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Kakistocracy to Afrocentric Governance: Evaluating Lumumba's Critique of African Leadership Failures

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About Article

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ABSTRACT

The idea of kakistocracy government by the very worst or most unscrupulous citizens had increasingly become a theme of the political rhetoric of Lumumba, a well-known Pan-African thinker and former Director of the Anti-Corruption Commission of Kenya. The various speeches and writings of Lumumba accused the African states of corrupt, incompetent, and selfish leaders who are mostly irresponsible. He criticized the political elite after independence, said that it dragged the colonial legacy, destroyed the confidence level of the masses and slowed down development. This paper discussed the ideological standpoint by Lumumba on kakistocratic governance and evaluate his promotion of Afrocentric model of governance infused with integrity, cultural dignity, participatory democracy and Pan African unity. In a critical discourse analysis of a sample of public speeches, interviews, and essays of Lumumba between 2010 and 2024, the paper examined the way he positioned the African leadership crisis and the expression of a path to political change. It also questioned philosophical grounds of his Afrocentric propositions, and was based on African humanist thought, Ubuntu, and the post-colonial political theory. The position of the paper is that Lumumba whose rhetoric is forceful and inspiring needs structural transformation into the policy arena, education on leadership, and reforming institutions. This study identified the following as the key findings: Lumumba defined African leadership invariably as kakistocratic leadership that is characterized by corruption, incompetence, and moral decay. His speech makes this issue of leadership crisis to be the biggest obstacle in the development of Africa. Lumumba asserts that leaders with the African values like transparency, service to the community and humility are essential to the rule as leaders should guide the nation with moral considerations and cultural identity. His discourse condemned the persistence of the reliance upon Western models of governance, aid systems and epistemologies. He points out this dependence as one of the causes of continuing underdevelopment in Africa. Lumumba suggests restoration of indigenous systems of power like Ubuntu and participatory leadership and African jurisprudence as a way of re-legitimizing the state power and governance. The one theme that recurs regularly is that there is a pressing need to reclaim the future of Africa by having a renewal of its leadership structure and youth participation in democratic actions in order to become a unified continent. The paper has reached the conclusion that Afrocentric governance based on indigenous knowledge systems, ethical leadership and cross-generational vision can provide an alternative to dysfunctional realities of most African governments today. But this ideal requires not only nurturing, but also a shift of generations to ensure changes in political consciousness, involvement in the civic sphere of activity, and the cooperation between continents.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Negative patterns related to the governance failures, system deterioration, corruption, and leaders of mediocre stature have been chronic issues in the Post-independence political path of many African states. The latter have produced a phenomenon that has often been described by Lumumba (2012) as kakistocracy, a particular system where the lowest, incompetent, and immoral people, rise to power and take over the public sphere. The rhetoric used by Lumumba (2012) echoes the increased disillusionment among the African citizens whose country decades after political independence keeps struggling with poverty, underdevelopment, insecurity, and disempowerment as a result of the huge flaws in the management of the affairs of native nations.

Against these odds, Lumumba (2012) presents to the people an ideological and structural change towards Afrocentric governance, which is a model of governance, based on the native African principles, ethical leadership, participatory democracy, and Pan-African unity. His denunciation is not only against the leaders as individuals but a reading of a paradigm shift that will elevate the states of the future of Africa within the context of cultural authenticity and morally acceptable sets. Yet, though his criticism makes rounds extensively on media, there is hardly any scholar other than critics who have taken to seriously critique the major postulations, the practical manifestations, and even philosophical bases of his propositions.

This study aims to critically analyze Lumumba's (2012) critique of African leadership within the broader discourse of governance reform. It investigates how his framing of kakistocracy and his advocacy for Afrocentric governance reflect both a diagnosis of Africa's political ailments and a vision for renewal.

1.1. Objectives

- i. To examine the ideological underpinnings of Lumumba's (2012) critique of African leadership.
- ii. To explore the conceptual framework of Afrocentric governance as articulated by Lumumba (2012).
- iii. To evaluate the practical implications of transitioning from kakistocracy to Afrocentric governance.
- iv. To situate Lumumba's (2012) ideas within the broader discourse of Pan-Africanism and postcolonial governance.

