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**POOR POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN SIERRA LEONE AND ECONOMIC  
GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT FROM 1961 TO 2020**

A Research Paper presented by:

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## **Dedication**

This work is special dedication to my parents, Mrss Jusephine Matturie who made sure I got everything to become who Iam today.

# Acknowledgement

Despite taking full responsibility of everything put forward and considered in this research study, I am considerably aware that this could not be finished entirely without the intensive cooperation and support from various people dear to me who dispensed unrelenting moral abettance, experience and dexterity, opinions, encouragement, helpful time, and views.

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Thank you all very much

# Declaration

I proclaim that “POOR POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN SIERRA LEONE AND ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT FROM 1961 TO 2020” is my own work. All the sources utilized or echoed are specified and acknowledged by ways of full referencing.

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Name: Alhassan Daramy

Date: 10 November 2021

## Contents

<b>Dedication</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Acknowledgement</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Declaration</b>	<b>v</b>
List of Figures	viii
List of Acronyms	ix
Abstract	x
Relevance to Development Studies	xi
<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Nature of the Problem	7
1.2 Justification and Relevance of this Research Project	8
1.3 Background to the Proposed Study	9
1.4 Research Objectives	11
1.5 The Research Question	11
1.5.1 Sub Questions	11
1.6 The Scope and Limitations of the Study	12
1.6.1 Scope	12
1.6.2 Limitations	12
1.7 Research Gap	12
1.8 Theoretical Framework	13
<b>CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>15</b>
2.1 Theories on Leadership	15
2.1.1 The Great Man Theory	16
2.1.2 Trait Theory	16
2.1.3 Transformational Leadership Theory	16
2.2 Political Leadership	17
2.3 Poor Political Leadership and Corruption	19
2.4 Effect of Poor Political Leadership on the Economy	21
2.5 Leadership and Civil War	23
2.6 Comparison to other African Countries	24
2.6.1 Comparative Analysis with Botswana	24
2.6.2 Comparative Analysis with Mauritius	26
<b>CHAPTER 3: STATISTICS</b>	<b>29</b>
3.1 Evidence of trustworthiness	30
3.2 Presentation of Results	31
3.3: Effects of poor political leadership on the growth and development of Sierra Leone	31
3.3.1 Ministry of Finance, Sierra Leone	31
3.3.2 Ministry of Works, Housing and Infrastructural Development, Sierra Leone	34
3.3.3 Ministry of youth affairs, Sierra Leone	35
3.3.4 Youth Group- Youth Partnership for Peace and Development (YPPD)	36

3.3.5. Women Empowerment Group- Lady Ellen Women’s Aid Foundation – Sierra Leone	37
3.3.6: Learning Institutions- University of Sierra Leone	40
<b>CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS</b>	41
4.1 Discussion and Analysis of Findings	42
4.1.1 Poor Political Leadership and Public Service Delivery	42
4.1.2 Economic Policies for a better economy	43
4.1.3 Poor Political Leadership: Women and Youth Empowerment	45
4.1.4 Participatory Governance	47
4.1.5 Poor Political Leadership and Education	48
4.1.6 A Comparison between Sierra Leone and other countries across various sectors	49
4.2 Recommendations for Action	54
4.3 Recommendations for Further Study	56
4.4 Implications for Social Change	56
<b>CHAPTER 5: TRIANGULATION</b>	57
<b>CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS</b>	62
Appendices	65
Appendix 1: <b>CONSENT ENQUIRY</b>	65
Appendix 2: Questionnaire to the Ministry of Finance, Sierra Leone	65
Appendix 3: Questionnaire to the Ministry of Works, Housing and Infrastructural Development, Sierra Leone	67
Appendix 4: Questionnaire to the Ministry of youth affairs, Sierra Leone	68
Appendix 5: Questionnaire to the Youth Partnership for Peace and Development (YPPD)	69
Appendix 6: Questionnaire to Lady Ellen Women’s Aid Foundation ( Empowerment Group) – Sierra Leone	71
Appendix 7: Questionnaire to the University of Sierra Leone	73

## List of Figures

FIGURE 1: THE PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO REPORTED TO HAVE PAID A BRIBE TO BE GIVEN SERVICES .....	10
FIGURE 2: A COMPARISON BETWEEN SIERRA LEONE AND BOTSWANA GDP FROM 1961 TO 2020 .....	49
FIGURE 3: A COMPARISON BETWEEN SIERRA LEONE AND MAURITIUS GDP FROM 1976 TO 2020.....	50
FIGURE 4: A COMPARISON BETWEEN SIERRA LEONE AND GHANA HEALTH EXPENDITURE .....	52
FIGURE 5: A COMPARISON BETWEEN SIERRA LEONE AND SENEGAL LITERACY RATES.....	53



## List of Acronyms

APC	All People's Congress
ARDP	Accelerated Rural Development Program
CPI	Corruption Perception Index
CSA	Commonwealth Sugar Agreement
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
HDI	Human Development Index
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PPP	Public Private Partnership
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SLPP	Sierra Leone People's Party
SP	Sugar Protocol
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
YPPD	Youth Partnership for Peace and Development

## **Abstract**

Researchers have explored overdependence on mineral exploitation as one of the critical factors resulting in the low economy in Sierra Leone. There is still much research to be done regarding the effects of poor political leadership on the country's development. The recessing economy has for a long time attracted the concern of scholars and research institutions, but poor political leadership as a causative factor has not been focused on. The objective of this qualitative study was to investigate the effects of poor political leadership on the growth and development of Sierra Leone from 1961 to 2020. The theory of transformational leadership and the trait theory were adopted in the theoretical framework. Data collection was through personal interviews conducted online. The study used non probability purposeful sampling. A sample of six respondents was interviewed and secondary sources were also consulted. Data was analysed using a descriptive analysis. The findings revealed that a) the poor political leadership is the primary cause of socioeconomic challenges in the country. b) Poor leadership resulted in civil war which had a detrimental effect on human resources and development. c) There is prevalence of corruption in the country which has resulted in wealth disparity hence a huge population of the country live in abject poverty. d) The poor political leadership has resulted in ineffective service delivery in the public sector, the stalemate of projects and improper budgetary allocation for projects. e) There are also low levels of employment among the youth due to poor political leadership. Unemployment has led to low living standards among the youth. The implications for a socio economic change include export diversification, participatory governance, participatory budgeting and policies for greater openness, to combat corruption and improve the leadership of the country for economic growth and development.

## **Relevance to Development Studies**

Being one of Sub-Saharan Africa's poorest countries, this research will give insights into how poor political leadership in Sierra Leone has affected its economic development. An in-depth understanding of good and poor political leadership will significantly influence the livelihoods and, ultimately, the growth of the economy. Results that will be obtained from this research will be of importance to leaders and prospecting leaders on how they can adopt good leadership, which will boost the country's economy. The data will also be used by other scholars for academic purposes

## **Keywords**

Poor political leadership, economy, good leadership, growth and development, GDP

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Leadership entails encouraging a collection of people to work cooperatively toward a similar objective. Leadership plays a critical role in determining the rate at which the economy of a country will develop. Development entails enhancing the nation's standard of living by ensuring the social wellbeing of citizens, sustainability and economic growth. Good or effective leadership creates a suitable environment for economic development, such as the ease of doing business, economic freedom, political stability, and much more. Poor political leadership entails leading people without possessing leadership qualities like humility, transparency and authority (Hackman and Wageman, 2007). The components of good political leadership entails political tranquillity and the absence of violence in the country, accountability and voice, an effective leadership, compliance and observance to the precept of law, and the ability to combat corruption are all necessary components. This study will focus on political leadership. Political leadership has a great influence on the growth and development of a country (Brady and Spence, 2010). Arguably, existing studies show that poor governance is the root cause of food insecurity and persistent poverty in most African countries

Good governance is a rare occurrence in the African continent, although it is evident in countries like Mauritius, Botswana, Ghana and Senegal (Onolememen, 2015). Good governance entails reducing poverty, fostering long-term growth and preserving peace. Countries which are under good governance have efficient delivery of public services and observe the rule of law. Countries with good governance also have transparency in the services offered to the public and promote inclusivity. Countries with good governance also have lower poverty levels, which are measurable through the income approach which is based on the measure of people thriving below the global poverty standards which is \$1.25 a day in U.S. dollars. Poverty levels can also be measured through the Multidimensional

Poverty Index (MPI), which have the three components of human development; education, health and the living standards. According to studies, good leadership focuses on dispensing quality education to its citizens, hence promoting employment.

Sierra Leone had only a brief period of free and competitive democracy after gaining independence from Britain in 1961. The following decades were plagued by increasing political instability, poor governance, and greater poverty, culminating in institutional collapse and civil war. Sierra Leone has suffered from poor political leadership for decades, especially in the 20th Century where the country suffered from military coups and civil war (Le Billon and Levin, 2009). This resulted in oppressive economic condition in the country. Malfeasance by the private and public sectors have increased the tough economic situation in the country. The political elites and the military leadership exploited the available opportunities leaving the Sierra Leone citizens with few resources which limited the economic development of the country. The lack of political stability has laid the foundation in which the country is suffering from poverty.

Sierra Leone's colonial history instituted several styles which the political economy of the country remains complaisant. The establishment of a bifurcated system – a dimensional and political split between Freetown (the former Colony) and the rest of the nation (the Protectorate), as well as the practice of indirect administration through chosen chiefs – were both crucial. Local despotism and unrestrained abuses by chiefs were tolerated under this system, which engendered a strong sense of animosity. Following independence, post-independence governments have made little effort to modify this status, opting to keep the colonial structure of ancillary authority in place. The “Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) and the All People's Congress (APC)” have always depended on Chiefs to manage the rural areas, generate proceeds, and win votes. This has exacerbated the split, but it has also weakened the state as a whole by limiting its reach into remote regions.

Sierra Leone is among the world's impoverished nations as it is positioned eighth-poorest in terms of GNI per capita and 11th most inferior in terms of GDP per capita by purchasing command uniformity. Comparing Sierra Leone with other African countries like South Africa, Ghana and Kenya, these countries have recorded a progressing economy since independence, which is evident by a rising GDP over the years and have stable economies. Additionally, the countries have developed infrastructure and other advances like world class super highways and international airports. On the Liberia-Guinea border, the region generated more over half of the nation's agricultural export crops and served as a key regional market. However, Sierra Leone was unable to trade with this lucrative sector due to a lack of paved roads and highways, which may have contributed in raising the country out of poverty. Sierra Leone considers regions like Freetown, a major seaport, to be important for its imports and trade. However, this does not diminish the necessity of roads; highways assist the delivery of services to remote areas as well as trade between locations without access to seaports, both of which Sierra Leone is deficient in. Sierra Leoneans as a result undervalue their wares, resulting in lower revenue and perpetuating low livelihoods. Due to infrastructural deficiency, rebels and militias, such as the RUF, may easily roam about Sierra Leone, causing violence in a wider range of places to further their objectives.

Notably, Sierra Leone has abundant resources such as diamonds and other minerals which have not benefitted the locals due to poor governance and judicial abuse, thus the prevalence of grievances. The diamond mining, which is one of Sierra Leone's main sources of revenue, has brought in enormous revenue, but the top-down effect has been essentially non-existent; rural inhabitants and the lower class citizens continue to face exploitative labour relations and extreme poverty in mining areas .they continue to be impoverished due to the leadership's mismanagement of money obtained from diamond mining. External causes, such as a drop in global demand for diamonds, have also pushed many

citizens out of work and into poverty. In addition, a lack of infrastructure has resulted in a rise in diamond prices, resulting in poverty in Sierra Leone. The cost of transporting diamonds from one location to another is considerable since highways and roads are in poor condition. The cost of transporting the diamonds from mining sites to port towns for transportation and trading is extremely high, including the expense of fuel. As a result, Sierra Leone is unable to sell its diamonds at the same low prices as other countries on a global scale. In comparison, South Africa's worldwide diamond marketing system has maintained steady pricing for producers and consumers, thanks in part to a considerably improved infrastructure than Sierra Leone's. As a consequence, diamonds' internal transit costs to trade routes are cheap, and profit exceeds costs. Sierra Leone's costs of transporting diamonds, on the other hand, are significantly more than the revenue generated by citizens; costs outweigh advantages, and citizens stay impoverished. In Sierra Leone, diamond business or being in government is the only way to make money or both. Given the frequent changes in administration and the length of time between elections, since independence, elites have tended to have limited time horizons and have used military rule to accomplish their goals during their tenure in power, to maximize rent extraction.

Therefore good leadership is paramount to the growth and development of any economy. Poor governance may include the exclusion of some crucial groups in development and corruption. According to Villarreal (2012), corruption is prevalent due to inadequate public regulation. Good governance which is characterized by the absence of corruption directly affects growth, impacting investments positively (Pellegrini and Gerlagh 2004). Voors et al. (2017) posit that Sierra Leone has documented unaccountable leadership corruption and policymaking, which does not observe inclusivity. Good governance has a part to play in fighting corruption and ensuring inclusivity. There are attributes that go along with good governance as described in the figure below.



