. Perhaps, the most worrisome dimension is its onslaught on the region's human capital, most likely comparable to the devastating effect of colonialism on Africa's development. Recent estimates of HIV/AIDS impact on global workforce paints a gloomy picture for the development of the region as evidenced from key indicators in Table 3. The following extract from ILO recent release is instructive: "...more than 26 million labour force between the ages of 15 and 64 years are HIV-positive worldwide; they are either living with HIV or already living with AIDS. The vast majority of persons in the labour force who are HIV-positive (over 70%) live in Africa, and the proportion would be even higher. In several African countries, there are over a million economically active persons who are HIV-positive: Kenya has 1 million, Mozambique 1.1 million, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe 1.3 million each, and the United Republic of Tanzania 1.4 million. In Nigeria, 2.4 million workers are HIV-positive and, in South Africa, nearly 3.7 million" (ILO, 2004:4).

Expectedly, the impact of HIV/AIDS on SSA's economic prosperity is assuming a catastrophic dimension and is multifaceted. Thus, several studies (BER 2000; Greener 2002) have shown that the impact of HIV/AIDS on the region's economic growth cuts across labour supply, labour productivity, factor productivity, government spending, and household spending patterns. By extension, all these will create serious gap in the flow of development capital into and within SSA; as a result, peace and prosperity in the region will remain a mirage.

Table 3: Estimated Impact of HIV/AIDS on Economic Growth, 47 countries, 1992-2002

Regions	HIV prevalence in persons 15-49 years (weighted) (%) 2003	Country macroeconomic data (latest available year)		Impact on GDP and GDP per capita			
		Real GDP for 2002 (US\$ millions)	Real GDP per capita (US\$) 2002	Estimated annual rate of growth of GDP attributable to HIV/AIDS (%) 1992-2002	Estimated average annual rate of growth of GDP per capita loss attributable to HIV/AIDS (%) 1992-2002	Estimated average annual GDP loss attributable to HIV/AIDS (US\$ millions) 1992-2002	Estimated average annual GDP per capita loss attributable to HIV/AIDS (US\$) 1992-2002
Sub-Saharan Africa countries***	33 7.9	949,234	1,588	1.1	0.7	232	11
Asia, countries***	4 0.4	8,054,765	3,276
Latin America and Caribbean, 8 countries***	1.0	1,263,924	6,294	0.5	0.3	396	10
More developed regions, 2 countries	0.8	10,265,835	23,739
All (41 countries)****	6.3	2,105,274	2,697	0.9	0.6	17,477	15
All (45 countries)*****	1.6	20,150,840	5,641	0.2	0.1	25,092	5

*** Thailand excluded from Asia and Uganda excluded from Africa because in both cases HIV prevalence reached a peak and subsequently declined by more than a quarter of peak value within the period 1992-2002. Brazil excluded from Latin America because of absence of measurable impact

**** Brazil excluded from Latin America, China excluded from Asia, and USA from more developed regions because of absence of measurable impact. Thailand and Uganda excluded

***** Thailand and Uganda excluded

... Impact not measurable

Source: Adapted from ILO, 2004

Outright Damaging Stereotype

Perhaps as a result of the foregoing, people outside SSA have developed an unpleasant outlook towards the region. This is understandable; however, by the time some modest progress started to occur, the snapshot stereotype about the region refuses to change. For instance, Nwankwo (2000, p.145) reported the description of Africa's business environment by some UK-based managers to include: "highly unstable politically and economically; high risk investment climate; low level of management education; too insecure an environment to allow adequate returns on investment; under-developed infrastructure support systems; inefficient public administration systems; absence of reliable, depository information sources; lack of transparency and stultifying features of some major apparatus of the state; and poor institutional mechanisms for systematically collecting data for environmental monitoring".

Such perceptual discrimination is anti investment and by extension development! Commenting on this, Foster and Hansén (n/a) noted: "Even though Africa benefited from a rise in FDI flow in the 1990s, the level of flow was much less than flows to other developing countries, leaving Africa's potential for FDI underutilized. Many African countries are not considered when it comes to locational decision of FDI. The

image among foreign investors of Africa is a continent torn by political unrest, economic instability, diseases and natural disasters”.

However, emerging consensus corroborate the view that in the midst of trouble spots SSA offers tremendous business opportunities

Confirming this, Clark (2001) remarks:

...despite the continent's obvious problems, its development needs provide many opportunities for western businesses...The vast scale and number of opportunities to be found in Africa challenge companies to reassess these stereotypes.