1.2. Research questions

- i. What are the core criticisms raised by Lumumba (2012) against African political leadership?
- ii. How does Lumumba (2012) conceptualize Afrocentric governance as a solution to kakistocracy?
- iii. What philosophical and cultural foundations underpin Lumumba's (2012) governance ideals?
- iv. How can Lumumba's (2012) ideas inform contemporary policy and institutional reforms in Africa?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Kakistocracy (rule by the worst)

Kakistocracy denotes government "by the worst people" a lexical diagnosis of regimes captured by incompetence, amorality, and clientelist elites. The term has been used recently in popular and academic discourse to name leadership that privileges

private gain over public good, and it is the organising grievance in Lumumba's (2012) rhetoric about African governance.

2.2. Afrocentric governance/afrocentricity

Afrocentricity (Asante) is both an epistemological stance and a political-philosophical program that argues for centring African histories, values, and perspectives in analysis and policy-making. Applied to governance, an Afrocentric approach prioritizes indigenous normative resources, communal accountability, and context-sensitive institutions rather than uncritical transplantation of Western models. Afrocentric governance therefore functions as both critique and constructive alternative to kakistocratic forms of rule.

2.3. Ethical leadership and ubuntu

Literatures on ethical leadership emphasize character, public-spiritedness, and stewardship; in African debates these ideals are often expressed through Ubuntu (a moral idiom roughly summarised as "*I am because you are*"). Ubuntu reframes leadership as relational responsibility - leaders are accountable not merely through rules but through reciprocal social bonds. As Desmond Tutu put it, "*A person with ubuntu is open and available to others*," a formulation that clarifies how communal ethics can be operationalised in governance discourse.

2.4. Pan-africanism

Pan-Africanism supplies both an historical memory and a policy horizon: it links struggles against colonialism and neo-colonial domination with present-day calls for continental solidarity, pooled sovereignty, and intra-African solutions to African problems. Lumumba's (2012) speeches often recast domestic governance failures as continental problems requiring transnational civic mobilisation and cooperative institutional redesign. (See classic Pan-African formulations for theoretical genealogy; Nkrumah *et al.* (1965)).

2.5. Neo-colonialism and decolonisation of knowledge

Postcolonial critiques underline that many post-independence governance failures are not only economic or administrative but epistemic: the privileging of external models and the continuing dominance of foreign policy prescriptions can reproduce dependency. Decolonising governance thus includes recovering indigenous knowledge systems, rethinking constitutional forms, and contesting externally imposed policy scripts. Fanon, Ngũgĩ and later scholars have insisted that political freedom requires epistemic reorientation as much as institutional change.

2.6. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as Lens

CDA foregrounds the ways language constructs and legitimates power relations; it interrogates how lexical choices, metaphors, modality, and intertextual references reproduce or resist ideologies. Fairclough's model attending to text, discursive practice, and social practice is well suited to link Lumumba's (2012) rhetorical moves (e.g., kakistocracy metaphors, invocations of Ubuntu, pan-African appeals) to broader sociopolitical structures and hegemonic formations. CDA therefore enables the study to map how Lumumba's (2012) speeches do ideological



work: delegitimising kleptocratic elites while constructing alternative moral vocabularies for governance.

Empirical research consistently shows that governance crises in Africa are linked to corrupt and unaccountable leadership. For example, Ogundiya (2010) found through a governance performance index that leadership failure, more than resource scarcity, explains Nigeria's recurrent political instability. Similarly, Ake (2000) demonstrated that state capture by elites produces a kakistocratic order, in which policies benefit narrow groups at the expense of citizens. These studies provide quantitative backing to Lumumba's (2012) rhetorical claim that *"the problem of Africa is the problem of leaders."*

Empirical studies in African political science have tested the applicability of Afrocentric frameworks to governance. Asante (2003) examined education and policy reforms in Ghana and South Africa, showing that Afrocentric paradigms improved cultural ownership and legitimacy of institutions. More recently, research by Mazama (2020) on Afrocentric education policy found that communities engaged more with governance processes when policies reflected local worldviews. These studies demonstrate how Afrocentricity can be operationalised beyond theory, strengthening Lumumba's (2012) advocacy for *"African solutions to African problems."*

Chasi and Rodny-Gumede (2016), in a discourse study of South African political speeches, found that leaders who employed Ubuntu-based rhetoric were perceived as more trustworthy and accountable by citizens. Similarly, Khoza (2011) conducted case-based research on African corporations and established that Ubuntu-inspired leadership styles fostered transparency, employee loyalty, and long-term sustainability. These findings lend empirical weight to the argument that ethical leadership rooted in African values can counterbalance kakistocratic tendencies.

