Obstacles to Social Innovation: The Toxic Politics and the Wicked Problem of the Isolated African Nations

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Abstract: The articles on toxic politics explore how isolated African nations navigate development while implementing policies with potential, rather than focusing on politics that rely on the capture of governance through the manipulation of controversy and knowledge. This article examines forms of ineffective change rooted in the toxic politics of various institutions, as opposed to the achievement of governance goals in African states.

The objectives of this article are threefold. First, it seeks to define toxic politics within the context of both authoritarian and fertilized regimes. Second, it aims to understand the reproduction of power and justice in instances where power is abused across state institutions. Third, it explores how toxic politics influences diversity, emphasizing the need to amplify urgency and action in addressing polluted political systems. To achieve these objectives, qualitative methods were employed to analyze data from existing literature published by various scholars and academics. The findings of this article contribute to identifying solutions for addressing the toxic politics challenges in different African states.

Keywords: Governance; The toxic politics; Reproduction; Justice; Diversity; Inclusion

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1. Introduction

In most African states, governance is significantly influenced by the toxic politics present within various institutions. The toxic politics has often been stigmatized as a "black sheep," a term typically used to describe an outcast or entity that deviates from the norms of international states, particularly those aligned with the United States and its currency, the dollar. This perception has compelled African leaders to address grievances within their communities and work toward resolving them [1]. The toxic politics has also empowered individuals to recognize that change can serve as a form of resistance to the myriad challenges plaguing these institutions.

Many citizens have adopted proactive approaches that foster positive deviance in policy implementation [2]. Existing solutions emerging across African states demonstrate their potential utility and sustainability within the framework of toxic politics. For instance, opposition parties often prioritize tribal divisions over unity for a common cause, further complicating governance [3]. Additionally, racism persists in various African states, exacerbating racial divisions and hindering effective institutional governance. These dynamics

have spurred bottom-up change in polarized communities, influencing policy and institutional reforms [4].

African countries grappling with significant internal conflicts or ethnic tensions are often perceived as outliers. For example, nations such as South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, and Ethiopia—which have endured long civil wars—are frequently viewed as diverging from the relative stability observed in other regions. While the "black sheep" metaphor underscores critical issues in specific countries, it is essential to approach this concept with nuance and an appreciation of the broader context. African nations face unique challenges and have achieved notable successes; reducing them to a single label oversimplifies their complex realities.

The objectives of this study are outlined as follows:

▪ To conceptualize toxic politics as the "black sheep" phenomenon in isolated African nations.

▪ To identify the causes of the toxic politics that contribute to the labeling of certain African nations as isolated.

▪ To examine the challenges posed by toxic politics in accepting the "black sheep" concept within isolated African nations.

▪ To propose strategies for transforming toxic politics to address the "black sheep" status of isolated African nations.

2. Research Methodology

The research methods employed in this study address the complexity of evaluating toxic politics in African states to enhance governance. These methods facilitate the collection of data across various institutions, revealing an increasing complexity that underscores the necessity for models capable of fostering shared understandings [5]. The research methodology involves identifying appropriate methods and selecting suitable instruments for data collection, primarily relying on secondary sources such as scholarly articles, journals, and textbooks. This approach provides a framework for understanding systems that cannot be adequately captured through qualitative methods alone. However, qualitative methods were utilized in this study to gather data, as they proved efficient in saving time and effort while addressing the research problem. This was particularly relevant in examining issues related to institutional approval processes within the context of toxic politics.

3. Literature Review

Previous literature on toxic politics has been extensively explored by various scholars, often leading to the characterization of African states as "black sheep." This label is demeaning and dismissive of the efforts made by African nations striving for recognition and progress, yet their endeavors remain subject to ridicule and marginalization [3]. In African states, political manipulation is prevalent, with voters frequently being convinced that the fate of the

nation hinges on each election. This dynamic actively penalizes individuals who seek compromise, further entrenching political dysfunction. African politics are often described as dysfunctional due to the prevalence of non-overlapping political interests, which focus on securing narrow majorities rather than fostering broad consensus [2]. Toxic politics, as a framework, does not inherently prioritize compromise or coalition-building within public institutions responsible for policy implementation [6]. This literature review provides a detailed exploration of these themes, offering a foundation for the analysis presented in this article.

