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The Impact of Foreign Aid on Extreme Poverty: A Case Study of Liberia's Development
Complexities (1980-2018)

A thesis
presented to
the faculty of the School of Continuing Studies and Academic Outreach
East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in Liberal Studies

by
Roosevelt Wreh Seedee
December 2018

Dr. Marie Tedesco, Chair
Dr. Jill LeRoy-Frazier
Dr. Rebecca Adkins Fletcher

Keywords: Aid, Poverty, Development, Standards of living, Inequality, and Dependency

ABSTRACT

The Impact of Foreign Aid on Extreme Poverty: A Case Study of Liberia's Development Complexities (1980-2018)

by

Roosevelt Wreh Seedee

Many countries in West Africa, including Liberia, remain trapped in extreme poverty and dysfunctional social services amid continued increase in foreign aid. This study examines complexities influencing decisions of government donors in determining the kind of development assistance needed in Liberia and nation states in West Africa. This research explains the ways in which aid perpetuates poverty instead of alleviating it using interdisciplinary research approaches. Although aid is critical to Liberia's development agenda, aid implementation faces numerous challenges because of extant poverty and rampant corruption.

Part of the problem in Liberia is not solely the failure of aid to meet its goals. I conclude that poverty persists despite billions of dollars in aid because of corruption, human rights abuses, and inequalities, not the concept of aid. Democracy is effective when economic development allows citizens to have power within their own nation and government is accountable to its citizens.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my lovely wife Miatta Campbell-Seedee and my beautiful daughters Rosa Angel Seedee and Roxy Edith Seedee. They mean the world to me. To my supportive mother, Edith Boog Tokpah, I say thanks for teaching me the importance of education, hard work, and honesty. I cannot imagine how life would have been without you, Mama.

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To my family and friends in the USA and in Liberia, I remain grateful for your love, support, and prayers. May the Almighty God bless you in his infinite wisdom. Thank you for everything...

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Liberia is located in an area geographers and policy makers designate as West Africa and divided into 15 political subdivisions known as counties with mixed population density as seen in Table One. Liberia is bound to the north by Guinea, to the east by Cote D'Ivoire, to the west by Sierra Leone, and to the south by the Atlantic Ocean. Liberia gained its independence on July 26, 1847, thus becoming Africa's first republic.¹ The coastline consists of lagoons, mangrove swamps, and palm trees. Monrovia, named for US president James Monroe, is the capital and the seat of national government. Liberia has 16 ethnic tribes that are interrelated by cultural practices and values. The geography of Liberia is rich with tropical rainforest, rivers, mountains, and conducive weather conditions for agriculture and industrial activities. The soil is fertile for rice and cassava production. Liberia is also a resource-rich country with vast deposits of gold, diamonds, iron ore, timber, and a high potential for oil discovery.² According to the *2014 Household Income and Expenditure Survey Report*, Liberia covers a land size of about 37,420 square miles and has a population of approximately 4.1 million people.³ Comparatively, the area occupied by Liberia is slightly larger than the state of Virginia in the United States of America.

¹ J.H.T. McPherson, *History of Liberia* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1891), 23-24, 30.

² Republic of Liberia, *Agenda for Transformation: Steps Towards Liberia Rising 2030* (Monrovia: Republic of Liberia, 2014), 2. Accessed December 27, 2017. <https://www.mfdp.gov.lr/index.php/documents/resources/national-development-agenda/file/9-agenda-for-transformation>.

³ Liberia Institute of Statistic & Geo-Information Services, *2014 Household Income and Expenditure Survey* (Monrovia: LISGIS, 2016), 3-5. Accessed November 12, 2017. http://www.lisgis.net/pg_img/Report%20on%20Agenda%20for%20Transformation%20National%20Key%20Indicators%20FINAL.pdf.

Liberia continues to experience extreme poverty and low economic development in the twenty-first century. Despite billions of dollars in foreign aid in the last three and a half decades between 1980 and 2016, there is not sufficient evidence in terms of quality health care and education, adequate infrastructure, economic advancement, and improved standards of living to account for the flow of aid because of complexities that continue to undermine aid interventions. Yet, development experts and the government of Liberia consider foreign aid an appropriate source of revenue to impact economic growth, expand social services, and improve infrastructure.⁴

Table 1. Population and Tribal Distribution in Liberia

No.	Counties of Liberia	Capital	Ethnic Group/Tribe	2008 Census Population
1	Bomi	Tubmanburg	Gola & Vai	84,119
2	Bong	Gbarnga	Kpelle	333,481
3	Gbarpolu	Bopolu	Belle & Mandingo	83,388
4	Grand Bassa	Buchanan	Bassa	221,693
5	Grand Cape Mount	Robertsport	Gola & Vai	127,076
6	Grand Geddeh	Zwedru	Krahn	125,258
7	Grand Kru	Barclayville	Kru	57,913
8	Lofa	Voinjama	Gbandi, Kissi, Lorma, Mandingo, & Mende	276,863
9	Margibi	Kakata	Kpelle	209,923
10	Maryland	Harper	Grebo	135,938
11	Montserrado	Bensonville	Dei	1,118,241
12	Nimba	Sanniquellie	Mano & Gio	462,026
13	River Cess	River Cess	Bassa	71,509
14	River Gee	Fish Town	Grebo	66,789
15	Sinoe	Greenville	Kru	102,391

Source: 2008 National Population and Housing Census Final Results.

⁴ International Monetary Fund, "Press Release: IMF and World Bank Announce US\$4.6 Billion Debt Relief for Liberia." Accessed December 11, 2017. <http://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2015/09/14/01/49/pr10267>; Republic of Liberia, *Liberia Poverty Reduction Strategy* (Monrovia: Republic of Liberia, 2008), 59-60. Accessed December 27, 2017. <http://www.emansion.gov.lr/doc/Final%20PRS.pdf>.

Resources in Liberia have perpetually remained a curse rather than a blessing. Since its independence, proceeds from aid and natural resources have not transformed the quality of life across the 15 political sub-divisions. Despite the existence of abundant natural resources and donor support, as of 2018, 54.1 percent of the population live in extreme poverty.⁵ Challenges affecting economic growth and development are enormous. Many of these challenges have existed for more than 170 years with little improvement. For example, the 15 political sub-divisions remain disconnected by paved road networks. Also, the lack of functional healthcare and education facilities have had serious implications on the country's performance in various aspects of human development indices such as life expectancy, education and healthcare, standards of living, and extreme poverty.⁶

The acceptable definition of foreign aid among economics and international relations scholars includes private donors' contributions, but my work focus only on governmental aid of the bilateral and multilateral type. Conventionally, foreign aid connotes any kind of development assistance in the form of concessional loans, grants, debt cancellation, and material support that addresses specific needs of developing countries. Aid can be classified along bilateral and multilateral lines. Bilateral aid includes aid from an individual foreign government, such as the United States, Great Britain, and France, directly to a recipient government, but multilateral aid covers assistance from international organizations composed

⁵ World Bank. "Data Bank: World Development Indicators." Accessed April 6, 2018. <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/reports.aspx?source=2&country=LBR>.

⁶ United Nations, *2016 Human Development Report* (New York: United Nations, 2016), 200, accessed March 22, 15, 2017. http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2016_human_development_report.pdf; *Liberia Poverty Reduction Strategy*, 99, 109-111.

of member nations (e.g., the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, European Union, and African Development Bank) to an agency of a recipient nation. Both multilateral and bilateral aid allocations occur for a variety of reasons including humanitarian, military, and economic development.⁷

Liberia faces enormous development challenges. These challenges range from lack of quality healthcare and education to poor infrastructure and transit systems, inequitable distribution of energy, and broken economies and judiciary systems.⁸ Addressing these challenges as a nation recovering from fourteen years of civil war⁹ requires a paradigm shift in major systems, practices, and legal regimes. Notwithstanding the massive flow of aid in the last three-plus decades, extreme poverty in Liberia has continued to increase. Outcomes of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) implementation and human development indices show that in the case of Liberia, the reason for low growth rates, deplorable social services, and poor quality of life affecting the development needs of the state and its people is lack of transparency and accountability in the allocation, management, and usage of proceeds from resources and aid. As a resource-rich country with vast resources such as gold, diamonds, iron ore, timber, and rubber, and a high potential for oil discovery, revenues from these resources

⁷ The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, "Official Development Assistance." Accessed March 27, 2018. <https://data.oecd.org/oda/net-oda.htm>; Carol Lancaster and Ann Van Dusen, *Organizing US Foreign Aid: Confronting the Challenges of the Twenty-First Century* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 2005), 6-7.

⁸ *Liberia Poverty Reduction Strategy*, 1.

⁹ I am fully aware of reference by historians to two civil wars in Liberia: 1989-1997 and 1997-2003. My analysis of the Liberian Civil War covers the entire fourteen-year period (1989-2003) for which thousands of Liberians remain displaced because of human rights abuses, economic mismanagement and inequality, and repressive conditions prior to arrival of the United Nations peace keeping mission in 2003. See Amos Sawyer, *Beyond Plunder: Toward Democratic Governance in Liberia* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005), 25.

appear to be a curse rather than a blessing. The lack of transparency and accountability in the management of aid and revenues from natural resources can be attributed to conditions that precipitated the civil war, destroyed the lives of many Liberians, and left the country's infrastructure, economy, education, and health system in ruins.¹⁰ This situation explains why Liberia remains an aid-dependent nation. Consequently, Liberia's performance has been low in areas of economic growth, social services, and human and infrastructure development for the last three decades. Those critical sectors of national development remain destabilized by massive corruption, thus giving rise to low rankings in human development indices.¹¹

This study examines the correlation between aid and poverty by outlining complexities that continuously have hindered aid successes in Liberia and the West African sub-region. As a native-born Liberian from the Southeast, the most disconnected and disenfranchised region, I grew up under inhumane conditions with limited access to quality social services such as health facilities, educational opportunities, safe drinking water, and road networks, prior to and during the fourteen-year civil war that began in 1989 and ended in 2003. The war worsened living conditions in the country. My experiences from these difficult living conditions made me develop an interest in finding answers to the root causes for the appalling condition of Liberian societies, despite increases in aid and abundant natural resources. My research on challenges associated with effective aid utilization to improve the well-being of the state has evolved over

¹⁰ Joseph Guannu and Raymond DA-Boi, "Introduction and Background," in *Nation-States and the Challenges of Regional Integration in West Africa: The Case of Liberia*, ed. Joseph Guannu (Paris: Editions Karthala, 2010), 11-15.

¹¹ Robin Bade and Michael Parkin, *Essential Foundations of Economics*, 7th ed (New York: Pearson Education, 2009), 396; United Nations, *Human Development Report 2015* (New York: United Nations, 2016), 61, 212-14. Accessed November 22, 2017. http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2015_human_development_report.pdf.

the years, as a result of professional experiences working in government to current exposure to the resourceful academic environment in the United States of America.

The theoretical frameworks for the study center on colonialism, postcolonialism, neoliberalism, dependency, and post-Cold War regionalism in Liberia and West Africa. These theories help to explain complexities that continue to impact aid effectiveness and their entanglement with multilateral and bilateral aid as “solutions” to Liberia’s development challenges. The demand for foreign aid has risen in the sub-region because of extreme poverty and lack of democracy. Consequently, these situations have made leaders of Liberia and nation-states in West Africa aid dependent. This dependency during the period under investigation for the most part stemmed from Western dominance through implementation of neoliberal policies that emphasize free trade, open markets, and structural adjustment programs of donor institutions. Using the theoretical frameworks of colonialism, postcolonialism, neoliberalism, and post-Cold War regionalism, this study seeks to explore the bilateral process of aid interventions and poverty reduction in Liberia and the sub-region.

Thesis Statement

Despite the substantial flow of aid to Liberia from 1980 to 2016, its impact remains negative to date. The most accurate and accessible accounting records of foreign aid that flowed to Liberia for the period under review resulted in the cancellation of Liberia’s debt by private donors in the amount of \$4.6 billion dollars.¹² This amount excludes spending on

¹² International Development Association and International Monetary Fund, *Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative Completion Point Document and Multilateral Debt Relief* (Monrovia: IDA/IMF, 2010), i-ii, 17-19. Accessed December 23, 2017.
<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTDEBTDEPT/CompletionPointDocuments/22668580/LiberiaCompletionPoint.pdf>.

humanitarian programs during the Civil War and direct budgetary transfer by the federal government.¹³ Aid for Liberia has had a negative impact and the impact is notably debilitating for the country. My contention is that it is not the concept of aid (within the colonial and the neoliberal frameworks that contain flaws) but rather other forces that have prevented aid from having a positive impact on Liberia. Part of the challenge faced with the deplorable condition of Liberia is not solely the concept of aid, but the absence of democracy in the nation. At higher levels of democracy, aid is more effective in alleviating poverty, inequality, and conditions of economic instability. I agree with Robert Calderisi and Dambisa Moyo that Democracy works when economic development allows citizens to have power within their own nation and government is accountable to its citizens, who pay the salaries of public officials through taxes. Persistent poverty, poor standards of living, unequal access to social services, rampant corruption, and misappropriation of resources are challenges that have undermined the attainment of economic prosperity and thus of democracy. Democracy only functions well in economically prosperous nations.¹⁴

Despite the billions of dollars in aid, standards of living remain deplorable, healthcare a disaster, the education system poor, and the economy in a state of collapse. Liberia ranks 177 out of 188 countries in human development rankings.¹⁵ From analysis of current political,

¹³ International Development Association and International Monetary Fund, *Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative Completion Point*, 30-32.

¹⁴ *The Trouble with Africa: Why Foreign Aid Isn't Working* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 4, 78; *Dead Aid: Why Aid is not Working and How there is a Better Way for Africa* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009), 23-24.

¹⁵ Liberia has a human development index value of 0.427, life expectancy of 61.2, expected years of schooling of 9.9, mean years of schooling of 4.4, and gross national income per capita of \$683, thus accounting for low human development. See the *2016 Human Development Report* (New York: United Nations, 2016), 200, accessed March 22, 15, 2017. http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2016_human_development_report.pdf.

economic, and social conditions, I contend that for aid to accomplish the desired purpose of reducing poverty, economic inequality, and improving standards of living, outside agencies must help rescue Liberia from the dungeon of poverty by appropriating aid through conditionality that promotes poverty reduction and economic prosperity. Aid allocation must prioritize sectors (e.g., agriculture, health, education, and transit) with measurable positive gains. Aid successes are possible only if donors are willing to introduce conditions that must be met for aid to be distributed to enhance government programs. In the absence of donors' interventions to help promote accountability in aid spending, the impact of aid risks failing to achieve its full objectives of reducing poverty, increasing socioeconomic development, and improving standards of living.

Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to investigate complexities associated with aid allocation and utilization in Liberia. Using content analysis of qualitative and quantitative research approaches, the study provides an overview of challenges informing donors' and the Liberian government's decisions on aid allocation and utilization. In addition to the major claim, the research recommends donors allocate aid on the basis of needs in compliance with poverty reduction, anti-corruption measures, and a "tough-love" approach to promote aid effectiveness. Lastly, the study contributes to ongoing conversations about aid interventions in Liberia by highlighting the importance of democratic governance, human development, and effective and fair free-trade policies. The study also highlights the importance of infrastructure in sustaining economic growth and development that will eventually lead to reduction in poverty and improvement in standards of living.

Research Questions

This thesis examines complexities associated with aid intervention in Liberia.

Understanding the impact of aid on the Liberian society requires a review of four questions I consider critical to economic prosperity. The research questions guiding this study include the following:

1. Why does Liberia have low rankings in all areas of human development indices despite continuous increase in aid flow and abundant natural resources covering the period 1980-2016?
2. What are the problems preventing aid from being effective and what solutions are available to tackle the challenges?
3. How can the nation use aid as a stepping stone to building a stable economic infrastructure?
4. In what ways is Liberia different from other West African countries in regard to institutions and aid (receiving and using)?
5. And how has the destruction of the civil war affected the need for aid?

Limitation of the Study

Although there are many Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working with the local communities to improve living standards, it is important to emphasize that this study does not consider the roles of NGOs as aid donors. Although I discuss two types of aid (bilateral and multilateral), my analysis is limited to multilateral aid, and does not account for other types of aid to Liberia.

Sources

Discussion about complexities associated with aid implementation to address poverty and standards of living in Liberia remains incomplete in the absence of referencing relevant primary and secondary sources. Primary sources gathered for this research include Liberian government reports, as well as World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), African Development Bank and United Nations reports, respectively. The Liberian government reports consist of the following: the *Agenda for Transformation* (2013), *Poverty Reduction Strategy* (2008), *Ebola Financing Report* (2014), and the *National Budgets (for Fiscal Years 2014/15, 2013/14, and 2012/13)*.¹⁶ Reports of the World Bank include the *Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Completion Point* (2008), *Economic Impact of the 2014 Ebola Epidemic*, and *2016 Annual Report*.¹⁷ The IMF source consulted is the *Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI) Report*.¹⁸ The African Development Bank source covers the *HIPC Completion Point Document on Liberia*.¹⁹ For the most part, sources of the United Nations consist of *the 2015 Millennium*

¹⁶ (Monrovia: Republic of Liberia, 2013). <https://www.mfdp.gov.lr/index.php/documents/resources/national-development-agenda/file/9-agenda-for-transformation>; (Monrovia: Republic of Liberia, 2008). <http://www.emansion.gov.lr/doc/Final%20PRS.pdf>; (Monrovia: Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 2014). http://www.emansion.gov.lr/doc/NationalBudget_1_17_2015.pdf.

¹⁷ (Monrovia: IDA, 2010). <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTDEBTDEPT/CompletionPointDocuments/22668580/LiberiaCompletionPoint.pdf>; (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2017). <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/24985/9781464808524.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y>.

¹⁸ (Monrovia: IMF, 2010). <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTDEBTDEPT/CompletionPointDocuments/22668580/LiberiaCompletionPoint.pdf>.

¹⁹ (Abidjan: AfDB, 2010). <https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Financial-Information/Liberia%20-%20Completion%20Point%20Document%20HIPC%20Initiative.pdf>.

Development Goals Report and the *2015 Human Development Report*.²⁰ I based my selection of sources on outcomes of Liberia's rankings in human development indices amid increases in aid as detailed in Appendix A. Also, conditions that led to cancellation of Liberia's external debt from 1980 to 2010 in the amount of \$4.6 billion provide a unique opportunity to examine the pattern of governance and development that has taken place, and reforms initiated by government and donors to ensure aid effectiveness.

Secondary sources focus on books, scholarly articles, and newspaper publications on aid engagements in Liberia and West Africa. Some of the books and articles critical to my study are: Dambisa Moyo, *Dead Aid: Why Aid is Not Working and How There is a Better Way for Africa*, Jeffrey D. Sachs, *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*, Robert Calderisi, *The Trouble with Africa: Why Foreign Aid Isn't Working*, Haley J. Swedlund, *The Development Dance: How Donors and Recipients Negotiate the Delivery of Foreign Aid*, Tony Addison, George Mavrotas, and Mark McGillivray, "Aid, Debt Relief and New Sources of Finance for Meeting the Millennium Development Goals," Matthew S. Winters, "Choosing to Target: What Types of Countries Get Different Types of World Bank Projects," John Page and Abebe Shimeles, "Aid, Employment and Poverty Reduction in Africa," and Simplicé A. Asongu, "The Questionable Economics of Development Assistance in Africa: Hot-Fresh Evidence, 1996-2010."²¹ The sources

²⁰ (New York: United Nations, 2016).

http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2015_human_development_report.pdf; (New York: United Nations, 2015).
http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2015_MDG_Report/pdf/MDG%202015%20Summary%20web_english.pdf.

²¹ Moyo, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009); Sachs, (New York: The Penguin Press, 2005); Calderisi, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Sewdlund, (London and New York: Cornell University Press, 2017), Addison, Mavrotas, and McGillivray, *Journal of International Affairs* 58, no. 2 (Spring 2005), accessed February 2, 2017. <https://search.proquest.com/docview/220712485/fulltextPDF/88CBBE4675254D9FPQ/1?accountid=10771>; Winters, https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/AD92ACCDBDEFBB77BF52CD7A4CA4600/S0043887110000092a.pdf/choosing_to_target_what_types_of_countries_get_different_types_of_world_bank_projects.pdf; Page and Shimeles, *African Development*

are critical to the study because they provide insightful contributions to approaches that facilitate aid successes and failures in developing countries. I selected publications dated after the declaration of the MDG by world leaders at the Millennium Summit held in New York from September 6-8, 2000. The selection of sources for content analysis date after the summit in 2000 because the MDG and related aid documents provide a unique platform for evaluating aid successes, failures, and challenges associated with ending poverty and improving standards of living in fragile countries such as Liberia.

Thesis Structure

The study is structured in the following way: Chapter One provides an introduction to the research and the reason for studying complexities associated with foreign aid effectiveness and extreme poverty in Liberia. The chapter also outlines the objectives and important research questions being asked. Chapter Two focuses on the theoretical framework and the historical background on Liberia, including the civil war. Chapter Three is the literature review. This section of the study explains the pros and cons of aid, as well as strategies to enhance aid effectiveness and improve standards of living in Liberia and countries in West Africa. Chapter Four is document analysis. This chapter outlines the methodology and content analysis procedures using qualitative and quantitative research methods as a basis for conducting the research. Chapter Five presents analyses and results from examination of primary sources. Chapter Six provides conclusions and further thoughts of the study.

Review 27, no. 1 (October 2015), accessed November 22, 2017. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-8268.12136/epdf>; Asongu, *Review of Black Political Economy* 41, no. 4 (October 2014), accessed November 22, 2017. <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1783936187?accountid=10771>.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Establishing the theoretical framework on challenges faced with aid intervention in Liberia and by extension West Africa is almost impossible in the absence of discussing the effects of colonialism, post-colonialism, post-Cold War regionalism, and the dependency of the nation on outside sources of financing. In this section, first, I discuss the theories and create linkage to Liberia and West African states and to the problem of dependency on foreign aid.