According to Asefa and Huang (2015), there is a close relation linking human growth, MPI indicators and governance. These authors argue that poor governance results in lower “Human Development Index (HDI) and MPI,” where the achievement is measured in terms of being knowledgeable, having a lasting and wholesome life; and high prevalence of corruption, measurable by Corruption Perception Index (CPI). Good leadership performs a vital part in the enhancement of the economy while reducing the poverty levels. Sierra Leone has a number of non-governmental Organizations which provide aid to the citizens to better their livelihoods. However, according to Asefa and Huang (2015), the narrow and rapid growth due to the foreign aid can lead to repression and misery under poor leadership. The narrow and rapid growth driven by the non-governmental organizations cannot improve the livelihood standards in the presence of poor leadership. Asefa and Huang (2015) explain how economic development and foreign aid relate. Foreign aid affects economic development in a number of ways. Firstly, Foreign aid impacts positively economic development. However, there are exceptions. Secondly, these scholars argue that has no or little effect on development, and in some cases it becomes a barrier. For instance, food aid will reduce the prices of domestic food and displace the local food production. Thirdly, these scholars posit that the impact of foreign aid relies on the standard of good political leadership. For example, countries like Botswana have significantly benefited from aid because the level of good governance is high. Many African countries have attracted aid but it had no effect on the economic development on the countries. For instance, food aid will develop dependency hence reducing the capacity of the local food production.

Collier (2007) posits that poor leadership is the main cause of poverty traps and conflict in most countries. According to the explanation given, tough economic conditions push countries to civil war and violence cycle which is difficult to escape from. The study revealed that when countries experience poor governance, low income and high income inequality, and over dependence on primary commodity for export; are prone to civil war.

Sierra Leone is an excellent representation of a nation that has experienced the effects of slow economic growth as a result of poor governance.

According to World Bank report on the development of Sierra Leone, the country seeks to be a middle income economy by 2035, but it still suffers the aftermath of war which are weak governance, corruption and youth unemployment(The World Bank in Sierra Leone, 2021).Notably, Sierra Leone continues to face the intimidating challenges of promoting transparency in the management of natural resources and creating a space viable for economic development. The country continues to experience poor leadership, infrastructure and impoverishments in the urban and rural areas. Despite policy measures put in place to enhance the macroeconomic situation of the country, the economy continues to swindle. The country experiences high inflation, high depreciation of exchange rates, high fiscal deficits and increasing debts which has contributed to the down gradation of the country from moderate to high risk of debt distress.

One of the indicators of poor leadership is corruption. Asefa and Huang (2015) define corruption as a post-constitutional opportunism with the aim of benefitting a group or individuals at the expense of the greater society. Corruption can be controlled through constitutional reforms to limit the ability of state officers to step in, in private and market affair. There is dominance of corruption in Sierra corruption whose effects has fallen disproportionately upon the poor. African countries including Sierra Leone can reap the benefits of good political leadership when corruption is controlled and effective global and regional cooperation and engagement is fostered. Good political leadership in Sierra Leone will help mitigate dictatorship-driven conflict, and corruption which are the primary barriers of economic growth in the nation. Scholars posit that fiscal instability, low human capital, low levels of domestic savings, bad infrastructure corruption and poor coordination contribute to low investment and entrepreneurship, which are evident in Sierra Leone. Good political

leadership should be able to foster entrepreneurship to defeat the lack of productivity due to low investment.

Le Billon and Levin (2009) state that due to poor political leadership, the country engaged in an 11-year civil war that tore the country apart, recovering from those effects. Therefore, this research proposal aims to lay the groundwork on how the research will be conducted in the country. The research will be guided by research questions to help the study attain its aims and objectives.

## **1.1 Nature of the Problem**

There has been concern over the years regarding the economic status of African countries. A part from the usual problems of drought, diseases and warfare, economic policy has become the next suspect. Most countries in Africa exhibit low economy which is characterized by low levels of livelihood and lower GDP. Corruption which comes as a result of poor leadership has become a challenge in many African countries. This refers to using public resources for the interest of an individual or a group of people, at the expense of other citizens. According to surveys and studies, corruption is the main barrier to the growth of the African continent economic growth (Asongu, 2013). A report from UNECA published in 2009 showed that the African Continent has suffered a loss of even more than \$148 billion due to corruption. According to UNECA, corruption is one of the major problems facing many countries in Africa. The reports shows that most government institutions in Africa, the judiciary, legislative, executive and the public service practice some level of corruption (Asongu, 2013).

The poor political leadership in Sierra Leone due to political wrangles has significantly affected the country's economic development. Corruption is also prevalent in the country which significantly contributes to the fluctuating economy. As a result, poor political leadership has resulted in most citizens to live under the poverty margin. The GDP of

the country has been fluctuating at shallow levels, causing inflation in the country. This results in an unstable economy. Sierra Leone's independence has not helped the country; it has created a continuous cycle corruption and poverty, particularly in important sectors such as, civil rights, infrastructure and education. When minor changes are being implemented in the areas to assist Sierra Leone develop, the procedure is lengthy and ineffective, and will remain so unless the country's political leadership takes serious steps to eliminate corrupt activities in all the areas and elevate its inhabitants out of low livelihoods. Thus, the basis of this research proposal, the effects of poor political leadership in Sierra Leone on growth and development.

## **1.2 Justification and Relevance of this Research Project**

This research aims to determine how poor political leadership in Sierra Leone has affected economic growth and development. Researchers have explored overdependence on mineral exploitation as one of the critical factors resulting in the low economy in Sierra Leone. There is still much research to be done regarding the effects of poor political leadership on the country's development. The recessing economy has for a long time attracted the concern of scholars and research institutions, but poor political leadership as a causative factor has not been focused on.

There is empirical evidence that proves that when the economy's growth is good, there is the unlikeliest of a coup (Fosu, 2002). According to Johnston and Lefebvre (2013), there is unlikeliest of US president's re-election during recessions. This justifies the Sierra Leone case. Effective leadership is critical as institutional changes influence growth and development. African countries have for years been marred by poor political leadership which in the long run has been detrimental to the economic growth of the continent. Despite other countries in Africa showing good governance and a flourishing economy, this has not been the case for Sierra Leone. Being one of Sub-Saharan Africa's poorest coun-

tries, this research through this proposal will give insights into how poor political leadership in Sierra Leone has affected its economic development.

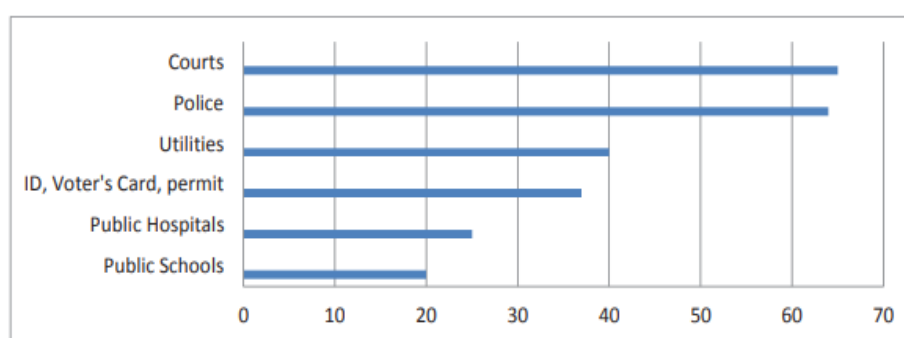
An in-depth understanding of good and poor political leadership will significantly influence the livelihoods and, ultimately, the growth of the economy. Data that will be obtained from this research will be of importance to leaders and prospecting leaders on how they can adopt good leadership, which will boost the country's economy. The data will also be used by other scholars for academic purposes

### 1.3 Background to the Proposed Study

Sierra Leone is among the nations in Sub-Saharan Africa facing growth and economic challenges. While other factors like civil unrest have been identified as the causes of recession economy, poor political leadership has contributed significantly to the poverty situation currently facing the country. Corruption and lack of inclusivity on important policies have resulted in the country experiencing coups and civil unrest, which to a greater extent affects productivity and drives away investors, thus the poor economy. Among the most fundamental contributors of poverty in Sierra Leone is the government. Since the end of colonial authority, the government has primarily been characterized by either military rule or one-party rule, a one-dimensional rule that does not allow for dissent and encourages corruption. Basic need requirements have been usurped for government employees, the government has been highly incompetent in delivering basic needs to its citizenry. Sierra Leone citizens had been systematically exploited or 'ripped off' for over a century, first by colonisation and then by the plans, policies, and programs of sovereign Sierra Leone's leadership.

Sierra Leoneans lack access to fundamental healthcare, drinking water, safe housing and enough food. Free medical aid offered by donor countries does not reach Sierra Leone's poor; instead, persons both inside and outside the government profit from the free

pharmaceuticals. Because they do not have the financial means to purchase even primary treatment, citizens fail to cure illnesses appropriately and timely. In this regard, they are more likely to become dangerously ill and die; for instance, if a household's single breadwinner is deceased, the family remains without revenue source, thrusting them to intense poverty. Alternatively, if a person is not terminally sick, they cannot work to aid in their recovery unless they get better coupled with expensive medicine challenges. Unnecessary health-care costs have contributed significantly to the acceleration and perpetuation of poverty among citizens. According to Transparency International, corruption is widespread in Sierra Leone and is rapidly increasing. Simultaneously, Asongu (2013) argues that corruption appears in three forms, incidental, systematic and systemic, which are all prevalent in African countries. Corruption is the main challenging factor in African countries which hinders social welfare, economic progress, service delivery to the citizens and good governance.



**Figure 1: The percentage of respondents who reported to have paid a bribe to be given services**

Source: Transparency International

It is critical to promote good political leadership which is transparent, participatory and accountable and guarantees the citizens the right to engage in businesses which will in turn promote progress. This can be achieved through constitutional reforms that will place limits on government officers to curb their abuse of power, promote economic freedom and control the negative motivation that leads them to corruption. Corruption can be re-

duced significantly through legally delineating and separating private economic activities from public political activities. The low economy in Sierra Leone is also linked with the presence of diamonds in the country.

## **1.4 Research Objectives**

The research will seek to attain several aims and objectives to find out how poor political leadership has affected the economic growth of Sierra Leone. Some of these objectives include;

- Find out how poor political leadership has affected the economic development of Sierra Leone.
- Find out the effects of poor political leadership in Sierra Leone.
- To find out the changes made by Sierra Leone leadership in economic development.

## **1.5 The Research Question**

How has Poor political leadership affected the growth and development of Sierra Leone?

### **1.5.1 Sub Questions**

- How did Sierra Leone leadership develop after independence in 1961?
- How has corruption affected Sierra Leone?
- What are some of the issues that have derailed the economic growth of the country through poor political leadership?
- What are some of the countries in West Africa that have witnessed economic development due to good leadership compared to Sierra Leone?
- What is the contribution of poor leadership on the presence of diamond conflicts

## **1.6 The Scope and Limitations of the Study**

### **1.6.1 Scope**

This research aims to focus on effects of poor political leadership on the growth and development of the Sierra Leone economy from 1961 after independence to 2020. The subject to be investigated in this research is poor leadership and the variables are growth and development. Data for this study will be obtained from World Bank, Transparency International and the UNDP. This study will rely on secondary data. Data will be collected through content analysis. This research will adopt a mixed method perspective to examine the consequences of poor political leadership on the growth and development of the Sierra Leone economy. Data will be analysed through frequency analysis. This study will not cover how the country would have gained if it had good leadership.

### **1.6.2 Limitations**

The target population for this study will be the World Bank, Transparency International and the UNDP, where data will be collected through content analysis. Individuals were omitted as part of the target population because it would be challenging to get people who are non-partisan to particular leaders and who will speak the truth about the effects of poor leadership.

## **1.7 Research Gap**

This research focuses on addressing the effects of poor economic leadership on the progression and development of Sierra Leone economy. Different scholars have explored on the causes of poor leadership in Africa, most have examined on the effects of poor political leadership on the growth of the African continent. However, not much has been done regarding the effects of poor political leadership in Sierra Leones economic growth and development. There is a research gap regarding the role of political leadership in the economic state of Sierra Leone, which this research will address. Sierra Leone has experi-



enced political leadership challenges since independence which has significantly contributed to the poor state of the economy. This study will use data from the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Works, Housing and Infrastructural Development, Ministry of youth affairs, Youth Groups, Women Empowerment Groups and University of Sierra Leone. The data obtained from the various institutions in Sierra Leone will explain the research gap on how poor political leadership affected the institutions, resulting in the poor economy of the country.

This study therefore seeks to identify how Poor political leadership has contributed to the poor economy of Sierra Leone through the onset of the civil war, corruption and diamond conflict.

This literature review contributes to the topic of poor political leadership in Sierra Leone as it explores the various subtopics in the field, outlining the literature in the field. This literature review will also contribute to future development of Sierra Leone as it can be adopted by policymakers in addressing the challenges facing Sierra Leone.

## **1.8 Theoretical Framework**

The best known empirical and theoretical studies which have been done to show how governance and development relate are those by Mauro (1995). The studies show that economic, political, and institutional governance can determine the failure or success of development. As a result, corruption is the main influence of poor governance. However, their studies show that corruption results in increased public investments while the private investment goes down.

Empirical studies have shown that maintaining a sustainable level of economic growth needs a complete change on governance institutions and structures and stakeholder's behaviour. Mauro (1995) in a cross-sectional analysis study among countries posits that corruption does not seem to affect long term growth of the economy but it has nega-

tive implications on investment. Corruption lowers the rate of economic growth, as it also reduces the physical capital that is supposed to be pumped to propel the economy. On the effects of corruption on economic development, Mo (2001) established that an increase in corruption levels by 1% causes a decline in the rate of economic growth by 0.72%. This implies that corruption affects economic growth negatively by causing political instability in countries. According to these authors, corruption is a result of poor political leadership and it affects the growth and development of the economy.