4. The Toxic Politics

The toxic politics reveals the current political system that is common and resilient in African states but fundamentally flawed when governing those institutions [7]. The concept of a "black sheep" is applied to the African nations that have faced significant criticism or isolation due to political, economic, or social issues. Toxic politics is seen as an attempt to manipulate people toward reaching a political end when elected to power [3]. For example, some African nations have faced sanctions or diplomatic isolation due to authoritarian regimes or human rights abuses; Zimbabwe or Eritrea are considered "black sheep" in this context. Therefore, toxic politics is regarded as the black sheep of the isolated African nations in implementing the policies in service delivery [2].

Toxic politics is influenced by a variety of factors, including:

▪ Polarization: The deep divisions within society lead to hostile political environments in Africa, where compromise is viewed as a betrayal of the electorate's beliefs in two distant and antagonistic poles [8]. Polarization itself is typically understood as a prominent division or conflict that forms between major groups in a society or political system and is marked by the clustering and radicalization of views [9]. Thus, polarization leads to more gridlock and less policy innovation during periods of a dysfunctional government desperate to promote stability and deliver services. This contributes to the development of toxic politics through the negative exposure of the content related to governance in most African countries [10].

▪ Media Influence: Sensationalist, biased media coverage exacerbates tensions, spreading misinformation and reinforcing negative stereotypes about politics in African countries [8]. Media influence significantly affects people's behavior, opinions, and perceptions by shaping their understanding of events, social norms, and issues, affecting the local people. Thus, potential media influence impacts public opinion, influencing political views, and promoting certain behaviors either positive or negative, when governing the country to exacerbate social trends [9].

▪ Social media: Social media platforms amplify extreme viewpoints, create echo chambers, and facilitate harassment, contributing to a toxic political climate in different African countries [10]. Social media coverage significantly influences what people think about certain issues or individuals, potentially swaying public opinion on political candidates or social causes in different institutions [11]. Social media campaigns are used to promote

healthy behavior like exercise or discourage harmful ones like smoking, influencing people's lifestyle choices. Repeated exposure to certain behaviors in social media shapes what is considered socially acceptable, potentially impacting societal norms in different communities.

▪ Identity Politics: The emphasis put on group identities leads to competition and conflict rather than collaboration and understanding when analyzing the politics in African countries [8]. Identity politics, as a mode of categorizing, are closely connected to the ascription that some social groups are oppressed such as women, ethnic minorities, and sexual minorities in different communities [9]. Identity politics provide the idea that individuals belonging to those groups are, by their identity, more vulnerable to forms of oppression because of the dominant groups [11]. Identity politics shape social networks and individual identity, which is well-documented by different sources highlighting negative emotions. Identity politics predict self-reports coming from the political elite governing the institutions to implement politics in Africa [10].

▪ Economic Inequality: The disparities in wealth and opportunity fuel resentment and anger, leading to more aggressive political behavior caused by the economic inequality in different institutions of Africa [11]. Economic inequality has a range of negative effects on society, including reduced social mobility, lower economic growth, increased social unrest, and poorer health outcomes, The decreased social cohesion, and political polarization, result in a decline in overall well-being, as the gap between the rich and poor widens, in most African countries limiting opportunities for the people. Economic inequality provides the basis and potentially hinders the economy in most African countries as a whole [8].

▪ Leadership Styles: Charismatic or authoritarian leaders encourage divisive rhetoric and undermine democratic norms, fostering a toxic atmosphere for the electorate to elect an incompetent party to power [10]. The different leadership styles significantly impact employee morale, productivity, creativity, and overall organizational performance in African countries. Transformational leadership generally leads to negative outcomes like decreased innovation and poor job satisfaction, while it lowers morale due to limited involvement provided to the people. Therefore, autocratic leadership also results in lower morale and reduced creativity due to limited employee involvement in governing public institutions [9].

▪ Fear and Insecurity: Economic, social, or physical insecurity can lead people to embrace extreme political positions as a form of protection [11]. Excessive inequality can erode social cohesion, lead to political polarization, and lower economic growth. It is essential to learn more about inequality, its causes and consequences, and how the IMF helps countries tackle inequality. Inequalities of opportunity affect a person's life expectancy and access to basic services such as healthcare, education, water, and sanitation. They can curtail a person's human rights, through discrimination, abuse, and lack of access to justice [8].