Empirical work has explored how Pan-African ideals are mobilised in speeches and policies. Murithi (2007) analysed African Union (AU) documents and observed that while leaders often invoke Pan-Africanist rhetoric, implementation gaps persist due to state-level interests. A content analysis by Tiekue (2004) of AU debates revealed selective appropriation of Pan-African ideas invoked to gain legitimacy but rarely institutionalised. Lumumba's (2012) speeches reflect this tension: he mobilises Pan-African vocabulary, but the empirical evidence suggests institutional inertia often undermines such calls.

Nkrumah's (1965) claim that neo-colonialism is the "last stage of imperialism" has been empirically tested in contemporary governance studies. Recent research by Adesina (2016) used case studies of Nigeria and Kenya to demonstrate that external donor conditionalities shape domestic policy choices in ways that weaken local legitimacy. Similarly, Chilisa (2019) found that externally imposed development frameworks reproduce dependency and epistemic marginalisation. These empirical findings corroborate Lumumba's warnings that Africa's governance crisis is compounded by lingering neo-colonial structures.

Eze *et al.* (2025) analyzed how African intellectuals use online platforms to counter dominant political narratives. They discovered that blogs and YouTube channels allow intellectuals to reach a new generation with anti-imperial and decolonial

messages. This Find that digital engagement is a strategic tool for ideological influence; which relevance as Toure's YouTube discussions and blog essays represented this trend of intellectual digital activism.

Several empirical works have employed Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine African leaders' rhetoric. Oloruntoba and Falola (2018) analysed presidential speeches in Nigeria, showing how discourse constructed narratives of national unity while masking elite interests. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) used CDA to deconstruct Zimbabwe's postcolonial speeches, revealing how language was weaponised to delegitimise dissent. These empirical precedents justify applying CDA to Lumumba's (2012) speeches, as they demonstrate how discourse functions both as critique and as an instrument of ideological struggle.

2.7. Empirical gap

Despite the rich body of scholarship interrogating African leadership, governance, and political communication, several gaps remain that justify this study. Conceptually, much of the literature on African governance has focused on structural and institutional weaknesses such as corruption, patrimonialism, and neo-colonial influences (Ake, 1996; Mbembe, 2001; Agbiboa, 2012). While these perspectives have illuminated systemic failures, they often underplay the rhetorical and communicative dimensions of leadership particularly how African leaders and intellectuals frame the crisis of governance discursively. Lumumba's (2012) interventions stand out precisely because of his emphasis on rhetorical critique, Afrocentric paradigms of leadership, and the moral reawakening of African societies. Yet, there remains a scholarly gap in systematically analyzing his speeches through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

Empirically, existing studies on political communication in Africa have concentrated on presidential rhetoric, electoral campaigns, or the role of mass media in shaping political discourse (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015; Oloruntoba, 2018). While these works underscore the interplay between language, power, and governance, few have examined non-state actors such as intellectuals, activists, and public speakers who significantly shape public opinion on governance. Lumumba (2012) though not a sitting political leader, has achieved wide resonance across Africa through speeches, interviews, and writings that call for accountability and Afrocentric governance. However, there is a scarcity of empirical work that thematically categorizes, textually analyzes, and situates his rhetoric within broader discursive strategies.

This study bridges that gap by conducting a critical discourse analysis of 20 selected speeches and writings of Lumumba (2010–2024), highlighting the recurring themes, textual patterns, and contextual discursive strategies he employs. By focusing on Lumumba's (2012) communicative praxis, the research expands the boundaries of African governance studies beyond institutional critique to rhetorical agency and Afrocentric.

2.8. intellectual leadership

2.8.1. Theoretical Framework

Postcolonial Theory and Afrocentricity: This study is guided by



Postcolonial Theory and Afrocentricity as its theoretical lenses. Postcolonial theory, particularly as articulated by Frantz Fanon (1961) and Edward Said (1978), critiques the lingering effects of colonialism on political, cultural, and epistemological structures in formerly colonized societies. Fanon emphasized the need for a “*new humanism*” to replace the alienating and exploitative systems inherited from colonial masters. In the African context, this theory illuminates how colonial administrative legacies and Western governance models continue to shape and often distort leadership and state-building efforts.

