

**Academic Year of 2014
Master Thesis –Summary–**

**Kaizen Approach and Community
Development in Africa:
The Case Study of One Village-One Product (OVOP)
Program in Senegal**

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Poverty still remains even after several decades of “Development” Practices in Africa. Fortunately, some Asian countries could succeed to achieve fast economic growth. After the World War II, Japan achieves a new way towards Development called Kaizen Approach. Based on the self-critical awareness, Kaizen implies a slight continuous improvement to overcome some recurrent issues in people's life or in their job. Japan, as a most significant OECD members within Asia want to promote trade and investment in Africa by supporting private sector since the cooperation plan agreed by Tokyo International Conference on Africa Development IV (TICAD IV) in 2008.

Moreover, most of African countries would like to strengthen their economic platform by formalizing small business activities. The informal sector in Africa is poorly understood but still more dynamic than formal sector and characterized by the coexistence of large and small informal business activities. The term of informal denotes of a very precarious firms with a lack of registration, no social security system for workers and not really decent jobs conditions.

With the limits of Western development approaches widely implemented already in Africa, how an alternative development approach from Asian experiences for instance, can be applied? Countries like Senegal faced issue that challenges the vivacity of the economy. According to the World Bank, over than 60% of economic activities is informal with a weak policies framework. Most of generating income activities are not officially registered. OVOP Program in Senegal, by strengthening the small businesses might contribute to revitalize economy specifically in rural areas. Incomes can be increased and subsequently activities might be formalized. And then, they can gain access to a better public service, social care system and beside, small business workers may also contribute to a community development.

That is why this master thesis focuses on Kaizen approach and Community Development in Africa: the case study of One Village One Product (OVOP) Program in Senegal. The main objective is to examine the effectiveness of OVOP with the Kaizen Approach in Senegal, especially in Community Development. The research question is, with the One Village One Product (OVOP) Program in Senegal, what sort of impacts have been observed on the small informal businesses and on the community development.

Firstly, a theoretical and critical review on Development Approaches in Africa is made to show the relevance of Kaizen approach in African context in contrast with exogenous and endogenous approaches of development.

Secondly, a socio history of Kaizen Approach in Japan and Asian-African countries is introduced. The origin of Kaizen Approach in Japan and its promotion for community development is described, and also its diffusion and implementation in several countries in Asia such as Singapore and Thailand, and in African countries like Ethiopia and Malawi are explained.

Thirdly, we focus on OVOP Program with Kaizen Approach in Senegal by making a general description of Senegal and its socio-economy history pre and post-independence. We present OVOP Program in Senegal, its aim, the scheme of organization, OVOP implemented areas in Senegal, the profile of women's small business Organization in Senegal.

Lastly, an analysis of the original field research data collected in Senegal about the OVOP Program and Community Development is made to highlight some business management problems and its Kaizen possibility with OVOP and the impacts of OVOP on women's empowerment and community development too.

This study identified some good impacts made by the OVOP Program to strengthen the small-scale businesses in Fatick and Kaolack. The product quality and the marketing system could be improved. Businesswomen get better leadership status within their family and in the community. Unfortunately, the diffusion of their training program into the whole implemented areas was not effective. It was limited to only few small-scale businesses which get benefit. At the end of this study, some recommendations are

proposed.

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