According to Kaufmann and Kraay (2002), the correlation between political leadership and growth are categorized into six indicators. Hence, good governance is characterized by higher per capita income while poor governance leads to low per capita income leading to economic stagnation and further negative growth rate. Precisely, increase in capital and labour quantities impacts growth positively. Langbein and Knack (2010) explore the determinants of good leadership which include, voice and accountability, effectiveness of the government, observance of the rule of law, political stability, the ability to control corruption and the presence of an operational regulatory quality.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

This section will present the various topics on various researches done on poor governance. Additionally, this chapter will discuss several theories of governance and leadership and their relationship to the research issue. Good governance emanating from political leadership continues to be a challenge in many African countries. Sierra Leone is not an exception. It is one of the Sub Saharan African nations that are blessed with natural resources. According to Silberfein (2004), the diamonds in the country has not been beneficial in the economy but rather contributed to the poor governance in the country, which sparked the 1991-2002 civil war. A study by Clapham (2003) shows that poor political leadership involves excluding some groups in the development process, which ultimately influences the direction of governance. Therefore, there is an association linking the standard of governance and grievances. This chapter will review the relationship between poor political leadership, which is the highest contributor of poor governance, and the diamond conflict in Sierra Leone, and how it has contributed to the low economy of the country. Excluding some groups in the decision making exercises and leadership of the state may lead to rebellion and ultimately war. This literature review also explores the impact of corruption in the leadership of Sierra Leone, which translates the impact to the economic spectrum. Corruption is among the elements of poor governance and is prevalent in many African nations, hindering development.

### **2.1 Theories on Leadership**

Various theories explain the leadership concept. This literature review explores the Great Man theory and the trait theory. There are variant views of governance as the characteristics of leaders vary. Most researchers have moved from the past traditional theories to a situation theory which states that the circumstance in which governance is implemented is dictated by the leader's characteristics and the leadership skills (Avolio et al., 1972).

### **2.1.1 The Great Man Theory**

The Great Man theory was among the first theories to study the leadership concept. This theory assumes that leadership capacity is inherent, that those that make great leaders are not made but born (Spector, 2016). This theory acknowledges that individuals with heroic potentials are destined to be leaders. According to this concept, some individuals are endowed with leadership traits and can transform society. This theory emerged in the early 20<sup>th</sup>-Century (Spector, 2016). According to this theory, the leadership traits instilled in leaders separates them from the non-leaders; thus, the origin of poor or good governance.

### **2.1. 2.Trait Theory**

After the Great Man Theory was proposed, the trait theory came later. According to the trait theory, individuals inherit leadership qualities and are part of their personalities (Allen, 1998). Political or social characteristics may exist. Northouse (2007) noted that some historical leaders like Abraham Lincoln, Mohandas Gandhi, and Napoleon were studied due to their innate and unique leadership qualities. Hence the studies were conducted to distinguish their traits and attributes, which made them different from others

### **2.1.3 Transformational Leadership Theory**

Transformational leadership is a kind of leadership which results in social systems and individuals. It generates meaningful and beneficial shifts within the members with the eventual objective of transforming followers into leaders in its natural format (Burns, 1978). Implemented in its perfect essence, transformational leadership increases the morale, stimulation, and followers' productivity through a number of processes. Burns (1978) provides the processes as "integrating the follower's sense of identity and self to the organization's mission and collective identity; inspiring followers to take greater ownership of their work; and understanding followers' strengths and weaknesses so the leader can assign

followers to duties that enhance their performance.” Burns in a descriptive study about political leaders proposed the notion of changing leadership through this concept.

## **2.2 Political Leadership**

Different scholars have defined leadership differently according to their individual view and phenomenal aspects that interests them. Undoubtedly, there are several leadership definitions because terms such as traits, influences, behaviours, role linkages, interaction patterns, and the role of a position have all been used to describe leadership. The ultimate act of leadership is to bring success to an organization and its people; thus, leadership can refer to “the ability to influence the behaviour of subordinates”. In addition, leadership is an art that allows people to dance with the complexity of their task and the goals of their organization. There are two ways to approach this type of leadership: formal and informal. A person may assume leadership in a formal and informal way. In both cases, the leader is expected to dance with the context, the objective, and the faction. In the second type of leadership, a person assumes responsibility for a group without any formal authority or duty. This type of leadership is informal and can involve the use of people outside the organization. Leaders are agents who help an organization overcome the challenges of change and deliver positive results. They help the people to envision the future and align it with organization's mission and goals.

Most definitions of leadership make assumptions that leadership is an activity in which individuals employ deliberate effect over others to organize, direct, and allow group or organizational activities and interactions. Several leadership definitions suggest that a leader can be identified as one and sometimes more members of a group at different times predicated on an easily discernible distinction between the individual(s) and other members, known to be the followers. Leadership definitions as phenomena entail the interplay of two or more people whereby a leader exerts intentional influence upon followers. Nu-

merous distinctions exist between the definitions, including who exercises impact, the purpose of attempts at influence, and the manner in which the impact or influence is exercised.

Bates (1981) summarizes political leadership into several measurable indicators. The indicators include the electoral competitiveness, control of executive power, degree of democracy and political instability. He asserts that a positive index of electoral competitiveness was linked to an economic growth in Africa between 1980 and 2010. Besides this, improved political institutions showed a better economic outcome at both on the micro and macro scales. Political reforms at macro level led to major growth in Gross Domestic Product while at micro level it led to a rise in agricultural productivity. Bates (1981) also found out that a positive electoral competitiveness led to the formulation of appropriate policies that were unbiased and suited well for many of Africa's population found in the countryside and depended on agriculture for survival. Biased policies that favour consumers in urban areas at the expense of rural dwellers had condemned rural areas into poverty.

Alence (2004) also observed that control of executive power demonstrated by mushrooming of democratic governments in Africa enhanced development oriented governance through proper legislations where free market policies were enacted. Government institutions were also harnessed to be more effective and corruption reduced. He also observed that control of executive powers reduced ethnicity in a country thereby preventing instances of short term recurrent economic growth collapse. Periodic growth collapse had stunted Africa's economic growth reducing it by 1% between 1960 and 2000. On degree of democracy, McMillan and Harttgen (2014) found that it aided in improving structural changes in African countries through reducing overdependence on agricultural sector as a main source of employment, a sector that was poorly performing. A positive degree of democracy score meant that people could undertake other economic activities such as industrialization hence creating alternative job opportunities. Besides this, Fosu (2004) also found out that political instability index which covers military coups and civil wars as having seri-

ous impacts on the economic development of countries in Africa. Political index measures the quality of governance. Fosu (2004) claims that Civil wars inhibit the rate at which growth can be transformed into real improvement of livelihoods.

## **2.3 Poor Political Leadership and Corruption**

There are several empirical studies conducted on corruption in leadership and its impact on the economy. The abuse of public or organizational authority for one's own or one's organization's benefit has been classified as corruption. In this regard, corruption is a pact between at least two individuals, typically one giving a bribe and one receiving the bribe, who collectively arrange a benefit exchange. Either of those parties takes use of the authority put upon them for personal gain. Corruption victims, unlike victims of other deviant activities, are frequently unconscious of violation. Victims of corrupt activities are frequently people or groups who are not a part of the corrupt relationship, such as society or the organization in which the corrupt actors work. Corruption rate is prevalent in developing countries than in industrialized countries. The structures in place to combat corruption accounts for the bare minimum of corruption in industrialized countries. The control measures are responsible for their political stability and development, whereas Africa's lack of anti-corruption mechanisms are responsible for its lack of development and rapidly deteriorating status. According to the Transparency International Human Progress Index Report (2013), nations with greater rates of corruption show slower rate of development; thus, growth is hampered by corruption.

When compared to other African regions, the Sub-Saharan area has an extremely low growth rate. When compared to developed countries, governance standards in emerging countries are often lower. The growth rate in Africa, is however, worse than in other developing countries. African continent is huge with both human and natural resources abound. Despite this, the continent has a poor level of human development index. Leader-

ship and corruption in Africa are to blame for the continent's pitiable condition. In Africa, corruption has hampered economic progress and prosperity as the majority of people live on less than \$2 each day.

According to Asongu (2013), the quality of political governance plays a significant role in discouraging or promoting corrupt activities. Political and economic aspirations mainly spark corruption. Corruption is a phenomenon exhibited in society at different degrees. However, some countries are prone to abusive economic and political opportunism than others. Asongu (2013) posits that typologies show the connection between corruption incidences and specific stages of social, economic, and political development. This author provides that corruption takes three main forms; incidental, systematic and systemic. Incidental corruption takes the form of trivial bribery and involves opportunistic groups or individuals. Systemic corruption is recurrent and involves enormous benefits which are a result of a bigger scandal. A large number of officials, entrepreneurs and intermediaries are involved as the source is civil servants from high ranks who exploit the illegal opportunities and ventures in government agencies and departments. Systemic corruption is one conducted by the bureaucratic elites, business people, politicians and civil workers. It is corruption on a large scale as embezzlement is made possible through ghost workers, who are registered on the governments' payroll. Embezzlement is also done through false procurement, making payment for the goods that were never delivered

There is a causal relationship between corruption and poor governance (Asongu, 2013). Poor political leadership provides loopholes for corruption, which in turn prevents the implementation of developmental structures and principles. Corruption is associated with the violations of principles of accountability, transparency and disobedience to the rule of law. Hence, corruption and poor political leadership affect the rule of law, democracy and economic development (Dartey-Baah, 2014). Poor political leadership and corruption affect the HDI of a country and the income per capita. Countries having higher in-



come per capita and HDI averagely have fewer reported incidences of corruption, and the government functions better. The World Bank estimates the global bribery to be at least \$ 1 trillion yearly, which was over 3% of the world income in 2002 (Jones and Olken, 2005). Corruption reduces a nation's productivity by lowering industrial policies effectiveness and encouraging business operators to conduct their businesses while violating the tax and regulatory laws. Studies show that corruption and poor governance are the main challenges towards effective service delivery and outcomes, for instance, health, education, income growth, infrastructure and a private sector that thrives.

## **2.4 Effect of Poor Political Leadership on the Economy**

Leadership has diverse meaning hence its role in directing and developing the nation continues to raise controversies. The quality of governance and leadership of any nation will determine the development pace of every entity in the nation (Asongu, 2013). The major and current issues that Africa's states are experiencing are government failures. Rather than serving the people, a leadership role in Africa has always been utilized to dominate the populace and extract resources from the countries. Due of their incapacity to provide public services for the general good, most African governments have lost their legitimacy. Political stability and economic growth are inextricably linked. The confusion attributed to an unstable political environment has the potential to stifle investment and economic progress. Simultaneously, poor economic performance can result in political insecurity and Governmental breakdown. On the other side, political stability can be realized by despotism or by having a ruling political party that is not required to seek re-election. In certain instances, political solidity can be a bipartite sword. Although political lucidity may foster a sense of tranquillity, it has the potential to easily devolve into a breeding environment for impunity and cronyism. This is the dilemma that many nations with precarious political systems face.

Economic development is hampered by poor political leadership since it cripples the economy. Uncertainty, unpredictability, decreasing moral values, and disregard for constitutional institutions and authority characterize a poorly- led state. It encourages anti-democratic behaviour while impeding progress and state stability. Corruption is a symptom of a democratic governance deficit. Poor political leadership results in the slow economic growth of a nation due to income inequality. Effective political leadership will ensure equal redistribution of resources and income among its population. Arguably, good political leadership implies that the government's capacity is strong, which includes enough resources, like financial resources and manpower, which will enhance the capital market and the investment platform. Hence the government has the role of ensuring growth in the economy to weaken the grabbing hand in market power. At the same time, good political leadership implies that market mechanisms play a significant role in resource allocation hence, increasing the products competitiveness of in the market-leading to market expansion and ultimately promoting economic growth. This will help enhance the helping hand of market power and weaken the grabbing hand.

Therefore, poor political leadership has an adverse effect on the economy of any country, while good political leadership will promote entrepreneurship due to favourable business conditions, which will in turn influence economic growth. It is possible that possessing power through a single party or a combination of parties for an extended period of time will be damaging to political stability. Because stability implies a stable political environment, the economy may do excellently when it comes to obtaining foreign investors. Complacency, opacity and, a lack of competition, on the other hand, may harm other areas of society. As a result, the economy suffers. As a result, having a stable administration does not always imply greater economic expansion. Therefore, not all types of political stability are uniformly conducive to growth; a lot relies on how well stability translates into good governance. Certain African governments with high growth rates have political systems

that are steady, while a number of African states with low growth rates have extremely stable political systems as well. Political stability in growth context means: strong institutions rather than powerful individuals, the rule of law, an efficient bureaucracy, an investment-enabling business climate and low corruption. Indeed, stable political leadership is essential for economic expansion. Politics is only one aspect of leadership.

## **2.5 Leadership and Civil War**

Political science and economics literature on the causes and effects of civil war continues to develop. In Sierra Leone, natural resources play a critical role as a cause of civil conflict (Nillesen and Bulte, 2014). The greed and grievances hypotheses have been shown in previous studies to be the major causes of conflict. This viewpoint has been influenced by Collier and Hoeffler (1998). The association linking conflict and the export of natural resources is explained by Collier, Hoeffler and Söderbom (2004). The interaction of multiple effects helps to explain conflict and natural resources. Poor political leadership in Sierra Leone was a major contributing factor to the civil war which affected the country's economy. According to Murshed and Tadjoeeddin (2009), grievances are as a result of inequality in the country and greed among the political leaders significantly supported the beginning of the Sierra Leone civil war. There was stiff competition among the elites on the renting of valuable mineral resources. Money from the rental of natural resources were used to fund, and also utilized by governments in power to repress opposition organizations (Humphreys, 2005). There is prevalence of grievances in countries with poor political leadership. Murshed and Tadjoeeddin (2009), posit that conflict therefore facilitates inequality and grievances. This resulted in institutional breakdown hindering growth and exacerbating poverty, resulting in a poor economy.

