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[YESTERDAY BOOK SECTION]
Leadership and identity in pre-colonial African contexts: A retrospective account
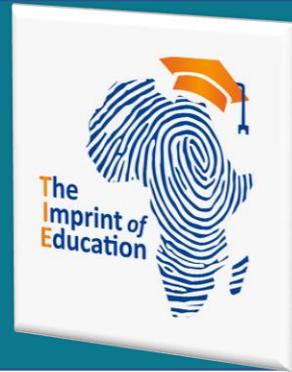Mr Matthews M. Makgamatha, HSRC

CHAPTER OUTLINE AND ARGUMENT

Paper Outline:

- Introduction
- Leadership and Societal and Community Organisation
- Leadership and Ethnicity Issues
- Leadership and Gender Issues
- Leadership and Social Stratification Issues
- Conclusions

CHAPTER OUTLINE AND ARGUMENT

Chapter Focus:

- Leadership and leadership practices in precolonial African societies and communities could be characterised as diverse across and within the various precolonial continental polities.

- Both the leadership types and practices precipitated a mixture of ethical versus unethical and socially just versus unjust outcomes and vice-versa within and across polities.

The Paper Tweet:

The paper is a retrospective examination of the forms of leadership and leadership practices associated with many different precolonial African societies and communities. It documents, from a multidisciplinary scholarly perspective, insights gained into the leadership types and leadership practices in various precolonial African socio-political forms of governance. This it does so by examining the precolonial Africa leadership and leadership practices using the social identity markers of societal and community organisation, ethnicity, gender and social stratification.

METHODOLOGY
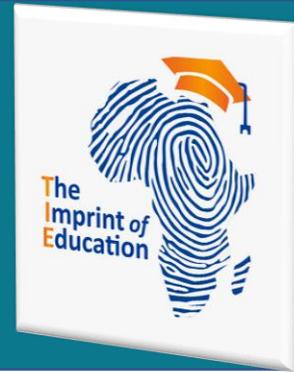
- Chapter is based on secondary literature sources. No primary data collection done.

- Initial literature searches conducted using EBSCOhost, JSTOR databases and Google Scholar

- **Keywords**: precolonial African leadership, precolonial Anglophone African leadership, precolonial Francophone African leadership, precolonial Lusophone African leadership, and precolonial (Eastern/Western/Southern) Africa/African leadership.

METHODOLOGY
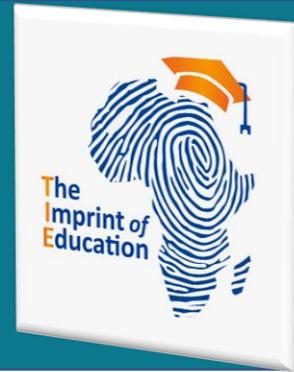
- Further literature searches:
  - Using referenced sources in journal papers and book chapter on precolonial African societies and communities
  - General literature of transformational and transformative leadership

- Disciplinary literature sourced: Archaeology, Anthropology, History, Theology, Sociology, Leadership Theory, Transformations etc.

LITERATURE AND USE OF THEORY

- **L**eadership & practice: "the leader" and "followers":
  - The "leader/leadership (persona)" vs "leaders as a practice"
    - Leadership = Kings, Queens, Chiefs etc.; Leadership Practices = Mediated through traditional council [Vertical vs Horizontal Leadership Practices]
  - "inkosi yinkosi ngabantu (a king is king because of the people)" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2008)
  - Syncretic connotation of the leader / leadership (esp. vertical leadership):
    - A link between the metaphysical (belief in ancestors, and God or Supreme Being), the physical (land) and followers (society/community) (Huffman, 2000:15)

LITERATURE AND USE OF THEORY

❑ *N*orthern vs *S*outhern Complementarities: Co-creation of the leadership act or practice [confluence of vertical leadership and horizontal leadership]:

  o Humans are endowed with the capacity to be creative (Montuori & Donnelly, 2018)

  o Leader is leading & being led; Followers are leading (Weiner, 2003:96)

  o Communitarian / communal / democratic leadership practices (Nye, 2008 in Montuori & Donnelly (2018:331))

▪ *N*orthern hemisphere (or metropolitan) literature vs *S*outhern hemisphere (Africanist scholarship):

  ▪ Contestations between *N*orthern and *S*outhern conception of and theorising about the precolonial African leadership.

  ▪ *N*orthern notion of a nation-state cannot be simply equated to the *S*outhern precolonial African polities owing to different contexts.

MAIN FINDINGS/DISCUSSION

- **Leadership and Societal and Community Organisation: Formation of Precolonial African States - The Statehood Thesis**
  - **Leadership = Kings, Queens, Chiefs etc.; Leadership Practices = Mediated through traditional council [Vertical vs Horizontal Leadership Practices]**
    - ***Centralised versus decentralised*** (e.g. Bradley 2005; Monroe 2013, Bandyopadhyay & Elliott 2016).
    - Types of centralisation democratic political systems – the ***pyramidal monarchy*** system and the ***associational monarchy*** (Potholm,1979 in Bradley, 2005). The power of the king was balanced by the council and vice versa.
    - A ***continuum state perspective*** – continuum from greater centralisation to less centralisation (Michalopoulos & Papaioannou 2015).
    - *Ndlovu-Gatsheni's (2008) Criticism of the precolonial African statehood thesis*

MAIN FINDINGS/DISCUSSION

- **Leadership and Ethnicity Issues:** Ethnicity defined as "Common descent, a unique name, a common history, a common territory/homeland, a common culture, and a sense of solidarity [and] language" (Green 2010:3).

  - Contestation around origin of *Ethnicity:* African OR Foreign (Metropolitan) Concept?

  - Role of ethnicity in leadership and practices differed from one socio-political grouping to another

MAIN FINDINGS/DISCUSSION

- **Leadership and Gender Issues: Patriarchal Domination vs Gender Complementarity Roles [within a binary gender construction]**
  - **Leadership, leadership practices (roles & responsibilities) gendered (e.g. Allman, Geiger, & Musisi, 2002 in Day (2007); Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2008)**
  - **Leadership and leadership practices; Males & Females roles complementing each other (e.g. Denzer, 1994; Day 2007)** [Henrietta (1998) = benign patriarchy model]

- **Leadership and Social Stratification Issues: Social ordering or ranking**
  - **Consequences: Engender non-egalitarian "leadership" and "followership" condition**

IMPORTANCE
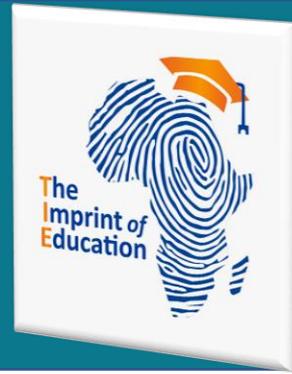
- Every country on the Africa continent has a unique history of "coming to being" and attended leadership challenges, therefore:

  o Need to consider (or ponder over) leadership lessons and practices from the past for present-day and future Africa, especially when faced with democratic moments of societal reinvention.

3 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Which leadership theory or a combination of theories (transformative leadership, transformational leadership etc.) could be best suited to explaining the various precolonial African leadership types and why?

- Which social markers in precolonial African societies could be associated with ethical and social just leadership outcomes and vice-versa?

- Why is context important to both understanding and explaining the different leadership styles and practices in precolonial Africa?

REVIEW PROCESS AND HELP NEEDED

- Represent of the text in a table to reduce the number of words

- The keywords need to be trimmed

- The language can be a bit bombastic and technical at times. More assistance with language adding still needed