▪ Historical Context: Past grievances, historical injustices, and unresolved conflicts linger and influence contemporary political behavior in different African countries with political instability [10]. Historical context significantly impacts how people interpret and understand events, texts, art, or any other historical source by providing insight into the social, political, and cultural climate of the time period [11]. This allows the political elite

to grasp the motivations, values, and perspectives of people from that era, thus revealing deeper meanings and nuances of politics. The historical context is missed without considering the broader historical backdrop; it acts as a key to unlocking the full meaning of something from the past by placing it within its relevant time and place [9].

▪ Political Institutions: Weak institutions fail to mediate conflicts effectively, allowing toxic dynamics to flourish [8]. One can analyze a speech in the context of a political crisis to reveal the speaker's true intentions. The underlying political agenda in different institutions has the cultural context of painting the politics to help interpret its symbolism and deeper meaning in African countries [11]. Thus, the historical context allows us to accurately interpret the intended meaning of a text, speech, or artwork, as the societal norms and prevailing ideas of the time influence how things are expressed and perceived. The historical context does not have a better understanding of the motivations and perspectives of individuals involved in a historical event, allowing us to empathize with their actions and viewpoints [10].

▪ Civic Engagement: Low levels of civic participation led to a disengaged populace, making it easier for toxic politics to take root without accountability [9]. Civic engagement is crucial for critical analysis, as it enables us to identify biases, assumptions, and underlying power dynamics present in historical sources [11]. Considering civic engagement, its historical context helps to prevent judging past events through the lens of modern values and societal norms, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of the past. Understanding the social class structure of a period can reveal the underlying themes and motivations of characters, as in a novel [8].

5. The Black Sheep

The term "black sheep" is often used to describe entities or individuals that are seen as different from, or problematic within, a group. In the context of African nations, this could refer to countries facing significant challenges or negative perceptions due to various factors:

▪ Political instability: Countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, and South Sudan have faced ongoing conflict and instability [12], leading to perceptions of them as "black sheep" due to their struggles with governance. Political instability also affects growth through physical and human capital accumulation, with the former having a slightly larger effect than the latter. Political instability creates uncertainty, which negatively affects economic growth by hampering and discouraging the business environment [13].

▪ Corruption: Nations like Malawi, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe have been criticized for high levels of corruption and mismanagement, which can tarnish their image on the continental and global stage [14]. Corruption can have many negative effects on society, including undermining trust in government, increasing inequality, and harming the environment [15]. Corruption also erodes the trust we have in the public sector to act in our best interests. It wastes taxes and rates meant for important community projects. This results

in poor quality services or infrastructure, or projects never getting off the ground when implementing policies [12].

▪ Human Rights Violations: Countries such as Zimbabwe, Eritrea, and Sudan have faced international condemnation for human rights abuses, leading to their negative perception [13]. Human rights violations can have a wide range of negative effects, including causing psychological trauma to victims, exacerbating poverty and inequality [14], undermining social stability, hindering economic development, fueling social unrest, and damaging a country's international reputation, often leading to further violations due to a lack of accountability and impunity. Erosion of trust in institutions in promoting frequent human rights violations can erode public trust in government and law enforcement agencies [15].

▪ Economic Struggles: Countries with severe economic challenges, like the Central African Republic, may be viewed unfavorably due to poverty and lack of development [12]. Economic struggles can have a wide range of negative effects on individuals, families, and communities, including increased poverty, food insecurity, housing instability, mental health issues, decreased access to healthcare, social unrest [13], and a decline in educational attainment, with the most vulnerable populations often experiencing the most severe impacts, with difficulty paying bills, and covering basic needs like food and housing, leading to constant worry and anxiety. The inability to afford leisure activities, healthcare, or necessary goods, impacts overall well-being [14].

▪ Isolation: Nations like North Sudan have faced sanctions and international isolation, contributing to their image as outliers within the continent [15]. Social isolation and loneliness have serious negative effects on mental and physical health; the effects of social isolation range from sleeplessness to reduced function [10]. Loneliness is associated with higher anxiety, depression, and suicide rates, as well as physical health outcomes. There is a well-established relationship between low family support and the development of depression, and family support has also been found to reduce the impact of adverse life contexts upon the development of depression [12].