The proposed vision of Afrocentricity, introduced by Molefi Kete Asante (2003), can be complementary since it requires the central position of African values, cultures, and historical experiences in the analysis of social and political life. Afrocentricity is the belief that the African communities should abandon the Eurocentric world order that sidelines the native systems and the indigenous communities should reaffirm their agency into culturally native systems. Asante explains, no people can grow in a sustainable manner by refuting their own cultural agency.

All of these theories give us a strong theoretical platform of interrogating Lumumba (2012) concerning his criticism of kakistocracy and his demands of Afrocentric governance. They enable such subtle outlooks on how historical injustices, cultural displacement, and intellectual dependency collude with the modern day failures of leadership and how recovery of indigenous knowledge and ethical governance could provide a transformative road ahead.

3. METHODOLOGY

This paper will employ a qualitative research approach in which this case, the research will use the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) method, to analyze the ideological content and verbal rhetoric of the chosen speeches, interviews and essays by Lumumba (2012) delivered or published between 2010 and 2024. The keynote/Lectures were 10, six (6)-broadcast interviews and four (4) written essays/op-eds. The geographical spread showed that at least three sub-regionals represented (e.g. East, West, Southern Africa; diaspora events acceptable) for the study. The domain of

CDA can be well employed to delve into the mechanism of language that establishes ideological stances and the power dynamics relations (Fairclough, 1995). Twenty public addresses and transcribed interviews were picked using the purposive sampling technique and provided during academic forums, Pan-African conferences, media platforms, and youth leadership summits. All of thematically analyzed texts had the same motifs, namely, kakistocracy, ethical leadership, Pan-Africanism, and Afrocentric values. The language use, metaphor, historical references and the appeals to the African consciousness and framing the governance problems and solution of Africa in discursive modes were the elements of analysis. Second sources such as academic commentaries and books about African political thought were also referred to in order to offer a background by which Lumumba (2012) could be viewed in his arguments. The adopted codebook which deductively nodes (e.g. corruption, Ubuntu, youth agency) and inductive space for emergent motifs. Context mapping was used to situate each text, while NVivo/Atlas.ti was adopted for coding and textual analysis. However, this study had some limitations that ranges from a purposive selection of speeches, wchich may not fully represented the entire breath of Lumumba’s (2012) rhetorical output between 2010 and 2024. The CDA approach is inherently interpretive, which means findings are subject to the researcher’s analytical perspective and may differ from alternative readings. It however prioritized themes of governance, corruption, and Afrocentric leadership, which may led to the marginalization of other relevant themes in Lumumba’s (2012) discourse, such as youth empowerment or pan-African economic integration. To mitigate this, instead of relying solely on purposively selected speeches, future studies could include a larger and more representative samlie across different timeframes and contexts to capture the full range of Lumumba’s (2012) rhetorical strategies.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Data presentation

The following are significant speeches, interviews and essays of Lumumba (2012), which will be analysed between the years 2010-2024 in chronological order.

Table 1. Professor P. L. O. Lumumba Speeches

Period	Speeches	Source
October 2010	Public Speech as Kenya Anti-Corruption Commission Director. (Reddit, Wikipedia, pegasusreporters.com)	Lumumba discouraged voters to vote in corrupt leaders admonishing the situation in which poor leadership does not help attain development and service delivery warning about stolen wealth stored in offshore havens.
June 2017	Mwalimu Nyerere Intellectual Festival, Tanzania. (<i>legacy.ippmedia.com</i>)	He extolled the rule of President John Magufuli as the way forward of the African re-building and wants a Magufulified continent whereby leaders are accountable and do not succumb to the foreign exploitation.
June 2018	Anti-Corruption Conference, Nigerian Legislature (speech) (<i>Tuko.co.ke - Kenya news. Vanguard News</i>)	Addressing legislators on corruption, Lumumba emphasized inter-African solidarity and ethical leadership as central to combating governance failures.