When we synthesise the preceding discussions, one important conclusion can be drawn. That is, the environment of SSA is changing and is offering significant business and locational opportunities (Nwankwo, 2000; Clark, 2001) but sad enough these are going unnoticed. A number of such changes and opportunities include but is not restricted to the following:

- The region holds over 500million of world population; and with a cheap workforce that promises a serious source of cost advantage to particularly labour-intensive businesses.
- The region is witnessing massive transition from military dictatorship to democratically elected governments, with accompanying constitutional reforms that hold great promise for socio-economical progress.
- Following broad based reforms, the markets are opening up for market led economies driven by private sector operators.
- Enormous opportunities exist for value added production
- The region is endowed with culture that promotes sound corporate governance, and by extension corporate performance. In this regards, Shonhiwa (2001) highlights the following personality traits common to most workforce in the region:
 - Spiritual collectiveness as opposed to individualism determines the communal nature of life, where households live as part of interdependent neighborhoods.
 - Inclination towards consensus rather than dissension, which explains the unequivocal loyalty of Africans to their leadership.
 - Inborn humility and helpfulness to others rather than criticizing them.
 - In the main, African culture is non-discriminatory and does not promote prejudice. This explains the readiness with which Africans embrace reconciliation in politics and **business**.
 - Co-existence with other people is most valued. The essence of **ubuntu** (humanity) cuts across Africa. It is based on the premise that you can only be respected because of your cordial co-existence with others. Materialism does not come into play at all.

- A mentality of inherent trust and belief in the fairness of human beings.
- High standards of basic morality, based on historical precedent. These are bolstered by the close kinship observed through totem or clan names and the extended family system.
- A hierarchical political ideology, but based on an inclusive system of consultation. Labour relations and people management practices will optimize this trait.
- Perpetual optimism is an integral part of the African, mainly due to strongly held religious beliefs.

Despite these instances of positivisms in terms of SSA environment, the snap shot view of the region by the outside world (as represented by UK-based managers example earlier quoted; see: Nwankwo, 2000, 145) tends to screen out these encouraging developments from the mind set of potential development partners. This situation should be reserved so as to create the right attitudinal transformation that will attract the right behaviour from relevant partners for SSA development. This is consistent with the supposition that belief must equate behaviour in order to create the right persuasion (Dainton and Zelle, 2005) in the mind of development agents for SSA's growth. It is from this perspective that marketing should sell SSA as a strategic choice to enthrone peace and prosperity in the region.

Marketing And SSA's Development

Due largely to the supposedly sellers' market prevalence in most developing countries, some scholars have argued that marketing is not a construct for development planning in economically challenged regions of the world (see for example: Bartels 1983). However, sufficient evidence appears to prove otherwise (Drucker, 1958; Moyer, 1965; Bauer, 1968; Baker, 1996; Shultz and Pecotich, 1997; Onah, 2000; Ogwo, 2000; Nkamnebe, 2003). Consistent with this belief scholars (e.g. Appiah-Adu, 1998; Nkamnebe, 2003) have argued and demonstrated that marketing should be deployed to meet the needs of the Third World. For instance, Baker (1996) argues that "marketing concept is universal to all stages of economic development and to ignore it is to slow down the optimum rate of growth ...neglect of marketing concept wastes scarce resources". Furthermore, and Moyer (1965) assert that marketing fulfils the critical function of integrating the economy into society to serve human needs. Drucker (1958) argues that there is a positive relationship between marketing and economic development. He opines that economic development "is the result of action, the purposeful, responsible, risk-bearing action of men as entrepreneurs" (p. 252-259). In this respect, Nwokoye (2000) opined that marketing could stimulate economic development in the following ways: "By the extension of markets, with the resulting promotion of specialisation and production for sale; By stimulating the accumulation of capital needed for industrialisation; By creating a merchant class which in turn is the major entrepreneurial and managerial talent needed to establish and run manufacturing enterprise; and By linking local communities to the outside world and acquainting people with the processes of the exchange economy and promoting the habits and attitudes appropriate to it" (p. 9).

Baker (1996) articulated this point further: "In developing countries one needs market research as an essential input to planning future development, one needs great

improved distribution to ensure that the limited goods available are put into consumption in the most efficient manner possible, one needs greater control over distribution to eliminate distortion of the price mechanism through diversion into black market operation...neglect of the marketing concept wastes scarce resources" (p. 486).