## **2.6 Comparison to other African Countries**

In as much as there is prevalence of poor leadership in Africa, some African countries seem to be performing better in their economy thanks to their good leadership. A comparison between some of the African countries and Sierra Leone reveals that Sierra Leone has trailed behind in terms of infrastructure and economic development which is evident by the HDI and GDP of the country. Mauritius and Botswana have established themselves among the most candid democracies globally, enjoying both politically and economically advanced economies (Armah, 2015). This research does not intend to single out the two nations as exceptional situations, but rather as versions of development, for Sierra Leone and the rest of Africa, from which other African states might learn to extend the modest gains economically and politically earned by these two countries. Botswana and Mauritius demonstrate that a country may flourish regardless of its location or geographical tendencies and projections if it has strong democratic institutions and implements sensible economic strategies (Armah, 2015). Institutions, whether political or economic, should be directed and tailored to African political and economic situations, not necessarily democratic (Auty, 2008). This literature review will therefore use Botswana and Mauritius as models. These two countries are seen as test examples for the entire nations globally, not only the African continent, because they are pragmatic and accountable economies led by strong leadership (Taylor, 2012). The two countries offer exceptional capabilities that all nations of the world might benefit from, despite being on a continent known for disastrous political precedents and economic incompetence.

### **2.6.1 Comparative Analysis with Botswana**

Located in Southern Africa, Botswana is a landlocked country bordering South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Namibia (Parson 1984). According to Parson, most of the land in Botswana is occupied by the famous Kalahari Desert and therefore inhabitable. The

nation was a colony of the Britain and attained its independence in 1966. Botswana's economic development has been sluggish. Arguably, by the period of independence, Botswana was among the globe's low - income countries, measured by per capita GDP. Botswana has risen from impoverishment to become one of the African continent's and world's economic giants, despite its desert and landlocked geography (Lewin, 2011). From an economy focused on domestic capital accumulation through cattle exports and commercial agriculture (Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson, 2012), the economy of the country has transformed to be one of the world's fastest rising economies, averaging 9% yearly between 1967 and 2006. These authors provide that between 1965 and 1995, the economy of Botswana expanded at a 7.7% annual pace, achieving median-income status in 2008, with a GDP per capita of \$7,343. By 2001, it is estimated that the country's per capita gross domestic output of \$7,820 doubled that of the Asian countries (\$3,854) which was also four times that of the sub-Saharan African region's average income per capita of \$1,826. Botswana's economic prosperity has been largely ascribed to its transition from an agrarian to a mineral-based economy. Botswana's constraints concerning arable land (Cook and Sarkin, 2010) resulted in decreased chances for economic expansion in farming sector during the pre- and colonial periods, which ironically focused on livestock farming.

Mineral deposits discovery in other corners of Africa, such as Sierra Leone and Liberia, resulted in unending civil war (Armah, 2015). However, Botswana utilized its newly discovered natural deposits resources to differentiate its economy, modify farming, and modernize (Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson, 2012). This implies that the possession of a natural deposits does not automatically ensure or secure the economic success of a country (Armah, 2015). Thus, big question is how Botswana avoided the resource curse that has afflicted other African nations of comparable stature, like Sierra Leone, Angola, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, to name a few. In retrospect, the success of Botswana in

overcoming the resource curse is largely due to good political leadership and good economic management (Armah, 2015), but it extends above the two factors.

Botswana's experience highlights the value of competent governance coupled with feasible economic policy. Taylor (2005) observes that the government of Botswana made substantial investment portions of the revenue from the sale of diamond on a number of growth initiatives, starting with the "Accelerated Rural Development Program (ARDP)" in 1974 (Armah, 2015). Earnings from this program were used to construct new schools, clinics, roads, and water infrastructure (Cook and Sarkin, 2010). It was a more comprehensive development agenda intended at improving the country's long-term economic position. On the contrary, in Sierra Leone, there is ample evidence of vast natural resource deposits nonetheless; the country is self-pitying in appalling poverty, a fate that Botswana desired to evade at all costs.

## **2.6.2 Comparative Analysis with Mauritius**

Mauritius is an Indian Ocean island situated roughly 620 miles east of Africa's east coast and approximately 800km east of Madagascar, having a size of roughly 2,030 square kilometres (Nath and Madhoo, 2004). Mauritius has remained a stable democracy since attaining independence in 1968. There have been subsequent just elections, a favourable record of human rights, and substantial foreign money, establishing it as one of the continent's most stable economies. As a matter of fact, there are only two Africa's post-independence countries that have maintained high growth rates, namely; Botswana and Mauritius, which are both African countries and are the only unbroken democracies on the continent of Africa. These post-colonial successes have made Mauritius incept significant growth advances on the continent, despite done in such a simple and peaceful manner (Armah, 2015). The country has a strong commitment to democracy, has just elections, multiparty government, observes the ordinance of law, and an independent judiciary are all examples of institutions

and effective media, as well as fundamental human rights (Armah, 2015), all of which culminated in continuous inflows of foreign direct investment into the country (Yao et al., 2005). Economically, Mauritius is synonymous with Botswana. At independence, the situation was so deplorable and uninspired that an independent assessment done in 1961 indicated that Mauritius was doomed to social and economic catastrophe.

Therefore, Mauritius was no different from other countries emergent from decades of colonial authority and facing an uncertain economic future. It lacked resources, was sensitive to external market and trade shocks, had a weak local economy, and had a lopsided distribution of income (Naeem 2008). The success was due to the determination to thrive mixed with diligence and discipline, both in its political leadership and among the populace in the wake of bleak economic forecasts. Mauritius' income per capita GDP increased from \$350 by independence to \$11,296 in 2008, emerging one of the world's strongest indicators of GDP (Naeem 2008, FAO 2021). Mauritius also practiced what Naeem (2008) refers to as "Sugar diplomacy." According to the authority, a "1953 agreement, the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement (CSA), and another in Lomé in 1975" awarded Mauritius a "Sugar Protocol" (SP) guaranteeing access to the British and the European Economic Community markets, correspondingly (Armah, 2015). The pacts essentially granted Mauritius privileged trade status in overseas trade discussions, which was not available to other African countries that played similarly significant roles in global economic affairs (Naeem, 2008).

Apart from sugar, textiles, and manufacturing exports, which together account for 30% of the country's GDP (Vandemoortele and Bird, 2010), the island is also known and lauded good political leadership and for its zero tolerance for corruption (Armah, 2015). Transparency International ranks Mauritius second only to Botswana on the African continent in terms of corruption rating (Frankel 2016). This is an especially appropriate illustration, given the continent's history of corruption and government misappropriation. In summary, Mauritius' economic success is a result of an economic policy designed with in-

digenous content, a very well regulatory "sugar diplomacy," and diversification of revenue from sugar exports to grow the economy and provide it with additional economic opportunities (Armah, 2015).

Interesting similarities are also found between the two examples presented due to their richness of natural resource wealth (Armah, 2015). Botswana and Mauritius, like the majority of countries in the African continent, are blessed with natural resources, but what distinguishes their gains is the structured and institutional framework within which proceeds generated by these assets have been dispersed and compounded for economic growth. Botswana's and Mauritius' natural resource richness, in the form of diamonds and sugarcane, has been supported by successful blueprints targeted at whole national development, but with a greater emphasis on reduced dependence on these assets, given their disputable character and potential to generate civil upheaval (Armah, 2015). The revenues generated by these industries have been dispensed to broaden other areas of the economy, with government blueprints evolving effectively to keep pace with global market changes (Vandemoortele and Bird, 2010).

Local content is also incorporated into policy formulation for dealings with international multinationals, making certain that domestic enterprises profiting equally with their foreign rivals (Vandemoortele and Bird, 2010). This is a significant departure from Sierra Leone which is endowed with natural riches in which limited components of the government control the assets and proceeds generated by them to the disadvantage of the greater populace and income is not appropriately considered and documented. In Sierra Leone, it is obvious that governments' over dependence on a sole commodity as the main source of foreign cash has resulted in massive economic failures in response to external price shocks.

From the two comparisons, it is therefore evident that the reliance on trade with regards to economic development has propelled Mauritius economically and helped the



country attain respectable levels of performance in its exports. Botswana which is also a country dependent on the mining of diamonds has achieved significant milestones with regard to economic growth. Diversification and a growth oriented development path which was realized as a result of good leadership has made the two countries a model in the African continent.

### **CHAPTER 3: STATISTICS**

This was a qualitative research and it sought to ascertain the effect of poor economic leadership on the growth and development of Sierra Leone economy. The research was

conducted because poor political leadership and widespread corruption have been blamed for the sluggish rate of growth in critical areas of the country's economy, since independence in 1961. The objective was to get a better understanding of the effects of various political leaderships in development governance in Sierra Leone. The conceptual framework was developed using leadership and governance theories that were modified for the Sierra Leone context. The study used transformational leadership theory and trait theory and as the most appropriate conceptual framework.

This part of the research summarizes the data from online interviews with Ministry of Finance, Sierra Leone, Ministry of Works, Housing and Infrastructural Development, Sierra Leone, Ministry of youth affairs, Sierra Leone, a youth led organization- Youth Partnership for Peace and Development (YPPD), Lady Ellen Women's Aid Foundation – Sierra Leone and University of Sierra Leone to obtain a deeper understanding, of the goals and policies of the many historical eras that formed the poor political leadership in Sierra Leone and the difficulties encountered between 1961 and 2020.

### **3.1 Evidence of trustworthiness**

As a result of concerns of external validity, like bias on the side of the researcher and the participants, establishing trustworthiness is a key challenge in qualitative research. Threats to validity, on the other hand, can be reduced by employing techniques to communicate study findings in a real and genuine manner that reflects the meaning as expressed by respondents. To reduce the risks and make the findings more trustworthy, I employed member checking by asking some of the respondents to review the data and validate the authenticity of my interpretation. This gave the participants a chance to answer any questions that had been left unanswered throughout the interview. Although the study's conclusions cannot be used for generalization because of the small sample size, the respondents exhibited a strong understanding of the issue and offered detailed descriptions

of incidences that have happened in the political leadership of Sierra Leone since independence, adding to the study's credibility.

## **3.2 Presentation of Results**

The results of the six respondents' individual interviews are provided in this portion of the research. I conducted online interviews with each participant to get their thoughts on the impact of poor political leadership on Sierra Leone's economic progress. Each person answered a set of interview questions linked with transformational leadership theories tailored to the Sierra Leone situation in order to gather information and get a deeper knowledge of the impacts with a specific focus on the issue under investigation. The impacts of successive regimes on economic growth in Sierra Leone since independence were studied to see whether there was any variation in leadership performance and how it influenced economic growth. This might aid in the formulation of strategies to enhance the Sierra Leone economy. The results of the interview will be presented in a descriptive form.

## **3.3: Effects of poor political leadership on the growth and development of Sierra Leone**

Research questions surrounding this phenomenon were asked across the six participants in their context.

### **3.3.1 Ministry of Finance, Sierra Leone**

Corruption was cited as the main hindrance against economic growth in Sierra Leone.

1. How has the poor political leadership of Sierra Leone affected the socio-economic development of the country? What is the impact on:
  - i. **Economic growth.**

Since independence, Sierra Leone has had a challenge on effective political leadership. Corruption prevalence has resulted in embezzlement of public funds meant for economic development jeopardizing economic growth.

### **ii. Human resources and development**

Due to poor political leadership in the country since 1961, there is no regime that has dedicated its resources to enhance human resources and development in the country. The decade war that the country went through as a result of poor political leadership affected human capital therefore spreading the effect on the whole human resources and development of the country which resulted in low productivity thus poor hampering economic development

### **iii. Poverty reduction**

The poor political leadership in the country has been attributed to corruption among the elite. Through corruption, the funds meant for development circulate among the elite class, leaving most of the country's population in abject poverty. Therefore, the poor political leadership in Sierra Leone has seen increased poverty among the country's population since independence to date. There has been no effort from the different regimes to reduce the rates of poverty in the country as most of the leaders are concerned with the elite affairs.

2. What are some of the economic policies that you think need to be changed for the betterment of the economy?

#### **i. Policies for greater openness**

One of the policies that can be instituted is creating openness in the government. A government that is open is transparent and accessible to anyone, anywhere, anytime. The Sierra Leone government is not open to the citizens, which makes it a breeding ground for corruption. It is critical for the government to align to disclosure with modern information management practices. Openness in the government will help reduce corruption rates, and funds would be used in the appropriate manner, which will boost economic growth.

## **ii. Export diversification**

Another economic policy should be focused on changing Sierra Leone's export structure. Poor political leadership in the country has not put much effort in diversifying the country's export to ensure improved economy. Sierra Leone main exports are diamonds, cocoa and coffee, since the country gained independence in 1961. By stabilizing export revenues, export diversification helps economies hedge against adverse terms of trade shocks. It allows them to channel favourable terms of trade shocks into increased growth, knowledge spill-overs, and scale returns. However, Sierra Leone has always depended on these commodities to support its economy. Notably, these commodities are controlled by the elite class, hence results in disparity in wealth distribution. Inequality and poor governance resulted in political instability, giving rise to civil war which affected the economy of the country.

## **iii. Revenue mobilization**

Revenue mobilization is also another important policy that can be implemented to boost economic growth in Sierra Leone. Increasing tax revenue mobilization is critical for governments to generate fiscal headroom for public investment and service delivery. This will see a rise in the GDP of Sierra Leone.