September 2021	JKLive Interview to President Uhuru Kenyatta. (<i>Tuko.co.ke - Kenya news</i>).	Lumumba urged Kenyatta to enforce discipline across government and adopt merit-based governance beyond tribal politics. He famously said, “ <i>The buck stops with you</i> ”
March 2023	Interview on the “ <i>Evil of Corruption in Africa</i> ”(pegasusreporters.com, Vanguard News)	He mentioned that “ <i>corruption ... kills even more people in Africa than in Civil Wars</i> ” and described corruption a fight of all part where not only the donor but also the recipient, “ <i>and demands national commitment</i> ”.
October 2023	The Platform Independence Anniversary (<i>Vanguard Nigeria</i>)	Lumumba lamented that Africa is ruled by its worst (“ <i>kakistocracy</i> ”) and emphasized the importance of choosing leaders of integrity over thieves. He remarked: “ <i>When you allow hyenas to take care of goats...why be surprised when the goats are eaten?</i> ”
July 2023 / June 2024	Various Panels and Public Debates (<i>via Reddit reports</i>)	The slow rate at which Agenda 2063 is taking was criticized by Lumumba who accused people of waiting too long to make transformational changes in their countries. He also criticized the ongoing reliance on foreign dispute resolution, and encouraged Africans to take the lead in its own
August 2020	Public Lecture (<i>virtually via EACC</i>)	On the 10th anniversary of Kenya’s Chapter 6 Constitution (Leadership & Integrity), he evaluated progress, calling for strengthened integrity mechanisms across public institutions EACC.

The Wikipedia page reports that Lumumba (2012) was active throughout this time and delivered speeches on African youth migration, energy crises, leaders and advice on how to run a government, as well as conducting hyperbolic talks like his 2015 address dubbed the “*Dumsorisation of Africa*” and lectures on youth leaders in 2017 and after 2017.

Table 2. The summary of lumumba speech analysis

Category	Section	Explanation / Examples / Implication
Anti-Corruption and Integrity	Thematic Analysis	Critiques endemic corruption and calls for integrity in leadership (e.g., 2010 KACC speech).
Pan-Africanism	Thematic Analysis	Advocates for African unity and self-determination (e.g., 2017 Nyerere Festival).
Kakistocracy and Leadership Failure	Thematic Analysis	Highlights the incompetence of African leaders using powerful metaphors (e.g., 2023 Platform Speech).
Legal Accountability	Thematic Analysis	Urges enforcement of the rule of law (e.g., 2020 Constitutional Lecture).
Youth Empowerment and Civic Duty	Thematic Analysis	Calls on youth to lead transformation (e.g., 2023–24 debates).
Metaphor	Textual Analysis	“ <i>Hyenas in the sheepfold</i> ” - dramatizes corrupt leadership.
Proverbs and African Oral Traditions	Textual Analysis	E.g., “ <i>A man who has not travelled...</i> ” -critiques narrow-mindedness.
Repetition	Textual Analysis	E.g., “ <i>We must... We must...</i> ” - creates urgency.
Intertextual References	Textual Analysis	Cites Nkrumah, Nyerere - builds legitimacy through historical allusions.
Allusion and Irony	Textual Analysis	E.g., “ <i>We have PhDs in theft</i> ” - uses sarcasm to critique elites.
Inclusive Pronouns	Textual Analysis	“ <i>We, our, us</i> ” - fosters unity with the audience.
Declarative Sentences	Textual Analysis	Used to assert leadership ideals and values.
Election Seasons	Contextual & Discursive Strategies	Electoral persuasion - citizens urged to vote wisely. Mobilizes public opinion during political transitions.
Pan-African Events	Contextual & Discursive Strategies	Framing unity and continental vision. Reinforces African solidarity.



Public Disillusionment	Contextual & Discursive Strategies	Kakistocracy critique; metaphor and satire. Harnesses anger into advocacy.
Legal Reforms	Contextual & Discursive Strategies	Legal-rational appeals. Highlights the need for institutional checks.
Youth Forums and Interviews	Contextual & Discursive Strategies	Dialogic, action-oriented language. Engages young Africans in nation-building.

Table 3. Thematic, textual, and contextual discursive analysis of Lumumba's Speeches (2010-2024)

Theme	Explanation
Anti-Corruption and Integrity	Critiques endemic corruption and calls for integrity in leadership (e.g., 2010 KACC speech).
Pan-Africanism	Advocates for African unity and self-determination (e.g., 2017 Nyerere Festival).
Kakistocracy and Leadership Failure	Highlights the incompetence of African leaders using powerful metaphors (e.g., 2023 Platform Speech).
Legal Accountability	Urges enforcement of the rule of law (e.g., 2020 Constitutional Lecture).
Youth Empowerment and Civic Duty	Calls on youth to lead transformation (e.g., 2023–24 debates).