The work of Edward W. Said in *Orientalism* plays a vital role in presenting the entanglement between Western traditions and values and non-Western values and traditions (simply the difference between East and West). Said defined Orientalism as “a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction between the Orient and (most of the time) the Occident.”¹ According to him, “the most readily accepted designation for Orientalism is an academic one, and indeed the label still serves a function in a number of academic institutions. Anyone who teaches, writes about, or researches the Orient—and this applies whether the person is an anthropologist, sociologist, historian, or philologist—either in its specific or its general aspects, is an Orientalist, and what he or she does is Orientalism.”²

Although Said’s view of Orientalism discusses perspectives through which Westerners view languages, lifestyles, art, cultures, values, and attitude of the East, particularly the Middle East and North Africa, his concept can be used to analyze and interpret the neoliberal development

¹ (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 2.

² Ibid., 2.

agenda of the West. Orientalism is a metaphor used to explain Western dominance over the Orient. The Orient is a metaphor used to represent the history and tradition of marginalized cultures and groups.³

Said's accounts of the interrelationship between knowledge and power draw insight from Michel Foucault's concept of power relations as potential social forces to examine cultural conditions accompanying class domination in structured societies.⁴ In the present era of aid dependency in West Africa, the concept of Orientalism best explains the impact of past imperial rule by the British and Europeans (e.g., French, and Portuguese) during the early days of colonization in the eighteenth-century, the period of decolonization in the nineteenth-century, and post-Cold War dominance by the United States in global politics and economics. Said uses Orientalism as a social construct to expose the extent to which interpretation of culture by Western scholars has perpetuated cultural and political dominance by the West.⁵ He argues that

Orientalism is not a mere political subject matter or field that is reflected passively by culture, scholarship, or institutions; nor is it a large and diffuse collection of texts about the Orient; nor is it representative and expressive of some nefarious Western imperialist plot to hold down the Oriental world. It is rather a *distribution* [italics original] of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical, and philosophical texts; it is an *elaboration* [italics original] not only of a basic geographical distinction (the world is made up of two unequal halves, Orient and Occident) but also of a whole series of "interests" which, by such means as scholarly discovery, philological reconstruction, psychological analysis, landscape and sociological description, it not only creates but also maintains; it is, rather than expresses, a certain *will or intention* [italics original] to understand, in some cases to control, manipulate, even to incorporate...power cultural (as with orthodoxies and cannon of taste, texts, values),

³ *Orientalism*, 2-5.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 3, 5-7.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 12.

power moral (as with ideas about what “we” do and what “they” cannot do or understand as “we” do).⁶

For many scholars, Said’s work marks the beginning of postcolonial studies and a reference to discuss the residual impact of colonialism on developing nations. The concept of Orientalism can also be used to describe neoliberal development agenda of the West. According to Jukka Jouhki, “the Orientalist discourse has been highly similar to the discourse approaching the delinquents, the insane, the women and the poor within Europe. They all have been deemed lamentably alien. As other marginalized people, the Orientals have been seen through (not looked at) and analyzed as problems (not as citizens), or confined or taken over.”⁷

Colonialism and Neocolonialism

One cannot expound on the idea of neocolonialism without first explaining the concepts of colonialism and imperialism. The *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* explains the dual concepts in the following ways: “colonialism is a practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of one people to another. One of the difficulties in defining colonialism is that it is hard to distinguish it from imperialism. Frequently the two concepts are treated as synonyms. Like colonialism, imperialism also involves political and economic control over a dependent territory.”⁸ The neocolonialist viewpoint of development in Africa outlined by Kwame Nkrumah in 1974 still holds true today. Nkrumah suggested that practices of colonialism had not come to

⁶ *Orientalism*, 12.

⁷ “Orientalism and India,” *J@rgonia*, 4, no. 8 (January 2016): 3-4, accessed August 3, 2018. <http://research.jyu.fi/jargonia/artikkelit/jargonia8.pdf>.

⁸ Margaret Kohn and Kavita Reddy, “Colonialism,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2017) 1, accessed April 20, 2018. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/colonialism/>.

an end on the continent, especially in West Africa, because nations that claimed to be independent were still under political and economic control of the West.⁹ Nkrumah, former head of state of Ghana, was one of the prominent leaders in the struggle for the decolonization of Africa. He was also one of the first writers to coin the word “neocolonialism” in an attempt to investigate the effects of colonialism, and why many nation-states were independent theoretically, but practically dependent on Western powers for solutions to their economic and political problems. Nkrumah described existing development practices of foreign aid, structural adjustment, and trade in the sub-region as strategies of the West to perpetuate colonial practices in disguise.¹⁰

Walter Rodney, a scholar of neocolonialism, described the development of Europe as a parallel process with the underdevelopment of Africa. Rodney suggested that natural resources extracted from Africa centuries ago were reinvested in the developed world, thus making Africa instrumental in developing the West in the same proportion the West helped to underdevelop Africa.¹¹ The neocolonial perspective on development plays a vital role in outlining the long-term impact of colonialism in West Africa. The extractive state system created by Europeans during the colonial era of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries had direct links with political and ethnic conflicts, as well as authoritarian governments established after independence. Colonial exploitation was key in shaping the sub-region with “growth without

⁹ *Neocolonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (London: Panaf, 1974), 1-2.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹¹ *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (London and Dar-Es-Salaam: Bogle-l’overture Publication, 1973), 116-17, 127-28.

development,” that is, an increase in the export of raw materials in which the profits were used for development of the West, rather than of nation-states in the sub-region.¹²

Expanding on the works of Edward M. Said, Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha, and Jacques Derrida in an effort to deconstruct colonial and postcolonial theories and apply them to neoliberal development policies, Ilan Kapoor, Professor of Critical Development Studies at York University, Toronto, uses complex political problems such as power, race, poverty, and inequality to question hegemonic cultural representation and institutional practices that have overshadowed the field of development.¹³ Kapoor claims that scholars in different fields have taken variant approaches to defining “culture” and its relationship (or not) to development policies.¹⁴ Kapoor’s argument resonates with some of the reasons why aid has not ended poverty in Liberia and nation-states in the sub-region. Kapoor’s argument focuses on the ways in which postcolonial theory offers practical solutions to political, economic, social, and cultural discourses of development studies. He also examines how “self-reflexivity” can be institutionalized to increase transparency and accountability in the structures of institutions.¹⁵

Kapoor advocates a postcolonial approach that analyzes the interaction between development agencies and marginalized groups (subalterns), and the contestation of rights by a variety of groups and political movements in resistance to development agencies. Kapoor’s account of the postcolonial theory of development contributes to ongoing debates between

¹² *How Europe Undeveloped Africa*, 231-33.

¹³ *The Postcolonial Politics of Development* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 1-3.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 19-20.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 25, 76-79.

advocates of dependency theories and advocates of self-reliance in the field of development studies. Kapoor discusses the contestation of power and power relations from a colonial standpoint using the concepts of “self” and “other,” with self representing superior ideologies in favor of Western practices and values and other being inferior non-Western traditions and values. He contends that Western aid is inherently colonial and that African nations should avoid becoming dependent on aid.¹⁶

Kapoor’s examination of the postcolonial politics of development agencies looks at dominant cultural representation accompanying Western biases and neoliberal approaches of aid, development planning, and economic and geopolitical interests aimed at silencing the subalterns. Importantly, Kapoor’s narrative reemphasizes the colonialist purpose of aid. He contends that difficulties faced with development outcomes in the Third World can be overcome through localized resistance to expropriation of resources to the West.¹⁷ Kapoor’s work is useful in offering interdisciplinary perspectives about the reoccurrence of colonialism in contemporary development programming as an illustration of tactical and strategic approaches to investigate the power relations of aid to nation-states in West Africa.

The theory of neoliberalism is critical in explaining the role of the state as one that creates and preserves an institutional framework appropriate for practices of strong private property rights, free markets, and fair economic trade policies. According to David Harvey, neoliberalism can be considered an ideology similar to colonialism (colonialism without

¹⁶ *The Postcolonial Politics of Development*, 26, 30.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 26, 30.

colonies) but one that did not originate during the African colonial period.¹⁸ The theory of neoliberalism has its origin from the eighteenth-century theories set forth by Adam Smith.¹⁹ Smith's *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of the Nation* provided the foundation for the study and application of free markets and economic thoughts about the principle of specialization and division of labor. The theory of neoliberalism bases on Smith's classical economic theories and free market economics. Neoliberalism deals with economic policies that extend the rights and abilities of the private sector over the public sector, specifically to put an end to government control of the economy.²⁰ As Harvey asserts, "neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human existence can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by free markets."²¹

Governments in developing nations have bought into the neoliberal ideology (as most developed country leaders have) and believe it will work because these countries have so many development needs, thus perpetuating the cycle of poverty. Neoliberal practices dealing with exploitation of resources in Africa emerged as an attempt to remove large-scale economic planning and control by the state. According to Fikrejesus Amahazion, a horn of Africa scholar focusing on African development, human rights, and political economy, reforms (structural

¹⁸ *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford Press, 2005), 19-21.

¹⁹ *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (Amsterdam, Lausanne, Melbourne, Milan, New York, and Sao Paulo: MetaLibri, 2007), 431-34. Accessed June 27, 2018. https://www.ibiblio.org/ml/libri/s/SmithA_WealthNations_p.pdf.

²⁰ *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 2.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

adjustment programs) introduced by the World Bank and IMF in the 1980s and early 1990s did not solve the problems in African nations.²² Instead, it weakened the direct control of African economies while attempting to promote economic growth. For example, during the period 1980 to 2000, the total debt of sub-Saharan Africa rose from US\$60 billion to US\$206 billion, and the ratio of debt to gross domestic product rose from 23 percent to 66 percent. In 1980, loan inflows of US\$9.6 billion were higher than the debt repayment outflow of US\$3.2 billion. And by the year 2000, only US\$3.2 billion flowed to Africa while US\$9.8 billion was repaid, leaving a net financial flows deficit of US\$6.2 billion.²³

As a result, neoliberal economic practices in many African nations indicate deepening income inequality with profound social, economic, and political ramifications (e.g. poverty, unemployment, and resource exploitation).²⁴ The effect of aid on development outcomes also explain why it is difficult to create an enabling environment in Liberia void of neoliberal practices of the West. The fact that developing countries in the sub-region with so many natural resources will choose to rely on aid from donors as solutions to their economic, social, and political problems speaks to imperial hegemony of the West in the twenty-first century. The discourse of foreign aid implies that developing countries are the ones with all the problems, while the donor nations and organizations have all the answers.²⁵

²² "Neoliberalism and African Development," *Madote*, (June 2015): 3, accessed March 22, 2018. <http://www.madote.com/2015/09/neoliberalism-and-african-development.html>.

²³ *Ibid.*, 2-3.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.

²⁵ *The Postcolonial Politics of Development*, 81-83.

European engagements in Africa, especially West Africa at the beginning of the nineteenth century, had links with the establishment of different types of colonies, policies, institutions, and property rights. The presence or absence of European settlers was a determining factor for the form of colonialism that took place in Africa, thus resulting in a creation of different sets of institutions in different parts of the world.²⁶ According to a distinguished historian of African history, Phillip D. Curtin, the reason for variation in colonial experiences and institutional frameworks beginning with the trans-Atlantic slave trade was based on “epidemiology of disease.”²⁷ Despite the explicit links of colonialism and dependency to the types of colonies founded by English and Europeans, Curtin summarizes conditions that gave rise to the establishment of different types of colonies in different regions because of the inability of English and Europeans to resist diseases for which they had no childhood immunity. Colonizers established plantations and institutions to support them in places in which the colonizers could live without high disease mortality.²⁸

The two types of colonies created by European powers during the period of colonial activities in the eighteenth-century were the “extractive states” and “Neo-Western” states, according to Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson, and James A. Robinson, who acknowledged the work of Curtin in establishing the types of colonies and used historical data on mortality rates in the colonies to estimate the effect of institutions on economic performance. Acemoglu,

²⁶ “Epidemiology and the Slave Trade,” *Political Science Quarterly* 83, no. 2 (June 1968): 190-91, accessed April 23, 2018. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2147089.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3Ac86fc5097608f1383b9ecf7fd49305ab>.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 198.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 194-95, 197-98.

Johnson, and Robinson claim that the extractive colonies had weak institutions, policies, property rights, and alarming mortality rates and were the types of colonies predominantly created on the African continent.²⁹ The primary objective of the European powers for establishing “extractive states” was to expropriate and transfer natural resources from the colonies to their colonizers.³⁰ The Neo-Western colonies were established in areas with less health catastrophe and had stronger institutions, trade policies, property rights, and checks and balances against government powers. Neo-Western colonies resettled by English and European immigrants were familiar with Western ideas of private property and social contract with government, a kind of awareness that was missing in extractive states.³¹ It is the situation that those West African states, especially countries under the French government (such as Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Ivory Coast, and Benin) that developed as “extractive” colonies had comparative advantage in agriculture and trade and commerce compared to Liberia.³² In the case of Liberia, it was neither established as an extractive state (even though Firestone built a factory) or settler colony, but for repatriation of freed slaves from the US by the American Colonization Society.³³ In an explicit way, Liberia’s institutions

²⁹ “The Colonial Origin of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation,” *The American Economic Review* 91, no. 5 (December 2001): 1370, accessed March 29, 2018. <https://economics.mit.edu/files/4123>.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 1369-70.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 1370.

³² Federico Tadei, “Extractive Institutions and Gains from Trade: Evidence from Colonial Africa,” *Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis* (Mar 2018): 4, accessed May 17, 2018. <ftp://ftp.igier.unibocconi.it/wp/2014/536.pdf>.

³³ Joseph Saye Guannu, *Liberian History Up to 1847* (London: Penguin, 1983), 9.

should have been stronger than many African nations including those countries mentioned above.

Discussion and Analysis of Regionalism and New Regionalism

Rick Fawn explains the theory of regionalism as one that plays an interdisciplinary role in the interpretation of geography, culture, identity, institutionalization, and the function of actors in developed and developing nations, to include major regional powers, and actors within a region at the level of the state and society.³⁴ The concept of regionalism covers all aspects of world politics including intricacies of globalization. Fawn claims that “Western Europe gave rise to a regionalism.”³⁵ He links the different forms of regionalism to political and economic conditions from the aftermaths of World War I, conditions of supremacy that emerged from World War II, and the Cold War struggles between the US and the Soviet Union because of globalization, a driving force of world politics. Fawn further links the different forms of regionalism to globalization and claims that even as globalism in its political and economic forms becomes preeminent, nonetheless, globalism functions within a regionalist framework.³⁶ In regard to Liberia and West Africa, Fawn’s ideas are applicable in outlining the entanglement of aid to political and economic implications of globalization deemed necessary by development agencies. Aid has not ended conditions of mismanagement, political instability, unemployment, and prolonged civil war in Liberia and nation-states in West African because of

³⁴ “‘Region’ and Their Study: Wherefrom, What for and Whereto?” *Review of International Studies* 35, no. 1 (February 2009): 5, accessed April 23, 2018. <https://search.proquest.com/docview/204921651?pq-origsite=gscholar>.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 7.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

challenges to linking social, economic, political, and cultural interests across national boundaries.

During the Cold War era, foreign aid became the driving force for expansion of capitalist and communist ideologies. Allies of the US (France, Great Britain) with so much influence on countries in the West African sub-region used aid as a political 'tool' to fight the expansion of communist ideology of the Soviet Union. The intent made aid to West African countries the opposite of aid to Europe because during the Cold War, benchmarks to achieve aid objectives were relaxed, compromised, and based on political and economic interests.³⁷ A special study conducted by the World Bank on the Cold War's impact on West Africa reveals that the end of the Cold War caused the downfall of many governments (e.g. Liberia and Sierra Leone) because of decreases in funding and military assistance programs to maintain power. Decreases in aid to the region eventually led to exposure of authoritarian governments' monopolies on violence, leaving them vulnerable to attacks from rebellious groups, and limiting options for external powers to intervene in defense of Western interests.³⁸

The US intervention in Europe and England through the Marshall Plan³⁹ was instrumental in transforming Western Europe and England after World War II. The end of World

³⁷ Moyo, *Dead Aid*, 35-37; Simplice A. Asongu, "The Questionable Economics of Development Assistance in Africa: Hot-Fresh Evidence, 1996-2010," *Review of Black Political Economy* 41, no. 4 (October 2014): 473-74, accessed November 22, 2017. <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1783936187?accountid=10771>.

³⁸ Alexander Marc, Neelam Verjee, and Stephen Mogaka, *The Challenges of Stability and Security in West Africa* (Washington D.C.: World Bank, 2015), 9-11. Accessed March 23, 2018. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/562931467986299230/pdf/97717-PUB-PUBLIC-Box391451B-9781464804649.pdf>.

³⁹ The Marshall Plan (officially referred to as the European Recovery Program) was the Economic Assistance Act, signed by President Harry S. Truman, March 1948, as the first post-World War II comprehensive foreign aid package of the U. S. government to Europe. The Marshall Plan aid program served as the first major aid program designed to rebuild Western Europe and England, mainly, that suffered destruction during World War II. The goals

War II witnessed many European countries destroyed, economies ruined, and millions of the population homeless and near starvation. The need for outside intervention to revamp the economies, rebuild infrastructure (e.g., roads, bridges, railroads, power stations, and communication facilities), and improve standards of living was high. Accordingly, US interventions in the rebuilding of Western Europe after World War II was based on fear of communism expansion into war-torn and vulnerable Western European nations and in a way capitalist economic principles that encourage US companies to implement programs from recipients of the Marshall Plan.⁴⁰ On the contrary, the communist approach considers government ownership of all means of production rather than private ownership. Europe was divided over US interventions through the Marshall Plan. Western European countries such as France, West Germany, and Italy signed off for the program, while Eastern European countries under the influence of the Soviet Union rejected the program. A key proponent of the rejection movement was Soviet leader Joseph Stalin whose objection to the Marshall Plan was premised on his intent to control aid to Russian sector of Germany and countries on the borders of the Soviet Union.⁴¹

of the US in appropriating about \$13 billion dollars for the program were to rebuild war-ravaged countries, remove trade barriers, modernize industry, improve European prosperity, and prevent the spread of communism. The top four beneficiaries were Great Britain, France, West Germany, and Italy. The plan took its name from General George Marshall, then Secretary of State, and the leading proponent of the program. See Office of the Historian. Marshall Plan, 1948. Accessed March 22, 2018. <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/marshall-plan>; and Dambisa Moyo, *Dead Aid: Why Aid is not Working and How there is a Better Way for Africa* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009), 10-13.

⁴⁰ Richards J. Samuels, ed. *Encyclopedia of the United States National Security* (Thousand Oaks, London, and New Delhi: Sage Publications Inc., 2006), 446-47. Accessed March 23, 2018. <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/iris.etsu.edu:2048/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlymtfxzQ3NDM4N19fQU41?sid=8508d021-b521-4c1c-a892-7f620ccf6a25@sessionmgr104&vid=0&format=EB&rid=>

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 446.

Between 1948 and 1951, Western European countries that accepted the Marshall Plan experienced growth in industrial output. The industrial sector recovered to exceed prewar production, standards of living improved intensely, and the economy witnessed an incredible boom, thus accounting for one of the fastest economic booms in European history. In contrast, Eastern European countries that refused aid through the Marshall Plan languished in poverty and industrial backwardness. The Marshall Plan has intrinsic links to the Cold War struggle for political control between the US and the Soviet Union. A key interest of the US government in the allocation of resources for postwar reconstruction of Western Europe centered on limiting the threat of communist expansion.⁴² The struggle for political dominance between the US and the Soviet Union in global politics had a trickle-down effect on models used to allocate aid for development and poverty reduction in West Africa.

Notably, the primary reason for increases in aid to West Africa during the Cold War was based on Western nations' desire to keep the region out of influence and control of the Soviet Union and not necessarily to address development needs.⁴³ Since the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991, the pattern of aid allocation has changed substantively. The new wave of aid interventions fit into the neoliberal economic perspectives of Bretton Woods Institutions' ideas of globalization and public sector reform through democratic governance, sound financial practices, trade and commerce, and human development.⁴⁴ The World Bank and IMF are the driving forces behind the neoliberal economic perspective of aid interventions.

⁴² Samuels, ed. *Encyclopedia of the United States National Security*, 446-47.

⁴³ Ibid. 446.

⁴⁴ International Monetary Fund, "About the IMF and the World Bank." Accessed December 11, 2017. <http://www.imf.org/en/About/Factsheets/Sheets/2016/07/27/15/31/IMF-World-Bank>.

Timothy M. Shaw's narrative of regionalism in Africa identifies current regional responses to challenges and opportunities of globalization by outlining five innovative features. The features outlined by Shaw cover development economies; ecologies, corridors and triangles; civil society and media institutions; emerging security threats; grim and pessimistic "war economy" that encourages and facilitates continuing conflict; and an orthodox and optimistic peacebuilding response, reconstruction, and redirection of development programs.⁴⁵ The features are critical to discussion of African societies as the new millennium dawned because they reinforce the immeasurable dimensions of globalization that identified the pacific benefits of linking socio-economic interests across national boundaries, and the emergence of human security agendas and discourses as noted above. Shaw contends that regionalism on the African continent is a disappointment because regional trade has failed to grow faster than at the global level, amidst the essential homogeneity of Africa's economies.⁴⁶ Shaw's analysis of local regional economic projects highlights weak development characteristics such as trade policies, security threats, and ineffective governance structures as conditions responsible for aid dependency and characterization of developing nations as failed states with shadow regimes for development.