### **3. Do you think the policies can be implemented with the current political leadership? How?**

#### **In terms of Transparency**

The policies are feasible. However, the current political leadership is still corrupt. Therefore, the first critical step before implementing the policies would be to combat corruption. There is no transparency in the current regime hence implementing the policies may not bear fruits in terms of economic growth.

### **4. What do you think needs to be changed to better the political leadership and enhance Accountability?**

The Sierra Leone Anti-corruption Commission (ACC-SL) the independent body in the country mandated to fight corruption should be active in its roles through prevention, investigation and prosecution of corrupt officials. An active operation will reduce the rates of corruption and the levels of transparency will increase in the public sector.

### **3.3.2 Ministry of Works, Housing and Infrastructural Development, Sierra Leone**

In this ministry, the questions focused on how poor political leadership in Sierra Leone has affected efficiency, stalemate of projects and budgeting of projects.

How has poor leadership affected the performance of Ministry of Works, Housing and Infrastructural Development, Sierra Leone?

i. In terms of Efficiency

The performance of the ministry has been adversely affected by the poor leadership in the country. The government has failed to invest in infrastructural development projects hence; the quality of services has been affected greatly. The ministry has been unable to offer effective services to the citizens.

ii. Stalled projects

Consequently, poor political leadership in the country has resulted stalemate of several infrastructural projects in Sierra Leone. The allocated funds are always unable to meet the completion of various projects. On the same note, the funds allocated get looted by public officials who allocate themselves the tenders and offer overpriced services.

iii. Budget for the projects

The leadership of Sierra Leone has also affected the operations of the ministry through improper budgeting. Some projects require more funding for their completion but the government underfunds or fail to fund the projects. This has to a greater extent affected the operations of the ministry.

### 3.3.3 Ministry of youth affairs, Sierra Leone

The third respondents provided information on how poor political leadership has affected youth employment and the standards of living.

1. How has poor political leadership affected the youth in Sierra Leone?

i. Youth unemployment

The poor political leadership in Sierra Leone was the main contributor of the decade long civil war that engulfed the country. During the war, many youth were used as agents in the fight. The involvement of youth in the armed conflict resulted in most of them dropping out of schools. The civil war also led to destruction of learning institutions. The result is evidenced by the high levels of illiteracy among the youth, thus the high levels of unemployment. Unemployment among the youth has resulted in fewer opportunities for career development hence, lower wage levels

ii. Low standards of living

Due to high levels of illiteracy and unemployment among the youth, most of them are unable to earn decent salary. Therefore, most of the young population live below the dollar as they cannot afford the basic commodities.

2. What role has the Ministry of Youth Affairs played in enhancing the livelihoods of the youth?

i. Youth empowerment programs

The ministry of youth affairs is always enhancing the livelihoods of the youth through the creation of youth empowerment programs. These programs are meant to empower the youth and give them economic strength and freedom.

ii. Access to financial resources

The ministry is also working towards ensuring that the youth are granted access to financial resources from the government and financial institutions which can empower them to set up businesses and be financially independent.

### **3.3.4 Youth Group- Youth Partnership for Peace and Development**

**(YPPD)** – Youth led organization working for youth development, stability and peace in Sierra Leone

The respondents provided information on how the youth have benefited from the poor political leadership of Sierra Leone and how participatory governance can impact the leadership of Sierra Leone.

#### **1. How has this youth group and others benefitted from the leadership of Sierra Leone since independence?**

Although the organization is registered as an NGO with the ministry of planning, and as a youth serving body with the National Youth Commission, the organization has not benefited from the government. While YPPD is committed to alleviate inequality and enhance accountability, the government is the main perpetrator of corruption in the country, which and the main cause of inequality, hence, does not fully support the group.

#### **Economic empowerment through grants**

YPPD is mainly empowered through grants from donors, well-wishers and partners. The role played by the government in terms of grants is negligible despite being one of the partners.

#### **2. Do you think participatory governance will have an impact on the leadership of Sierra Leone**

##### **a. Participatory budgeting**

Yes. Participatory governance will have far reaching impacts on the political leadership of Sierra Leone. Participatory budgeting will be a greater way of considering various opinions



on different aspects in the country. Additionally, having a participatory budgeting is a form of democracy which will give the citizens the opportunity to decide how the public or municipal budget would be allocated. This is a critical aspect as it is the citizens who are on the ground and can identify the areas of priorities.

**ii. Participation in legislative agenda**

Having the citizens involved in the legislative agenda will impact the leadership of Sierra Leone. First, public participation in the legislative process will increase credibility between the government and the citizens on significant issues and services. This will by far enhance service delivery in the public sector. Public participation will also lead in the creation of citizens who are aware of their needs hence shaping the government on how to respond to the needs, therefore improving leadership.

**iii. Open contracting**

Open contracting will positively impact the leadership of Sierra Leone because information would be published in an open, timely and accessible manner so that the public can be engaged. The strategy of open contracting will increase contract monitoring and transparency, resulting in a better quality of governance, reduced corruption better value for money, better development outcomes and increased service delivery.

**3.3.5. Women Empowerment Group- Lady Ellen Women's Aid Foundation – Sierra Leone**

1. In what ways have women been empowered by the political leadership of Sierra Leone since independence?
  - i. Training

The political leadership has for the longest time neglected the role of women in the society. Most women in Sierra Leone are untrained in the basic courses and therefore lack basic skills.

ii. Ending gender based violence

Gender based violence has been one of the main challenges women in Sierra Leone have gone through since independence. This was altogether exacerbated by the 2002 civil war. However, there has not been much effort from the Sierra Leone leadership to strive to stop the issue. Hence, the role of stopping gender based violence has been taken up by mainly NGOs in the country.

iii. Gender equality

The subject of gender equality though controversial, is vital in this century. There is no gender equality in the country as men are given better preferences than women.

iv. Equal participation in leadership

Regarding gender representation, women are far much behind in terms of equality in employment and leadership positions. Women are less represented as most positions are taken up by men. The leadership has not shown much effort to ensure that there is gender equality in the country.

**2. How has the poor political leadership affected the economic development of women in Sierra Leone? How has it affected,**

i. Income generation activities

The country witnessed a civil war as a result of poor political leadership. The civil war affected livelihoods with a majority being women. The environment during war was not conducive for conducting income generation activities hence most women had to stay at home or even look for other places to stay. This greatly affected their productivity in the country, resulting in most women remaining behind economically.

ii. Women's ability to secure decent jobs

The poor political leadership in Sierra Leone has always not been in support of women in securing decent jobs. Gender inequality in the country is so prevalent that most decent jobs

are done by men. Most women are engaged in informal jobs and several of them are without jobs. This has really affected the economic development of women in the country.

iii. Access to grants and low interest loans

Due to the government failure to empower women through training and other empowerment programs, it has been difficult for the same government to offer loans and grants to empower women. Most women depend on empowerment groups from NGOs so that they can be offered with loans and grants. The government is doing very little as far as women empowerment is concerned.

3. What are the developmental challenges that women have gone through as a result of poor leadership in Sierra Leone?

i. Employment opportunities

Due to poor leadership, women have had to go through difficult times in search for employment opportunities. Employment in Sierra Leone is mainly offered to the elite class and it is marred by corruption. Individuals have to be bribed in order to offer employment to the citizens. This has resulted in most women being left out of the employment bracket. The result is poor livelihood.

ii. Maternal health

A health care service is a major challenge in Sierra Leone. First most health facilities were brought down during the civil war, jeopardizing maternal health. After the war, health facilities were re-established but the sector is full of corruption. Healthcare services in Sierra Leone are expensive which most women are unable to afford. This has affected the lives of women and their capacity to take part in economic development.

iii. Water and sanitation

In water and sanitation issues, poor political leadership has greatly contributed to the suffering of women of having to walk for long distances to look for water. Clean water is

hardly available in the rural areas. Girls and women use a lot of time to walk long distances to acquire the basic commodity. This has resulted in girls using most of their time which would have been used in studies, to be shifted in search of water, and for women, a time which they could have used for otherwise constructive activities.

### **3.3.6: Learning Institutions- University of Sierra Leone**

1. How will you describe the political leadership of Sierra Leone since independence and the impact on the overall education system?

- i. Impact on student outcome

Learning institutions in Sierra Leone have inadequate learning resources as a result of poor political leadership. Funds allocated in the education sector do not finance the sector adequately. Additionally, some are looted through corruption resulting in inadequate learning resources. This negatively affects the outcome of students.

- ii. Education quality

The political leadership of Sierra Leone since independence has not been stable. Sierra Leone has experienced wrangles in its leadership which have to a greater extent affected the whole education system. The civil war experienced in the country saw a lot of destruction of learning institutions which brought learning to a halt in the country. Although there was reconstruction of learning institutions, the places are overcrowded, affecting the quality of education offered.

- iii. The absence of vocational training institutions in the country

Notably, Sierra Leone does not have vocational training institutions. Due to poor political leadership, there no focus on empowering the youth with skills which will enable them to survive in the labour market. The absence of vocational training institutions have resulted in many youth lacking basic training as most of them cannot afford university fees. Such institutions would play a significant role in increasing literacy levels in Sierra Leone.

2. Will the country have better education if the leadership and governance of Sierra Leone were different?

Yes. Although a different leadership does not guarantee better education altogether, other policies should be implemented first which will guarantee better education. For instance, corruption should be dealt with, to ensure that funds allocated for education are used for the purposes they were meant for, and that none is looted. This, together with a different leadership, will guarantee Sierra Leone better education.

## **CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

Good political leadership is critical for any country's economic progress and prosperity, particularly in a developing nation like Sierra Leone. The goal of this qualitative case

study was to determine the effects of poor political leadership on Sierra Leone's economic growth and development from 1961, when the country gained independence, through 2020. There have been different regimes in Sierra Leone since the country acquired independence, and among the different political dispensations, the country has experienced poor economic growth. Evidenced by the GDP, the country continues to experience a fluctuating economy at very low levels. The literature review segment presented the effects of poor political leadership on the economy and chapter four had a summary of the results derived from the analysis of the participants' responses on the interview questions. This chapter presents a discussion of the findings.

## **4.1 Discussion and Analysis of Findings**

### **4.1.1 Poor Political Leadership and Public Service Delivery**

The majority opinion of the respondents identified the socioeconomic challenges that the country faces and attributed them to poor political leadership. According to the findings the country has exhibited a poor economic growth due to corruption that is prevalent in the country. The stagnation and fluctuation of the economy of Sierra Leone is due to the looting of public funds that are meant for economic development. According to Al-Sadig, (2009), Corruption affects the fairness of institutional mechanisms and distorts policies and goals. As a result, corruption weakens the legitimacy of governments resulting in a loss of public trust and support for government and state agencies. Most of the Sierra Leone population live below the poverty line, as resources and money circulate among the elite class. As a result of the poor political leadership, citizens formed a rebellious group that made the country plunge into war in 1991. The decade long war led to loss of the human capital. According to Leon, (2012), Civil wars are catastrophic for a country's development prospects, not just in the near term by ruining lives, assets, and infrastructures, but also in the long run by eroding people trust in society and government, resulting in withdrawals of

foreign direct investment and skills. Human capital is a major driver of the economy; this resulted in lower productivity of the country, thus poor economic growth.

Participants also identified that poor political leadership also affected the delivery of services in the public sector. According to the respondents, there is inefficiency in the government in terms of service delivery. The country has no adequate infrastructure, hence affecting the quality of services offered to the citizens. According to Ndlovu (2009), enhancing the public sector's image is critical for eradicating corruption, which is sadly pervasive in the public sector. Tizard, (2012) asserted the critical importance of solid public sector ethics. As a result, an evaluation of the public sector's ethical code is necessary. Due to the free flow of information and confidence being harmed by unethical action on the part of leaders, it is difficult to develop an effective public service. Also, due to inadequate funding or looting the allocated funds, many infrastructural development projects are stalled, additionally, there is an aspect of underfunding projects, which all affect the delivery of services to the public.

#### **4.1.2 Economic Policies for a better economy**

Majority of the respondents agreed that the adoption of some economic policies will aid in the economic growth of the country. The respondents agreed that policies for greater openness can be adopted to help increase transparency in the public sector. Creating transparent governance is one of the features of good governance. This will ensure that the citizens understand and can access any information regarding the governments operations. According to World Bank (Openness Is the Key to Effective and Inclusive Development, 2021) Increased transparency and citizen engagement in government decision-making through open government is a very effective method to overcome the complicated governance and development issues that some countries have faced for the longest time. A transparent government is rarely involved in corrupt activities, and is accountable. Governments

gain from openness. Governments that are more transparent are better equipped to manage and allocate public resources effectively. Governments may lay a strong basis for optimal resource utilization and efficiency through contemporary and open information and data technologies, as well as through openness in government processes and transactions (Ben-Aaron et al., 2017). Sierra Leone can adopt this policy as a way of fighting corruption, which will help in the growth of the country's economy.

The respondents agreed that citizens gain from transparency. Open governments are predicated on vigorous and inclusive citizen-government participation. A two-way communication channel between citizens and governments enables governments to better recognise and relate to citizens' actual demands (Nduka, 2013). Additionally, it lays the groundwork for governments and citizens to develop trust and collaborate on new solutions to shared issues (World Bank, *Openness Is the Key to Effective and Inclusive Development*, 2021). Open governments are better positioned to foster inclusive growth because they increase their capacity to offer all citizens with the products and services they require and deserve.