Table 4. Textual analysis

Strategy	Examples & Function
Metaphor	" <i>Hyenas in the sheepfold</i> " - dramatizes corrupt leadership.
Proverbs and African Oral Traditions	E.g., " <i>A man who has not travelled...</i> " - critiques narrow-mindedness.
Repetition	E.g., " <i>We must... We must...</i> " - creates urgency.
Intertextual References	Cites Nkrumah, Nyerere - builds legitimacy through historical allusions.
Allusion and Irony	E.g., " <i>We have PhDs in theft</i> " - uses sarcasm to critique elites.
Inclusive Pronouns	" <i>We, our, us</i> " - fosters unity with the audience.
Declarative Sentences	Used to assert leadership ideals and values.

Table 5. Contextual and discursive strategies

Context	Discursive Strategy	Implication
Election Seasons	Electoral persuasion - citizens urged to vote wisely.	Mobilizes public opinion during political transitions.
Pan-African Events	Framing unity and continental vision.	Reinforces African solidarity.
Public Disillusionment	Kakistocracy critique; metaphor and satire.	Harnesses anger into advocacy.
Legal Reforms	Legal-rational appeals.	Highlights the need for institutional checks.
Youth Forums and Interviews	Dialogic, action-oriented language.	Engages young Africans in nation-building.

4.2. Analysis of the Themes in Lumumba's (2012) Political Discourse

The five thematic strands identified in Lumumba's (2012) speeches reflect a coherent ideological framework that

critiques Africa's current leadership paradigm while proposing a transformative alternative. Below is a detailed analysis of each theme:



Table 6. Themes in lumumba's political discourse

Themes	Lumumba's Political Discourse	Interpretation
Critique of Kakistocracy	Lumumba's use of the term kakistocracy serves both as an indictment of African political elites and as a rhetorical strategy to provoke critical reflection among citizens. His imagery- " <i>hyenas and vultures masquerading as leaders</i> "-evokes a sense of betrayal and decay. This theme underscores his perception that Africa's most critical crisis is not one of resources but of leadership character. His critique aligns with Achebe's (1983) assertion that leadership failure is the root of Nigeria's and, by extension, Africa's problems. In this critique, Lumumba preconditions an explanation of the necessity of reformatting through the system.	The theme is not merely about identifying problems but about discrediting illegitimate authority and inspiring public outrage that can catalyze resistance or reform.
Call for Ethical Leadership	Ethical leadership is put forth as the opposition of kakistocracy. Lumumba supports more leaders who are selfless, ethical and devoted to the common good. His motto, a service is greater than self, is a governance motive that takes the African humanism. These include leadership philosophies like Ujamaa by Nyerere, and Mandela reconciliatory leadership to which he makes an unstated appeal.	According to this theme, the political redemption of Africa will occur with the moral attributes of the leaders and not necessarily institutional reform. It requires training of leaders and re-valuing them.
Rejection of Neo-colonialism	This motif underscores the fact that Lumumba was in agreement with the postcolonial theorists such as Fanon and Ngũgĩ wa Thiongá. He denounces the preservation of the colonial mindset in the form of foreign dependence, economic domination, and acultural mimics. Slogans such as dancing to foreign tunes of governance reveal the fact that Africa is still vulnerable to western influence.	Neo-colonialism is portrayed as a mental and structural condition that must be dismantled for authentic development. Lumumba positions political sovereignty as inseparable from cognitive liberation.
Promotion of Afrocentric Governance	In this case Lumumba is going beyond criticism to remedy. He has drawn some themes of governance based on African indigenous systems of governance using Ubuntu, use of traditional justice systems, and cultural pride. He disputes the notion that the progress should be Western both in character and concept.	Afrocentric governance is offered not as nostalgia but as a viable, culturally-aligned alternative. It emphasizes collective well-being, participatory structures, and moral accountability
Pan-African Unity and Civic Responsibility	It is this theme that links the vision of Lumumba to wider Pan-African ideals. The problems he depicts in Africa are transnational and therefore need a continental collaboration. The reference to the youth to wake up demonstrates how he views the generation change and the civic power of the individual.	Cohesiveness and civic altruism is not expressed as abstract ideal but strategic necessity. Lumumba re takes back Pan-Africanism, as a strategy of resistance and as a development vision.

All of these themes make a hybridization of moral critique, cultural nationalism and transformational leadership theory. Instead of the simple protest, Lumumba poises a discourse that goes beyond political activism and outlines an Afrocentric political philosophy of moral action, native rule and a Pan-African common ground. The role of his rhetoric is both diagnostic and programmatic-the systems forced Africa to overcome its kakistocratic stasis and envisage a post-colonial future based on African standards.