▪ Cultural conflicts: Countries experiencing ethnic tensions, such as Nigeria, can be seen as struggling to unify diverse populations, leading to a tarnished reputation [13]. Cultural conflicts lead to a range of negative effects including escalation of tensions, social unrest, discrimination, violence, hindered communication, reduced productivity, and mistrust between groups [10]. The difficulty in achieving consensus, essentially, when different cultural groups clash due to differing values, beliefs, and practices, can create significant social and societal problems, sometimes even leading to destructive conflict situations [12].

In summary, it is important to recognize that many are also working towards recovery and improvement, and labeling them as "black sheep" overlooks their efforts and potential.

6. The Factors or Dimensions of Toxic Politics

The causes of the toxic politics led to the labeling of isolated African nations.

The toxic politics in African nations is attributed to a range of interconnected causes that

often lead to their isolation on the global stage. The key factors are explained briefly.

(A) Authoritarian Governance

Most African states are comfortable in promoting authoritarian rule to their citizens, which dismantles the democratic morals to be exercised in different institutions as well as the community [1]. Repression of dissent is common during elections as well as post – elections taking place in most countries in Africa. Many African leaders maintain power through oppressive measures, stifling free speech and political opposition, which is regarded as a threat to their pre-meditated autocratic governance [16]. The lack of clear democratic processes has been questionable in most countries, which has led to rigged elections in favor of the ruling party or the puppet. This has led to unprecedented suppression of civil liberties, which led to widespread disenfranchisement in different institutions when implementing the policies needed to preserve democracy [17].

(B) Corruption

African states' economies are largely traditional, are unable to compete with the global world, and are limited by the inheritance of loans obtained by their predecessors [3]. The inability to acquire credible information about the management of the country's economy has led to the mismanagement of financial, human, and information resources. The so-called interventions by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank have worsened the African economies. They have been plundering economies because of their unnecessary demands, thus leading to unjustified enrichment for the IMF and World Bank, which devalues African currencies. As a result, most African states are identified as black sheep because of the IMF and World Bank's involvement, and failure to repay the loans has led to allegations of corruption [16]. African leaders out of fear have been diverting public funds away from essential services, leading to economic instability and public discontent. This has led to the erosion of trust and high levels of corruption in government institutions, making it difficult to build effective governance [17].

(C) Ethnic and Sectarian Tensions

All African governments contain different ethnic groups, and the dominant group does not want to be led by an individual from a minor group, which is unacceptable and frustrates the government in power [18]. Appointments made are based on appeasing other tribes while furthering their divisive agenda of segregation to hang on to power at all costs, regardless of their failure in government. This has led to the manipulation of people and the introduction of identity politics promoted by uncoached leaders who exploit ethnic divisions to consolidate power, leading to conflict and social fragmentation [19]. Ruling parties have had a tendency to use exclusionary policies and thus favoring one group over another can deepen societal divides and provoke violence. It has been the cause of the brain drain in most of the African states, which have been unable to acknowledge leadership coming from the ethnic groups needed to improve the welfare of the people [16].

(D) Economic Instability

Economic instability was caused by the founding forefathers who were so desperate to make a name and get rid of the colonial masters from Europe [17]. They had no clue how the

government was run; they became too dependent on their colonial masters to build a dismantled economy [19]. For example, if you divorce your wife or husband, you can't go to your former lover to help you live with your new spouse. The lack of foresight for the newly independent nations led the African states to be labeled as black sheep because they were dependent on their former colonial masters for commodities as well as professionalism [18]. This undermined African states by causing them to rely heavily on a single resource, thereby making them vulnerable to market fluctuations and economic shocks. As a result, high unemployment and poverty have created economic hardship fueling unrest and dissatisfaction with the ruling government [16].

(E) External Influences

African states are too dependent on their former colonial masters for both good and bad reasons. As a result, geopolitics has infiltrated the systems of governing the country [17]. Political interests are based on scoring points to get a better deal in terms of developing the country: this has made most African states vulnerable, then revealed everything they knew about the security of the state which allowed the colonial masters to stage a coup d'état [19]. In return, the foreign powers supported oppressive regimes for strategic reasons, inadvertently perpetuating the toxic politics through the debt and aid conditionality provided to the country. The loans and aid often come with strings attached, which leads to the formulation of policies that do not align with the needs of the population [18].