The explicit and implicit link of aid to Liberia for the beginning of the period under review focuses on colonial and postcolonial control over the expansion of communist ideology

⁴⁵ "New Regionalisms in Africa in the New Millennium: Comparative Perspectives on Renaissance, Realisms and/or Regressions," *New Political Economy* 5, no. 3 (November 2000): 399, accessed April 23, 2018. <https://search.proquest.com/central/docview/216970888/fulltextPDF/41381CF499424C17PQ/1?accountid=10771>

⁴⁶ "New Regionalisms in Africa in the New Millennium," 402.

of the Soviet Union. During the later period, specifically between 1985 and 1990, Western nations and the Soviet Union sought the allegiance of newly-independent African nations. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, which occurred as neoliberalism gained strength, the struggle then shifted more to the globalist struggle among corporations and nations linked together economically. In regard to international relations that does not mean that nation-states or regions cease to have influence. But it does mean that global economic links between and among corporations and nation-states may be more meaningful than political links among nation-states.⁴⁷

Dependency Theory

The theory of dependency looks at the pattern of economic development of industrial and developing nations. Dependency theory suggests that the relationships between developed and developing nations can only be understood when their global interdependence are taken into consideration. The theory of dependency provides a unique way to analyze the economic relations between Western powers and nation-states in the West African sub-region. The relationships between nation-states in the sub-region and Western powers such as Great Britain, France, Germany, and the US originate from the extraction of natural resources and return of resources in the form of manufactured goods, as well as aid, even though aid aims to encourage industrial development, a situation that remains a challenge to development initiatives in West African countries. The concept of dependency explains the complex

⁴⁷ Amos Sawyer, *Beyond Plunder: Toward Democratic Governance in Liberia* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005), 199-200.

relationships between the West and nation-states in West Africa with so many development problems.

The theory of dependency came to prominence because of Paul A. Baran's critical views of capitalism and his idea about a new form of imperialism that has engulfed resource-rich nations. Baran's work is classic in the field of development studies and it is one that subsequent scholars such as Andre Gunder Frank (*Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America: Historical Studies of Chile and Brazil*), Jorge Larrain (*Theories of Development: Capitalism, Colonialism, and Dependency*), Bjorn Hettne (*Development theory and the Three Worlds*), and Diana Hunt (*Economic Theories of Development: An Analysis of Competing Paradigms*) have used and elaborated upon.⁴⁸ Baran decries that economic development in developing countries (as it is with the situation of nation-states in the sub-region) is still deplorable because decisions for solving the problems are overwhelmingly inimical to dominant interests of the developed world.⁴⁹ Baran argues that capitalism is a hierarchal, international system in which developed nations exploit developing countries through the transfer of economic surplus to the developed nations, and most (nation-states in the sub-region) are underdeveloped today because of the loss and misuse of economic surplus.⁵⁰

Dependency theorists have outlined several ways Western nations have engaged into practices that promote their own interests and needs to keep African nations dependent on

⁴⁸ (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967); (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989); (California: Longman Scientific and Technical, 1990); (Savage: Barnes and Noble Books, 1989).

⁴⁹ *The Political Economy of Growth* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1962), 11-12.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 29-30.

them. Andre Gunder Frank, a Marxist influenced by Baran, describes the relationship between the developed and developing nations as one in which Western powers use their “superior position” to administer the affairs of developing countries in ways that are beneficial to themselves.⁵¹ For example, developed nations tend to promote integration of developing nations into neoliberal practices characterized with aid, foreign direct investment, and trade and commerce.⁵² Jorge Larrain observes that the concept of “metropolises and satellites” is an important criterion in the discussion of dependency theory, wherein the metropolises use their superiority to expropriate economic surplus of the satellites.⁵³

According to dependency theorists, the relationships between developed and underdeveloped countries have connections with monopolistic structures that continue to cause the misuse and squandering of resources. An important form of misuse of resources outlined by Larrain is “the expropriation and appropriation of a large part or even all of and more than the economic surplus or surplus value of the satellite by its local, regional, national or international metropolis.”⁵⁴ Larrain further asserts that the theory of dependency is explicitly linked to the inherent duality of capitalism wherein “some countries develop because other underdevelop, and vice versa.”⁵⁵

⁵¹ “The Development of Underdevelopment,” *Monthly Review* 41, no. 2 (June 1989): 2, accessed April 23, 2018. http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE|A7659725&v=2.1&u=tel_a_etsul&it=r&p=AONE&sw=w&authCount=1

⁵² *Ibid.*, 2-3.

⁵³ *Theories of Development: Capitalism, Colonialism and Dependency* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989), 116.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 116.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 114.

The theory of dependency is important to aid and Liberia's reliance on aid because it exposes colonial legacies and mindsets associated with expropriation of resources for development that benefits Western nations to the detriment of Liberia and other West African nations. The framework of dependency outlines the correlation between foreign aid to Liberia and the expropriation of natural resources by multinational corporations of the West. Importantly, the theory of dependency outlines reasons why natural resources have become a curse rather than a blessing, and complexities associated with aid implementation in Liberia and nation-states in West Africa. In a strange sort of way, neoliberalism and dependency theory are related because of common ground on neo-Marxist concepts of development. The neo-Marxist concepts of development focus on finding solutions to social and political problems not sufficiently address by traditional Marxist theory.⁵⁶

Historical Background of Liberia

Challenges associated with aid implementation in Liberia are not limited to aid failure and the absence of democratic frameworks. Part of the root causes for continual poor performance in all areas of the human development indices (such as health, education, social services, human and infrastructure development, and life expectancy) have their origin in colonial legacies and mindsets that have continued since the formation of the state by the American Colonization Society (ACS) in 1822. The circumstance behind the colonization of Liberia was to establish a safe haven for the repatriation of freed black slaves, who were considered harmful to the peace and stability of the United States. It is important to emphasize

⁵⁶ *The Political Economy of Growth*, 33-35.

that Liberia was not an “official” colony of any country, yet, over the years, Liberia was under the influence of the US government, US corporations, in particular, Firestone, and a philanthropic organization, the ACS.⁵⁷

Established in 1816 in Washington, D.C., as a private philanthropic organization of white Americans, ACS initiated the early nineteenth-century schemes for the repatriation of freed black slaves to the continent of Africa. The formation of the ACS became successful through efforts of Virginia legislator Charles Fenton Mercer and Presbyterian clergyman Robert Finley of Princeton, New Jersey.⁵⁸ The motives of the ACS ranged from humanitarian to physically ridding the US of persons considered dangerous to the peace and stability of the American society. Early on, it had some funding from the federal government for repatriation programs, but that funding did not last long. The decision of the federal government to allocate funds to the ACS for repatriation of freed slaves explains the entanglement of Liberia with the US. The mode of governance introduced by the ACS privileged freed slaves (the descendants of whom indigenous Liberians came to call Americo-Liberians or Congo people)⁵⁹ to the detriment of natives or indigenous Liberians and the country’s resources.

The intervention of Firestone Rubber Company in 1926, the United States’ first largest overseas investment in Africa, originated from economic tension that existed between the US

⁵⁷ D. Elwood Dunn, Amos J. Beyan, and Carl Patrick Burrowes, *Historical Dictionary of Liberia*, 2nd ed (Lanham and London: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2001), 18.

⁵⁸ See J.H.T. McPherson, *History of Liberia* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1891), 1-4; Joseph Saye Guannu, *Liberian History Up to 1847* (London: Penguin, 1983), 8-9; George William Brown, *Economic History of Liberia* (Washington D.C.: The Associated Publishers, Inc., 1941), 97-99.

⁵⁹ Americo-Liberians or Congo people is a social construct used to refer to descendants of settlers or freed slaves who originated from the US. Guannu, *Liberian History Up to 1847*, 9.

and Britain over the supply of rubber.⁶⁰ The Liberian government granted Firestone the concession during a period when the US relied on British control of rubber produced by Malaysian plantations for the supply of rubber to ease high demand in the manufacturing industry. Britain's dominance created constraints for the US productive capacity as the largest consumer of rubber in the early twentieth century. As part of the strategy to address British control over rubber supply, Firestone Tire and Rubber Company, with support of the US government, entered into an agreement with the Liberian government for acquisition of land to establish a rubber plantation. In 1926, a 99-year concession agreement covering one million acres of land was signed by Firestone and the government for cultivating rubber as a long-term strategy to provide the US with a ready-made market for rubber, so that it would not have to rely on British control of rubber and rubber prices. In an effort to protect its investment in Liberia, Firestone lobbied with the US to approve a five million dollar loan as a cover-up plan for what many social and environmental justice advocates in Liberia today refer to as the "K" clause. The "K" clause mandated the Liberian government to provide one million acres of land for Firestone Rubber Company, a condition that Firestone and the US government forced the Liberian government to accept.⁶¹

George William Brown's analysis of the Firestone agreement reveals that the concession between Firestone and the government of Liberia marked the extension of ethnic conflicts among four native groups, the Bassa, Krahn, Kru, and Greebo. Brown asserts that the Firestone

⁶⁰ Dunn, Beyan, and Burrowes, *Historical Dictionary of Liberia*, 34-35.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 34.

agreement disadvantaged natives because they were not consulted during land negotiations between Firestone and the government. Also, officials involved with negotiations were Americo-Liberians with vested interests in maintaining their relationships with influential members of the ACS with political and economic connections to Firestone and federal government.⁶² Land ownership in the last century faces serious conflicts between the indigenous majority and the minority Americo-Liberians who enjoyed all the benefits and rights associated with property ownership. Western concepts of land ownership that depended on written legal deeds introduced by the settlers were to the disadvantage of indigenous Liberians because English was not their native language. Also, indigenous cultures had concepts of community ownership of land, but not individual private ownership peculiar to the West, a condition that made the indigenous lose customary ownership of their land.⁶³ The acquisition of one million acres of land in 1926 by Firestone for a period of 99 years further worsened relationships between the indigenous and Americo-Liberians.⁶⁴

Liberia has a unique history of marginalization and disunity that originates from the arrival of freed slaves. From the days of forming the colony, there has been a prolonged conflict between Americo-Liberians and natives over political and economic dominance and property rights. Between 1822 and 1980, the power relations between the minority Americo-Liberians

⁶² *Economic History of Liberia*, 230-34.

⁶³ Caroline Khoubessarian, "State Building in a Post-Conflict Context: The Liberian Framework for Donor Aid and Private Investments," in *From Civil Strife to Peace Building: Examining Private Sector Involvement in West African Reconstruction*, ed. Hany Bessada (Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2009), 244.

⁶⁴ Sunny Nyemah, "State-Building Efforts in Post-Conflict Liberia," in *From Civil Strife to Peace Building: Examining Private Sector Involvement in West African Reconstruction*, ed. Hany Bessada (Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2009), 193-94.

and the majority indigenous people witnessed serious discontent. The discontent arose because Western concepts of governance and land ownership introduced by the settlers disadvantaged the indigenous groups because they did not hold capitalist ideas of private property ownership or liberal political ideas of governance based on system of voting. The natives experienced the highest degree of marginalization in political and economic governance. Although Americo-Liberians were the minority group and constituted five percent of the country's population at the time of independence, these elites controlled political and economic powers for more than a century (1822 to 1980).⁶⁵

According to Liberian historian Joseph Saye Guannu, the exclusion of indigenous peoples from mainstream governance systems and denial of economic and educational opportunities from 1822 to 1980 account for reasons why Liberia has experienced systemic poverty, inequality, political struggle, and prolonged civil war.⁶⁶ For more than 100 years, Americo-Liberians were the privileged group that dominated government and public service.

During the early days of independence, Liberia's sovereignty came under serious attack from British and French merchants who had direct supervision over neighboring territories such as Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Cote d'Ivoire. The primary reason for infringement of Liberia's sovereignty through land encroachment activities by the French and British was because Liberia was not colonized by any of the Western powers and because native peoples did not have military organizations that rivalled those of Western powers. The fact that Liberia was not

⁶⁵ "State-Building Efforts in Post-Conflict Liberia," 194.

⁶⁶ *Liberian History Up to 1847*, 82-84.

colonized and did not gain independence from the European or English colonial masters directly involved with the colonization of West Africa created opportunities for the French and British to disregard Liberia's sovereignty, thus resulting in encroachment.⁶⁷

Decisions on aid to Liberia during the Cold War were based on the willingness of the tyrannical regime of Master Sergeant Samuel Kanyon Doe to dance to the will and pleasure of the West at the disadvantage of marginalized and impoverished Liberians. During this period, specifically between 1980 and 1989, the infamous seventeen-man military junta commonly known as the People's Redemption Council (PRC) had staged a military *coup d'état* on April 12, 1980, and assassinated William R. Tolbert, the twentieth President of Liberia.⁶⁸ In a live public broadcast, Master Sergeant Doe, the lowest ranking officer and head of the PRC attributed the causes of the *coup d'état* to an effort to end one-party rule, human rights violations, corruption, marginalization, poverty, and unequal resource distribution perpetrated for more than a century by Americo-Liberians to the detriment of indigenous population. In the face of these allegations against the Tolbert regime, the PRC government of Doe committed even worse atrocities, human rights violations, and corruption.⁶⁹

Between 1980 and 1985, the military regime executed more than 80 eminent Liberians for political reasons, jailed about 600 political activists without trial, and attacked students at the University of Liberia resulting in several deaths, rapes, and more than 100 injuries. In

⁶⁷ "State Building in a Post-Conflict Context," 233.

⁶⁸ Dunn, Beyan, and Burrowes, *Historical Dictionary of Liberia*, 8.

⁶⁹ Adekeye Adebajo, *Liberia's Civil War: Nigeria, ECOMOG, and Regional Security in West Africa* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2002), 18-20.

addition, the PRC government rigged the 1985 election results that favored Jackson F. Doe (no relation to Samuel Doe) of the opposition Liberia Action Party and imprisoned him.⁷⁰ In the wake of poor performance and human rights abuses during the tenure of the military government, the administration of US President Ronald Reagan approved \$91 million in 1985 for development and annual appropriation of \$14 million for military hardware from 1980 to 1985 respectively.⁷¹ The continued bad governance from 1985 to the present serves as contributing factors for Liberia's classification as a failed state with low human development rankings, an aid dependent nation, and the fourth poorest country in the world in the midst of abundant natural resources and increase in foreign aid.⁷²

Since declaring independence, however, Liberia has experienced some bitter obstacles ranging from class and income inequality, power struggles, patriarchal system that oppresses females, suppression of political rights, and a one-party system of governance that gave rise to the military *coup d'état* of 1980 and subsequent fourteen-years civil war that ended in 2003. These incidences have hurt, rather than improve living conditions. Samuel Doe's disrespect for the rule of law, nepotism in favor of his kinsmen (Krahn ethnic group), and poor leadership style led to high costs of living and caused the civil war that began in 1989 by Charles Ghankay Taylor. As a result of these complexities, the war destroyed all fabric of the Liberian society and

⁷⁰ Amos Sawyer, *Beyond Plunder: Toward Democratic Governance in Liberia* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2005), 17-20.

⁷¹ Dunn, Beyan, and Burrowes, *Historical Dictionary of Liberia*, 8.

⁷² *Human Development Report 2015*, 50; Global Finance Magazine. *2016 Poorest Countries in the World*. Accessed August 8, 2017. <https://www.gfmag.com/global-data/economic-data/the-poorest-countries-in-the-world?page=12>.

worsened standards of living, thus increasing the need for more foreign aid to undertake national reconstruction and development. Like Doe's regime, Taylor's regime was characterized by dictatorship, human rights abuses, suppression of oppositions and student activists, and continuation of war in other parts of the country by opposition leaders.⁷³

In 2014, Liberia's development challenges got worse because of the deadly Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak in West Africa. The epidemic made the health and education sectors dysfunctional, changed the way of life in the Liberian society, and stalled Liberia's recovery after decade of peace and stability. Like the civil war, the Ebola outbreak destroyed the lives of thousands of Liberians and deteriorated economic and commercial activities, thus resulting to decline in growth rate from 5.9 to 1 percent.⁷⁴ Even though the outbreak existed for a relatively short period (from March 2014 to September 2015) as compared to the civil war, Liberia has not fully recovered from damages caused by the outbreak. To date, the economy is still struggling from side effects of the epidemic because of pauses in investment plans by external partners.⁷⁵ It was humanitarian aid from both private sources and government sources that contributed to ending the outbreak and saving lives in Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone.

Over all, the theoretical frameworks of colonialism, post-colonialism, post-Cold War regionalism, and dependency of a nation on outside sources of financing help to explain

⁷³ Sawyer, *Beyond Plunder*, 24-25.

⁷⁴ Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, *Ebola Financing Report* (Monrovia: MFDP, 2014), i, iii. <https://www.mfdp.gov.lr/index.php/documents/reports/special-report?download=33:ebola-financing-report-november-2014>; *Human Development Report 2015*, 70. 12; *World Bank Annual Report* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2017), 10, 18. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/24985/9781464808524.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y>.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

challenges associated with aid implementation in Africa. In the case of Liberia, the theoretical frameworks provide insights on root causes of the civil war and why development programs remain at the center of aid request.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

Aid as a Colonial and Postcolonial Tool

Edward W. Said's social and intellectual descriptions for many of the insights and doubts of *Orientalism* have influenced many disciplines. In addition, the cross-examination of Western imperialism focuses on political and cultural representation of class, gender, race, social differentiation, and nationalism in neoliberal practices. Said's insight of "knowledge and power" outlines ways in which political and cultural representations have focused on subjecting developing countries to the political culture of the West.¹ Although Said's discussion focuses on countries in the Middle East and ways in which Western scholarship represents non-Westerners, it is important to state that his insights are applicable to aid agenda in Africa. Building on the work of Said and others, Ilan Kapoor observes from a postcolonial development perspective that one of the main discourses of aid is "aid as a gift" that represents practices and strategies of development agencies in maintaining influence and control.² The concept of "gift" is important because it helps to explain social and political arrangements associated with development policies between countries (donor and recipient). As Kapoor puts it "aid as a 'gift' is an ideological construction. The mystique of the gift covers over aid's political and economic dimensions."³ He challenges the material structure of global inequality and poverty created by neoliberal capitalists and calls for a reevaluation of development policy, but "alternative ways

¹ (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 5-6, 12.

² *The Postcolonial Politics of Development* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 37, 79-80.

³ *Ibid.*, 90.

of doing development.”⁴ Kapoor claims that aid is the most contested political tool used by development agencies of the West to subject subalterns to social engineering and political and economic restructuring in the “name” of structural adjustment, good governance, basic needs, human rights, and poverty reduction.⁵

There are several anthropological ethnographies that deal with poverty and its making that are important for this study because of their insightful contribution to poverty reduction. These studies have critiqued the discursive power of foreign aid, institutional knowledge and practices, and governance structures of neoliberal development programs. Using American economist Milton Friedman’s insight of the free market system introduced by Adam Smith in 1776, Ann Kingsolver discloses that decisions that cause and reinforce poverty, inequality, and unemployment in disenfranchised societies have their links to the logic of neoliberal capitalism. The logic of neoliberal capitalism derives from the concept set forth by Friedman that supports a market free of government regulation. According to Friedman, a free market would reduce rather than increase poverty and inequality.⁶ Kingsolver explains that neoliberal capitalist logic contends that “success of the free market depends, as many have noted, on there being a strategically othered group that has little choice other than to provide labor for the increasingly wealthy Free Marketeers.”⁷ Kingsolver’s explanation applies to Liberia and other West African

⁴ *The Postcolonial Politics of Development*, 90.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 37, 131.

⁶ “Poverty and Purpose: Life with the Free Marketeers,” *Voices* 6, no. 1 (June 2008): 24, accessed March 24, 2018. <https://anthrosource.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1525/vo.2002.6.1.23>.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 24-25.

countries in the sense that underpaid labor of the poor makes these resources available to elites and to those of the West and not to residents of those nations.

David Harvey's accumulation by dispossession looks at Marx's description of primitive accumulation on a wide range of neoliberal practices that include the commodification and privatization of land and the forceful expulsion of subaltern populations; the conversion of various forms of property rights into exclusive private property rights; the suppression of civil liberty; and the commodification of the labor force and the suppression of indigenous forms of production and consumption.⁸ Harvey's work also covers colonial, neo-colonial, and imperial processes of appropriating assets; the monetization of exchange and taxation, particularly of land; the historical slave trade and usury; the national debt; and ultimately the credit system as a radical approach of primitive accumulation.⁹ Harvey's examination of the organic relationship between expanded reproduction and violent processes of dispossession provides a better understanding of ways in which capitalistic imperialism has helped to shape the historical geography of capitalism. Harvey's argument of capital "accumulation by dispossession" illuminates ways in which dispossession plays a significant role in the concentration of economic and political power among elites to the disadvantage of the poor.¹⁰

Several ethnographical studies in recent years have also linked historical and spatial accounts of neoliberal practices and aid architecture to anthropologies of development. David Moore's analysis of contemporary politics of land ownership in developing countries reveals

⁸ *The New Imperialism: Accumulation by Dispossession* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 145.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 147.

that development themes (e.g., human rights, democracy, and economic management) are not part of a regime of “truth” originating from modern liberalism but rather provincialized as cultural norms and values that deal with people’s identity, occupation, and environment.¹¹

Moore observes that development is not a distinctive apparatus that is separable from historical relations between state and culture. He claims that development “can be studied as the fraught institutional effort to make this so (or to resist it)—a scenario in which anthropologists are themselves implicated as policy makers, project workers, activists, or critics.”¹² Anthropologists have observed that the philosophies of development do not exist as culturally external nor as what the West does to the “rest,” but a fundamental part of the postcolonial struggle based on cultural ideas of change.¹³ Studying the governance structure of poverty reduction in Africa, specifically Senegal, Giogio Blundo points out that the neoliberal system of governance on the continent focuses on the state as a machine of delivery and economic management, rather than “as a political entity whose legitimacy is derived from the creation of identity for its citizenship and accountability toward them.”¹⁴ This situation, as Blundo claims, undermines the intimate relationship between development programs and

¹¹ “The Anthropology of International Development,” *School of Oriental and African Studies* 42 (July 2013): 230, accessed March 24, 2018. <https://www-annualreviews-org.iris.etsu.edu:3443/doi/pdf/10.1146/annurev-anthro-092412-155553>.