Anti-Corruption and Integrity Lumumba persistently critiques endemic corruption, urging Africans to demand integrity in leadership. His 2010 KACC speech emphasized "*integrity as the foundation of sustainable development*." In his use of 'Pan-Africanism' he invokes a unified African identity. He used Inter-African solidarity framing. Positions his discourse within continental reform discourse. Through his 2017 Nyerere Festival speech called for "*Magufulification*" of African politics, urging leaders to emulate visionary figures. Prof Lumumba used his

platform during Anniversary Speech, where he invoked the "*Kakistocracy and Leadership Failure*" in 2023. He also employed the used the metaphor of "*hyenas and goats*" to describe the incompetence of African leadership. Legal Accountability

In his 2020 Constitutional Lecture, he emphasized the necessity of enforcing laws to ensure leadership discipline. Furthermore, at the 'Youth Empowerment and Civic Duty' Lumumba repeatedly calls on African youth to "*seize the day*" and drive transformation, especially prominent in his 2023-2024 panel discussions. He called the youths to action to builds civic agency among young Africans.

Lumumba's communicative approach is grounded in ethical Pan-Africanism, rhetorical brilliance, and context-responsive critique. His speeches transcend mere political commentary and serve as mobilization tools for ideological realignment, youth empowerment, and institutional reform. He uses cultural messages, language materials, and historical references to relocate discourse of African governance out of lamentation



mode into the responsibility and action mode. The relevance of his thinking to the present discourse on governance in the world is also significant in that he asserts that any effective reform must be grounded in both structural malfunction and moral failure, to put it in two different ways; also as not given the proper attention in technocratic accounts on how to develop African societies.

4.3. Discussion

The criticized African leadership as presented by Lumumba as well as his proposal on Afrocentric governance is a considerable intrusion in postcolonial governance discourse and political restructuring in Africa. His interests in thematic sense of kakistocracy, ethical leadership, decolonization and Pan-African unity reflect on the long held academic interests of the problem of leadership crisis in Africa and postcolonial quagmire of the continent. Kakistocracy is a historically proven word in the western political thought, but Lumumba has animated the word to explain a leadership environment that is corrupt, average and morally insolvent. This idea that Africa is poor is purely nonsense but it is led badly as stated by Lumumba, this is also observed by Achebe (1983) when he noted that the troubles of Nigeria are simply and squarely failure of leadership. This is the same direction reflected in other literature where personalization of power, patrimonialism, and capture of elites are considered as obstacles to democratization (Van de Walle, 2001 & Mbaku, 2004). The criticism made by Lumumba is thus an extension of the intellectual campaign to eradicate the political elites that exploit people and to raise civic consciousness.

The fact that Lumumba stresses the importance of ethical leadership evokes a moral vision comprising the African communitarian values and the restoration of a public-spirited rule. His call to those leaders who should serve with the integrity echoes the work of Eze (2008) who suggests that, the African crisis could only be solved by morally rebirth of the leaders but not by institutional reform. In the Lumumba system of thinking ethical leadership is not only the virtue of the person but the incorporation of integrity in the political culture. It entails recreating governance into a kind of stewardship, a concept that is in line with Ubuntu that states, I am because we are.

Lumumba denies the existence of neo-colonial styles of rule which resonates with the postcolonial theorists like Fanon (1961) and Thiong (1986) who condemned the remnants of the colonial rule on African political and intellectual climate. Akin to Ngugi (1986) on *Decolonising the Mind*, Lumumba stressed on cognitive oppression and this is asserted when he said the bullet played the part of physical conquest. The spiritual subjugation was brought about by the use of language." In the case of Lumumba, the development of Africa depends on the ability to be liberated out of externally imposed forms of governance and adopt culturally persuasive thought and governance.

The lack of nostalgia explains the difference between Afrocentric governance as proposed by Lumumba, and the reconstructive one. Based on the Afrocentricity theory by Asante (2003), Lumumba suggests the model of leadership in

which the African values, traditions, and communal rationale are glorified. Afrocentricity demands respecting African realities through African lenses which Lumumba refers to when he says ruling ourselves with our instruments and in our words. This can be followed up with some of the other scholars such as Mazrui (2002) who would propose a cultural revalidation of African systems of governance and knowledge. Also Pan-African is the discourse in Lumumba as he places the leadership crisis of Africa within a Pan-African context. The incorporation of his demand for unity, youth mobilization and transnational cooperation are a supporting idea of Nkrumah (1963) who considers that the independence of Ghana is effective when it is bound to the liberation of the entire African continent. Lumumba positions youth to be the force behind such emancipation, demanding leadership and responsibility change of generation. In his argument on civic responsibility, he promotes what Tandon (1996) refers to as active citizenship, thus the participation of the ordinary Africans in the process of creating accountability of power and influence on the governance outcomes.