(F) Weak Institutions

Most African states have been unable to create their institutions, and the ones currently in use were either inherited or copied from their former colonial masters [17]. There is nothing wrong in copying the institutions of the state, but how these are managed has been hidden from African leaders who view their work as the signing of documents [18]. In most cases, the documents signed by the African leaders were not read, and the inadequate rule of law found them in weak judicial systems. The failure to uphold laws impartially, allowing abuses of power to go unchecked, led to the lack of accountability toward leaders who foster an environment where toxic politics thrive [16].

(G) Media and Information Control

The media has been used by most African states to limit what the people must hear because of censorship of sensitive information in government institutions. The restricting of media freedom prevents open discourse and the dissemination of differing viewpoints from politicians who do not get along [18]. Information control has increased the development and sustaining of misinformation in most African states to manipulate public perception and maintain control. These factors contributed to a cycle of toxic politics that isolated nations from the international community by labelling them as black sheep, in other words, as beasts of burden [17].

7. The Challenges of the Toxic Politics in Africa

The labeling of certain nations as "black sheep" can also stem from stereotypes or media portrayals that focus on negative aspects, overshadowing positive developments [16]. The

toxic politics in Africa present numerous challenges that affect governance, social cohesion, and economic development and are explained briefly below.

(A) Erosion of Democracy

Most African leaders promise goodwill before they come to power but later promote authoritarianism which suppresses dissent and manipulates electoral processes [18]. The leaders go far in restricting freedoms, leading to a lack of genuine democratic representation in parliament because of the threats directed against the opposition. As a result, the political instability has led to frequent coups and changes in leadership undermining political stability and the rule of law in African states [19]. Some of these coups have been influenced by the colonial masters to maintain the status quo that balances their economic return at the expense of the African states, which is unacceptable. The coups aimed at dethroning the puppets of the former colonial masters are justified and must be supported; Africa cannot be held to ransom by greedy powerful states as well as unscrupulous leaders [17].

(B) Corruption

Corruption is widespread in African states because the leadership uses the concept to punish or embarrass their successors; this occurs less often in developing countries such as the United States of America [7]. The widespread mismanagement is mainly caused by the lack of knowledge and skills to manage the finances and set up strategies to be executed in government institutions [18]. News about corrupt practices diverts resources from essential services such as education and healthcare, exacerbating poverty and inequality. The loss of public trust spreads, and citizens become disillusioned with the government, leading to apathy or increased unrest in African states desperate for change because of institutionalized corruption [19].

(C) Ethnic and Sectarian Conflict

The ethnic divisions have led some leaders to capitalize on divisive politics in most African states, to use it as leverage to evade justice for the abuse of the law during their stay in power [17]. The leaders exploit ethnic divisions for political gain, leading to tensions and violence between groups, thus causing social fragmentation in African states. The prolonged disagreement due to the lack of compromise between the ruling parties and the opposition creates a conflict of interest in fractured societies, making it difficult to achieve national unity [19]. The use of weak legal frameworks encourages the dominant groups to feel secure and abuse the law in the way they want, which derails unity in most African states. As a result, out of frustration, sectarian conflict erupts because of the different religious values that corrupt the judicial systems and hinder the enforcement of laws and protect the rights of citizens [18].

(D) Limited Economic Opportunities

The limited economic opportunities in most African states have been a theme that is unachievable and to some extent too ambitious for the leaders in power [19]. The lack of creativity among the political leaders has remained unchecked by institutions such as the Ombudsman or Public Protector and has worsened the situation. For example, high unemployment has contributed to economic mismanagement and instability in different

institutions [7]. This limited economic opportunity often results in high levels of unemployment, particularly among youth, fueling frustration and unrest by government agencies. The over-reliance on foreign aid stifles local initiatives and creates a cycle of dependency, which undermines the plight of the people. This has left most of the African states depending largely on external aid, which is of low quality, to improve the economic harsh conditions [18].

(E) Weak Institutions

Most African states have weak institutions because of nepotism, which is on the rise. Incompetent employees, some without any academic background, often head an institution [17]. The ruling parties in Africa are very good at neglecting professionals to head the departments, but when things go wrong, they look for help from the professionals. These games and gimmicks are common in African states [7], and they have become part of the appeasement policies in different institutions because of the inadequate rule of law. The lack of accountability is prevalent without strong institutions, and leaders operate without checks and balances, allowing for abuses of power [19].