Having said this, certain factors, ranging from poor growth and high inflation rates, rigid trade barriers, political instability and frequent changes in business laws, inadequate communications, sub-standard infrastructure and high political risk serve as barriers to development (Appiah-Adu 1998) which in effect militates against full application of marketing for development purposes. Nkamnebe (2003) argued compellingly that the dismantling of these fundamental structural hiccups should serve as a necessary condition for marketing to play its developmental roles in regions that are classified as developing.

The task before us now should be to devise an inventive system to deploy marketing to assist SSA eliminate or at least reduce the factors described earlier in this paper as drivers of underdevelopment in the region. The section that follows will focus on how marketing can contribute in solving some of the development problems of SSA earlier identified to include:

- HIV/AIDS Endemic
- Poverty
- Declining Share of World Market
- Corruption
- Outright Negative Stereotype

HIV/AIDS Endemic

As has been illustrated, development is all about people; people are the main essence of development (UNDP, 2004). It therefore follows that any development agenda that has not taken care of the sustainability of the people is lacking in merit. Part of the reasons why HIV/AIDS has continued to hold sway in SSA could be sketched to include ignorance, poverty, cultural beliefs etc. There may be no single panacea for eradicating these problems in SSA. However, given the transformational potentials of social marketing (Nkamnebe, 2004) in particular, and also following the tradition of broadening the marketing concept (Kotler and Levy, 1969) to equally apply to other social issues as the afore listed items, marketing can assist in ameliorating the effects of these factors as to surmount SSA's possible barriers towards improving peace and prosperity in the region.

Without doubt, social marketing can effectively play decisive role at fighting ignorance and modify some cultural beliefs that promote the spread of the disease. Specific areas to be targeted include: sensitisation and advocacy, providing education on risky behaviour especially at community level, establishing collaboration with other relevant agencies in order to make desired impacts, and pursuing de-stigmatization programme as to encourage voluntary counselling and testing (VCT) so as to improve the chances of early detection of the virus before it degenerates into AIDS. Niebuhr, et al., (2004) demonstrated the effectiveness of social marketing apparatus in breaking social barriers that militate against the fight for HIV/AIDS in Cameroon.

Promoting Responsible Governance

Indeed, using the instrument of marketing to promote SSA governments- in such a way as to promote responsible governance could be a veritable strategy to reforming African values to governance. Evidently, irresponsible governance is the greatest obstacle to sustainable development in SSA. As is evident in the sociology of SSA, the values and ethos of social institution in the traditional African societies have little room for corrupt enrichment of individuals at the expense of the society. This is evident in the community-based structure in African society before the advent of capitalist institution that promotes the survival of the fittest game. By encouraging SSA governments to think in terms of the traditional African values, the penchant of our leaders to “me-only” attitude will be replaced by “we-only” attitude. This is where effective marketing communications will be helpful. The focus should be on crafting the right communication that can lead to attitudinal changes. To be effective, the communication being proposed should be all embracing to incorporate foreign government who should be made to see the rationale in not accepting the loots from SSA to be stacked away in their countries.

In the spirit of emerging cooperative development as reflected in UN Millennium Declarations among other such participatory initiatives, SSA should intensify efforts to attract some form of string-free foreign aids, which are increasingly becoming scarce. Ward (2002:489) regretted that “we spend more on pet food and on animal health care in the USA than on the starving children of Africa, Asia, or Latin America combined”. Admittedly, attainment of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) rests on three main fronts, that is, Official Development Assistance (ODA), Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), and Trade. A zero-string ODA for now still remain an attractive option for immediate solution even if at short-term basis, however, availability of this option will depend on the ability of SSA to compete among other regions of the world that also need the assistance. Proper branding of SSA and appropriate repositioning will certainly help to achieve this. The African Union (AU) has to take this as one of their crucial strategic choice for survival; realising that under the present dispensation, value-laden brands are power. A positive brand of the new SSA will certainly assist in attracting the three drivers of MDG successes mentioned above. A similar project in South Africa – The Proudly South African is a private sector initiative that demonstrates the efficacy of national branding and positioning. The Proudly South African is an endorsement that certifies that a product bearing it has met certain minimum criteria such as ‘local content (at least 50%), produced by workers working in fair conditions, to a high standard of quality without damaging the environment’. Anyone buying any product with the seal of Proudly South African is made to know that he/she is supportive in nation building. In the words of the Chief Executive Officer of Proudly South African ‘Now, every South African can be a nation-builder. As South Africans, we often forget how innovative, entrepreneurial and competitive we can be. We need to find a new sense of pride in who we are and what we can achieve. With the proudly South African campaign, companies can identify themselves as such for everyone to see’. A similar project for the entire SSA (say, Proudly for Africa) targeted to Africans and non Africans is likely to rake up unexpected level of success as is the case with Proudly South African.