¹² *Ibid.*, 240.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹⁴ “Dealing with the Local State: The Informal Privatization of Street-Level Bureaucracies in Senegal,” *Development Change* 801, no. 4 (September 2006): 799-803, accessed March 28, 2018.

governance processes because aid remains the only “economic intervention” used by donors to solve development complexities in fragile nations in the West African sub-region.¹⁵

Regional discussion of China’s aid to Africa has received mixed reactions from the development scholars about the associated costs and benefits. Notwithstanding the mixed reactions, supporters of China’s investments in Africa view the relationship as a positive step with practical solutions to Africa’s development problems. According to Stephanie Rupp, critics view the Africa-China partnership as one that favors China’s commercial interest, displaces African industries and markets, and introduces colonial practices in the form of dependency.¹⁶ For example, Robert I. Rotberg describes the political and economic ties between China and resource-rich Africa as a symbiotic relationship in which China cannot easily grow without Africa, nor can African nations exist and now prosper, without China because of mutually exclusive interests based on ideological and material need and extraction of natural resources.¹⁷ Rotberg contends that China’s investment in Africa undermines liberal political ideology by weakening United Nations sanctions on countries not compliant with human rights and democratic governance. According to Rotberg, China’s investment in Africa intensifies Chinese disdain of Africans because of economic interests not in compliance with respect for human rights and democracy.¹⁸ Stephanie Rupp observes that the Sino-African relations are

¹⁵ “Dealing with the Local State,” 799-803.

¹⁶ “Africa and China: Engaging Postcolonial Interdependencies,” in *China into Africa: Trade, Aid, and Influence*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg (Cambridge, MA: World Peace Foundation, 2008), 65-67, 77-78.

¹⁷ “China’s Quest for Resources, Opportunities, and Influence in Africa,” in *China into Africa: Trade, Aid, and Influence*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg (Cambridge, MA: World Peace Foundation, 2008), 1-3.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 11-13.

neither colonial nor neocolonial. Instead, China is concerned with influencing basic characteristics of political and economic systems that promote the interests of the Chinese and compliant African governments to the detriment of the ordinary people. Rupp suggests that China has no intention of colonizing Africa in any way, including the neoliberal “colonization without colonies” because of shared interests interdependent of each other.¹⁹ Rupp refers to the Sino-Africa relationship as postcolonial interdependency, one in which China is not burdened by patronizing moral banality of Western nations that decree democracy and transparency as preconditions to economic engagements in nation-states of Africa.²⁰

Debra Brautigam describes Chinese-African relationship as one evading aid interventions dominated by Western powers because China does not interfere in African political systems, human rights violations, and corrupt practices of government officials. This, as Brautigam suggests, provides a unique opportunity for diplomatic maneuvering of China’s soft power as a major decision maker and source of development for most African nation-states.²¹ Also, Martyn J. Davies rejects the widespread perception that China’s aid to the Special Economic Zones (SEZ) in Africa focuses on the extraction of natural resources rather than transforming living conditions because most of China’s investments are within the manufacturing sector.²²

¹⁹ “Africa and China,” 66, 77.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 79.

²¹ “China’s Foreign Aid in Africa: What Do We Know?” in *China into Africa: Trade, Aid, and Influence*, ed. Robert Rotberg (Cambridge, MA: World Peace Foundation, 2008), 197-99.

²² “Special Economic Zones: China’s Developmental Model Comes to Africa,” in *China into Africa: Trade, Aid, and Influence*, ed. Robert I. Rotberg (Cambridge, MA: World Peace Foundation, 2008), 137-38.

In an exceptional study outlining the new wave of innovation in Africa, Dayo Olopade outlines positive characteristics of individuals and grassroots civic organizations making immense contributions to the transformation of African societies amidst the overwhelming development challenges. Olopade identifies extreme poverty and “formality bias”²³ as obstacles affecting innovation and development in many African states. She contends that Africans are preoccupied with Western concepts of governance and foreign aid as solutions to Africa’s problems, thus making the continent lose focus on its greatest assets.²⁴ Accordingly, Olopade identifies Africa’s greatest asset to resolve the enormous development challenges as “kanju,” a diction from the Yoruba dialect of Nigeria which means “the specific creativity born from African difficulty.”²⁵ Olopade uses “kanju” as a metaphor to explain how a new generation of creative entrepreneurs have found ways outside the formal structures of governance to provide workable solutions to day to day economic problems that plague ordinary people.²⁶

For decades, there have been on-going disagreements among economists about the tradeoff between efficiency and inequality in many parts of the world, including Africa. A critique of this tradeoff written by Joseph E. Stiglitz, a renowned economist and 2001 Nobel Peace Prize winner, discloses that inequality, irrespective of the society, hurts economic growth

²³ Formality bias is a situation in which solutions to Africa’s development problems are considered important and effective only when they come from Westerners (foreign governments and international non-governmental organizations) with so much influence and dominance in global politics and development practices. *The Bright Continent: Breaking Rules and Making Change in Modern Africa* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014), 14, 35.

²⁴ Ibid., 35.

²⁵ Ibid., 20-21.

²⁶ Ibid., 22-23.

and development more than it enhances national development.²⁷ Stiglitz outlines several ways inequality adversely affects economic performance in society. First, inequality decreases aggregate demand for goods and services because individuals with high incomes consume relatively less of their income than those with low incomes. Second, the poorer people of society have inadequate resources to invest in educational programs that will benefit their children because they have no savings. This “inequality of outcomes,” as Stiglitz observes, is a consequence and a cause of “inequality of opportunities,” which is the main determinant of an individual’s socioeconomic position in society.²⁸ Stiglitz is a strong supporter of capitalism and some level of government regulation, who argues that inequality results from increasing unjust political and economic policies and misguided priorities of the state and its people.²⁹ He contends that current neoliberal approaches being used to resolve development challenges favor the profit motives of corporations, tax avoidance schemes by the rich, and a fraudulent financial and political systems, rather than increasing opportunities for the poor.³⁰

The impact of foreign aid on the type of development programs started by national governments is overwhelming. Although government development programs are heavily dependent on foreign aid, views on aid as a measurement for poverty reduction and increase in access to social services are mixed. Understanding the proportional correlations of aid and

²⁷ *The Great Divide: Unequal Societies and What Can We Do About Them* (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 2015), 6-7, 95.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 14-16, 83, 93, 160.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 125, 304.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 86, 99, 260.

poverty requires a comprehensive review of complexities that inform donors' decisions in determining "who gets what and why" in aid allocation processes. There are differing views on the impacts of aid on poverty reduction, economic growth, and governance systems in West Africa. Scholarly discussions about aid to Africa focus on the assumptions of two schools of thought: aid as a beneficial and successful policy tool that reduces poverty, improves democratic governance, expands economies, and strengthens social institutions, and aid as a failure and a mechanism that exacerbates poverty, misery, corruption, inefficiency, and low productivity.

Aid to Africa as Beneficial and Successful

Development scholars Robert Calderisi, Carol Lancaster, Ann Van Dusen, Haley J. Swedlund, Paul Collier, David Dollars, and Mathew S. Winter regard aid as beneficial, successful, and the best approach to address Africa's development problems. The major claim of aid as beneficial and successful is that foreign aid enhances economic growth and sustainable development, reduces extreme poverty and incidence of diseases, improves democratic governance, expands the economies, increases access to social services, and strengthens social institutions. It is, however, important to note that these favorable views of aid have linkages to neocolonial economics and operate within the parameters of Western dependency. Scholars and development experts in support of aid as beneficial and successful claim that in the last three decades, foreign aid has made significant gains in Africa by increasing economic

performance and standards of living, thus resulting in a significant reduction in the rates of extreme poverty.³¹

Robert Calderisi, an economist and former development expert of the World Bank, adds to the debate of aid effectiveness in Africa by providing his personal experiences of living and working in several countries as an official of the World Bank. In the face of controversies, Calderisi claims that the problems with achieving economic prosperity in Africa in the last three decades are not because of the impact of the slave trade among African tribal groups, colonialism, the Cold War, high debt burden, supposed inequalities of globalization and world trade with the West, geography of natural resources, foreign aid, and the politics of development.³² Although Calderisi's work is at the center of controversy, he argues that African problems are mainly of its own making in the form of authoritarian governments, rampant corruption, poor investment climate to attract industrial and agriculture activities, and a "culture of fatalism" that have made Africans accustomed to poverty and misery created by

³¹ Robert Calderisi, *The Trouble with Africa: Why Foreign Aid Isn't Working* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 7, 14, 160; Carol Lancaster and Ann Van Dusen, *Organizing US Foreign Aid: Confronting the Challenges of the Twenty-First Century* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 2005), 10-11; Haley J. Sewdlund, *The Development Dance: How Donors and Recipients Negotiate the Delivery of Foreign Aid* (London and New York: Cornell University Press, 2017), 1-2, 19; Paul Collier and David Dollars, "Development Effectiveness: What Have We Learnt?" *Economic Journal* 114 (June 2004): 267, accessed February 2, 2017. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1468-0297.2004.00221.x/epdf>; Tony Addison, George Mavrotas, and Mark McGillivray, "Aid, Debt Relief and New Sources of Finance for Meeting the Millennium Development Goals," *Journal of International Affairs* 58, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 124, accessed February 2, 2017. <https://search.proquest.com/docview/220712485/fulltextPDF/88CBBE4675254D9FPQ/1?accountid=10771>; Matthew S. Winters, "Choosing to Target: What Types of Countries Get Different Types of World Bank Projects," *World Politics* 62, no. 3 (July 2010): 453, accessed February 2, 2017. https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/AD92ACDDBDEFBB77BF52CD7A4CA4600/S0043887110000092a.pdf/choosing_to_target_what_types_of_countries_get_different_types_of_world_bank_projects.pdf.

³² *The Trouble with Africa*, 3, 7, 14.

theirs leaders.³³ Despite the defense for the World Bank's aid programs in Africa (that aid has improved education, standards of living, water and sanitation, and healthcare), Calderisi decries "political correctness" that prevents resolving of development problems. Calderisi also calls for aid appropriation to focus on rigorous democratic reforms and straight donors' oversight in an entirely new approach that prioritizes countries such as Uganda, Tanzania, Mozambique, Ghana, and Mali.³⁴ Calderisi attributes the continent's problems to the failure of African leaders to create functional governance systems, failure to hold African leaders accountable, and selfishness of non-governmental organizations in providing too many ideas not applicable to African countries.³⁵ Amidst Calderisi's revelations about the political and economic realities of African leaders, his position is supportive of aid and maintains Africans leaders to be held accountable.

Carol Lancaster's and Ann Van Dusen's examination of criteria used by the US Department of State and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) indicate that parameters in allocating foreign aid reflect postcolonial motivations and fit within a regionalist framework of the post-Cold War era of development. Aid from the US government focuses on creating a strong regional integration of security, democracy, and globalization. Lancaster and Van Dusen worked at USAID in the positions of deputy administrator and senior career officer, respectively. As the largest single provider of international assistance in the amount of \$350 billion from the end of 1946 to 2003, Lancaster and Van Dusen's examination

³³ *The Trouble with Africa*, 4, 78, 91.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 8-9, 160-61.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 4-5, 7-8, 157.

discloses that US aid has made a significant impact in strengthening governance systems, reducing poverty, and improving standards of living in many parts of the world, including Africa.³⁶ In the midst of the successes, however, Lancaster and Van Dusen admit that aid implementation in Africa faces serious societal crises (i.e., religious, class, ethnic, and regional conflicts) that have consistently undermined aid usefulness in eradicating extreme poverty.³⁷ Lancaster and Van Dusen further explain that US aid is associated with diplomatic endorsement, support of military allies, reward systems for government actions desired by donors, and development of infrastructure to extract natural resources from recipient nations, and corporate access to other commercial activities. Despite the challenges, Lancaster and Van Dusen maintained that US aid has made great impact in reducing extreme poverty through the billions of dollars spent on humanitarian support, development projects, and military programs in Africa.³⁸

The results of Tony Addison, George Mavrotas, and Mark McGillivray's statistical analysis demonstrate that on the average, the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) implementation was successful in decreasing extreme poverty and incidence of diseases because it affords more Africans an opportunity to access social services such as healthcare, education, and water and sanitation programs.³⁹ The use of MDG as standards for the success of aid supports the argument that aid increases economic growth and relaxes budgetary

³⁶ *Organizing US Foreign Aid*, 7-8.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 7.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 11-12.

³⁹ Addison, Mavrotas, and McGillivray, 113.

constraints of poor governments in transforming deplorable living conditions in most developing countries. The MDG is a policy document made of eight critical areas of human development indices. The United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan introduced the MDG in 2000 as a working tool for all donor institutions. The MDG seeks to “eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases, ensure environmental sustainability, and develop a global partnership for development” by 2015.⁴⁰ Using statistics from the MDG implementation in Africa, Addison, Mavrotas, and McGillivray conclude that foreign aid remains a major source of income for development sustainability and suggest that the standards of living in developing countries would be worse than they were previously in the absence of aid.⁴¹ Jeffrey D. Sachs supports this viewpoint. According to Sachs, outcomes of the MDGs implementation made significant gains in removing constraints on access to water and sanitation in poor countries such as Liberia and neighboring West African countries.⁴²

In a policy review of the World Bank’s role in providing beneficial aid to Africa, Matthew S. Winters cites the *relative* (italics mine) increase in access to social services, economic productivity, environment sustainability, gender equality, and public sector reforms as gains

⁴⁰ *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2015* (New York: United Nations, 2015), 4-7.

⁴¹ Addison, Mavrotas, and McGillivray, 124.

⁴² “The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time,” *European Journal of Dental Education* 18, no. 1 (February 2008): 19, accessed December 17, 2017. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1600-0579.2007.00476.x/epdf>.

made by the World Bank in reducing poverty through public sector investments.⁴³ Winters suggests that interventions by the World Bank in recent years have contributed to the expansion of economic growth, advancement of human development, and increases in infrastructure and quality of life.⁴⁴

The effectiveness of aid in reducing poverty outlined by economists Paul Collier and David Dollar offer an in-depth approach to aid implementation and acknowledge improvements made in the standards of living in most African countries. Collier is a professor of economics and public policy at Oxford University and former director of the development research group of the World Bank. Dollar is a senior fellow in the John L. Thornton China Center at the Brookings Institution and former World Bank's country director of China and Mongolia. Collier and Dollar explain the importance of aid implementation in Africa by detailing its role in improving the quality of life using three criteria: poverty efficient allocation rule, changes in policy and government transactions, and alternative partnerships between governments and donor institutions. Collier and Dollar claim that aid has become an effective tool in reducing poverty, decreasing risk of conflict, and instituting reforms across African countries.⁴⁵ Collier and Dollar also acknowledge that aid interventions face multiple objectives and interests of donors, including imperial control and the exploitation of natural resources by multinational corporations from the West. Collier and Dollar argue that standards of living in Africa "could" have been worse in the absence of aid and maintain that aid remains an important policy tool

⁴³ "Choosing to Target," 425-26.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 444.

⁴⁵ "Development Effectiveness," 267-68.

for poverty reduction, economic growth, and increased access to social services (e.g., schools, hospitals, roads, and safe drinking water).⁴⁶ In the midst of the gains, they caution that aid allocation must prioritize countries with effective governance structures and economic policies, and adherence to tenets of democracy as way forward to reduce extreme poverty.⁴⁷

As Léonce Ndikumana and Lynda Pickbourn, professors of economics and specialists in African economy development note, aid allocated to water and sanitation projects in African countries has helped to reduce the time spent by women and girls to fetch water, to decrease incidence of water-borne diseases, and to increase progress toward gender equity, as well as to the sustainable development goals on poverty reduction.⁴⁸ Ndikumana and Pickbourn suggest that increased access to water and sanitation helped to improve health and human development outcomes, thus contributing to improving overall standards of living. Ndikumana and Pickbourn reaffirm the position of the 2013 MDG report that mandates access to social services as priority areas to promote human development and reduce poverty. The study establishes the importance of aid to water and sanitation and emphasizes the need for increase in monies to increase access to safe drinking water and healthy living conditions as part of the solutions to Africa's development challenges.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ "Development Effectiveness," 267.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 264.

⁴⁸ "The Impact of Foreign Aid Allocation on Access to Social Services in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Case of Water and Sanitation," *World Development* 90 (February 2017): 112, accessed February 2, 2017. https://ac.els-cdn.com/S0305750X1530543X/1-s2.0-S0305750X1530543X-main.pdf?_tid=21d90c22-3cac-468b-b4ff-deda89c832f6&acdnat=1523816256_c0c809bfa11bd591b82bcb31a5b02fb9.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 112.

Haley J. Swedlund, assistant professor at the Center for International Conflict Analysis and Management (CICAM), Radboud University in the Netherlands, examines the impact of foreign aid on poverty reduction in Africa. Her study reveals that millions of Africans now have improved access to healthcare facilities, primary and secondary education, and social services such as safe drinking water, paved roads, and energy because of aid. Swedlund expounds that despite the aid successes, achieving aid effectiveness in Africa is a difficult task because of bargaining between donor agencies and recipient governments, and maintains that aid successes depend on the credibility of both parties' commitment to improving the lives of the ordinary citizens.⁵⁰ According to Swedlund, aid to Africa continues to pose challenges because decisions to allocate and utilize aid have consequences on donors' and governments' sincerity to uphold commitments made during aid negotiations, which in most instances, result in policy compromises.⁵¹ In these compromises, donor agencies will agree to provide a certain amount of aid in exchange for specific actions by recipient governments, a situation that causes a great deal of frustration among donors and government officials.⁵²

Overall, views in support of foreign aid maintain that aid to developing African countries is beneficial and has made great impacts in reducing poverty, expanding the economy, providing increased access to social services, and increased standards of living. Views of supporters of aid as beneficial and successful maintain that the status of the continent,

⁵⁰ *The Development Dance*, 3, 18-19.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 4-5, 22-23.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 27-29.

especially sub-Saharan Africa, in the human development indices would have been worse without foreign aid.⁵³

Aid to Africa as Failure

In contrast to the view on aid as beneficial and successful, there are ensuing disagreements among some prominent development studies scholars, environmental activists, and political pundits on the effectiveness of aid to Africa. This scholarship fits within the postcolonial school of thought and suggests that in the case of Africa, aid has failed, remained ineffective, poorly managed and implemented, and responsible for the dysfunctional nature of nation-states in Africa.⁵⁴ Some of the development practitioners in support of this argument include, but are not limited to, Dambisa Moyo, Ryan C. Briggs, Simplicé A. Asongu, John Page, and Abebe Shimeles.

Moyo is an eminent scholar, economist, and development specialist from Zambia who has worked with the World Bank as a consultant in its regional units of Europe, Central Asia, and Africa where she co-authored the World Bank's *Annual World Development Report* (1994).

⁵³ *The Development Dance*, 19-20; "The Impact of Foreign Aid Allocation on Access to Social Services in Sub-Saharan Africa," 112; *Organizing US Foreign Aid*, 7; "Development Effectiveness," 267; "Choosing to Target," 453-4; "Aid, Debt Relief and New Sources of Finance for Meeting the Millennium Development Goals," 124.

⁵⁴ Dambisa Moyo, *Dead Aid: Why Aid is not Working and How there is a Better Way for Africa* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009), xix; Amanda Kay McVety, *Enlightened Aid: US Development as Foreign Policy in Ethiopia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 220-1; John Page and Abebe Shimeles, "Aid, Employment and Poverty Reduction in Africa," *African Development Review* 27, no. 1 (October 2015): 17, accessed November 22, 2017. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1467-8268.12136/epdf>; Simplicé A. Asongu, "The Questionable Economics of Development Assistance in Africa: Hot-Fresh Evidence, 1996-2010," *Review of Black Political Economy* 41, no. 4 (October 2014): 473-74, accessed November 22, 2017. <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1783936187?accountid=10771>; Ryan C. Briggs, "Does Foreign Aid Target the Poorest?" *International Organization* 71, no. 1 (January 2017): 187, February 2, 2017. https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/24010BE037DC8F4C6AF04DED5D94E4C9/S0020818316000345a.pdf/does_foreign_aid_target_the_poorest.pdf.

She also worked for a number of years at Goldman Sachs as head of economic research and strategy for sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, she contributes to scholarly discourses on aid implementation on the continent. Moyo currently serves on the board for several S&P 500 Fortune Companies, among them- Barclays Bank, Barrick Gold, and Chevron.⁵⁵ Moyo argues that aid interventions in Africa do not favor reconstruction, industrial activities, and provision of social services, as was the case of US interventions in the reconstruction of Europe at the end of World War II. Moyo also claims that “across the globe the recipients of this aid are worse off; much worse off. Aid has helped make the poor poorer, and growth slower.”⁵⁶ Aid must take responsibility for the rising level of dependency, poverty, corruption, inflation, erosion of social services, and weakening of governance systems. According to Moyo, all leaders of each and every African state are brainwashed into aid dependency so as to limit their full potential in competing economically with Western powers. She further claims that Africa is locked into the cycle of dysfunction and unable to take appropriate actions toward economic prosperity because of aid dependency.⁵⁷ She asserts that many Africans are poor today because of aid and disagrees with strategies of the World Bank and IMF that foreign aid is an effective and constructive policy tool for promoting and sustaining economic prosperity and development in Africa.⁵⁸ Even though she once was an employee of the World Bank, she has come to disagree

⁵⁵ “Global Economist, Author and Investor in the Future.” <http://dambisamoyo.com/about/>. Accessed December 28, 2017.

⁵⁶ *Dead Aid*, xix.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 5-6, 8, 6.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 28.

with its policies on aid. Moyo's work reignites the debate on aid effectiveness on the continent because it provides a critique and analysis of aid failure, sustainability, and strategy concerning bilateral aid from Western governments and China and multilateral aid. Moyo reaffirms the work of other development scholars such as Karl R. Pedersen, Paul Mosley, and Stephen Knack that aid has made the poor poorer, and economic growth slower than faster industrial activities because of aid dependency; yet, foreign aid remains an integral part of development needs of Africa.⁵⁹

Using official development assistance statistics produced by World Bank, World Trade Association, and African Development Bank on economic growth, job creation, and poverty reduction, John Page and Abebe Shimeles, economic development specialists at Brookings Institute and the African Development Bank, argue that the current trend of economic growth in Africa has weak links to poverty reduction because of aid failures to create economic stability and employment opportunities.⁶⁰ Page and Shimeles contribute to ongoing conversations on the impact of aid on structural change (a condition in which there exists a link among income, economic growth, and poverty reduction in society) and improvements in quality of life. Page and Shimeles suggest that aid is one of the many reasons for the slow pace of employment, socio-economic growth, and reduction in the rates of extreme poverty in Africa because of poor implementation strategies.⁶¹ In agreement with Moyo, Page and Shimeles maintain that there is a missing link between economic growth and poverty reduction because strategies of donors

⁵⁹ *Dead Aid*, 74-75.