(F) Media Suppression

Free media in most African countries is permitted when it suits the interests of the political leaders, but if it is against the backup plan, censorship takes place [18]. The media restrictions limit public access to information and inhibit the ability to hold governments accountable. The suppression of media has been a trend in most African countries; the leaders do not answer questions properly and have no idea of selling foreign policies [17]. Instead, they provide misinformation to the press and look for partisan journalists, who sympathize with the leadership to benefit in return for preserving their reputation. The media suppression spread of propaganda undermines informed public discourse and leads to increased polarization when implementing policies in different institutions [19].

(G) Human Rights Violations

Human Rights violations have been an instrument used to suppress the freedoms of most Africans in different states when showing their dissatisfaction with the government [7]. The freedoms are often branded as evil by most African governments, which often violate human rights, including freedom of speech, assembly, and press, leading to widespread fear and oppression. Human rights violations are believed to cause violence against the states, yet activists regard it as promoting a mature democracy through respecting the opposition figures. Human rights violations are used by most African states to harass, arrest, and perpetuate violence, in deterring civic engagement [2].

(H) Global Isolation

African states have been treated as black sheep and have been isolated in the United Nations; the permanent members do as they please when they issue diplomatic sanctions [17]. They are aimed at worsening the economic conditions of the African states so that they do not have a say in the affairs of the other developed nations. This is toxic politics, one-sided and oppressing the African states, yet they use every trick through the multinational companies to obtain minerals to please their communities without any remorse [19]. African nations

are responsible for causing internal toxic political environments due to the conflict of interests, which quickly attract international sanctions, thus reducing foreign investment and support. The negative perceptions in African states are aligned with the persistent issues and are labeled as the black sheep of the developed nations, which increases the inferiority complex among African politicians [18]. This has led to embracing a negative image on the global stage, affecting tourism and international relations in accepting the black sheep concept as part of the isolated African nations [17].

8. The Reproductions of Power and Justice

Toxic politics uses unilateral power to undermine the judiciary in different African states, which hinders the independence of the judiciary in performing its daily functions [18]. The repeated incidents of violence in different institutions have contributed to the warfare that changed democratic politics in engaging with the people. The toxic politics are involved in changing the course of justice, which dramatically affects the outcome of the court. Due to the limited reproductions of power in different institutions, legal frameworks are not taken into consideration when implementing policies [7]. Through a modified framework, the implementation of policies is hardly prioritized, which affects people's engagement when delivering services. This has led to the development of a modified framework that has not been approved by the different parliaments when implementing policies [6]. The toxic politics provide evidence of the managed government's severe paralysis of institutions and egregious incidents of injustice. This has led to different political polarization which is the breeding ground for extremist religious and traditional political parties in African states [2]. Toxic politics has been seen as a lethal attack on human dignity as well as other freedoms when implementing policies in different institutions. This has led the Western states in Europe, Canada, and the United States of America to view African states as destabilized nations depending on aid and donations [18].

Table 1. *Toxic Politics Versus Diversity (drawn by Douglas J. C. Banda)*

| The toxic politics	Diversity
Abuse of power	Inclusion
Absence of legal provisions	Use of legal provisions
Intimidation	Engagement
Declarations of war	Declarations of peace
Injustice	Justice
Political polarization	Political unity
Destabilizing events	Stabilizing events
Ineffective communication	Effective communication
Economic paralysis	Stable economy
Lack of priority	Prioritization of services to be delivered

9. The Toxic Politics Versus Diversity

The concepts of toxic politics and diversity are used in different philosophies of the states used by the African states [7]. The identification of the difference between toxic politics versus diversity is indicated in the table below (**Table 1**).

The identification of toxic politics and diversity provides the extraordinary confluence of African states in managing the institutions of the states [2]. The toxic politics have undermined peace in different African states, and as a result, some communities have been left traumatized because of the violent events perpetuated by African leaders [7].