The participants agreed on the diversification of exports as another policy. Sierra Leone has for long relied on one type of export for revenue. Export diversification protects economies from adverse trade terms shocks. It enables them to convert advantageous trade conditions into higher growth, knowledge spill over, and scale rewards. Undoubtedly, diversifying exports are beneficial for developing nations because it can help them overcome export volatility or the negative effect of primary product terms of trade. Notably, Sierra Leone has always relied on one type of export since independence, and the export commodities are controlled by the rich. The result has been unequal distribution of wealth, where most of the citizens live in abject poverty. The wealth disparity was one of the main causes of the civil war in the country. Diversifying in exports therefore will boost economic growth of Sierra Leone.



Revenue mobilization can also be adopted as a policy to boost the economic growth of the country. Governments must increase tax revenue mobilization in order to provide budgetary headroom for public investment and service delivery. Sierra Leone's GDP will grow as a result of this. According to Gnanon and Brun (2018), government can implement an ambitious tax reform program in order to boost domestic income. The primary pillars are modernisation of the tax administration, segmentation of taxpayers, expansion of the tax base, and the implementation of self-assessment. The policies can be implemented. However, the present political leadership, on the other hand, is still corrupt. As a result, the first and most important step before putting policies in place would be to combat corruption. Because the existing system lacks transparency, adopting programs may not provide positive results in terms of economic growth.

#### **4.1.3 Poor Political Leadership: Women and Youth Empowerment**

There is a similarity among the respondents that the poor political leadership in Sierra Leone has affected the youth to a greater extent. First, the rates of unemployment among the youth are high. According to Okolie and Igbini (2020), there is a strong correlation between bad governance and severe youth unemployment. Higher rates of unemployment results in low wage levels. This also translates to low standards of living. Due to poor political leadership, the youth are not involved by the government in youth empowerment programs to enhance their livelihoods and access to financial resources to empower them to set up businesses and be financially independent.

A respondent revealed that since independence, the government has not played a significant role in ensuring that youth groups benefit from grants and economic empowerment programs. Youth groups mainly depend on donors, well-wisher, and partners for empowerment. According to Hlungwani and Sayeed (2018), Ensuring that all young people, particularly the most marginalized and disadvantaged, have access to decent work will accelerate progress toward inclusive and sustainable development. The youth are the most

productive individuals in any nation. Therefore, empowering this group economically will contribute immensely to the growth of the economy.

The participants contended that the poor political leadership in Sierra Leone is also the main contributor of gender inequality in the country. There is no equal participation in leadership roles, as men are accorded more positions than women. Women have been neglected, and most of their population lack basic training and skills. Cuberes and Teignier-Baqué (2012) posit that gender disparity has a substantial detrimental influence on growth. For instance, increased gender disparity in education has a harmful effect on growth. The capacity of women to contribute to economic development of Sierra Leone has been under-utilized. Therefore, with good governance, different segments of the society will be empowered and involved in different leadership positions. The economic development of women has significantly been impacted by the poor political leadership in the country. Since the onset of the civil war, livelihoods were affected, as women could no longer participate in income generation activities, unable to secure decent jobs as well as access grants and loans to empower themselves. Empowering women and other vulnerable groups will help boost the nations' revenue, hence enhancing economic growth.

A respondent also noted that, as a result of poor political leadership, women have had to go through developmental challenges. Access to maternal health and access to water and sanitation are some of the challenges women go through. Generally, health services are a major challenge in Sierra Leone. Corruption abounds in this industry. In Sierra Leone, healthcare is costly, and most women cannot afford it. This has had an impact on women's life and their ability to participate in economic growth.

A health care service is a major challenge in Sierra Leone. First most health facilities were brought down during the civil war, jeopardizing maternal health. After the war, health facilities were re-established but the sector is full of corruption. In practical terms, health

has a number of effects on economic growth. For instance, it decreases production financial loss due to worker absenteeism, enhances adult productivity as a result of improved nutrition, and decreases absenteeism and improves learning among schoolchildren (Alhowaish, 2014). Healthcare services in Sierra Leone are expensive which most women are unable to afford. This has affected the lives of women and their capacity to take part in economic development.

The country witnessed a civil war as a result of poor political leadership. The civil war affected livelihoods with a majority being women. The environment during war was not conducive for conducting income generation activities hence most women had to stay at home or even look for other places to stay. This greatly affected their productivity in the country, resulting in most women remaining behind economically.

#### **4.1.4 Participatory Governance**

According to the respondents, adopting participatory governance will impact the leadership of Sierra Leone positively. Having the citizens of Sierra Leone put forward their opinions on different aspects of the country is a sign of a democratic country. Participatory budgeting will grant the citizens a chance to select how the public or municipal budget is spent (Grote and Gbikpi, 2002). This is a crucial component since residents are the ones who are on the ground and can identify priority regions.

The respondents pointed on the aspect of giving the citizens chances to participate in the legislative agenda. Citizens' participation in the legislative agenda will have an influence on Sierra Leone's leadership. According to Leach and Wingfield (1999), more public engagement in the legislative process will improve the government's trust with residents on important topics and services. This will vastly improve public-sector service delivery. Citizens who are aware of their needs will be created as a result of public engagement, and the government will be shaped to react to those demands, thereby enhancing leadership.

There should also be open contracting. The open contracting model will improve contract monitoring and transparency, resulting in improved governance, lower corruption, and greater value for money, improved development results, and higher service delivery. According to World Bank, (Openness Is the Key to Effective and Inclusive Development, 2021), governments can establish more stable conditions for private investment by instituting more open and transparent systems. Additionally, by opening up governmental contracts, the majority of which are carried out by the private sector, openness may level the field for enterprises, allowing them to compete on transparent and fair terms. Co-operation with the private sector enables more open governments to work in conjunction with the private sector to solve problems and promote economic growth and development. Participatory governance is an aspect that is not evident in the Sierra Leone government. Participatory governance will increase public trust, enhance service delivery; reduce corruption all of which will be important to the growth and development of the Sierra Leone economy.

#### **4.1.5 Poor Political Leadership and Education**

According to the respondents, the poor political leadership in Sierra Leone greatly affected the overall education system of the country. During the civil war, learning institutions were brought down and learning activities came to an end in the country. The overcrowding in the available schools affects the quality of learning. Consequently, the country is deficient of learning resources which significantly influences student outcome. According to Go (2016), Political instability results in uneven policies as a result of the frequent turnover of education officials with conflicting interests and a dearth of educational competence. This means that educational policies are affected by the country's political leaders. Sierra Leone does not have vocational training institutions; there is little focus on equipping the youth with skills that will enable them to survive in the labour market due to weak po-

litical leadership. Because most young people cannot pay university tuition, the shortage of vocational training institutes has resulted in many students missing fundamental training. Such institutions would have a substantial impact on Sierra Leone's literacy rate, thereby increasing rates of employment thus a boost to the economy.

#### 4.1.6 A Comparison between Sierra Leone and other countries across various sectors

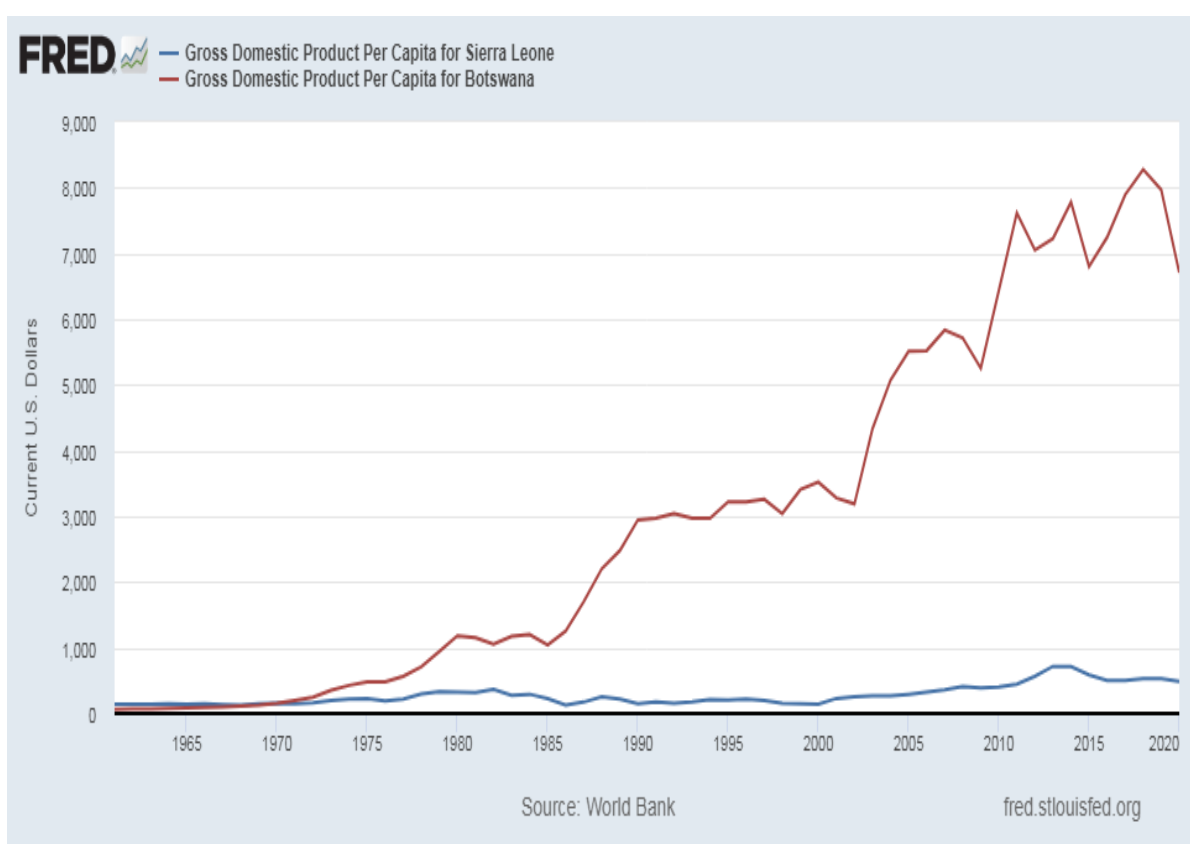
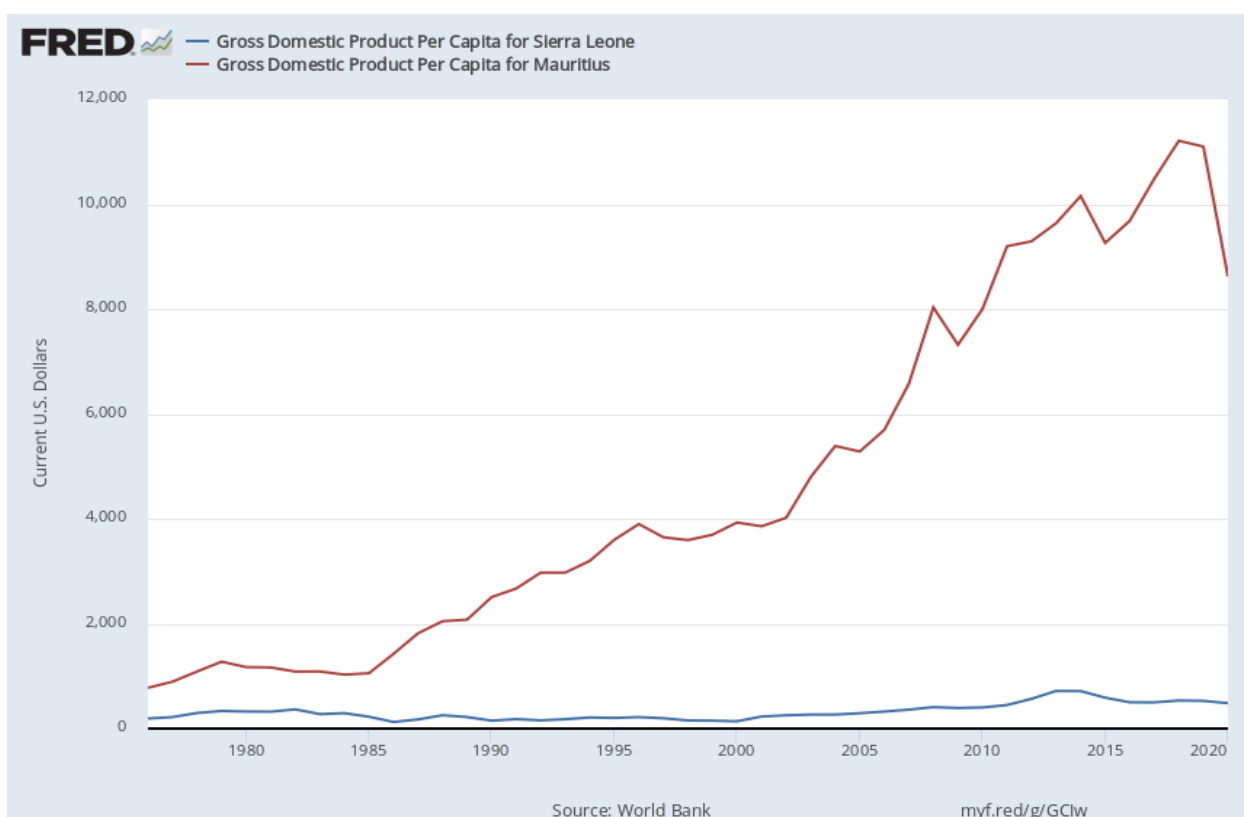


Figure 2: A comparison between Sierra Leone and Botswana GDP from 1961 to 2020

Source: <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/>

The graph presented shows the gross GDP per capita of Sierra Leone and Botswana from 1961 to 2020. The GDP of Botswana shows an ascending pattern over the years. Botswana is one of the countries in the African continent that has good leadership and low rates of corruption. The economic growth of the country has been attributed to its political stability, low rates of corruption and implementation of good economic policies. However,

in Sierra Leone, the GDP shows a stagnating pattern, at very low levels. Notably, Botswana also produces diamonds. Botswana has been named as one of Africa's success stories (Saraf and Jiwanji, 2001) as the country was able to beat the resource curse with regards to diamonds. The diamonds have benefited the country and contributed to the high GDP evidenced in the country. According to Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson (2012), diamonds discovery facilitated the generation of foreign exchange profits and occurred at an advantageous point in Botswana's economy. Initially, the country was impoverished, rural, and aid-dependent, with little possibilities for economic progress. Botswana is now an upper-middle-income country. A robust civil service, modern infrastructure, and an educated populace distinguish this country. According to Lewin (2011), Botswana's success story is due to Effective governance, excellent policies, and good fortune. The country is governed by a strong state with an exceptional potential for growth. Botswana has never been in a civil war like Sierra Leone hence, the growth in its GDP gradually over the years.



