

African Philosophy of Education for Africa: A Critical Proposal

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Abstract

This paper is faced with innumerable questions as regards facets of African crisis of development knowing full well that no nation develops beyond her quality of her educational system. Historically, if Africa must still develop beyond the contemporary obstructive shackles and glaring chains of the Western World as well as the existing momentous vicious circle of underdevelopment, she needs her own Philosophy of Education that is pertinent to her culture, circumscriptive of her worldview and very typical of her age-long academic quagmire as well as her educational problematiqués. This paper applying method of observation and critical analysis finds out that African development rests more on well defined mapped-out curriculums and therefore recommends a functional African Philosophy of Education for African emancipation and pursuance of African developmental oriented goals thereby rejig African for a better world.

Keywords: African philosophy, African philosophy of education, development

Introduction

African continent is an unfortunate continent. But time has come for us Africans (with our seeming black skin that has given room to world structural inequalities) to question few things with regard to *who we are* and *what* is happening around us. In spite of the rare privilege of Africa being the cradle of civilization and mother of civilization of all civilizations and the much lauded gained independence, Africa still, in this 21st century, struggles to survive independently, socio-politically and economic wise. However, the contemporary and continued scramble for Africa leaves every good thinking human being with lot of questions with regard to African coming of age *to be* (amidst the inherent racism and once-in-awhile resurgence of white supremacy). The glaring socio-economic cum political showdown in our world due to the global COVID-19 pandemic and economic meltdown of past years as well as the already existing great divide

of Global North-South amidst renewed scramble for Africa, in spite of the existing brain drain of the *blacks* as well as the capital flow and France continued financial plundering of Africa speak volume of continental Africa in unhealthy relationship with Europe. Africans have no immunity from the happenings in the world rather it is affected by it. The paper therefore tries to question what stops or favours Africa in bridging the yawning gap in-between the existing global divides.

The paper emphasizes greatly the quest for change in the African educational system through the use of African Philosophy of Education. It stresses that though there is an existing Philosophy of Education but it does not fulfill the needed purpose. This explains and at the same time criticizes the impact of colonial education on Africans. Though there are few positive impacts but the negative impacts outweigh the later. Therefore, there, is a call for the *re-Africanisation* of the already existing Philosophy of Education for effective development, liberation and empowerment with regard to educational aspiration thereby limiting the possibility of having cultural freaks or social misfits as educational products. African Philosophy of Education advocated as such should by and large rejig our society so as to able to reclaim its pride of place in the comity of nations. This paper among other things emphasized the need for a redesign of the curriculums within the boundaries of African Philosophy of Education so as to solve peculiar African problems. However, it is within the proper limits of Philosophy of Education to define the appropriate boundaries of the curriculum as its content development with regard to teaching and learning. In *lato sensu*, African Philosophy of Education, even as an applied discipline, ought to be the application of critical insight and other issues of African philosophical traditions on education as a process of leading one out of ignorance and consequently leading same person into knowledge. African Philosophy of Education ought to borrow heavily from African Philosophy as philosophy.

As Africans, who are still battling with unfathomable crisis of development and poor educational policies, we need a form of education that is well informed by African Philosophy of Education which is valued oriented and morally based, to be formally taught in our schools. This is very pertinent, especially in our time, when there seems to be general clear gross loss of common sense, crass reign of poverty of thought, glaring show of *transvaluation* of values and abysmal collapse of morals. If our educational system is well articulated on a proper and healthy ideology of African Philosophy of Education, it will definitely ensure a return to a sound functional education with great premium on discipline, character, common sense and value orientation and formation.

Dependable and Dependent Africa

Many countries of the West still dependably scramble for Africa as many African nation-states are ironically very much dependent on the countries that gave them independent. In another sense, some colonial masters are dependably under-developing few African countries they colonized via capital flow and *cash payment of colonial tax for the benefits of slavery and colonization*. However, one must recall that the death or the near collapse of industrialization in Europe due to abysmal shortage of man power and awful lack of *raw materials* made Continental Africa vulnerably the target of the West. Such is the whole idea behind their explorations and their great expeditions. That was the beginning of the scrambling for Africa via their need for natural resources, slavery, colonization and of course, through open market and capital flight. There is therefore, ravages of colonization in place of slavery and a return to the sad phenomenon of neo-colonization as if to say that colonial masters forgot something precious on African soil. Their recent *debt-burden strategy* of which, virtually, every African nation-state is involved and indebted as well as the new wave of scrambling for African countries are becoming the worst events and episodes in human history perpetrated against African development. Unfortunately, all the African states were colonized save Ethiopia. But we must note that countries like India and Dubai were equally colonized. So what is wrong with Africa and her development? Let's take France for example.