⁶⁰ "Aid, Employment and Poverty Reduction in Africa," 17.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

and African governments have the least responsiveness to create enough employment opportunities.⁶²

Amanda Kay McVety is an associate professor of history at Maimi University. Mc Vety's narrative on the US-Ethiopia bilateral relationship provides a postcolonial perspective about conditions that contribute to aid failure in Africa. Similar to what happened in Liberia and many West African countries during the Cold War era, US aid to Ethiopia during the administration of Haile Selassie focused on a mixture of interests of both governments. The US interests in Ethiopia during the Cold War centered on humanitarian, paternalistic, and strategic encouragement to make Ethiopia the "bread basket" of the Middle East, and also to keep the regime out of the Soviet orbit. Selassie's interest was based on expanding Ethiopia's control in eastern Africa through industrial power as a strategy to hold onto power perpetually.⁶³ McVety argues that federal government interventions through appropriation of millions of US taxpayers' dollars in Ethiopia during the Cold War validate the argument that foreign aid did not work to improve the lives of Ethiopians, but did work to keep Ethiopia out of the Soviet orbit. McVety's narrative supports the claim that in many cases aid has failed to improve the lives of poor Africans because of compromises, selfish political interests and motives, and perpetuation of colonialism.⁶⁴ A similar study by Adebajo Adekeye, former Director of International Peace Academy at the University of Sussex in England and expert in West Africa conflict resolution, reveals that Western aid to West Africa (especially Liberia, Sierra, Guinea, and Ivory Coast)

⁶² "Aid, Employment and Poverty Reduction in Africa," 28

⁶³ *Enlightened Aid: US Development as Foreign Policy in Ethiopia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 220-21.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 179-80.

between 1960 and 1990 did not achieve favorable outcomes of reduce the occurrence of poverty, inequality, and diseases because of inept political leaderships, prolonged ethnic conflicts, civil wars, and unresolved differences from colonial practices of marginalization and unequal distribution of resources.⁶⁵

Examining the impact of aid on wealth creation, Ryan C. Briggs uses the World Bank's mission statement that says, "Our dream is a world free of poverty," to analyze the extent to which aid from the Bank has reached poor people and marginalized communities in Africa. Briggs uses household survey data of subnational transfers of resources from the World Bank and African Development Bank to African nations to measure wealth distribution in Africa. He observes that the relationship between wealth creation through aid is counterproductive to ending extreme poverty in Africa.⁶⁶ Outcomes of Briggs' surveys reveal that foreign aid to Africa is not working because of ineffective implementation strategies of donor institutions. Briggs also confirms Moyo's assertion that aid implementation in Africa does not favor the poor because of the abuse of resources, corrupt practices, mismanagement, and incompetent political leadership.⁶⁷ The study examines the extent to which foreign aid reaches people at different levels of society to ascertain the impact of aid on nation-states in Africa. Briggs concludes that aid to African countries is not effective in promoting inclusive growth, development, and does not favor the poor.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ *Liberia's Civil War: Nigeria, ECOMOG, and Regional Security in West Africa* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 2002), 1-3.

⁶⁶ "Does Foreign Aid Target the Poorest?" 187.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 203.

⁶⁸ *Liberia's Civil War*, 203.

Analyzing health as an indicator to measure the effectiveness of aid implementation, David Sanders, Ruth Stern, Patricia Struthers, Thabale Jack Ngulube, and Hans Onya reveal that health promotion policies of Sub-Saharan Africa are weak and continue to decline because of lack of financial and technical support from donors and African governments.⁶⁹ Sanders et al. argue that for aid to influence the health sectors in African nations, approaches to health promotions must adopt a human rights standpoint that builds on the central principles of people's collective rights to health.⁷⁰ Despite the justification in policy documents of African governments and donors, Sanders et al. contend that poverty and access to quality healthcare remain a major challenge because of inequalities between rich and poor.⁷¹

Using human development indicators to measure the rates of poverty and inequality in 52 African countries, Simplice A. Asongu questions the motives of aid by outlining its deficiencies in resolving development challenges of African countries.⁷² Asongu observes that foreign aid allocation to nation-states on the continent have been associated with a mixture of interests including altruism, historical tides, and imperialism by the West. He argues that neocolonialism is at the center of aid distribution to African countries, thus making aid detrimental to institutional quality and performance. Asongu insists that the destiny of Africa is tied to political and economic decisions of leaders to transform living conditions and improve

⁶⁹ "What is Needed for Health Promotion in Africa: Band-Aid, Live Aid or Real Change?" *Critical Public Health* 18, no. 4 (December 2008): 514-15, accessed November 22, 2017.

<http://web.a.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=0&sid=06cb23e7-7c58-4efe-afa8-e7c31eece0d2%40sessionmgr4007>.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 515.

⁷¹ Ibid., 515-17.

⁷² "The Questionable Economics of Development Assistance in Africa," 455-56.

public infrastructures (electricity, transportation, and technological advancement).⁷³ Like Asongu, Omotayo R. Olaniyan argues that development in West Africa has suffered from rapid economic growth, political instabilities, and decolonization following the euphoria of independence. Olaniyan claims that extreme poverty is high in West Africa because of decreases in investment coupled with the slow pace of public sector development, low savings, inadequate social services, and low economic production.⁷⁴

Common Ground on Aid Success and Failure

An intermediate perspective on strategies available for aid to address extreme poverty, transform standards of living, and improve infrastructure deficit considers the establishment of a common ground on both approaches, aid as beneficial and successful, and aid as failure. This account of aid intervention is what I refer to as the “hybrid” model of aid effectiveness. One of the leading proponents of this intermediate approach to achieve effective utilization of foreign aid is Jeffrey D. Sachs. Sachs is a renowned professor of economics, health policy and management, and director of the Center for Sustainable Development at Columbia University. Sachs is also a senior advisor to UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, bestselling author and columnist whose monthly newspaper columns appear in more than 100 countries, and co-recipient of the 2015 Blue Planet Prize, the leading global prize for environmental leadership.⁷⁵

⁷³ “The Questionable Economics of Development Assistance in Africa,” 473-74.

⁷⁴ *Foreign Aid, Self-Reliance, and Economic Development in West Africa* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publisher, 1996), 98-99; 179-81.

⁷⁵ “Bio.” Accessed June 23, 2018. <http://jeffsachs.org/about/>.

In previous work on poverty and economic growth and development in Africa, Sachs attributed difficulties confronting aid accomplishments in Africa to the absence of a “Green Revolution” that would allow Africans opportunities to produce more food as the best alternative in reducing the rates of extreme poverty.⁷⁶ At present, Sachs’ approach to Africa’s development problems has been modified from “Green Revolution” to a good “differential diagnosis.”⁷⁷ In his recent publication, *The Age of Sustainable Development*, He argues that:

The combination of continued rapid technological change and a good “differential diagnosis” to identify priority needs of each low-income region can thereby direct investments toward high-return antipoverty programs, whether for infrastructure (such as roads, rail, power, connectivity, and ports), health care, safe drinking water and sanitation, or improved access to schooling. Just as public health has improved with the scaling up of programs to fight AIDS and malaria, similar breakthroughs can be made in other areas: more productive farming, new industrial development, and greatly improved educational attainment.⁷⁸

In Sachs’ earlier work, *The End of Poverty*, He attributed Africa’s poverty and development challenges to the following factors:

First, Africa, unlike Asia, did not have a Green Revolution. There are many reasons. One of the reasons is that Asia has its great rivers, including the Ganges, the Indus, the Brahmaputra, the Mekong and the Yangtze, which serve to irrigate tens of millions of farms. Unfortunately Africa depends instead on rain-fed agriculture, without the vast river systems to provide irrigation. An astonishing 96% of Africa’s cropland is rain fed. This result is extremely fragile farm systems which make it financially hazardous for the poorest farmers to purchase fertilizers and high-yield seeds. Their extreme poverty also prevent them from getting credits to buy inputs even when they would like to do so. The results are catastrophic. Without fertilizers, high-yield seeds and irrigation, the

⁷⁶ *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2005), 69-70.

⁷⁷ *The Age of Sustainable Development* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 142.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 148-49.

result is low and unreliable crop yields, and the depletion of soil nutrients which are not replaced by chemical fertilizers.⁷⁹

Sachs further claims that “a different diagnosis of Africa’s problems shows that there are challenges in nearly all of the seven big categories: poverty trap, economic policy framework, fiscal framework, physical geography, governance patterns and failures, cultural barriers, and geopolitics.”⁸⁰ On account of industrial agriculture and food security, Sachs reveals that:

African farms face many obstacles. One key challenge is soil-nutrient depletion. Africa’s farmers have generally been too poor to keep their farms’ soils replenished with nitrogen, potassium, and phosphorous necessary for decent crop yields...Farmers in almost all other parts of the world use extensive fertilizers, both organic and chemical, to replenish the key nutrients that are removed with each harvest. When crop is harvested, the nitrogen and other nutrients leave with it. Somehow those nutrients have to be put back in the soil, whether through green manures, chemical fertilizers such as diammonium phosphate and urea, or long fallow periods, in which nitrogen is replenished through natural processes. Yet most of Africa’s peasant farmers have been so poor that they have been farming without the advantage of those added nutrients, and the resultant low yields trap the farmers in a poverty trap. They get low yields year after year. Since the farmers are too poor to buy the fertilizers that they need, their soils continue to be depleted of key nutrients. The yields remain low, and every year the farmers get very meager income that does not help their families’ struggles with hunger or give them the income necessary to buy inputs that would enable higher production.⁸¹

Notwithstanding Sachs’ recommendation for a mixture of approaches (such as investment in agriculture, health, education, physical infrastructure, fiber optic, and electrification) to end poverty in Africa, it is important to note that application of practices of

⁷⁹ “The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time,” *European Journal of Dental Education* 18, no. 1 (February 2008): 19, accessed December 17, 2017. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1600-0579.2007.00476.x/epdf>.

⁸⁰ *The Age of Sustainable Development*, 151.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 152-53.

the Green Revolution has come under serious criticisms from environmental and social justice advocates. In India for example, Vandana Shiva, an Indian physicist and environment activist, attributes increase in poverty, decrease in food security, and destruction of the ecological systems to outcomes of the Green Revolution. She asserts that the Green Revolution is a neoliberal capitalist idea that deprives native Indians from storing their seeds for future use, increases financial burdens of farmers in the purchasing of genetically-modified seeds, and decreases food production among the local population.⁸² Shiva also argues that the Green Revolution is an attempt for science to overcome the natural limitation of agriculture, primarily for political and economic reasons rather than poverty reduction.⁸³ She reveals that emergence of the Green Revolution with genetically-modified seeds as a scientific experiment in development and agricultural transformation witnessed a paradigm shift from a farming system owned and controlled by peasants to one under absolute control by agrichemical and seed corporations.⁸⁴

Instead of reducing poverty and increasing food security, Shiva claims that implementation of the Green Revolution in India and other parts of Asia has increased poverty, ethnic conflicts, inequality, food insecurity, pollution, destruction of the environment, and marginalization of indigenous farmers because disputes and patents and intellectual property rights on seeds ownership.⁸⁵ As Shiva observes, the mandatory use of genetically-modified

⁸² *The Violence of the Green Revolution* (New York: Third World Network, 1991), 12-14.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 23, 46-47.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 64.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 15, 20-22, 63.

seeds for agricultural activities in India increased the financial burden of indigenous farmers. This situation also denied farmers the opportunity to store organic (heirloom or hybridized) seeds, as opposed to genetically-modified seeds, destroyed the ecosystems, decreased food production, and increased poverty and diseases among the local population.⁸⁶ Shiva contends that the Green Revolution is a neoliberal capitalist idea that has succeeded in creating a multitude of problems for poor Indians. The problems arise because genetically-modified seeds are expensive to grow, require so much water, fertilizer, and pesticides.⁸⁷

In addition, Wangari Maathai, 2004 winner of the Nobel Peace Prize and founder of the Green Belt Movement in Kenya,⁸⁸ provided an account of challenges impacting Africa's growth and development, and in so doing resists Sachs' recommendation for Green Revolution as the solution to Africa's poverty and economic challenges. Maathai attributed Africa's social, political, economic, and environmental problems to effects of colonialism, aid dependency, corruption, lack of ethical leadership, and environmental degradation (desertification, and deforestation).⁸⁹ She suggested that full scale implementation of the Green Revolution would cause more harm than good for Africans because the Green Revolution would destroy these relationships (e.g., the trees, rivers, streams, land, and forests) which are the sources for

⁸⁶ *The Violence of the Green Revolution*, 11-14, 63-64.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 47, 62-63.

⁸⁸ The Green Belt Revolution was established in 1977 as a non-for-profit organization dominated by women involved with environmental conservation, advocacy against patriarchal systems, community development through planting of trees, improving the livelihood of community members, protecting the environment degradation, and increasing commitment and persistence among disenfranchised indigenous persons who depended on the rivers, land, and trees as sources of survival in Kenya. See *The Challenge for Africa* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2009), 3.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 9-11, 28-29.

gathering food through farming, hunting, and fishing activities. Maathai's analysis takes into consideration challenges associated with application of the Green Revolution's idea of industrial agriculture because many African nations do not have the necessary infrastructure such as roads and railroads to connect rural and urban communities for easy movement of goods and services as well as geographic and climatic conditions that make industrial agriculture more difficult to establish and sustain.⁹⁰ Maathai argued that Africa's situation is a paradox to development because it is one of the richest continents on the planet with so many resources such as oil, precious stones and metals, forests, waters, wildlife, soils, and agriculture products; yet, millions of Africans remain extremely poor.⁹¹

Overall, the literature review provides intriguing scholarly approaches to aid and its outcomes, and aid to Africa as beneficial and successful and aid as failure. These differing approaches are critical to the study and help with establishing a way forward to address complexities affecting development in Liberia and nation-states in West Africa. Both schools of thought present an interdisciplinary perspective of scholars on the role of aid and its impact on developing countries such as Liberia.

⁹⁰ *The Challenge for Africa*, 9-11, 28-29.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 287-28.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains methodology used to study the impact of foreign aid on extreme poverty in Liberia. The methodology explains the role of content analysis in exploring primary documents produced by the Liberian government and bilateral donors on the need for aid and ways aid can be used to alleviate poverty. Understanding the impact of foreign aid on extreme poverty in Liberia requires a review of policy documents on donors' decisions to allocate aid and complexities faced with aid effectiveness. I did not use a software program (such as Nvivo or QDA Miner) to assist in content analysis.

Mapping Content Analysis

This study uses content analysis to determine complexities associated with poverty reduction, causes for aid dependency by government, conditions informing donors' decisions to allocate aid, and expenditures on development programs in Liberia. The research uses content analysis to examine primary documents that reflect distribution of aid and primary documents that request aid and implement aid. Content analysis deals with the examination of communicated material in a variety of forms that include, but is not limited to, classification, tabulation, and evaluation of key words and themes to determine the meanings and probable effects of a document.¹ Klaus Krippendorff's account of content analysis highlights three unique and distinct characteristics considered critical to applying qualitative and quantitative research methods. First, content analysis consists of an empirically grounded method, exploratory in

¹ Klaus Krippendorff, *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology*, 3rd ed (Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, and Singapore, Sage Publications, 2013), 1.

process, and predictive or inferential in intent. Second, contemporary content analysis goes beyond traditional notions of symbols, contents, and intent of an author's work. Third, content analysis seeks to develop a methodology of its own, one that permits researchers to plan, execute, communicate, reproduce, and evaluate whatever the particular results are to the researcher²

For this study, Kimberly A. Neuendorf's interpretation of content analysis is the basis of discussion and serves as the working definition to use throughout this research. Neuendorf expounds that "Content analysis is a summarizing, quantitative analysis of messages that relies on the scientific method, including attention to objectivity/intersubjectivity, a priori design, reliability, validity, generalizability, replicability, and hypothesis testing. It is not limited as to the types of messages that may be analyzed, nor as to the types of variables that might be measured."³

Content analysis is an effective research instrument that allows researchers to achieve research goals. A number of scholars have used content analysis as a research tool for a variety of qualitative studies on multiple subjects and topics. For example, Fabrizio Zerbini, Francesca Golfetto, and Michael Gibbera's case study on a competence-based approach of customers' satisfaction in business models investigated ways suppliers go about identifying, developing, and marketing competencies that add value to customers' satisfaction. Interestingly, the authors found that the link between a supplier's competencies and value for customers

² *Content Analysis*, 1-4.

³ "Content – A Methodological Primer for Gender Research," *Sex Roles* 64, no. 3-4 (February 2011): 277, accessed March 10, 2018. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/227148936_Content_Analysis-A_Methodological_Primer_for_Gender_Research.

generated by these competencies depends on three conditions: first, the supply of competencies increases as the supplier's bargaining power reduces dependence on industrial customers; second, the spatial dimensions of space and time have trigger-down effects on immediate customers; third, effective communication has positive impact on customers' satisfaction and competence marketing.⁴

Several studies have used content analysis as a research tool for a variety of subjects and topics. For example, Guy Enosh, Adital Ben-Ari, and Eli Buchbinder used content analysis to examine the inherent power relations between interviewees and interviewers on knowledge production through exploration, negotiation, and argumentation processes. The researchers discovered that it is commonly accepted by interview partners that knowledge construction is a simultaneously substantive and reflexive process that requires the production of creative meaning to research.⁵ Validating the role of content analysis in research, Svend Brinkmann's account of content analysis outweighs the traditional meaning of data, as "given," by presenting a new method to think about qualitative analysis that is neither driven by data nor by hypotheses approaches. Brinkmann noted that knowledge sharing is a way of doing, learning, and de-familiarizing things we normally take for granted in the production and transfer of knowledge.⁶ Another intriguing account of content analysis examined the link

⁴ "Marketing of Competence: Exploring the Resource-Based Content of Value-For-Customers Through A Case Study Analysis," *Industrial Marketing Management* 36, no. 6 (August 2007): 795, accessed March 11, 2018. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0019850106001118>.

⁵ "Sense of Differentness in the Construction of Knowledge," *Journal of Qualitative Inquiry* 14, no. 3 (April 2008): 462-3, accessed March 7, 2018. <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1077800407311962>.

⁶ "Doing without Data," *Journal of Qualitative Inquiry* 20, no. 6: 724, accessed March 7, 2018. <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1077800414530254>.

among aid flows, growth, and existing policies in aid recipient environments. Henrik Hasen and Finn Tarp examined literature on savings, investments, and growth relationships in compliance with comparative appraisal about conversations on aid effectiveness.⁷ The use of content analysis helped the researchers to establish whether aid has a direct influence on aggregate savings, investment patterns and positive relationships. The researchers found that on average, aid has a positive link to growth and development in countries hampered by an unfavorable policy environment.⁸

Exploring the correlation between aid and poverty in Liberia requires researching both publications of donor institutions and of agencies of the Liberian government. Sources outlined for examination of contextual information and data analysis of the study include a number of critical primary documents. First are the Liberian government documents, among them *Agenda for Transformation; Poverty Reduction Strategy; Ebola Financing Report; and National Budgets for Fiscal Years 2014/15, 2013/14, and 2012/13*.⁹ Second are donor documents made of the United Nations *Millennium Development Goals 2015 Report* and *2015 Human Development Report*, World Bank *2016 Annual Report and Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Completion*

⁷ "Policy Arena: Aid Effectiveness Dispute," *Journal of International Development* 12 (2000): 375-76, accessed March 7, 2018. [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/\(SICI\)1099-1328\(200004\)12:3%3C375::AID-JID657%3E3.0.CO;2-M/epdf](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/(SICI)1099-1328(200004)12:3%3C375::AID-JID657%3E3.0.CO;2-M/epdf).

⁸ Ibid., 393.

⁹ *Agenda for Transformation* (Monrovia: Republic of Liberia, 2013). <https://www.mfdp.gov.lr/index.php/documents/resources/national-development-agenda/file/9-agenda-for-transformation>; *Poverty Reduction Strategy* (Monrovia: Republic of Liberia, 2008). <http://www.emansion.gov.lr/doc/Final%20PRS.pdf>; *National Budget* (Monrovia: Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 2014), http://www.emansion.gov.lr/doc/NationalBudget_1_17_2015.pdf; *Ebola Financing* (Monrovia: Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 2014). <https://www.mfdp.gov.lr/index.php/documents/reports/special-report?download=33:ebola-financing-report-november-2014>.

Point, the International Monetary Fund *Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI) Report*, and the African Development Bank Completion Point Document Under the *Enhanced HIPC Initiative*.¹⁰

The *Agenda for Transformation (AfT)* is an essential policy document of the Liberian government's long-term development priorities. The *AfT* seeks to attract investment and aid as a means to create more employment opportunities, promote balanced growth and socioeconomic development, pursue national healing and reconciliation, and establish an open, transparent, and accountable democracy that guarantees political stability.¹¹ The *Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS)* articulates the vision and strategies of the government to achieve rapid, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth and development in post-war Liberia. The *PRS* programs play a major role in resource mobilization and utilization as Liberia transitions from post-conflict to laying the foundation for reconstruction, economic recovery, poverty reduction, and attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.¹² Also, the *National Budgets for Fiscal Years 2014/15, 2013/14, and 2012/13* identify sources of revenues (e.g., taxes and

¹⁰ *Millennium Development Goals Report 2015* (New York: United Nations, 2015). http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2015_MDG_Report/pdf/MDG%202015%20Summary%20web_english.pdf; *Human Development Report* (New York: United Nations, 2016). http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2015_human_development_report.pdf; *World Bank Annual Report* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2017). <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/24985/9781464808524.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y>; *IMF Debt Relief* (Monrovia: IDA/IMF, 2010). <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTDEBTDEPT/CompletionPointDocuments/22668580/LiberiaCompletionPoint.pdf>; *African Development Bank* (Abidjan: AfDB, 2010). <https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Financial-Information/Liberia%20-%20Completion%20Point%20Document%20HIPC%20Initiative.pdf>.