**Figure 3: A comparison between Sierra Leone and Mauritius GDP from 1976 to 2020**

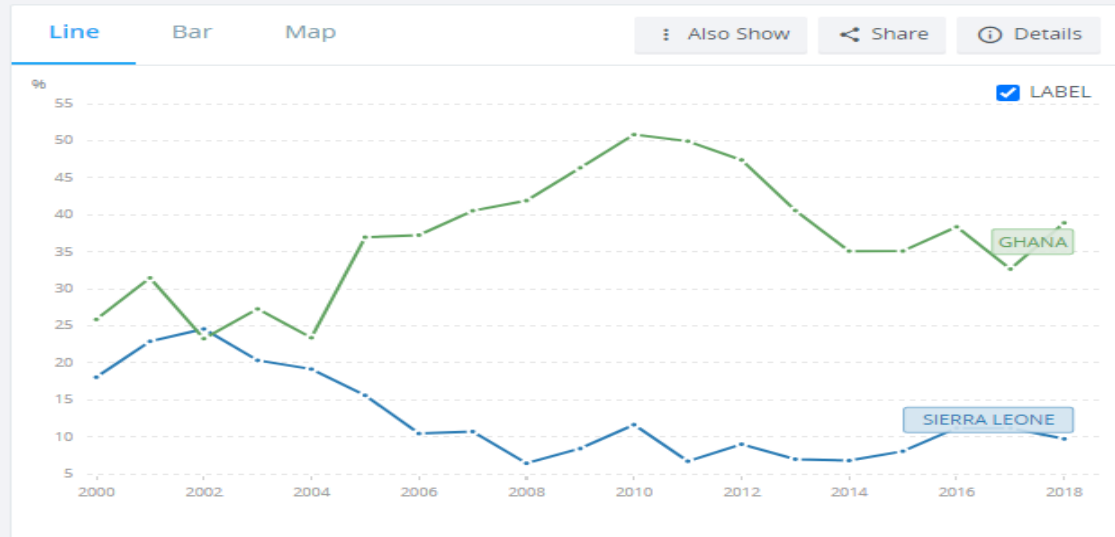
Source:<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/>

The GDP of Mauritius as evidenced in the graph shows a rising pattern from 1976 to 2020. Mauritius, also a country in the African continent has never engaged in a civil war and the country is politically stable. This is one of the reasons for a flourishing economy in the country. However, in Sierra Leone, the economy has been fluctuating over the years at very low levels. The civil war that lasted for a decade and the poor political leadership in the country are the causes of the poor economy of the country. According to data collected from the respondents, Sierra Leone has been dependent on one type of export. Of importance to note is that Mauritius diversified its economy beyond dependence on agricultural produce. Unlike in Sierra Leone, there has been no diversification and the country has solely depended on one type of export since independence. According to Frankel (2014), Mauritius adoption of political stability, a solid institutional structure, a low degree of corruption, and a favourable regulatory environment aided in laying the groundwork for economic growth, while its free trade policies helped maintain progress. It is no doubt that Mauritius' economy is a diversified one that is built on agribusiness, trade, financial sectors, and tourism. Since the 1980s, Mauritius's government has tried to broaden the nation's economy away from agriculture. Therefore, this has placed Mauritius in a better place economically compared to Sierra Leone and other African countries.

## Domestic general government health expenditure (% of current health expenditure) - Sierra Leone, Ghana

World Health Organization Global Health Expenditure database ( [apps.who.int/nha/database](https://apps.who.int/nha/database) ).

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**Figure 4: A comparison between Sierra Leone and Ghana health expenditure**

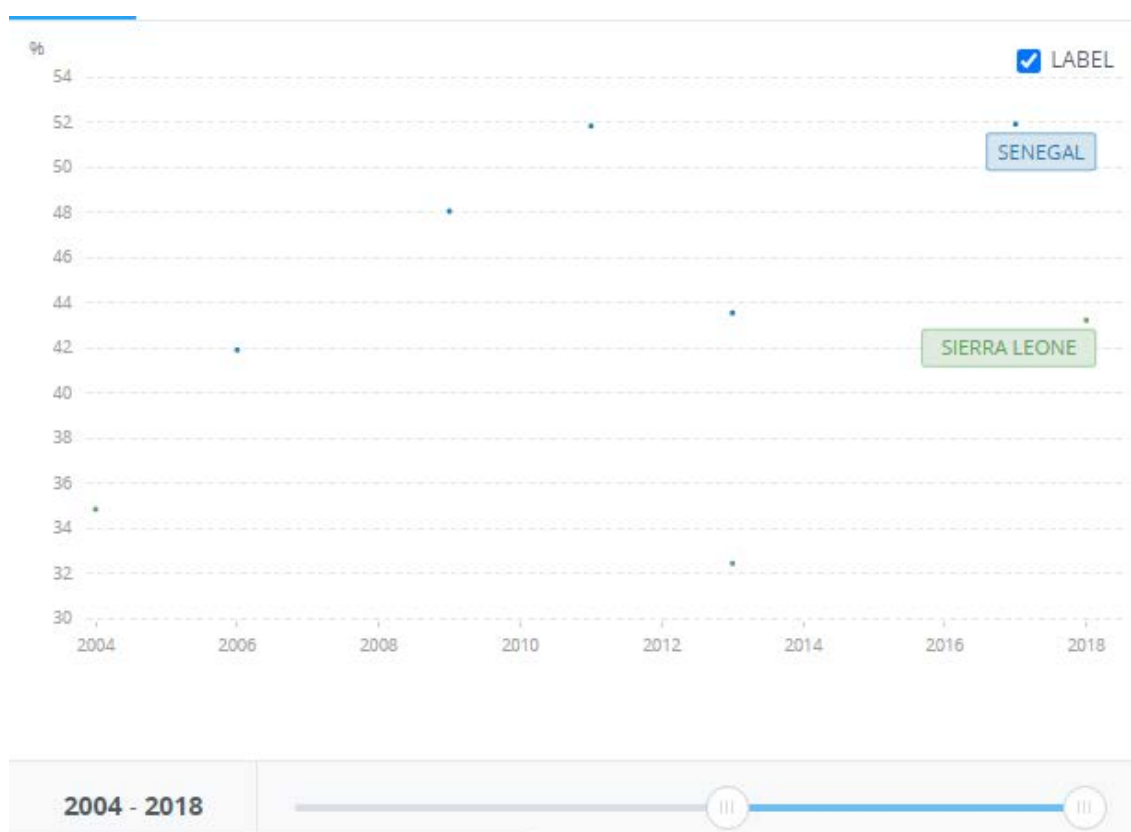
**Source: World Bank**

The above figure shows a comparative presentation of the government expenditure in health between Sierra Leone and Ghana. From the graph, the domestic general health expenditure of Ghana is higher than that of Sierra Leone. In 2000, Mauritius spent 53.52% on health while Sierra Leone spent 18.03%. The trend continues as the expenditure of the two countries continues to fluctuate. However, Ghana has a higher spending on health as compared to Sierra Leone. In 2018, Ghana's spending on health was at 43.14 while that of Sierra Leone was 9.71. The comparison shows a huge difference in the health expenditure of the two countries. The health expenditure in Sierra Leone is low. This goes in tandem with the data collected in the interviews which revealed that access to medical care in Sierra Leone is expensive due to corruption prevalence in the sector. Health expenditure is a significant predictor of a quality of the health and economic growth. Thus, investment in the health sector yields a better yield in terms of health outcomes and economic growth. According to Boachie et al. (2014), healthcare spending is positively correlated with personal spending labour productivity, and GDP indicators. These authors demonstrate



that an increase in healthcare spending has a beneficial effect on economic performance. This is evident in the comparison presented between Sierra Leone and Ghana. Ghana has a higher spending in health and a higher economic performance despite both countries being in the West Africa region.

Figure 5 shows a comparison in the literacy levels between Sierra Leone and Senegal. The graph shows that literacy levels in Sierra Leone have been low since 2004 as compared to Senegal which is higher. The data shows that literacy rates in Senegal are higher than that of Sierra Leone.



**Figure 5: A comparison between Sierra Leone and Senegal literacy rates**

**Source: World Bank**

According to the data collected from the respondents, the low literacy rates in Sierra Leone have been attributed to poor political leadership. Banerjee et al. (2014) posit that Government support for initiatives in elementary schools, high schools, and universities is a significant political concern for the majority of academics. According to data collected

from the respondents, the poor political leadership has affected the overall education system in Sierra Leone and therefore the sector is not given much attention as far as economic development is concerned.

## **4.2 Recommendations for Action**

The findings of this research showed the effects of poor political leadership on the growth and development of Sierra Leone economy. This study gave insights on how good political leadership in Sierra Leone can lead to a sustainable national economic growth. One aspect is the adoption of participatory governance, which will involve seeking opinions from the citizens and involving them in the decision making process, hence, increasing transparency in the government. Since independence, Sierra Leone leadership has been full of corruption and has lacked transparency. With regards to the results of this research, the researcher came up with a number of recommendations.

I propose that the Sierra Leone government create a framework of national development plans and use it as a basis for formulating a long-term infrastructure long term plan for the country. This policy would allow the government to concentrate more resources on the orderly development of essential national the country's infrastructure. Good infrastructure is critical for the development of any economy.

The study also recommends that the government should first strive to fight corruption. As evidenced in the findings, corruption, which is a result of poor political leadership, is the main cause of the several economic challenges facing Sierra Leone. Eradicating corruption will save the country millions of shillings which can be channelled to other developmental activities. Corrupt public officials should be held accountable for their actions. This will aid in the cleaning up of the bureaucracy. Economic development governmental organizations should be made more open and accountable. Public servants should be trained on the need of practicing and maintaining good morals in service delivery.

The country should also consider adopting some of the economic policies mentioned in this study. First, it should adopt policies for greater openness. An open government is one that is transparent and open to anybody, anywhere, at any time. Sierra Leone's administration is closed to the public, making it fertile ground for corruption. The government must match its disclosure procedures with contemporary information management techniques.

Changes to Sierra Leone's export structure should be the subject of another economic policy. The country's poor political leadership has made little attempt to diversify the country's exports in order to strengthen the economy. Since independence in 1961, Sierra Leone's primary exports have been diamonds, cocoa, and coffee. Export diversification helps countries hedge against adverse terms of trade shocks by stabilizing export earnings. It enables them to convert advantageous trade conditions into higher growth, knowledge spill-overs, and scale rewards.

Another significant policy that may be implemented to enhance economic growth in Sierra Leone is revenue mobilization. Government must increase tax revenue mobilization in order to provide budgetary leeway for public spending and service delivery. Sierra Leone's GDP will grow as a result of this. According to the outcomes of this research, insecurity and political instability have a direct impact on Sierra Leone's economic progress. Political stability would enable private sector investors to participate in infrastructure development through public-private partnerships in the country (PPP). The economic growth and development of Sierra Leone are still being harmed by the environment caused by decades of political turmoil. I recommend that the state involve key players to solve insecurity and political instability which may open the door for more private sector investments in Sierra Leone's infrastructure development. This would make it easier for the government to divert funding and resources towards other areas of the economy.

### **4.3 Recommendations for Further Study**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to determine the economic impacts of poor political leadership on Sierra Leone's economy and development from 1961 to 2020. The number of participants was limited to six people with knowledge of the economics and governance in Sierra Leone. A larger sample size is recommended when using other qualitative research techniques. Incorporating other members of the public in a similar research might provide unexpected results.

In addition, I propose using a quantitative approach that includes a survey technique and statistical analysis tools to determine whether there is any empirical evidence of a relationship between the poor political leadership in Sierra Leone and economic growth. Future researchers should replicate this study in other African countries that are dealing with similar issues like poor political leadership and a fragile economy to see whether the results are different.

### **4.4 Implications for Social Change**

This study's conclusions highlighted a number of significant societal concerns. Political instability, corruption, lack of planning, and inadequate financing, are some of the difficulties facing Sierra Leone's economic growth and development, according to the findings. Since its independence in 1961, the country has been unable to escape the cycle of economic incompetence and underdevelopment. Sierra Leone's economic issues are mostly due to government corruption. Good political leadership will be beneficial to the people's society. It would improve openness, service delivery, and citizen trust.

Creating empowerment groups to strengthen the vulnerable groups would be prudent. Women and youth in Sierra Leone are disadvantaged in terms of employment, leadership roles, economic empowerment and access to grants and low interest loans. Empower-

ing the youth and women will reduce dependency and establish a strong economic base for the country thereby boosting the economy of the country.