Mallence Bart-Williams (2020) in a TED talk maintains that the western world with their free aid is systematically destabilizing the wealthiest African nations with the impression that Africans are poor and dying thereby continuing with their aids and presents. Africa is merely thought to be surviving on the mercy of their free aid with the presence of their International Organizations. For Mallence, what one hand gives under the flashing light of cameras, the other takes in the shadows. She proposed that it would have been super sweet of them to come with their coloured paper in exchange for our gold and diamonds. However, it is disheartening to note that French Government treasures about 500Billion Dollars year in year out from Africa. However, the former French President Jacques Chirac recently spoke about the African nations' money in France bank in a video interview about the French exploitation scheme in Africa and here is the excerpt transcript: "we have to be honest, and acknowledge that a big part of the money in our banks come precisely from the exploitation of the African continent." Continuing Antoine Roger Lokongo of Global Times (2012) writes:

Former French president Jacques Chirac acknowledged that "without Africa, France will slide down into the rank of a third [world] power." Chirac's predecessor François Mitterand already prophesied in 1957 that "Without Africa, France will have no history in the 21st century." Africa is critically important for France. One French scholar, Xavier Renou, suggests several reasons: maintaining an international status, independent of US and Chinese influences, securing a permanent access to strategic resources, and benefiting from a monopolistic situation. To attain these objectives and maintain its power over its former colonies, France has to pursue a global policy that is economic, political and cultural. However, in the 21st century, Africa does not need the remnant frameworks of colonialism. Africa should turn its back on La Francophonie in particular. France does not respect Africa. Former French president Nicholas Sarkozy went as far as insulting Africa, when in a speech in Dakar the capital of Senegal he said: "Africa has no history" and "the African man has not fully entered into history."

Indeed recorded history has it that France started colonizing Algeria in 1830. Gradually, French control crystallized over much of North, West, and Central Africa at the start of the 20th century (including the modern states of Mauritania, Senegal, Guinea, French Sudan (now Mali), Ivory Coast, Benin, Niger, Chad, Central Africa Republic, Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Cameroon, the east African coastal. However, William I. Zartman, an online publisher maintains that fifteen years after most of African Countries received their independence, Africa is still attractive and Europe is still present and influential in the continent. Africa still looks attractive to the Europeans amidst the much lauded independence as long as their political influence, economic preponderance and cultural conditioning remain. Report has it that France has been holding the national reserves of fourteen African Countries since 1961: Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo-Brazzaville, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon. In summary, France has been addicted to looting and exploiting Africa right from the times of slavery. There are still French military bases and soldiers in Africa under the pretense of protection. But in fact they are there to control and oppress the local citizens. Mawuna Remarque Koutonin (2020) in an online write-up gave a detailed account of France dubious impact on

the socio-political cum economic platform in African continent. Below are his lengthy excerpts.

When Sékou Touré of Guinea decided in 1958 to get out of French colonial empire, and opted for the country independence, the French colonial elite in Paris got so furious, and in a historic act of fury the French administration in Guinea destroyed everything in the country which represented what they called the benefits from French colonization.

Luigi di Maio, Italian deputy prime minister equally via BBC accused France of exploiting Africa and fuelling migration as they never stopped colonizing tens of African states.

Sylvanus Olympio the first president of the Republic of Togo, a tiny country in West Africa, found a middle ground solution with the French. He didn't want his country to continue to be a French dominion, therefore he refused to sign the colonisation continuation pact De Gaul proposed, but agree to pay an annual debt to France for the so called benefits Togo got from French colonization. It was the only conditions for the French not to destroy the country before leaving. However, the amount estimated by France was so big that the reimbursement of the so called "colonial debt" was close to 40% of the country budget in 1963. On January 13, 1963, three days after he started printing his country own currency, a squad of illiterate soldiers backed by France killed the first elected president of newly independent Africa. Olympio was killed.

On June 30, 1962, Modiba Keita, the first president of the Republic of Mali, decided to withdraw from the French colonial currency FCFA which was imposed on 12 newly independent African countries. For the Malian president, who was leaning more to a socialist economy, it was clear that colonisation continuation pact with France was a trap, a burden for the country development.