10. The Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework in different institutions provides the African states with the development of the parts in using different institutions. This provides leverage in most management situations which lie in understanding dynamic complexity, not detailed in different institutions [17]. Hence, the theoretical framework provides a holistic perspective in outlining the toxic politics as a black sheep for isolated nations. The area of toxic politics measures the relative development of common knowledge in reducing complex views to support the implementation of the policies [18]. An important result is to define the theoretical framework to reason about toxic politics in a complex development context. The objective of this study explained in **Figure 1**, contributes to the development of knowledge of how to evaluate toxic politics by focusing on the relationship between African states and the governed.

This is partly addressed in **Figure 1**, as explained in detail.
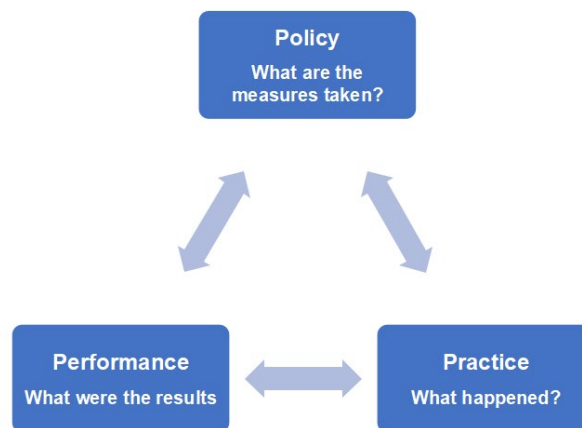
Figure 1. The Policy Framework (drawn by Douglas J. C. Banda)

Figure 1 provides the value of the study in the development of mature politics in the implementation of different ways of assessing things before service delivery. **Figure 1** emphasizes the prior development of the implementation of policies in different institutions to reduce toxic politics. The research method focuses on the collection of data from different institutions, which is still ongoing; in addressing the challenges of toxic politics in Africa, a multi-faceted approach is required that includes promoting democratic governance. The

strengthening of institutions and fostering of social cohesion encourages civic engagement among employees who are concerned with improving the African political environment [2]. Thus, protecting human rights is essential for building resilient societies that overcome the labeling of African nations as the black sheep in developing their economic environments [7].

11. Discussion and Results

By many metrics, African politics are on a course of decline. According to recent reports in different newspapers, the past several decades have shown alarming trends, including the collapse of different institutions. This has affected entire sectors of the different African states' economies, evident in inflation and high unemployment [18]. The toxic politics spikes in economic and mortality inequality in different African states through failing health care and education systems inherited from their colonial masters. This has led to a concomitant decline in life expectancy, which causes dramatic increases in anxiety, and depression in different communities allocated with limited resources [6]. These trends in African politics continue to cause dysfunctional institutions, which contribute to ill-discipline, which conditions some political parties regardless of the outcome. In most cases, different political parties constantly seek to have more seats to ensure the victorious party wins a narrow majority to govern the country [20].

The toxic politics has contributed to suicide, mortality, and unrelated deaths in a multiplicity of stressful trends, which has triggered great resentment in different communities [7]. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, some African states used the situation to promote toxic politics. Toxic politics happens in mostly democratic nations which evolve into flawed democracies because of the lack of transparency and accountability [6]. The belief that a leader must come from the traditionally dominant groups has led to the deterioration of governance in different institutions implementing the policies. Toxic politics is often weaponized by political leaders who cause spikes in racism, xenophobia, and extremist acts from different communities. This has resulted in a spiral of political sectarianism which is toxic and treacherous when implementing policies [7]. These politics diminish the preservation of human knowledge and skills in promoting different functions in African states governing the institutions.

Toxic politics shows chronic and divisive patterns which are often more susceptible to change after governance disruptions, thus undermining the status quo [2]. In addition, African states have suffered for several years with patterns of hostilities between different tribes, municipalities, provinces or regions, and political parties. This has led the African states to experience interstate conflicts which create disturbances in different institutions when implementing policies [18]. In most cases, toxic politics does not provide room for compromises when governing the institutions to implement policies. As a result, the toxic politics has led to the creation of dysfunctional institutions in different African states, which have been ineffective when implementing the policies. The toxic politics in African states pave the way to reduce the hate and indifference existing in different institutions implementing policies to deliver services [20].

12. Recommendations

The recommendations of this article provide a sense of urgency and action when reducing the toxic politics affecting governance in different African states and are indicated in detail.