## **CHAPTER 5: TRIANGULATION**

This research was aimed at finding out the effects of poor political leadership on the growth and development of the Sierra Leone economy, from 1961 to 2020. The participants for this study involved three government ministries, two empowerment groups and a learning institution. These were; the Ministry of Finance, Sierra Leone, Ministry of Works, Housing and Infrastructural Development, Sierra Leone, Ministry of youth affairs, Sierra Leone, a youth led organization- Youth Partnership for Peace and Development (YPPD), Lady Ellen Women's Aid Foundation – Sierra Leone and University of Sierra Leone. In addition, secondary data sources were also examined and analysed to complement results from interviews.

The data collected was analysed to give a better understanding of how poor political leadership affected the growth and development of the Sierra Leone economy. The combined findings of chapter 1 and 2 are presented revealed that the poor political leadership is the primary cause of socioeconomic challenges in the country. The country despite being rich in natural resources remains with high levels of poverty compared to other countries utilized in this study. Undoubtedly, poor leadership resulted in civil war which had a detrimental effect on human resources and development. This has emerged from comparing the country with Botswana that has almost similar natural endowments but its good governance facilitates averting detrimental consequences. Therefore, Sierra Leone's poor leadership is the cause the high degrees of poverty and political instability.

In addition, the findings have revealed that there is prevalence of corruption in the country which has resulted in wealth disparity hence a huge population of the country live in abject poverty. Corruption is deeply rooted in the poor political leadership of the country that has resulted in ineffective service delivery in the public sector, the stalemate of projects and improper budgetary allocation for projects. Botswana's heightened development has been attributed to zero tolerance to corruption, which Sierra Leone is lacking to implement. As a result, there remain low levels of unemployment among the youth due to poor political leadership. Unemployment has led to low living standards among the youth. The findings have revealed high measures of bribery to acquire services or be aided on anything, including landing job opportunities, among the youth. Consequently, there are no youth empowerment programs established by the government; thus, the youth lack financial resources.

Similarly, women are also victims of the poor political leadership in Sierra Leone. According to the findings, women are not empowered economically as they are unable to access loans and grants from the government. Also, there are no training centres for women, gender based violence is on the rise and gender inequality. Due to gender inequality, women are less represented in leadership positions and are unable to secure decent jobs. Similarly, poor political leadership has facilitated absence of programs to empower women and provide them with grants and loans to enable them to be dependent. Other challenges faced by women include, water and sanitation, corruption in the health system resulting in poor maternal health and high rates of unemployment. Thus, there is no doubt that poor leadership has influenced women negatively in Sierra Leone.

At the same time, the effects of poor political leadership are also felt in learning institutions in Sierra Leone. It has affected the overall student outcome and the quality of education. The country also lacks vocational and technical training institutions where the youth can acquire skills and improve their wellbeing. Precisely, the ministry of finance contends

that the poor political leadership in Sierra Leone affected the socioeconomic development of the country. The major areas affected are economic growth, human resource and development and the livelihoods of the Sierra Leone citizens. The ministry proposed policies like export diversification, policies for greater openness and revenue mobilization should be adopted for the betterment of the economy. However, both primary and secondary data informs that the policies, when implemented cannot be successful unless corruption is eradicated in the country.

The Ministry of Works, Housing and Infrastructural Development, Sierra Leone has revealed that poor leadership has affected the performance of Ministry of Works, Housing and Infrastructural Development in Sierra Leone in terms of efficiency, stalemate of projects and in the budgeting of the projects. As a result, the youth have greatly been affected by the poor political leadership in Sierra Leone. It is evidenced by the ballooning youth unemployment and the low standards of living. The government has failed to engage the youth in the youth empowerment programs as they also lack access to financial resources. Secondary sources also indicate that employment among the youth is a great challenge in the country.

It is evident that the youth and women are the most hit by the situation of poor leadership at Sierra Leone. The findings support this argument by revealing that the youth groups rarely benefit from the government in terms of economic empowerment through grants. However, participatory governance like participatory budgeting, participating in legislative agenda and open contracting will impact the leadership of Sierra Leone positively. On the other hand, women lack economic empowerment in Sierra Leone. This was evidenced by lack of basic skills among them, high prevalence of gender based violence, and gender inequality. The poor political leadership has affected the economic development of women in the sense that women do not have income generating activities; they are unable to secure decent jobs, grants and low interest loans from the government. The poor politi-

cal leadership has resulted in women to go through a series of developmental challenges like lack of employment, poor maternal health and challenges in water and sanitation.

The poor political leadership has affected the overall education system in Sierra Leone. Lack of learning resources has compromised the quality of education in learning institutions affecting the student outcomes. Both primary and secondary data contend that a different leadership does not guarantee better education altogether, other policies should be implemented first which will guarantee better education. For instance, corruption should be dealt with, to ensure that funds allocated for education are used for the purposes they were meant for, and that none is looted. This, together with a different leadership, will guarantee Sierra Leone better education.

Finally, the crucial indicators chosen for this study from secondary sources also show the effects of poor political leadership on the growth and development of Sierra Leone. Comparisons of the various critical sectors of the country with that of other selected few in the continent attest to this fact. For instance, as seen in fig. 2, at 1961, Sierra Leone had a gross GDP of 139.36 current US Dollars higher than that of Botswana which was at 64.17. The trend continued until 1971 when Sierra Leone had a gross GDP per capita of 149.90 current US Dollars and Botswana rose to 197.19. The GDP of Botswana continued to rise gradually over the years attaining a peak in 2018 at 8279.81 current US Dollars. However, Sierra Leone continued to experience low and fluctuating GDP over the years where the peak was 716.83 current US Dollars in 2013. These figures show that Botswana is on a rising trend while Sierra Leone is stagnant, attracting questions to what happened that a country below them in GDP rose high above the country. Similarly, figure 3 shows the gross GDP per capita of Sierra Leone and Mauritius from 1976. Mauritius GDP shows an ascending pattern over the years while that of Sierra Leone shows stagnation and fluctuation at low levels. At 1976, the GDP of Sierra Leone was at 191.74 current US Dollars, while Mauritius had 776.64 current US Dollars. From 1991, Mauritius shows a progressive



GDP from 2669.32, attaining the highest in 2018 at 11,208.32 current US Dollars. However, from 1991, Sierra Leone had a fluctuating GDP from 179.36, having the least in 2000, at 138.69 current US Dollars, and continues to fluctuate at lower levels. These facts show a clear image of poor governance consequences to a country that should be competing on the international scale.

At the same time, figure 4 has provided a comparison in the government expenditure in health sector between Sierra Leone and Ghana. From the graph, the domestic general health expenditure of Ghana is higher than that of Sierra Leone. In 2000, Ghana spent 25.84% on health while Sierra Leone spent 18.03%. The trend continues as the expenditure of the two countries continues to fluctuate. However, Ghana has a higher spending on health as compared to Sierra Leone. In 2010, Mauritius spending on health was at 50.81 which was its peak spending while that of Sierra Leone was 9.71. The comparison shows a huge difference in the health expenditure of these countries, showing inadequate service delivery that can be attributed to poor leadership. Finally, figure 5 shows a comparison in the literacy levels between Sierra Leone and Senegal. The graph shows that literacy levels in Sierra Leone have been low since 2004 as compared to Senegal which is higher. The data shows that literacy rates in Senegal are higher than that of Sierra Leone. It is no doubt that poor leadership has facilitated lack of incentives to motivate and encourage citizens to engage in learning. Therefore, the combination of results acquired from analysing the findings support the argument that Sierra Leone experiences poor leadership that has given birth to detrimental consequences on numerous fronts.

## **CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS**

This research was conducted with the aim of establishing the effects of poor political leadership on the growth and development of Sierra Leone. Poor political leadership in Sierra Leone since independence has been a subject of great concern. The economic challenges witnessed in the country are a result of the poor political leadership. Corruption and corrupt activities are rampant in the Sierra Leone government, which is a factor that affects service delivery. Corruption in the country resulted in wealth disparity which was a factor that contributed to the formation of rebel group.

For Sierra Leone to overcome stagnancy of the economy, first, the government has to combat corruption that has taken roots in the country. This will enable the government to focus more on development agenda, focusing on improving Sierra Leone's economy. To improve the Sierra Leone economy, the government should also work with the vulnerable groups like the youth and women and create empowerment programs to enable this segment of the society to be economically independent. Also, the government should ensure that the country maintains political stability in the country.

It would also be prudent for the leadership of Sierra Leone to adopt participatory governance to experience economic growth. Involving the citizens in its operations would be critical in building trust hence reducing the rates of corruption in the government. When government information is made open and accessible to citizens, the relationship between the leadership and the citizens improve. Also, the citizens should be involved in legislative processes to ensure that their demands, needs and opinions are captured and delivered.

Participating in legislative agenda will help the government know where to prioritize developmental agenda with regards to the needs of the citizens.

The leadership of Sierra Leone should also adopt open contracting in the tendering processes. Open contracting will guarantee openness and may attract several investors in the country. This will create employment positions and will increase the rates of employment in the country hence a boost in the economy. Open contracting will also be critical because it will improve the relationship between the leadership and the citizens hence building trust.

Data from secondary sources presented a comparison between Sierra Leone and Botswana, Mauritius, Ghana, and Senegal basing on the various indicators of growth. It is evident from the findings that Sierra Leone lags behind on several developmental projects. The findings revealed that countries with diamonds like Botswana is far much better than Sierra Leone and has been named as one of success stories in the African continent. Botswana unlike Sierra Leone used the diamond for economic growth due to its good political leadership together with solid developmental plans. As evidenced in the data presented, the GDP of the two countries vary to a greater extent with Sierra Leone showing lower figures. Similarly, a GDP comparison with Mauritius showed that Sierra Leone trails behind. Therefore the leadership of Sierra Leone has to use the two countries as models of growth. Apart from good leadership and having a solid development plans; the country should also ensure that it diversifies its exports.

Health and literacy levels are also indicators of economic growth. Comparing the country with Ghana and Senegal respectively, Sierra Leone showed lower spending in the health sector and lower literacy levels among its population. All these have been attributed to poor political leadership in the country. Lastly, the government should explore other

leadership styles by adopting better economic policies that will support the growth and development of the country.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: CONSENT ENQUIRY

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to take part in this exploratory study to determine the effects of poor political leadership on the growth and development of the Sierra Leone economy from 1961 to 2020. My name is.....and I will take you through the interview session. The purpose of this exploratory research is to fulfil a requirement for a master's degree in..... This research seeks your candid opinion on how poor political leadership has harmed Sierra Leone's growth and development from 1961 to 2020, with a particular focus on the elements that contributed to the country's economic challenges under the previous regimes.

Please reply honestly and as best you can to the questions posed during the interview. Your replies will be kept in strict confidentiality. Please do not write your name on the paper.

### Appendix 2: Questionnaire to the Ministry of Finance, Sierra Leone

5. How has the poor political leadership of Sierra Leone affected the socio-economic development of the country? What is the impact on:

**i. Economic growth.**

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**ii. Human resources and development**

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.....iii. **Poverty reduction**

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6. What are some of the economic policies that you think need to be changed for the betterment of the economy?

**iv. Policies for greater openness**

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**v. Export diversification**

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**vi. Revenue mobilization**

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7. Do you think the policies can be implemented with the current political leadership? how?

In terms of Transparency

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8. What do you think needs to be changed to better the political leadership and enhance Accountability?

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**Appendix 3: Questionnaire to the Ministry of Works, Housing and Infrastructural Development, Sierra Leone**

1. How has poor leadership affected the performance of Ministry of Works, Housing and Infrastructural Development, Sierra Leone?

iv. In terms of Efficiency

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v. Stalled projects

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vi. Budget for the projects

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**Appendix 4: Questionnaire to the Ministry of youth affairs,  
Sierra Leone**

3. How has poor political leadership affected the youth in Sierra Leone?

iii. Youth unemployment

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iv. Low standards of living

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4. What role has the Ministry of Youth Affairs played in enhancing the livelihoods of the youth?

iii. Youth empowerment programs

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iv. Access to financial resources

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**Appendix 5: Questionnaire to the Youth Partnership for Peace and Development (YPPD)**

– Youth led organization working for youth development, stability and peace in Sierra Leone

3. How has this youth group and others benefitted from the leadership of Sierra Leone since independence?

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**Economic empowerment through grants**

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**4. Do you think participatory governance will have an impact on the leadership of Sierra Leone**

i. Participatory budgeting

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ii. Participation in legislative agenda

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iii. Open contracting

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**Appendix 6: Questionnaire to Lady Ellen Women’s Aid Foundation ( Empowerment Group) – Sierra Leone**

4. In what ways have women been empowered by the political leadership of Sierra Leone since independence?

v. Training

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vi. Ending gender based violence

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vii. Gender equality

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viii. Equal participation in leadership

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**5. How has the poor political leadership affected the economic development of women in Sierra Leone? How has it affected,**

iv. Income generation activities

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v. Women's ability to secure decent jobs

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vi. Access to grants and low interest loans

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6. What are the developmental challenges that women have gone through as a result of poor leadership in Sierra Leone?

iv. Employment opportunities

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v. Maternal health

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vi. Water and sanitation

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### **Appendix 7: Questionnaire to the University of Sierra Leone**

3. How will you describe the political leadership of Sierra Leone since independence and the impact on the overall education system?

iv. Impact on student outcome

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v. Education quality

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vi. The absence of vocational training institutions in the country

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4. Will the country have better education if the leadership and governance of Serra Leone were different?

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