In June 2019, Chihombori-Quao, former ambassador of the African Union (AU) to the United States, who was fired by

the AU on November 1, 2019, for her criticism of France for taking over \$500 billion from Francophone African countries based on a pact they forced these countries to sign, that is: *Pact for the Continuation of Colonization* before they were granted independence.

In fact, during the last 50 years, verifiable records have it that a total of 67 coups happened in 26 countries in Africa, 16 of those countries are French ex-colonies, which means 61 % of the coups happened in Francophone Africa. What of the Capital flow and the contemporary China Debt Trap for African nation States?

Again through different waves African Continent suffers different debt burden. In 2012, the IMF found that China owned 15% of Africa's external debt. Few years later, roughly two-thirds of all new loans were coming from China. However, some analysts continue to issue warnings about debt-burden traps. Most people see what China is doing as a new form of colonialism. Wade Shepard (2019) reporting on the developments that are shaping the 21st century questioned what China is really up to in Africa? He writes thus

Africa has become the fastest urbanizing region of the world with rural migrants moving into cities a clip that has even surpassed that of China and India, as the continent becomes one of the final frontiers of the forth industrial revolution. This rapid transition presents big challenges but also offers big rewards for countries willing to risk billions in an infrastructure building revolution unlike anything the world has seen before – and no country has answered Africa's call quite like China.

Professor PLO Lumbumba equally gave a touching speech advising African leaders about the economic impact of china on African continent. He also warns about African leaders with regard to the plans China has in becoming a central player in Africa's urbanization push, as a huge percentage of the continent's infrastructure initiatives are being driven by Chinese companies and/or backed by Chinese funding. In a YouTube online interview, PLO Mulumba fought in favour of making Africa great again as he unpacks Africa-China relations. He seems to be advocating for better governance on the African side so as to ensure that Africans stakeholders

benefit from engagement with the Chinese in terms of trade, investment and loans.

One of the central themes that he raises repeatedly in his speeches, conferences and interviews is: what is China long-term objective in Africa? "When China is handing down these many loans, including the \$60 billion (FOCAC) loans to African countries, what will she get in return? My view is that we must begin to ask the fundamental question: what are we doing to ensure that China does not buy-over African countries?" An estimated 20 percent of African governments' external debt is owed to China, according to the Jubilee Debt Campaign, a charity organisation that wants the debts of developing countries to be written off. Zambia today remains the most indebted country to China in Africa to the tune of US\$7.4 billion (of the country's total US\$8.7 billion) of debt is owned by China. This is a large debt burden given the relatively small size of Zambia's economy. Djibouti owes over 80 percent of its GDP to China and in 2017, became host to China's first overseas military base. Today, there are debt-traps as well as debt-burden diplomacies.

The term "debt-trap diplomacy" was coined by Braham Chellaney to describe China's predatory lending practices in which poor countries who are overwhelmed with unsustainable loans would be forced to cede control of strategic assets to China. The term was first used in 2017; within 12 months it had quickly spread through the media, intelligence circles, and western governments. It has since expanded to include other parts of the world and was further defined and expanded upon in the context of Chinese geostrategic interests in a 2018 Harvard University report. Nigeria is becoming a test ground for this China debt-trap madness.

Nigeria has fallen prey to China's debt trick of giving heavy loans to susceptible and gullible nations with view that if they fail to repay they can forfeit anything that may equal the loan in their country. However, it may interest you to know according to Yomi Kazeen (2020) that:

As such, Nigeria has increasingly relied on loans for big-ticket infrastructure projects and has particularly leaned on Chinese financial and technical support to build out its transport network. So far, China has offered loans to back eleven ongoing large-scale infrastructural projects, leaving Nigeria's debt to China at \$3.1 billion

There is this trailing info with regard to China-Nigeria debt deals as it concerns the proper information and the politics trying to instigate fears on the

citizens. For them, it seems that Chinese has set her debt-trap in Nigeria with questionable clause in an unprintable stlye and unreadable language. However, Nigeria's transport minister Rotimi Amaechi in a cold-chilling press interview has attempted to clarify and explain away the purpose of the clause relating to China's debt-diplomacy and described it "as a waiver of immunity which would allow China pursue paths, including arbitration, to settle possible disputes over payments". Wao! As simple as that! Just like that! The minster, however, continuing explained:

They (the Chinese) are saying, if you are not able to pay, don't stop us from taking back those items that will help us recover our funds. And it's a standard clause, whether it's with America you signed it or with Britain or any country, because they want to know they can recover their money.