¹¹ (Monrovia: Republic of Liberia, 2013), ix-x.

¹² (Monrovia: Republic of Liberia, 2008), 13-14.

foreign aid) and outline the appropriation of revenue to priority areas of national development. The budgets help to determine government's commitment to reduce poverty, inequality, and improve standards of living through expenditure to sectors (programs) with higher economic benefits and returns. The *Ebola Financing Report* details the flow of humanitarian aid to post-war Liberia as a result of the deadly Ebola Virus Disease epidemic of 2014 that derailed the economy, threatened the peace, and worsened poverty and living conditions across the 15 political subdivisions.¹³ Foreign aid commitment for the Ebola epidemic, estimated at \$303 million, represents the highest humanitarian support to post-conflict Liberia.¹⁴

The *2015 Millennium Development Goal Report* provides a landmark commitment of world leaders to end extreme poverty and improve living conditions on the surface of the earth. In the words of UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, "the global mobilization behind the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has produced the most successful anti-poverty movement in history."¹⁵ The MDG discusses collective efforts of donors to transform the world by adhering to eight goals critical to human development: to end extreme poverty, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality, reduce infant mortality, improve maternal health, fight diseases (e.g., HIV/AIDS, Malaria, diarrhea, and tuberculosis), ensure healthy environment, and develop global collaborations for aid effectiveness.¹⁶ The *2015*

¹³ (Monrovia: Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 2014), iii.

¹⁴ Ibid., 6.

¹⁵ (New York: United Nations, 2015), 2.
http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2015_MDG_Report/pdf/MDG%202015%20Summary%20web_english.pdf.

¹⁶ Ibid., 3-6.

Human Development Report is one of the most recent updates of human development published by the United Nations. The report provides an independent, investigative, and practical discussion of major development issues, trends and policies, focusing on the richness of human lives rather than on the wealth of economies.¹⁷ The report reveals that the link between work and human development is not automatic because some activities such as forced labor, war, and conflict are detrimental to human development and thus violate human rights, shatter human dignity, and sacrifice freedom and autonomy.¹⁸ For the most part, the World Bank's *2016 Annual Report* focuses on enhanced partnership between the Bank and developing countries such as Liberia to end extreme poverty by 2030, promote shared prosperity, and support global sustainable development agenda through aid interventions. The report explains steps taken by the World Bank to help Liberia recover from aftermath of the Ebola epidemic.¹⁹ Importantly, the *Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Completion Point*, *Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI)*, and *Debt Waiver Reports* detailed conditions that led to the increase in Liberia's debt burden and strategies deployed by the World Bank, IMF, and African Development Bank to cancel the debts²⁰. These reports are instrumental to the content analysis procedures because they provide a unique scenario for understanding situations that necessitate the need for aid despite poor outcomes. The reports also explain substantial

¹⁷ (New York: United Nations, 2015), iii.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

¹⁹ (New York: United Nations, 2016), 10, 18.

²⁰ International Development Association and International Monetary Fund, *Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative Completion Point Document and Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative* (Monrovia: IDA/IMF, 2010), 1-4. Accessed December 22, 2017.
<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTDEBTDEPT/CompletionPointDocuments/22668580/LiberiaCompletionPoint.pdf>.

progress made in achieving HIPC completion amidst the difficult conditions, including the global recession of 2008.

The use of content analysis in this research plays a major role in contextualizing key words, phrases, themes, and topics frequently used in primary documents of donor institutions and the government of Liberia. Content analysis also plays an important role in the evaluation of actions taken by past and current Liberian administrations to solicit, execute, and account for donor support. Content analysis helps to evaluate government decisions of aid utilization to promote better outcomes that enhance inclusive economic growth, sustainable development, and extreme poverty reduction. Although content analysis is a difficult task to perform, it is helpful in pinpointing focus areas, goals, restrictions, and agendas of bilateral donors and foreign governments that continue to disburse aid despite the lack of transparency and accountability to yield the desired results in human development indices.

During my review of documents, I categorized the review into three sections: a review of government primary sources, analysis of donor-produced documents, and a combined examination of donors' and Liberian government documents. Content analysis on primary documents produced by the government of Liberia covers four reports. The second section of the content analysis focuses on donors' sources. This section includes five reports produced by bilateral donors. The final section of the content analysis creates a common ground on primary documents from donors and the Liberian government. In this section, both government and donor reports were analyzed concurrently.

The documents use for content analysis cover the period between 2000 and 2016. The expansion of the timeline in scope of operation takes into account my research interest in

providing a detailed analysis with relevant and reliable data sets that feed into the post-war development priorities of the government of Liberia. My analysis considers aid successes and failures as evidenced in the post-2015 primary documents such as the *Millennium Development Goals Report*, the United Nations *2015 Human Development Report*, World Bank *2016 Annual Report*, and the government of Liberia's *Agenda for Transformation*. The debt cancellation provides an opportunity for some level of access to public documents about Liberia's debt previously kept as a top secret among public officials. The period of the content analysis is important to examining aid interventions in Liberia to ascertain the underlying factors responsible for low growth, poor standards of living, and dysfunctional social services. Furthermore, the timeline of the content analysis establishes a new stage for realigning the country's development agenda, adherence to requirements for debt cancellation, democratic transition, and institutional reform to attract donors' funds.

My analysis covers three major areas of foreign aid intervention in Liberia and West Africa. The thematic areas under consideration for understanding the rationale for foreign aid include: the overall impact of aid on post-2003 Liberia, the outcomes of aid specifically on poverty reduction, and aid complexities vis-a-vis HIPC completion that resulted in cancellation of Liberia's debt in the amount of \$4.6 billion.²¹ Key terminology used to locate primary documents for my thesis include words such as "foreign aid," "extreme poverty," "donor support," "economic growth," "economic development," "poverty reduction," "grant," "development assistance," "fragile state," "debt waiver," "reform," "HIPC completion,"

²¹ International Monetary Fund, "Press Release: IMF and World Bank Announce US\$4.6 Billion Debt Relief for Liberia." Accessed December 11, 2017. <http://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2015/09/14/01/49/pr10267>.

“democratic governance,” “human rights,” and “economic management.” I have also presented a complete list of frequently used words in primary documents in Tables Four, Five, and Six of Chapter Five and in a detailed Excel spreadsheet as Appendix B, C, and D respectively.

Qualitative and Quantitative Analyses of Documents

Qualitative analysis herein applies to primary resources identified for this study. Hence, the selection of the sixty most commonly used words formed the basis of qualitative analysis of this research. It is important to note that the thematic list of words I describe as frequency of words from the documents was not generated using a content analysis and coding software program such as Nvivo or QDA Miner. I created a list of sixty words for content analysis from review of primary documents (e.g., government policy documents and donor reports) using the find (Ctrl+F) method of Microsoft Word to conduct the word count. For quantitative analysis, I listed all 60 frequently used words created from primary documents in an Excel spreadsheet. I applied a simple arithmetic by adding the number of times each word appears in selected reports to arrive at total frequency per word. To calculate the percentages, word, I added the frequency of all 60 words and denoted with label: N. Finally, I divided the total frequency per word by the value representing N to derive at percentages per word for easy comparison of results from donors and government documents as seen in the example illustrated in Table Two.

Table 2. An Illustration on the Basis for Quantitative Analysis

Government Sources			Donors Sources			Combination of Government & Donor Sources		
Word	Reports	Frequency	Word	Reports	Frequency	Word	Combination	Frequency
Aim =	5+2+3+4+6 =	20	Aim =	9+4+6+5+8 =	32	Aim =	20+32 =	52
Eat =	4+2+3+4+5 =	18	Eat =	7+5+5+2+6 =	25	Eat =	18+25 =	43
N = 38			N = 57			N = 95		
<u>Percentage calculation</u>			<u>Percentage calculation</u>			<u>Percentage calculation</u>		
Aim = 20/38*100 = 52.6%			Aim = 32/57*100 = 56.1%			Aim = 52/95*100 = 54.7%		
Eat = 18/38*100 = 47.4%			Eat = 25/57*100 = 43.9%			Eat = 43/95*100 = 45.3%		

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS FROM EXAMINATION OF PRIMARY SOURCES

This chapter presents and analyzes the results from the content analysis of nine primary documents about aid allocation and implementation in Liberia. Data used for analysis in this section take into consideration primary documents exclusively. The grouping of primary documents exists in two categories: government of Liberia reports and donor reports as detailed in Table Three below. The approaches used in presenting the research results take place in three stages covering separate analyses of reports from the government of Liberia, donors, and a combination of both donors and government reports.

Table 3. Primary Documents used for Content Analysis

Government of Liberia Sources	Donors' Reports
Agenda for Transformation (2013)	2015 Human Development Report
Poverty Reduction Strategy (2008)	African Development Bank Debt Cancellation Report (2010)
National Bugets for Fiscal Years (2014/15, 2013/14, and 2012/11)	Millennium Development Goal 2015 Report
Ebola Financing Report (2014)	World Bank 2016 Annual Report
	2008 HIPC and MDRI Completion Reports (World Bank and IMF)

Frequency of Words

The frequency of data used produced a clearer understanding of aid allocation and usefulness in Liberia as a result of using keywords gathered from primary sources created by both the Liberian government and donors. For an in-depth analysis of primary documents, I selected sixty words commonly associated with aid discussion in donor and government

reports. To determine complexities faced with aid implementation, donors' motives for appropriating aid, and government commitment on aid effectiveness requires an examination of words with the most frequencies in reports published. The review takes place in three separate and distinct sections: 1. a review of words with the most frequency on aid utilization in government reports; 2. an analysis of words with the most frequency in donor reports; and 3. a joint examination of words with most frequency in both government and donor reports. For the purpose of conducting this content analysis, the sixty words selected remain the same and form the basis of my examination in all three steps. The careful selection of words helps to outline conditions that continue to facilitate aid entanglement with Western ideologies and mindsets in Liberia's development agenda. Importantly, words incorporated in this study authenticate the role aid plays in Liberia's development. Sections of government reports analyzed include contextual information, history and current content on development strategy, governance, and aid implementation. For donor reports, my analysis focus on sections lighting human development indices, governance structure, and donors' contributions.

Liberian Government Sources

Examination carried out in this section provides an appreciable understanding of the government's decision on aid requests. My review of coded words used in development programs provides a description of the themes and strategies used by the Liberian government on aid application and utilization to sectors considered as priority areas. From the 60 frequently used words chosen for content analysis, I have presented rankings of 30 words frequently used in primary sources. The frequency of the words explained government actions and desires to ensure prudent use of aid for favorable results. I have provided Table Four to demonstrate

rankings of 30 frequently used words on the government of Liberia’s decisions on aid execution.

The detailed Excel spreadsheet of my analysis outlining rankings of all 60 frequently used words identified in reports of the Liberian government is attached as Appendix B of the study.

Table 4. Top 30 Frequently used Words in Government Sources

Rank	Word	Frequency	Percentage of word frequency
1	Foreign	1,335	10.5
2	Health	1,045	8.2
3	Development	1,010	8.0
4	Education	1,010	8.0
5	Security	768	6.1
6	Grants	659	5.2
7	Economic	646	5.1
8	Donor	436	3.4
9	Poverty	399	3.1
10	Institution	388	3.1
11	Strategy	372	2.9
12	Governance	325	2.6
13	Civil Servant	249	2.0
14	Intervention	248	2.0
15	Justice	237	1.9
16	Transformation	236	1.9
17	Reduction	201	1.6
18	Fragile	193	1.5
19	Economy	157	1.2
20	Support	153	1.2
21	Corruption	145	1.1
22	Ebola	143	1.1
23	Human Rights	139	1.1
24	Transparency	138	1.1
25	Debt	123	1.0
26	Accountability	119	0.9
27	External	111	0.9
28	Growth	110	0.9

29	Recovery	93	0.7
30	Loans	91	0.7

The above table depicts the top thirty words with the highest frequency in government documents to solicit and account for resources deemed necessary for effective execution of aid programs in sections on contextual information, governance and development strategy, and aid implementation. My analysis sought to identify each word involved with development priorities identified by the government. From a review of the top thirty frequently used words above, there are three themes that I considered critical to discussing government motives and decisions on effective use of aid. From a review of the first ten commonly used words, it is important to note that decisions outlined in government programs centered on aid dependency: “foreign,” “health,” “development,” “education,” “security,” “grants,” “economic,” “donor,” “poverty,” and “institutions.” The theme of the first ten commonly used words points to government dependency on aid as a means to resolve overwhelming challenges affecting performance of the state. For example, my review of the 2008 *Poverty Reduction Strategy* and 2013 *Agenda for Transformation* reveals that revenues to finance national development are heavily concentrated on aid, rather than the national budget. Amidst these policy documents, government support to programs outlined in the document is low. More importantly, the national budget does not prioritize thematic programs of the *Poverty Reduction Strategy* and *Agenda for Transformation* through appropriation of funds. For example, the *Poverty Reduction Strategy* specifies “land conflicts; the condition of youth especially with regard to employment; political polarization; mismanagement of natural resources; the relationship between the state and its citizens; and weak and dysfunctional

justice systems” as six crucial areas that need full government support to create long-lasting peace and stability in the nation.¹ In addition, the *Agenda for Transformation* points out four pillars: peace, security, and rule of law; economic development; human development; and governance and public institutions are key policy areas to that need the fullest of support to generate wealth, encourage inclusive economic growth, and address poverty.² Each pillar outlines ways to institute reforms needed to improve the states. For example, the pillar on human development mandates national government “to improve quality of life by investing in more accessible and higher quality education; affordable and accessible quality healthcare; social protection for vulnerable citizens; and expanded access to healthy environmentally-friendly and sanitation services.”³ Sadly, expenditure patterns of the national budget do not priorities those thematic programs, but rather misallocation of fund to recurrent costs.⁴

The next ten commonly used words focused on approaches that guaranteed aid effectiveness: “strategy,” “governance,” “civil servant,” “intervention,” “justice,” “transformation,” “reduction,” “fragile,” “economy,” and “support.” Government reports used these “buzzwords” in sections on contextual information to present development programs applicable to ensure aid effectiveness through reforms and socio-economic development. Interestingly, my

¹ (Monrovia: Republic of Liberia, 2008), 21. <http://www.emansion.gov.lr/doc/Final%20PRS.pdf>.

² (Monrovia: Republic of Liberia, 2013), 41. <https://www.mfdp.gov.lr/index.php/documents/resources/national-development-agenda/file/9-agenda-for-transformation>.

³ Ibid., 90.

⁴ In policy documents of the government of Liberia, the term “recurrent costs” connote regular budgetary expenses to non-policy areas (such as salaries, vehicles, travel allowances, and goods and services) of the *Poverty Reduction Strategy* and the *Agenda for Transformation*. Five Key sectors that should be the focus of government expenditure are health, education, agriculture, energy and environment, and infrastructure and basic social services. See The *National Budgets for Fiscal Years 2014/15* (Monrovia: MFDP, 2014), 27-28; *2013/14* (Monrovia: MFDP, 2013), 33-35; *2012/13* (Monrovia: MFDP, 2012), 33-34.

examination shows that words such as “strategy,” “governance,” “civil servant,” “intervention,” “justice,” “transformation,” “reduction,” “fragile,” “economy,” and “support” are integral part of development framework used to attract donor support through advocacy to strengthen governance and the rule of law. The Liberian government decries in all its policy documents being a fragile state with deplorable economy, poor governance structures, and enormous development needs. For example, the *Poverty Reduction Strategy* highlights the selected words to explain how “the series of crises that besieged the Liberian nations over the quarter century—from war and mismanagement to human rights abuses and deepening poverty—can be blamed largely on poor governance and disrespect for the rule of law. The situation has improved markedly since the end of the war, but Liberia continues to suffer from weak public institutions, corruption, limited justices and a lack of human capacity to quickly remedy these deficiencies.”⁵

Despite increases in aid since the end of the civil war in 2003, the Liberian government continues to argue that “to reach its targeted level of growth, Liberia will need high levels of investment” and attributed reasons for Liberia being a failed state with so many development problems to effects of the civil war and scarcity of resources.⁶ As a result, there is no demonstrated political will to fight against corruption and to bring about effective utilization of scarce resources to ensure that the true meaning of the words mentioned above yield success in the governance process. The words are used to describe the kind of reforms needed to improve sectors such as the health, education, security, and economy as evidenced by the national budget’s failure to prioritize poverty reduction programs or sectors outlined in policy

⁵ (Monrovia: Republic of Liberia, 2008), 21.

⁶ (Monrovia: Republic of Liberia, 2013), 5.

documents, as opposed to recurrent costs that benefit few group of people. The national budget does not prioritize poverty reduction programs, but rather recurrent costs (e.g., salaries, vehicles, travel allocations, and goods and services for government offices) mainly in the interest of public officials. A sampling of government spending from past national budgets shows that recurrent expenses are the highest spending area rather than development programs with economic benefits to improve standards of living and reduce extreme poverty. For example, in fiscal year 2014/15, 526 million US dollars (82.8% of the total budget) were spent on recurrent costs; 482.3 million US dollars (82.7% of the total budget) in 2013/14; and 433 million US dollars (64% of the total budget) in 2012/13, respectively.⁷ This demonstrates that the national government has failed to make improvements in standards of living of Liberians a number one priority in the distribution of resources.

The last ten words linked to attributes that account for poor performance of certain sectors of the Liberian society: “creditor,” “bilateral,” “extreme,” “civil war,” “democracy,” “relief,” “inequality,” “eradicate,” “inefficiency,” and “triggers.” The words are at the center of donors’ support to Liberia. The words are the reasons why aid to Liberia is on the increase and government uses them to make a case at donor conferences. Democracy, bilateral, creditor, and triggers are associated with possible negativity because of bad governance practices by national leaders, and as democracy is an impediment to aid effectiveness in Liberia. The coded

⁷ Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, *National Budget: Fiscal Year 2014-15* (Monrovia: MFDP, 2014), 25. http://www.emansion.gov.lr/doc/NationalBudget_1_17_2015.pdf; *Fiscal Year 2013-14* (Monrovia: MFDP, 2013), 23. http://www.theperspective.org/documents/nationalbudget_2013_14.pdf; *Fiscal Year 2012-13*, (Monrovia: MFDP, 2012), 29. http://www.cabri-sbo.org/uploads/files/Documents/liberia_2012_approval_external_enacted_budget_ministry_of_finance_ecowas_english_1.pdf.

texts (e.g. extreme, inequality, inefficiency, and civil war) describe negative features that have continuously undermined aid effectiveness and provide reasons why aid has not helped to solve pressing economic problems in Liberia. These “buzzwords” are used in government documents to request aid and not necessarily to address the nation’s problems. Reasons for using the coded texts are in line with neoliberal ideology that ends up benefitting the personal interests of few citizens to the disadvantage of the country and its people. For example, the *Poverty Reduction Strategy* cites the below passage as justification for more donor support:

Basic infrastructure was destroyed. Many roads are now impassable, which seriously constrains economic recovery, as well as the provision of basic services such as health and education. The grossly inadequate road infrastructure also impedes peacebuilding efforts by limiting economic opportunities, constraining the ability of police and other security forces to operate effectively, and weakening national cohesiveness and integration. There was no electricity or piped water in the country for 15 years until the new Government turned on some water and electricity in Monrovia in July 2006. Unemployment soared, and poverty increased sharply, with nearly 64 percent of Liberians now living below the poverty line. Schools, hospitals, and clinics are badly damaged, and most government buildings are in shambles. Today there are only 51 Liberians physicians to cover the nation’s public health needs, approximately one for every 70,000 Liberians. About 70 percent of school buildings are partially or wholly destroyed, and over half of Liberian children and youth are estimated to be out of school. A whole generation of Liberians has spent more time at war than in the classroom. Public finances collapsed, with annual revenue falling to US\$85 million, allowing per capita public expenditure of about US\$25, one of the lowest levels in the world. The Government defaulted on its debts in the mid-1980s, and by 2006 external debt has soared to US\$4.5 billion, equivalent to 800 percent of GDP and 3,000 percent of exports. Domestic debt and arrears added an additional US\$900 million, of which US\$300 million, of which about US\$300 million was ultimately deemed valid by external auditors.⁸

⁸ (Monrovia: Republic of Liberia, 2008), 16-17.

Unfortunately, government commitment to execute what is written in its policy documents is poor. The combined spending on health care, education, agriculture, energy and environment, and infrastructure and basic social services for fiscal years 2014/15, 2013/14, and 2012/13 is far below recurrent costs for each fiscal year as seen in Table Five below.⁹ Sadly, the health sector experienced a significant increase in the 2014/15 budget because of the Ebola crisis.¹⁰ Increases in health expenditures at the cost of other services (recurrent costs) would not have been possible if it were not for the Ebola epidemic. This is a clear indication that the government lacks vision and strategies to transform the state because sectors that need more funding to improve living standards are not prioritized under normal conditions, but only in times of national disaster such as the Ebola outbreak.

Table 5. Budgetary Appropriation for Five Key Sectors of the *Poverty Reduction Strategy* and the *Agenda for Transformation*

Millions in US dollars						
Fiscal Year	Health	Education	Agriculture	Energy & Environment	Infrastructure & Basic Social Services	Recurrent Costs
2014/15	99.9	76	8.9	33	55.2	526
2013/14	69	71.6	8.2	21.1	29.5	482.3
2012/13	70.5	78.1	14.52	64.9	78.2	433

Sources: *The Government of Liberia National Budget for Fiscal Years 2014/15, 2013/14, and 2012/13.*¹¹

⁹ (Monrovia: MFDP, 2014), 27-28; (Monrovia: MFDP, 2013), 33-35; (Monrovia: MFDP, 2012), 33-34.

¹⁰ (Monrovia: MFDP, 2014), 27.

¹¹ (Monrovia: MFDP, 2014), 27-28; (Monrovia: MFDP, 2013), 33-35; (Monrovia: MFDP, 2012), 33-34.