Declining World Market Share

Within the context of African developmental aspiration, marketing has the great potency to attract this people who through a healthy exchange relation can attract the much-needed fund through aggressive and sustainable trade. Since the 1970s,

Africa has lost trade equal to about 20 per cent of its GDP; this figure is by far more than it has received in aid. Most worrisome is its loss of primary products. SSA can only witness rapid development and growth if it is able to recover and also exceed its previous share of the world market. Marketing concept represents the most veritable tool towards achieving this, as it has the potency to identify profitable markets where SSA has competitive advantage among other imperatives of marketing to development discussed at the beginning of this paper.

The puzzle now is whether Africa can recover the lost ground? We make bold to answer in the affirmative, if only the accumulated experiences of African merchants are brought to bear on the development programme of the continent. Moyer (1965) revealed that England's export merchants played a leading role in financing that nation's industrial progress. In another study, Alexander (1968) identified some critical imperatives for merchants/marketers participation in the development process to include:

- Unlike other potential industrialists, merchants are already entrepreneurs, are accustomed to responding to market incentives and to exposing themselves to business risk;
- Merchants also possess business skill such as in buying and selling, employing others, and in making contacts;
- Merchants are likely to possess capital, and this is of special advantage in regions with inapt financial system that cannot support any meaningful development;
- Merchants probably already have their own networks of wholesale and retail outlets. They are more sensitive to particular product specifications, and are generally closer to the market on the demand side of their contemplated industrial projects. This explains why they venture into industrial enterprise that is in line with their former trading experience.

From the forgoing, marketing possesses the potentials as useful tool in the development trajectory of SSA in two broad ways, namely at macro and micro levels. From the macro marketing perspective, marketing though neglected in SSA as instrument of governance possesses enormous potential to bring about attitudinal change among the people and government in the region. Discussing marketing in the context of corporate management, Foreman and Woodruffe (1991, 402-421) argued that marketing "create an internal environment which is flexible and responsive, and nurtures common values and behaviour which reflects organisational goals and its synergy with the marketplace". This statement can equally hold ground in a macro marketing situation where such values and norms are particularly needed to create the right platform for development. This again corresponds with the conclusions in the literature that a positive relationship exist between such norm and value with development (Nwankwo and Richards 2004; Kumssa and Mbech 2004). Value as used here refers to "beliefs about what is accepted and not accepted, and what is important in a particular community" (Kumssa and Mbech 2004, 844). Such values alongside other accepted 'standard of conduct should regulate and shape political, socio-economic relations and over time generate the level of values that can bring about development. Social marketing can effectively serve as an instrument for creating and spreading these values.

Conclusions

Using the Millennium Development Goals as a benchmark, SSA is miles away from experiencing peace and prosperity; as the region accounts for 34 out of 49 countries that are classified as least developed (UNDP, 2004). For instance, going by current trend, halving the proportion of poor people in SSA will extend beyond 2105 and attaining the Universal Primary Education will push up till 2129 (World Bank, 2004). In the midst of this state of despondency, relevant development partners appear to have permanently scripted the negative images of SSA on their mindset; so deep as to screen out positive realities in the region. This has amounted to a sort of vicious circle that is permanently keeping the region in the rear of every development discourse, with its concomitant heightening poverty and social conflict. This paper has argued that marketing as a development tool can complement other efforts in the region to draw the region out of its present doldrums and promote peace and prosperity.

The paper makes far reaching observations as to factors that if not checked will continue to drive underdevelopment in the region. These include: poverty, declining share of world market, high incidence of unemployment, prevalence of income inequality, high incidence of HIV/AIDS, and existence of outright stereotype. In preferring solution to these, a number of conclusions and postulations are made largely based on the marketing perspectives. Firstly, social marketing instruments should be focussed at attitudinal transformations for tackling the menace of HIV/AIDS in the region. Evidently, this will help to tackle the socio-cultural barriers to controlling the spread of the virus particularly the stigmatisation incident.

Secondly, the need for promoting responsible governance has become urgent. Virtually every discussion on the development barriers in SSA would end up indicting governments of SSA. The paper advocates effective internal marketing as a tool for reviving some of the cherished ethos in the traditional African value of communalism as opposed to the current individualistic tendencies, which has heightened the avalanche of corruption within in the region.

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