The water has been troubled. According to Eric Olander (2020): That clause, *sovereign immunity* clause, now commonly known as clause 8 (1) has sparked a level of controversy bordering on moral panic, with people accusing the government of selling out Nigeria's sovereignty to China. The water is simply troubled. It is yet to settle as China's presence in Nigeria and their hidden arrival in Nigeria with Government-protection at the heart of lockdown in March-April 2020 appearing as Medical Doctors though they were, weeks later, know to be engineers and other high-tech experts, makes mockery of whatever anybody or the Minister is trying to explain and exonerate their unholy intentions from. After the Minister of health who welcome the engineers later tries to deny it, all in Nigeria. Ankara Online writes:

A team of Chinese medical experts will arrive in Nigeria on Wednesday for a month-long visit to help in the country's fight against the coronavirus, local media reported. The invitation to the Chinese experts is opposed by local doctors, with the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) terming it "ill-timed" and raising concerns over the impact of a similar team that visited Italy. According to local newspaper Punch, the Chinese team includes experts in infectious diseases, intensive care, respiratory illness, cardiology, general surgery, neurology, and anesthesiology. The group, which will land in the capital Abuja, will bring medicines and equipment, including test kits, ventilators, disinfectants, and protective face masks.

However, it was noted by the same source that

The primary purpose of the team is to provide China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation (CCECC) employees with critical and necessary healthcare,” the Punch report quoted CCECC Executive Director Jacques Liao as saying.

Many years ago Kwame Nkrumah, the then president of Ghana, made a compelling case for the unification of Africa in his book, *Africa Must Unite*. He made reference to the untold pains of African bondage thus: “so long as we remain balkanized, regionally or territorially, we shall be at the mercy of colonialism and imperialism”. There is, however, great need for the new socio-political cum economic Continental African independence.

Bob Marley was foremost in this crusade for the emancipation of Africa when he prophetically sang in the track *Redemption song* thus: *emancipate yourself from mental slavery none but ourselves can free our minds...* Continuing, Kwame Nkrumah admonishes in one of his enduring speeches to all Africans thus: “to us, Africa with its islands is just one Africa. We reject the idea of any kind of partition. From Tangier or Cairo in the North to Capetown in the South, from Cape Guardafui on the East to Cape Verde Islands in the West, Africa is one and indivisible”. This is a call for the revival of *Ubuntu* of the South Africans, Iroegbu’s *Belongingness* of West Africa alongside Kanu’s *Igwebuike* and Asouzu’s *Ibuanyidanda* and all the paraphernalia of liberation concepts from dependency. Many scholars of history and philosophy via their publications like *How Europe underdeveloped Africa* and *Stolen Legacy* tried to uplift Africa again from the dungeon of underdevelopment in which we were dropped into by the then acclaimed colonial masters of progress, leaving Africa at the cross road of dependency after the much lauded independence and impoverishing African countries of their resources. Were Africans really trained, educated or colonized to be free and independent? This is a million dollar question when one looks at other continents and compares with African continent and the continued scramble to own Africa. It is worrisome why France is still being paid by all the countries they colonized. Britain politically controls all they colonized and through their system of political subjugation places the worst in all ramifications over the best in all rounds, socio-political cum economically and educationally wise. Portuguese still leverage their colonized countries. The interference continues socio-politically cum economically. They equally interfered with our cultural orientations as well as traditional institutions all in the name of colonization.

However, if you wish to destroy a people, try and destroy their language and then their culture. That's what the colonisers perfectly did to Africans. How can we have *African Science* and the corresponding *African Technology* outside *African Language* with proper and basic *African Philosophy* and *African Philosophy of Education*? How can Africans develop without her cultures? To this end Okere has emphatically demonstrated that philosophy is the hermeneutics of culture. Since we have been *decultured*, is there any hope that our philosophy that guarantees our education will thrive amidst other philosophical traditions? China, Australia, Malaysia and India were colonised. UAE was under British protection for years and never lost their culture and language. China and India kept their language and their cultures which makes them greater than their colonisers.

Many African countries were made to learn and continue to learn another foreign language of their *master colonizers* knowing full well that speaking foreign language is not a sign of intelligence. With all the multifaceted languages in Nigeria why must the colonial master import new ones as English, and later French, as the second *lingua franca*? But such was a functional expression of colonialism. This remains the mental slavery Bob Marley had earlier cried out against. Technological advancements and scientific prowess adopt and hear any language. Japan and China as the hubs of industrialisation in the world as well as Dubai as hub and centre of every known merchandise do not speak English nor French yet technology and tourism obey them. Learn and speak your languages for functional development.