Donors' Sources

Examining the frequency of coded words used repeatedly in primary sources of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and African Development Bank provides a deeper understanding of the roles played by donor institutions in addressing challenges posed by development in Liberia. My review in this section outlines themes accompanying donors' decisions for allocating aid to Liberia. Of the 60 commonly used words chosen for content analysis of donor sources, I have provided a ranking of the top 30 frequently used words in primary donor sources to establish motives behind donors' decisions for increases in aid flow to Liberia. In Table Six below, I outlined the top 30 frequently used words that continue to inform donors' decisions for aid appropriation to Liberia. I have attached the detailed Excel spreadsheet that shows the rankings of all sixty commonly used words gathered from donor reports as Appendix C of the study.

Table 6. Top 30 Frequently used Words in Donors' Sources

Rank	Word	Frequency	Percentage of word frequency
1	Development	1,227	14.8
2	Debt	637	7.7
3	Education	424	5.1
4	Economic	415	5.0
5	Health	400	4.8
6	Employment	386	4.7
7	Poverty	358	4.3
8	Jobs	325	3.9
9	Growth	311	3.8
10	Access	306	3.7
11	Support	275	3.3
12	Relief	269	3.2

13	Assistance	208	2.5
14	Inequality	168	2.0
15	Creditor	165	2.0
16	External	142	1.7
17	Impact	128	1.5
18	Conflict	125	1.5
19	Reduction	122	1.5
20	Security	115	1.4
21	Production	113	1.4
22	Institution	110	1.3
23	Extreme	101	1.2
24	Strategy	100	1.2
25	Economy	97	1.2
26	Bilateral	95	1.1
27	Multilateral	94	1.1
28	Loans	86	1.0
29	Reform	77	0.9
30	Grants	73	0.9

Analyzing the highest frequency of words found in donor reports required identifying themes that connect to requests for increased aid to Liberia. My review of the top 30 frequently used words in primary sources produced by donors revealed that existing conditions in Liberia mandate the need for increased aid. To demonstrate this, I grouped the top thirty words with highest frequency in three categories to create themes linked to donors’ decisions on providing aid to Liberia. Each section contains ten coded words. From a review of the first ten frequently used words, it is imperative to understand that decisions made by donors to increase aid for Liberia centered on humanitarian conditions: “development,” “debt,” “education,” “economic,” “health,” “employment,” “poverty,” “jobs,” “growth,” and “access.” The words are linked to humanitarianism in the sense that they describe complexities faced

with Liberia's development and donors' empathy in solving some of the problems. For example, documents of the World Bank, IMF, and the African Development Bank used the words listed above to advocate for cancellation of debts, to create avenues for additional development assistance, and to link aid to the richness of human lives by creating opportunities for Liberians to access basic social services. For example, the African Development Bank argues that "Liberia has satisfactorily implemented eleven out of its twelve completion point triggers and has made substantial progress in implementing the remaining triggers for which it has been granted a waiver by the IMF and World Bank Boards of Directors."¹² The waivers exist in aid, debt cancellation, and technical support to accelerate development. Furthermore, the International Development Association (conglomeration of the World Bank Group) and IMF recommended that "the Executive Directors of the IDA and IMF approve the completion point for Liberia under the Enhanced HIPC Initiative. In the view of the staffs, Liberia has made substantial progress in achieving the completion point triggers despite the difficult environment following the decision point, including the food and fuel price crisis and global recession."¹³ The World Bank maintains that "the World Bank Group is working to become a more agile partner in addressing the world's most pressing problems. It aims to leverage and apply its unique capabilities to provide the innovative financing and creative solutions that support countries in dealing with these challenges at the local, regional, and global levels."¹⁴

¹² *Liberia Completion Point Document Under the Enhanced HIPC Initiative* (Abidjan: AfDB, 2010), 10-11. World Bank, *2016 Annual Report* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2017), 27. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/24985/9781464808524.pdf>.

¹³ *Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative Completion Point Document and Multilateral Debt Relief* (Monrovia: IDA/IMF, 2010), 2.

¹⁴ *2016 Annual Report*, 4.

A common theme derived from analysis of the first ten commonly used words points to systemic deficiencies in production. Liberia has a human development index value of 0.427 and ranks 177 out 188 countries, thus becoming a state with low human development.¹⁵ The low human development value is a result of poor performance in critical areas such as life expectancy, health, education, per capita income, and standards of living, a situation that continued to necessitate the need for aid.¹⁶ My analysis shows that complexities affecting national development in Liberia continue to exist because of gross financial profligacy, abuse of public trust, rampant corruption, and unequal distribution of resources. Conditions affecting national development are common knowledge to Liberians and they are manifested in policy statements and documents. The *Agenda for Transformation and Poverty Reduction Strategy* came into to existence as a result of national consensus and a policy statement made by the President of Liberia to fight corruption, reduce extreme poverty, and improve standards of living. Former President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf declared corruption as “public enemy number one” while taking the oath of office in January 2006.¹⁷ During the second term of office in 2012, she changed her characterization of corruption from “public enemy” to “vampire of development.”¹⁸ Interestingly, in her last State of the Nation’s Address to the Legislature in January 2017, she said “We have not fully met the anti-corruption pledge that we made in

¹⁵ United Nations, *Human Development Report 2016*, (New York: United Nations, 2017), 200.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 70, 218.

¹⁷ Proclamation, “Inaugural Address,” *National Legislature* (January 16, 2006): 9. Accessed March 20, 2018. http://www.pul.org.lr/doc/Inaugural%20Address%20of%20President%20Ellen%20Johnson%20Sirleaf_16%20January%202006.pdf.

¹⁸ Proclamation, “Annual Message on the State of the Republic,” *National Legislature* (January 26, 2015): 33. Accessed March 20, 2018. http://www.emansion.gov.lr/doc/EJS_Annual_Message_2015.pdf.

2006. It is not because of lack of political will to do so, but because of the intractability of dependency and dishonesty cultivated from years of deprivation and poor governance.”¹⁹

Interestingly, the pattern of national spending speaks volumes of government’s commitment to fight corruption and improve social services. Like all other budgets, in fiscal year 2014/15, for instance, “the approved budget allocation for the major areas of government spending operations are Recurrent Cost of \$526.0 million, of which US\$383.8 million is recurrent cost of Spending Entities, Public Sector Investment (PSIP) \$109.2 million (17.2%), National Claims US\$81.6 million (11%) and general Claims US\$60.4 million (9.5%),”²⁰ a clear indication of abuse of public trust and lack of commitment to improve living conditions of ordinary Liberians. The last decade has witnessed a significant increase in aid to Liberia as part of donors’ commitment to end extreme poverty. In the midst of increases in aid since the end of the civil war, policies of the government have not yielded favorable results for the vast majority of citizens as evidence in the human development indices. The impact of colonial heritage, civil war, the Ebola crisis, and the inability of the government to respond to the needs of its citizens have resulted to poor performance of Liberia in all areas of human development indexes. Liberia’s poor performance in all areas of the human development indices have created the need for donors’ interventions in fulfillment of the United Nations *Millennium Development Goals*’ commitment to “eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality,

¹⁹ Proclamation, “Inaugural Address on the State of the Republic,” *National Legislature* (January 16, 2017): 11. Accessed March 20, 2018. <http://www.emansion.gov.lr/doc/ANNUAL.pdf>.

²⁰ (Monrovia: MFDP, 2014), 25.

reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases, ensure environmental sustainability, and develop a global partnership for development.”²¹

A notable theme on the next ten commonly used words with the highest frequency focused on governance structures and their liabilities: “support,” “relief,” “assistance,” “inequality,” “creditor,” “external” “impact,” “conflict,” “reduction,” and “security.” When allocating aid to Liberia, donors’ attentions focused on governance structures that remained a challenge to development in Liberia. The purpose of aid as outlined in policy documents of the United Nations and the World Bank is to promote development and improve standards of living in developing countries, such as Liberia, with so many challenges. As stated in the *Millennium Development Goals Report 2015*, the focus of the UN aid is to “spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty.”²² While the goal of the World Bank is “to end extreme poverty—reducing the share of the global population living in extreme poverty to 3 percent by the year 2030—and to promote shared prosperity—increasing the income of the bottom 40 percent of the population.”²³ Although there are ongoing criticisms about donors’ intervention in Liberia and other West African countries, it is important to recognize efforts made by donors in providing increased access to primary education, health care, and safe drinking water and sanitation to Liberians through interventions such as loans, debt cancellation, and technical support by the World Bank and IMF.

²¹ (New York: United Nations, 2015), 4-7.

http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2015_MDG_Report/pdf/MDG%202015%20Summary%20web_english.pdf.

²² *Human Development Report*, 2.

²³ *2016 Annual Report*, 11-12.

The last category of frequently used words that informs donors' decisions for increased aid to Liberia considered financial (resource) constraints: "production," "institution," "extreme," "strategy," "economy," "bilateral," "multilateral," "loans," "reform," and "grants." As a resource-rich nation, Liberia ranked among the poorest nations in the world with low human development rankings. The human development rankings outline performance of a nation in health, standards of living, education, life expectancy, and per capita income.²⁴ For example, the rankings of nation-states in West Africa such as Nigeria (152), Togo (162), Benin (166), Senegal (170), Ivory Coast (172), and Gambia (177) were higher than Liberia's rankings (177).²⁵ The words are used to explain Liberia's dependency on outside support, and further demonstrate existing conditions undermining national approaches to genuine development.

My review shows that the subjects of the top thirty frequently used words from donor sources speak volumes to bad governance, system failures, and resource deficits to underwrite costs associated with reforms, growth, and infrastructure development. Requests for aid continue to mention the civil war and destruction it caused to all sectors of the Liberian society. Although Liberia was not a developed nation prior to the military *coup d'état* of 1980 that led to the civil war, standards of living were relatively better than what they are presently. An account of the *Agenda for Transformation* describes the status of the Liberian economy before and after the civil war as follow "In the decades preceding the start of instability in the late 1970s, Liberia's growth record was remarkable. The country had grown at an average rate of more than 7 percent annually during 1955-1975. By 1980, Liberia's gross domestic product (GDP) per

²⁴ *Human Development Report 2015*, 218-19; *Global Peace Index, Annual Report 2015*, 9.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

capita peaked at UDS\$1,765 (purchasing power parity, constant terms), bringing the country close to the middle-income threshold. Despite eight years of strong growth since the peace settlement, today's average level of GDP per capita is only US\$310—still well below that historical peak.”²⁶ At present, the restoration of basic social services such as electricity, pipe borne water, road networks, schools, and hospitals are almost impossible in the absence of donors' intervention. Deplorable infrastructure exists because of democratic deficit, corruption, and the civil war. As a result, solutions to Liberia's poverty depend on donors' interventions, rather than effective government spending through appropriation of resources in the national budget.

Review of Combined Government and Donors' Sources

A review of words with the highest frequency in primary sources produced by both the government and donors helped with establishing the basis of my analysis in this section. The frequency of repeatedly used words affords a unique opportunity to demonstrate the commonality of interests of donors and the Liberian government. The role of content analysis in this section is to provide a qualitative representation of reporting data²⁷ on results of aid allocation, application, and utilization. I have listed the chosen 60 words with the highest frequency in Table Seven to authenticate the role foreign aid plays in the growth and

²⁶ *Agenda for Transformation*, 18.

²⁷ Kimberly A. Neuendorf, “Content – A Methodological Primer for Gender Research,” *Sex Roles* 64, no. 3-4 (February 2011): 284, accessed March 10, 2018.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/227148936_Content_Analysis-A_Methodological_Primer_for_Gender_Research.

development of Liberia using both primary sources from government and donors. Appendix D provides a comprehensive Excel spreadsheet with full disclosure.

Table 7. Sixty Frequently used Words in Donors and Government Sources

Rank	Word	Frequency	Percentage of word frequency
1	Development	2,237	10.7
2	Health	1,445	6.9
3	Education	1,434	6.8
4	Foreign	1,376	6.6
5	Economic	1,061	5.1
6	Security	883	4.2
7	Debt	760	3.6
8	Poverty	757	3.6
9	Grants	732	3.5
10	Institution	498	2.4
11	Strategy	472	2.3
12	Donor	456	2.2
13	Employment	449	2.1
14	Support	428	2.0
15	Growth	421	2.0
16	Jobs	395	1.9
17	Access	392	1.9
18	Governance	381	1.8
19	Reduction	323	1.5
20	Intervention	303	1.4
21	Relief	279	1.3
22	Transformation	263	1.3
23	Justice	259	1.2
24	Economy	254	1.2
25	External	253	1.2
26	Civil Servant	251	1.2
27	Assistance	247	1.2
28	Fragile	215	1.0
29	Creditor	197	0.9
30	Impact	195	0.9
31	Conflict	183	0.9
32	Human Rights	179	0.9
33	Loans	177	0.8
34	Inequality	177	0.8

35	Transparency	177	0.8
36	Ebola	165	0.8
37	Production	164	0.8
38	Corruption	162	0.8
39	Accountability	156	0.7
40	Reform	155	0.7
41	Multilateral	152	0.7
42	Standards	138	0.7
43	Extreme	131	0.6
44	Bilateral	126	0.6
45	Recovery	124	0.6
46	Crisis	121	0.6
47	Aid	107	0.5
48	Wealth	96	0.5
49	Disease	92	0.4
50	Effectiveness	87	0.4
51	Transportation	85	0.4
52	Reconstruction	85	0.4
53	Disbursement	79	0.4
54	Compliance	66	0.3
55	Trigger	44	0.2
56	Civil War	35	0.2
57	Benchmark	34	0.2
58	Eradicate	25	0.1
59	Democracy	23	0.1
60	Inefficiency	7	0.0
	N=	20,968	100

My review and word count in this section of the study focus on the entirety of primary documents of government and donors and provide an in-depth description about processes associated with aid intervention in Liberia. Analyzing the highest frequency of words in this combined section offers a deeper perspective in identifying themes and contexts in the allocation and utilization of aid. The review shows that donors are concerned about solutions to deplorable living conditions impacting the standards of living in Liberia. Although there exists a cordial relationship on request for aid by the Liberian government and the allocation of aid by

donors, the impact of aid on society is inconsistent because of the variance in government and donors' priorities as noted from the United Nations *2015 Human Development Report and Millennium Development Report* respectively.²⁸

The top ten most commonly used words focus on critical sectors that enhance development and indicate universal challenges: "development," "health," "education," "foreign," "economic," "security," "debt," "poverty," "grants," and "institution." My analysis of the first ten words with the highest frequency listed in the table above shows that there is a disconnect between donors' intentions for aid and government actions on aid effectiveness. The words have different application in donors and government reports because of the lack of "political correctness." In government reports for example, the words describe frameworks of the four pillars of national development: security, economic revitalization, governance and rule of law, and infrastructure and basic social service to request. The Liberian government argues that

The four pillars are mutually reinforcing. Progress in one area facilitates progress in the others. Peace and security are pre-requisites for sustained economic progress and reduction of poverty. Without peace, economic growth and poverty reduction cannot proceed. Likewise, peace and national security will be severely threatened if chronic poverty continues to rise. Sustainable peace will largely depend upon the ability to create inclusive economic opportunities and deliver basic social services throughout the country. Similarly, basic infrastructure is required to broad-based growth and delivery of services nationwide, and provides the basis for decentralized governance systems. Governance and the rule of law provide the institutional base for strong economic performance and poverty alleviation, and the justice that is needed to ensure that grievances are settled through dialogue within the political system, as opposed to violence.²⁹

²⁸ (New York: United Nations, 2016), 61, 212-14; (New York: United Nations, 2015), 11-12.

²⁹ *Poverty Reduction Strategy*, 44.

From donors' perspectives, for example, the UN decries that "experiences from the efforts to achieve the MDGs demonstrates that we know what to do. But further progress will require an unswerving political will, and collective, long-term efforts. We need to tackle root causes and do more to integrate the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development."³⁰ The question that comes to mind from analysis of both sources is why donors' institutions would choose to allocate resources to nation-states that lack political will to fight corruption and successfully implement aid. Answers to the question show both sides (recipient and donors) not living up to protocols on aid effectiveness. Liberia current rankings in human development indicators demonstrate government unwillingness to utilize aid for the benefit of all Liberians through access to quality hospitals/clinic, schools, roads, and jobs. Despite the acknowledgement by the UN on the lack of political will to successfully achieve aid objectives, donors continued to provide aid with the hope that government will improve quality of life.³¹ With the exception of the words "donor," and "debt" the top ten frequently used words in government rankings are the same as the combined rankings of donors and government sources. A comparison of the top ten frequently used words from government and donors' sources show a major variation in results of the two analyses. These are abnormalities that highlight differences between the Liberian government and donors' priorities. From my analysis, the differences between aid (resources) and outcomes (e.g., standards of living, economic growth, and infrastructure improvement) serve as some of the many reasons for aid failure. Additionally, differences between donors and government's

³⁰ *Millennium Development Goals Report 2015*, 3.

³¹ *Ibid.*

approaches to solve Liberia's development complexities further create opportunities for mismanagement, illegal wealth accumulation by public officials, and controversies on aid successes. This is a manifestation that donors' intentions for aid in Liberia are positive but remained ineffective because of misappropriation, corruption, and political instability, as outlined, for example, by Robert Calderisi, Jeffrey Sachs, Paul Collier and David Dollar, and Haley Swedlund.

Closely following the top ten in rankings are the next group of words on systems and processes: "strategy," "donor," "employment," "support," "growth," "Jobs," "access," "governance," "reduction," and "intervention." The themes (economic growth and human development) have connections with these coded texts and speak volumes of complexities that continue to derail democracy in Liberia. The framework to guarantee democracy is weak because of colonial practices of resource expropriation and marginalization of the indigenous people through existing institutions, trade policies, unequal property rights, ethnic conflicts, and the civil war. Both donors and government reports acknowledge that Liberia has problems in areas of economic growth, job creation, and access to social services. Both sources call for donors' interventions to help solve the problems in Liberia. Primary documents of the reveal that "the *Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS)* estimates total costs for fully implementing the PRS over the next three years will be US\$1.61 billion. On the financing side, the government estimates that it will be able to generate approximately \$510 million in revenues that can be dedicated to PRS-related activities, leaving a gross financing gap of approximately US\$1.1 billion over the PRS period, before taking into account financing from development partners."³² From

³² (Monrovia: Republic of Liberia, 2008), 134.

donors' perspectives, as noted by the African Development Bank, "the Board of Directors recall that the total resources mobilized by the Bank Group to support Liberia's arrears clearance in 2007 exceeded the amount needed for the operation, enabling the Bank group to provide the additional debt relief."³³ The words are used as subjects to provide a balanced approach by all stakeholders in identifying strategies to address gaps in development needs. Aid remains at the center of both donors' and government strategies of reducing poverty in Liberia because of the many development problems worsened by the 2014 Ebola epidemic that left the economy in recession.³⁴

It is important to note that there is a vary word usage between the establishment of development strategies and enforcement of these strategies by donors and the Liberian government. Donors may advocate for structural adjustments programs such as privatization of public services, austerity measures, fair economic trade policies, and democratic governance to ensure transformation of the Liberian society, but successful implementation of these strategies to achieve the aid objective of reducing poverty requires political commitment from government. Lack of political commitment is why donors cannot play the role of government because the charter creating donor institutions such as the World Bank and IMF prohibits direct interferences in governance processes, a major setback for successful aid implementation.³⁵

³³ *Liberia Completion Point Document Under the Enhanced HIPC Initiative* (Abidjan: AfDB, 2010), 8.

³⁴ Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, *Ebola Financing Report* (Monrovia: Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 2014), 4. <https://www.mfdp.gov.lr/index.php/documents/reports/special-report?download=33:ebola-financing-report-november-2014>. Ebola Report.

³⁵ Winters, "Choosing to Target: What Types of Countries Get Different Types of World Bank Projects," *World Politics* 62, no. 3 (July 2010): 444.

The next theme is conditions and welfare and the words that relate to the theme are: “relief,” “transformation,” “justice,” “economy,” “external,” “civil servant,” “assistance,” “fragile,” “creditor,” and “impact.” The meaning of these words give reasons for aid dependency in Liberia. The last twenty commonly used words of the combined matrix justify the theme for challenges and aid failure: “reform,” “multilateral,” “standards,” “extreme,” “bilateral,” “recovery,” “crisis,” “aid,” “wealth,” “disease,” “effectiveness,” “transportation,” “reconstruction,” “disbursement,” “compliance,” “trigger,” “civil war,” “benchmarks,” “eradicate,” “democracy,” and “efficiency.” The words “democracy” and “standards” illustrate that poor performance of the Liberian society exists because of extreme poverty, low economic growth, and deplorable social services. In addition, the texts of the documents point to advocacy for democracy in order to bring about political reform and ensure aid efficiency. There is a conflict between donor and government accounts of the last twenty frequently used words from the combined listing in Table Eight and detailed in the matrix of Appendix C. A reason for the conflict is because actions taken by government to guarantee that aid accomplishes what donors want it to accomplish runs contrary to donors’ commitment to end extreme poverty and inequality in Liberia through increased access to social services. While donors are allocating aid to help improve living conditions in Liberia, the government is spending domestic revenue on lucrative salaries and benefits for public officials. As discussed in previous chapters, the national budget is not designed to benefit the ordinary people. For example, recurrent costs (such as lucrative salaries and allowances, vehicles and gas slips, per diem for foreign and domestic travels for officials of government) are to the disadvantage of

ordinary citizens.³⁶ This argument on recurrent costs is also illuminated in Kapoor's examination of local elites' "Orientalist" attitude of suppression and marginalization produce through misguided economic and political decisions to keep ordinary citizens in poverty trap.³⁷ Resource allocation in the national budget does not illustrate government's commitment to address conditions of poverty because of wasteful spending on recurrent expenses mentioned above. This is a clear indication that explains lack of commitment to its poverty reduction strategies because the budget does not prioritize national development, but rather spending on recurrent expenses that benefit public officials as compared to health, education, agriculture, energy and environment, and infrastructure and basic social services.