▪ African states need revitalization in governing the institutions of the state responsible for implementing the policies to deliver the services. Therefore, Buthelezi and Ledger (2019:30) state that revitalization means much more than trying to return the institutions to their perceived past glories. These institutions and the state must be recalibrated to meet the demands of democracy. African states must define the construct of collective responsibility in managing the toxic politics for promoting wrongdoings in different African states. The African states must reduce the short-sightedness of policy implementation with the integration of strategies. This will lead the African communities to regard the African statement as the champion for greater multilateralism, and they will become eager to participate in integration.

▪ African states are occupied by different tribes; the attempt to reduce tribalism has been occurring through intermarriage, yet African statesmen use different tribes to hang on to power at any cost. This must be stopped to restore a compromised reputation, of having two dominant tribes which will interchange when governing the institutions. For example, regardless of the victory, the other tribe, which did not previously govern, must govern the nation. This will reduce the resurgence of the toxic politics for African statesmen to make declarations of war in different institutions when implementing the policies. African states must reduce toxic politics through respect for the organization of civil society in opposing the government in adopting hardline policies that undermine the plight of the people. This will guide African statesmen to extend the hand of partnership in promoting mature democracy in different institutions. The affected communities will be able to have small elites in different institutions making decisions, which is essential when implementing policies.

▪ The reduction of toxic politics will provide an advantageous position to identify, monitor, and control responsible individuals implementing policies in different institutions. This will reduce the threat of sanctions to further cripple the governing of the institutions in different African states implementing policies. The toxic politics, which is properly managed, provides the opportunity to do so. Since they are all culprits, the assumption is that no one will have an incentive to bear the risk or responsibility of exposing the activity. This will provide a more defensive measure in governing the institutions of the states to reduce arrogance and selfishness when implementing policies in different institutions. The African states must set up National Revenue Authorities to collect tax and manage their institutions in different communities, which will contribute to the country's economy. The National Revenue Authorities must be decentralized in different African states and reduce the spirit of centralization, which is interrelated to African traditions when implementing the policies.

▪ The arrest of the former African statesmen over allegations of corruption must come to an end; they embarrass the nations, lower the electorate's morale, and institutionalize corruption. The African states must have an intelligent court that will be managed by evidence-based rules and judges for the former statement to explain how they accumulated

their finances and return some. This will allow a few African statesmen to hang on to power, as their fear will be replaced by the preservation of their reputation when they are out of office. Corruption is not good for the nation. However, Western leaders in Europe are not sued for corruption, yet some are genuinely corrupt. African states must stop the use of toxic politics to build their institutions and implement policies to deliver these services.

▪ African states must set up a mixed economy to reduce the development and escalation of toxic politics to ensure that there is inclusion and diversity when implementing policies. Ebrahim [16] states that free and open economies are the fountain of peace and prosperity. This increases protectionism coming from the politically motivated communities that were neglected before implementing policies. In addition, the African states must have a clear foreign policy that does not leave room for the resurgence of toxic politics in the different institutions' implementation in delivering services. This will reduce the need for African statesmen to spy on each other, which undermines the sovereignty of different nations in implementing policies to deliver services.

Addressing these issues requires comprehensive reforms in African states and avoiding the inferiority complex imposed on them as black sheep while they need their resources to fix their economies. The African states must abandon pride, selfishness, arrogance, and the use of intelligence units to eliminate the opposition to hang on to power at all costs. Killing the opponents does not resolve any problem but worsens the situation, which lowers morale in strengthening democratic institutions and undermines transparency in African states. Each African country's context is unique, and solutions must be tailored in the constitution to specific circumstances to build a more inclusive and stable society and foster social cohesion.

13. Conclusion

This article provides the African states with bridge-building groups across different countries that fit the implementation of the policies in different institutions. Many African states focus on promoting and facilitating community dialogues across the different institutions while preserving divisions to deliver services. The different ruling parties in African states are the immune systems of different governing political parties, actively engaging with different communities. This provides different ways which offer a sense of understanding of African states in different institutions implementing policies to deliver services. Other states have different institutions that bring interested parties together across ideological divides in the provision of services through ineffective compromises. Undoubtedly, African states face the wicked problem of taking difficult steps to tirelessly seek ways to redress the inheritance of toxic politics in different institutions.

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