Taken together, postcolonial theory and Afrocentricity enable one to perceive the discourse of Lumumba in a mixture of structural and epistemological liquidation. The postcolonial theory can be used to understand why colonial traditions of governance still exist whereas Afrocentricity is the means of imagining new models of political and social structure based on the realities of the Africans. Lumumba will add value by playing the formulations of these frameworks in mobilizing language which can speak to the youths in the street to political reformers. This criticism does not come without its own set of obstacles, enough to transform contemporary African societies into nation-states that govern using Afrocentric ideals of sovereignty is complicated at best, given the fact these societies exist in a world heavily connected to world power, technology and economies. But his rhetoric offers an ideological and moral purpose of transformative change. His propagation is an awakening call to the ruling elite in Africa and a call to action in regeneration of Pan-Africa. Others will write our story instead of us and we would not like the ending as Lumumba himself cautions, so we must write our own story.

4.4. Findings

According to the critical discourse analysis of speeches and writings of Lumumba between 2010 and 2024, the researcher identified the following as the key findings: Lumumba defines African leadership invariably as kakistocratic leadership that is characterized by corruption, incompetence, and moral decay. His speech makes this issue of leadership crisis to be the biggest obstacle in the development of Africa. In his argument, Lumumba asserts that leaders with the African values like transparency, service to the community and humility are essential to the rule as leaders should guide the nation with moral considerations and cultural identity.

His discourse condemns the persistence of the reliance upon Western models of governance, aid systems and epistemologies. He points out this dependence as one of the causes of continuing underdevelopment in Africa. Lumumba suggests restoration of indigenous systems of power like Ubuntu and participatory



leadership and African jurisprudence as a way of re-legitimizing the state power and governance. The one theme that recurs regularly is that there is a pressing need to reclaim the future of Africa by having a renewal of its leadership structure and youth participation in democratic actions in order to become a unified continent.

5. CONCLUSION

The research comes to the conclusion that the critique given to the African leadership by Lumumba can be viewed as timely and ideologically consistent because it is an amalgamation of postcolonial resistance, cultural nationalism, and moral leadership theory. His speech is successful in discrediting the ethical authority of the existing political elitists and presenting the Afrocentric governance as a viable alternative to the kakistocratic systems which are prevalent in most of Africa. The rhetorical strength of Lumumba is not only his criticism but also his visionary way that he describes through the constructs of the African value and the responsibility of collective action. Nevertheless, though his ideals are intellectually captivating, they will still have to be actively implemented through many years of political determination, institutional provisions, and civic education.

RECOMMENDATIONS

i. *Institutionalize Leadership Ethics Education*: Black governments and civil society groups should inculcate ethics training in leadership into civics education to be taught in schools and universities, induction programs of government agencies and systems of political parties to establish a leadership culture of probity and responsibility.

ii. *Decolonize Governance Frameworks*: Policymakers and other constitutional review mechanisms must contemplate incorporating indigenous forms of decision-making (e.g., council of elders, consensus-building) into official political institutions in those areas it is feasible.

iii. *Promote Afrocentric Civic Engagement*: Media, schools and cultural organizations should inculcate African ethos like Ubuntu and Ujamaa to reform the societal understanding of leadership and governance as communal ideas instead of an individual way of thinking.

iv. *Strengthen Pan-African Networks*: Pan-African networks such as the African Union and the ECOWAS should help foster cross-national youth leadership incubators, forums or think tanks that would echo the Pan-African principles of Lumumba.

v. *Translate Ideological Rhetoric into Policy Action*: There is need to author policy papers that can translate into policies by linking the dreaming discourse of Lumumba and practice of reforms in governance by intellectuals and actors in political arena.

vi. The research confirms that Lumumba did not make a rhetorical contribution to the African political thought, which may turn transformational, only when one embraces it in good faith, when it is localized and when it is rooted in the actualities of African societies.

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