Despite the good intention of foreign aid as evidenced by the United Nations and World Bank goals to reduce poverty and inequalities, improve standards of living, and promote social-economic development, the result of my examination of sixty frequently used words shows that aid interventions in Liberia link to a variety of factors. A variety of factors arise because of two reasons that are critical to aid effectiveness: 1. the lack of political will by the Liberian government to fight corruption and to adhere to tenets of democracy, and 2. Donors' refusal to withdraw aid supports as a means to enforce compliance to standards that already define conditions for giving aid and to demand change in the status quo of aid to Liberia. Moyo, Sachs,

³⁶ Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, *National Budget: Fiscal Year 2014-15* (Monrovia: MFDP, 2014), 25. http://www.emansion.gov.lr/doc/NationalBudget_1_17_2015.pdf; *Fiscal Year 2013-14* (Monrovia: MFDP, 2013), 23. http://www.theperspective.org/documents/nationalbudget_2013_14.pdf; *Fiscal Year 2012-13*, (Monrovia: MFDP, 2012), 29. http://www.cabri-sbo.org/uploads/files/Documents/liberia_2012_approval_external_enacted_budget_ministry_of_finance_ecowas_english_1.pdf.

³⁷ *The Postcolonial Politics of Development* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 19, 37.

Caldrisi, and Swedlund raised similar objections in support of compliance to tenets of democracy, efforts to fight corruption, and respect for human rights on the part of African governments and donors as the way forward to ensure aid effectiveness in fragile states such as Liberia.³⁸ When tenets of democracy, efforts to fight corruption, and respect for human rights are satisfied, aid implementation can create a chance to stimulate socio-economic growth, address development needs, and promote equality in a fragile state with so many development opportunities and advantages, among them, sizeable population, abundant natural resources, and rich cultural heritage.³⁹

³⁸ *The Trouble with Africa: Why Foreign Aid Isn't Working* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 7, 14, 160; *The Development Dance: How Donors and Recipients Negotiate the Delivery of Foreign Aid* (London and New York: Cornell University Press, 2017), 1-2, 19; *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2005), 75-7; *Dead Aid: Why Aid is not Working and How there is a Better Way for Africa* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009), 5-6.

³⁹ *Liberia Poverty Reduction Strategy*, 26; *Agenda for Transformation*, 25.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER THOUGHTS

This study began with the objective of trying to understand complexities affecting successful aid implementation and continuance of extreme poverty in Liberia. The study also adds the link to the continuance of a colonial mindset common in Liberia as a nation dependent on aid. It deepened into the examination of donors' roles in aid allocation vis-a-vis actions taken by the Liberian government to guarantee effective aid utilization. The research started with a contextual search on foreign aid to Liberia by taking into consideration trends of economic development prior to the military regime of 1980, the Civil War of 1989-2003, Liberia's *Poverty Reduction Strategy and Agenda for Transformation* of 2013, and the *Heavily Indebted Poor Countries* (HIPC) completion point of 2010. Theoretical framework of the research focuses on insights from colonialism, postcolonialism, neoliberalism, post-Cold War regionalism, and dependency theory.

Contextual viewpoints of the theories of colonialism, postcolonialism, neoliberalism, post-Cold War regionalism, and dependency are critical to understand complexities associated with aid and poverty reduction and their corresponding effects on socio-economic development in Liberia. There are two important scholarly discussions on foreign aid highlighted in this study. First, aid to Africa is beneficial and successful. This research highlights the views of Paul Collier, David Dollars, Mathew Winters, and others that aid is a necessary policy tool to reduce extreme poverty, improve democratic governance, expand economies,

and strengthen social institutions in developing countries engulfed by economic stagnation.¹

The basis for this debate relies on research findings that the status of such countries as Liberia, trapped in extreme poverty, risked failing to experience economic prosperity in the absence of aid because of political instability, corruption, incidence of disease, deplorable infrastructure, and economic failure.² The second point of the study outlines aid to Africa as failure. Dambisa Moyo, Simplice Asongu, Ryan Briggs, and other scholars argue that aid does not end extreme poverty. Rather, donors use aid to maintain imperial rule, which in turn, exacerbates poverty, corruption, inefficiency, and low productivity in developing countries because of imperial rule through cooperation between the multilateral organizations and private business. Moyo, Asongu, Briggs, and others claimed that aid causes poverty.³

A common ground created on both sides of the discussion, the success and failure of foreign aid in Liberia and the sub-region of West Africa is what I termed as the “hybrid” account

¹ “Development Effectiveness: What Have We Learnt?” *Economic Journal* 114, (June 2004): 267, accessed February 2, 2017. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1468-0297.2004.00221.x/epdf>; “Choosing to Target: What Types of Countries Get Different Types of World Bank Projects,” *World Politics* 62, no. 3 (July 2010): 453, accessed February 2, 2017. https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/AD92ACDDBDEFBB77BF52CD7A4CA4600/S0043887110000092a.pdf/choosing_to_target_what_types_of_countries_get_different_types_of_world_bank_projects.pdf.

² Alexander Marc, Neelam Verjee, and Stephen Mogaka, *The Challenges of Stability and Security in West Africa* (Washington D.C.: World Bank, 2015), 9-11. Accessed March 23, 2018. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/562931467986299230/pdf/97717-PUB-PUBLIC-Box391451B-9781464804649.pdf>.

³ *Dead Aid: Why Aid is not Working and How there is a Better Way for Africa* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009), 5-6; “The Questionable Economics of Development Assistance in Africa: Hot-Fresh Evidence, 1996-2010,” *Review of Black Political Economy* 41, no. 4 (October 2014): 473-4, accessed November 22, 2017. <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1783936187?accountid=10771>; “Does Foreign Aid Target the Poorest?” *International Organization* 71, no. 1 (January 2017): 187, February 2, 2017. https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/24010BE037DC8F4C6AF04DED5D94E4C9/S0020818316000345a.pdf/does_foreign_aid_target_the_poorest.pdf.

to promote aid effectiveness. The basis for the common ground echoes the importance of finding a better approach to food security by investing in industrial agriculture through effective collaboration between donors (multilateral organizations such as the World Bank and IMF) and African governments. This, as Jeffrey Sachs recommended, is a practical approach to reduce extreme poverty in Africa.⁴ Although the replacement of subsistence farming with industrial agriculture has been criticized by Vandana Shiva and Wangari Maathai for destroying the environment and increasing financial burdens of local farmers as mentioned in Chapter Three, it is important to emphasize that successful implementation in Liberia requires consultation and dialogue with all stakeholders, especially indigenous farmers. As part of the strategies to invest in industrial agriculture, indigenous farmers must play an active role – from planning to execution. This will help to solve the many problems that undermined poverty reduction in other countries as argued by Shiva and Maathai. Self-sufficiency in agriculture as an immediate solution to Liberia’s development will not only end poverty, but will provide a comparative advantage in exports, foreign exchange, economic stability, and open corridors for investment in technology and social services.

This approach will reduce poverty, increase efficiency, and reduce aid dependency. The goals of the hybrid version of aid encourage donors to adopt prudent aid utilization strategies that provide opportunities for investment in public programs to reduce extreme poverty, increase economic growth and development, and improve standards of living in Liberia and nation-states in the sub-region. It calls for a new approach of looking at root causes of poverty

⁴ “The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time,” 17.

and ways that resources engender holistic change in Liberia and other distressed countries in West Africa.

The study employed content analysis techniques in three stages: 1. Analysis of Liberian government documents; 2. Analysis of donors' produced documents; and 3. A joint evaluation of government and donors' documents. Three themes emerged from government sources: dependency, approaches, and poor performance. The themes reveal that government needs to develop effective strategies to tackle Liberia's development problems. Similarly, humanitarian conditions, governance constraints, and resource (financial) constraints are themes associated with donors' support to Liberia. Conditions for donors' support cannot yield the desired results for transformation of the Liberian society when government actions do not align with donors' objectives. Meanwhile, themes on universal challenges, systems and processes, and conditions and welfare of the combined analysis of donors and government documents show a disconnect donors and government strategies to ensure aid effectiveness and reduce poverty in Liberia.

Despite inflows of aid in the last thirty-eight years, poverty persists because of complexities that continued to undermine donors' interventions. Results of content analysis on 60 frequently used words also point to conditions that have made aid interventions difficult in providing increased access to social services, holistic economic development, and decreases in extreme poverty across the 15 political subdivisions of Liberia. Notwithstanding the challenges, humanitarian aid to Liberia was instrumental in providing food, medication, and shelter for Liberians during the civil war and recent outbreak of the deadly Ebola Virus Disease.⁵

⁵ Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, *Ebola Financing Report* (Monrovia: Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, 2014), iii, 4. <https://www.mfdp.gov.lr/index.php/documents/reports/special-report?download=33:ebola-financing-report-november-2014>.

I maintain that the absence of full adherence to tenets of democracy, commitment to the fight against corruption and ills of society, and lack of respect for citizens' rights serve as sufficient reasons why donors must assist in demanding accountability from the Liberian government for all aid funds. As a result of the bleak history associated with decades of political and economic marginalization of native people, a fourteen-year civil war, and the recent Ebola epidemic, the study maintains that there is a need to reinforce transparency and accountability on donors' support to address poverty in Liberia. Although such enforcement may be considered as reinstating colonial relationship, however, there is a need for tough policy measures to enforce change in the Liberian society. It is common knowledge among the citizenry that the national budget cannot address the country's needs. Against this background, it is in the best interest of Liberians for donors to establish tougher conditionalities for Liberia. This will deter the current administration from "doing business as usual," where aid funds end up in the pockets of public officials and private companies implementing development programs. If multilateral aid institutions do have aid requirements, then the question is why does aid continue to flow despite the poor results? Instituting stringent accountability mechanisms (conditionalities) within Liberian agencies and investment in industrial agriculture void of problems would help to ensure that every dollar yields maximum benefits as the way forward to reduce poverty, increase economic growth, and improve infrastructure development. This confirms Robert Calderisi's argument that Africa is now responsible for its own problems, and that the donor community can help only if Africans are more direct and sincere in the utilization of aid.⁶

⁶ *The Trouble with Africa: Why Foreign Aid Isn't Working* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 7.

It is imperative to note that Liberia's development agenda remains elusive without donors' interventions. Although government needs foreign aid to undertake development, multilateral aid provided by citizens of other nations should be used for the general good of society. This will help Liberia attain speedy development. The study unveils unique approaches to enhance collaboration between donors and the government and contribute to ongoing discussions on aid effectiveness and add to the production of knowledge. Effective collaboration between donors and the government of Liberia is the way forward in solving Liberia's development complexities. Effective collaboration is the way to make Liberia competitive among the comity of nations.

Essentially, there is a need to open discussions aimed at finding common ground on donors' strategies and Liberia's development objectives to strengthen aid efficiency, reduce extreme poverty, and ensure successful aid utilization. Although this study argues for stronger conditionalities and investment of aid funds to industrial agriculture, it is inconceivable to think that their application will lead to independence of neoliberal practices of development because of global interdependency of donors and recipients of aid. Despite limitations of the study, the primary focus is to provide immediate practical solutions to Liberia's problems. This, in no way ignores potential weaknesses, but strategy design to end poverty and increase access to quality education, basic healthcare, and modern infrastructure, thus improving standards of living.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. Figure for each Category of Liberia's Performance in the 2016 Human Development Index

Human development value	Life expectancy	Expected years of schooling	Means years of schooling	Gross national income per capita	Gender inequality index	Population living below poverty line (national poverty line)	Population with at least some education	Gender development index	Maternal mortality ratio (birth per 1,000)
0.427	61.2	9.9	4.4	683	0.649	63.8	28.3	0.83	108.8

Source: *The United Nations Human Development Report 2016.*

Appendix B. Rankings of Sixty Frequently used Words in Government Sources

Rank	Word	Frequency	Percentage of word frequency
1	Foreign	1,335	10.5
2	Health	1,045	8.2
3	Development	1,010	8.0
4	Education	1,010	8.0
5	Security	768	6.1
6	Grants	659	5.2
7	Economic	646	5.1
8	Donor	436	3.4
9	Poverty	399	3.1
10	Institution	388	3.1
11	Strategy	372	2.9
12	Governance	325	2.6
13	Civil Servant	249	2.0
14	Intervention	248	2.0
15	Justice	237	1.9
16	Transformation	236	1.9
17	Reduction	201	1.6
18	Fragile	193	1.5
19	Economy	157	1.2
20	Support	153	1.2
21	Corruption	145	1.1
22	Ebola	143	1.1
23	Human Rights	139	1.1

24	Transparency	138	1.1
25	Debt	123	1.0
26	Accountability	119	0.9
27	External	111	0.9
28	Growth	110	0.9
29	Recovery	93	0.7
30	Loans	91	0.7
31	Aid	88	0.7
32	Access	86	0.7
33	Reconstruction	81	0.6
34	Reform	78	0.6
35	Crisis	74	0.6
36	Effectiveness	73	0.6
37	Standards	72	0.6
38	Jobs	70	0.6
39	Impact	67	0.5
40	Transportation	65	0.5
41	Employment	63	0.5
42	Compliance	60	0.5
43	Conflict	58	0.5
44	Multilateral	58	0.5
45	Production	51	0.4
46	Disbursement	45	0.4
47	Disease	41	0.3
48	Assistance	39	0.3
49	Wealth	36	0.3

50	Benchmark	32	0.3
51	Creditor	32	0.3
52	Bilateral	31	0.2
53	Extreme	30	0.2
54	Civil War	29	0.2
55	Democracy	13	0.1
56	Relief	10	0.1
57	Inequality	9	0.1
58	Eradicate	8	0.1
59	Inefficiency	7	0.1
60	Trigger	3	0.0
		N = 12,688	100

Appendix C. Rankings of Sixty Frequently used Words in Donors' Sources

Rank	Word	Frequency	Percentage of word frequency
1	Development	1,227	14.8
2	Debt	637	7.7
3	Education	424	5.1
4	Economic	415	5.0
5	Health	400	4.8
6	Employment	386	4.7
7	Poverty	358	4.3
8	Jobs	325	3.9
9	Growth	311	3.8
10	Access	306	3.7
11	Support	275	3.3
12	Relief	269	3.2
13	Assistance	208	2.5
14	Inequality	168	2.0
15	Creditor	165	2.0
16	External	142	1.7
17	Impact	128	1.5
18	Conflict	125	1.5
19	Reduction	122	1.5
20	Security	115	1.4
21	Production	113	1.4
22	Institution	110	1.3
23	Extreme	101	1.2

24	Strategy	100	1.2
25	Economy	97	1.2
26	Bilateral	95	1.1
27	Multilateral	94	1.1
28	Loans	86	1.0
29	Reform	77	0.9
30	Grants	73	0.9
31	Standards	66	0.8
32	Wealth	60	0.7
33	Governance	56	0.7
34	Intervention	55	0.7
35	Disease	51	0.6
36	Crisis	47	0.6
37	Foreign	41	0.5
38	Trigger	41	0.5
39	Human Rights	40	0.5
40	Transparency	39	0.5
41	Accountability	37	0.4
42	Disbursement	34	0.4
43	Recovery	31	0.4
44	Transformation	27	0.3
45	Justice	22	0.3
46	Ebola	22	0.3
47	Fragile	22	0.3
48	Donor	20	0.2
49	Transportation	20	0.2

50	Aid	19	0.2
51	Corruption	17	0.2
52	Eradicate	17	0.2
53	Effectiveness	14	0.2
54	Democracy	10	0.1
55	Compliance	6	0.1
56	Civil War	6	0.1
57	Reconstruction	4	0.0
58	Benchmark	2	0.0
59	Civil Servant	2	0.0
60	Inefficiency	-	-
		N = 8, 280	100

Appendix D. Detailed Analysis of Government and Donors' Sources

No.	Word	Government of Liberia Reports					Donors' Reports						Combined Frequency	Combined %
		Ebola Report	PRS	AfT	Budget	Total	HDR 2015	WBAR 2016	MDG 2015	HIPC & MDRI	AfDB	Total		
1	Aid	7	11	23	47	88	6	1	10	2	-	19	107	0.5
2	Poverty	1	285	100	13	399	190	71	72	14	11	358	757	3.6
3	Foreign	-	23	30	1,282	1,335	22	4	-	14	1	41	1,376	6.6
4	Development	39	231	305	435	1,010	1,020	-	144	43	20	1,227	2,237	10.7
5	Compliance	-	4	36	20	60	1	1	-	3	1	6	66	0.3
6	Economic	12	244	238	152	646	271	76	45	15	8	415	1,061	5.1
7	Corruption	-	42	74	29	145	4	5	-	8	-	17	162	0.8
8	Assistance	4	21	14		39	24	22	12	135	15	208	247	1.2
9	Growth	3	31	42	34	110	135	76	15	70	15	311	421	2.0
10	Extreme	-	15	15	-	30	15	38	45	3	-	101	131	0.6
11	Economy	1	54	89	13	157	78	11	1	3	4	97	254	1.2
12	Donor	13	35	38	350	436	1	7	3	5	4	20	456	2.2
13	Support	12	35	45	61	153	115	124	17	3	16	275	428	2.0
14	Reduction	-	160	27	14	201	22	13	22	46	19	122	323	1.5
15	Strategy	-	201	156	15	372	14	18	3	42	23	100	472	2.3
16	Grants	4	15	9	631	659	12	22	2	35	2	73	732	3.5
17	Loans	5	8	25	53	91	11	43	2	29	1	86	177	0.8
18	Recovery	1	30	30	32	93	11	13	1	5	1	31	124	0.6
19	Impact	4	48	1	14	67	84	22	13	8	1	128	195	0.9
20	Wealth	-	5	31	-	36	43	3	14	-	-	60	96	0.5
21	Eradicate	-	-	3	5	8	7	-	10	-	-	17	25	0.1
22	Effectiveness	-	17	28	28	73	2	11	1	-	-	14	87	0.4
23	Inequality	-	1	8	-	9	157	5	6	-	-	168	177	0.8
24	Standards	-	31	41		72	50	3	5	6	2	66	138	0.7
25	Security	5	208	227	328	768	91	13	7	2	2	115	883	4.2
26	Benchmark	-	8	17	7	32	-	2	-	-	-	2	34	0.2
27	Trigger	1	1	1	-	3	2	-	-	27	12	41	44	0.2
28	Intervention	4	44	174	26	248	28	6	20	-	1	55	303	1.4
29	Production	2	12	19	18	51	90	8	7	5	3	113	164	0.8
30	Civil War	1	8	20	-	29	5	-	-	1	-	6	35	0.2
31	Conflict	4	14	25	15	58	75	25	17	6	2	125	183	0.9
32	Human Rights	-	54	58	27	139	35	1	4	-	-	40	179	0.9
33	Transparency	1	35	47	55	138	4	12	3	10	10	39	177	0.8
34	Accountability	2	35	48	34	119	3	12	4	12	6	37	156	0.7
35	Disease	7	15	11	8	41	24	3	24	-	-	51	92	0.4
36	Inefficiency	-	1	6	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	0.0
37	Health	23	221	185	616	1,045	225	47	84	33	11	400	1,445	6.9
38	Education	1	156	209	644	1,010	286	35	79	19	5	424	1,434	6.8
39	Transportation	-	15	15	35	65	4	16	-	-	-	20	85	0.4
40	Transformation	-	7	210	19	236	23	2	2	-	-	27	263	1.3
41	Disbursement	38	2	2	3	45	1	24	1	6	2	34	79	0.4
42	Reconstruction	-	26	17	38	81	-	-	-	2	2	4	85	0.4
43	Employment	-	1	-	62	63	332	7	46	-	1	386	449	2.1
44	Institution	-	163	123	102	388	52	40	3	6	9	110	498	2.4
45	Justice	-	71	100	66	237	7	11	-	3	1	22	259	1.2

No.	Word	Government of Liberia Reports					Donors' Reports						Combined Frequency	Combined %
		Ebola Report	PRS	AfT	Budget	Total	HDR 2015	WBAR 2016	MDG 2015	HIPC & MDRI	AfDB	Total		
46	Access	4	23	39	20	86	150	81	62	5	8	306	392	1.9
47	Democracy	-	5	8	-	13	9	1	-	-	-	10	23	0.1
48	Governance	-	132	126	67	325	12	27	-	9	8	56	381	1.8
49	Civil Servant	2	43	48	156	249	-	-	-	2	-	2	251	1.2
50	Reform	5	16	24	33	78	19	26	2	15	15	77	155	0.7
51	Debt	-	5	27	91	123	34	7	32	360	204	637	760	3.6
52	Jobs	4	13	22	31	70	301	22	1	-	1	325	395	1.9
53	Creditor	-	10	-	22	32	-	-	-	120	45	165	197	0.9
54	External	7	19	32	53	111	13	4	8	99	18	142	253	1.2
55	Relief	-	8	2	-	10	3	4	9	150	103	269	279	1.3
56	Bilateral	1	4	-	26	31	3	-	4	69	19	95	126	0.6
57	Multilateral	6	8	9	35	58	2	20	-	50	22	94	152	0.7
58	Ebola	87	-	-	56	143	6	6	10	-	-	22	165	0.8
59	Crisis	6	16	24	28	74	25	11	5	5	1	47	121	0.6
60	Fragile	-	1	188	4	193	8	8	5	-	1	22	215	1.0
N = 20,968												20,968	100	

VITA

ROOSEVELT WREH SEEDEE

Education: Master of Arts in Liberal Studies, East Tennessee State University, 2018

B.Sc., Economics, University of Liberia, Capitol Hill,
Monrovia, Liberia, 2009
Major: Economics; Minor: Accounting

Certification: Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE), Association of Certified Fraud Examiners,
Austin, Texas, December 12, 2011.

Professional
Experience: Research Assistant, East Tennessee State University, 2016-2018

Sector Analyst, Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative,
Capitol Hill, Liberia, 2013-2016

Audit Coordinator, General Auditing Commission (Liberia's Supreme
Audit Institution), Ashmun Street, Monrovia, Liberia, 2010-2013

Internal Auditor, General Auditing Commission, 2008-2010