Language-Strategy Appreciation

Language and Culture are two sides of one coin. Man though is known as *animal rationalis* (rational animal) is a *homo loquens* (speaking animal) and fundamentally *animal culturalis* (cultural animal). Language and culture are entwined and knotted together; hence, man is language bound as well as culture bound. A particular language defines a people that are bound with one culture. Through language, however, the culture of the people is expressed. .

Language most often is a product of thought hence the interconnection between language and thought, as an idea or opinion produced by thinking. Language, a system of sound for communication, culturally learned and acquired, is a very exclusive mark of man. According to Azikiwe, Uche (1998:1), "language could be said to be a means of social control, it is a collection of motor responses. It functions symbolically and so is used for verbal communication. Again only human beings had evolved a communication system with the properties of natural language". Explaining further, Azikiwe describes Language as a code, a system, convention for verbal communication. To this extent one thinks of sign

language just for communication that is important for authentic and functional development.

Culture-Strategy Admiration

Traditionally the very word *culture* goes back to Latin *colere*, 'to inhabit, care for, till, worship' and *cultus*, a *cult*, especially a religious one. It means a *place tilled* in later days English. To be cultural, to have a culture, is to inhabit a place sufficiently intensive to cultivate it—to be responsible for it, to respond to it, to attend to it caringly. The *Cambridge English Dictionary* states that culture is "the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time." The word is used in a general sense as the evolved ability to classify and represent experiences with code or symbols and to act imaginatively and creatively.

Culture is the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, encompassing defining elements like custom, religion, symbols, language, norms, values, artefacts, government and economy. Culture is basically learned, shared, dynamic, integrated, flexible and symbolic. Culture defines a people. Culture determines a people. Culture disciplines a people. Culture identifies a people. Culture, amidst diversity of cultures, is an umbrella concept that encompasses the human society with defining common and acceptable social attitude as it concerns the complex whole of capabilities within the human society. While change is inevitable, the past should also be respected and preserved. The United Nations has created a group called the *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization* (UNESCO) to identify cultural and natural heritage and to conserve and protect them as such. The flexibility of culture allows for *culture meeting other cultures* which allow a form of assimilation in the way of *enculturation* as well as a process of *acculturation* through which one attain self fulfilment *via* personal development and a form of amalgamation in a way of merging and dropping some unhealthy-archaic aspects as in *inculturation*.

Philosophy, African Philosophy as Interpretation of Cultural Weltanschauung

Philosophy as love of wisdom dwells more on the worldview of the people especially the culture of the people. Philosophy is wondering on the reality and the worldview of the people in question. Omoregbe (in Boudorin, 1985:1) asserts that "human experience is the source of the reflective activity known as philosophy". It is by this singular human exercise of interpreting realities and reflecting on the peoples' worldview

and symbolic cultures that one attains the level of wondering for the love of wisdom which is *philosophia*. Hence, Paul Riceouer (in Okere, 1983:18) asserts: "one can philosophize from culture, or at least from those elements of culture that can be called symbols". Okere (1983:18) buttressing further remarks: "symbols are pregnant with meaning...philosophical discourse is, therefore, a hermeneutical development of the symbols, these enigmas which precede and nourish it". Therefore, Okere (1983:120) writes:

We assert, however, that in black Africa there exists a reservoir of cultural *philosophemes* from which any future philosopher can inspire himself or borrow his share of philosophical raw material. In such a culture a philosopher can plant his roots and from inside it, and as forming part of it, develop a philosophy with his culture as non-philosophical background.

Onebunne, J. (2019a: 23) rightly affirms that many African literatures gave credence to Okere's work on African Philosophy as an *avante guard* in the application of hermeneutics of culture as philosophizing per excellence. Oguejifor, J.O & Onah, G.I. (eds) (2005: x) interpreting Okere further writes "taking inspiration from some European hermeneutic philosophers, Okere argues that philosophy, every philosophy, is essentially a hermeneutics of culture (in the fullest meaning of the term culture)". Okere (1983: i) asserts greatly of the possibility of African philosophy and its ultimate source thus:

But designating what is African Philosophy needs some criteria. Philosophy is a unique cultural form and, despite affinities, is not to be confused with other forms such as myth, *Weltanschauung* and religion. But it grows out of a cultural background and depends on it.

Philosophical excursus is a product of critical cultural symbolism; that is a kind of reflection on the symbols of his culture, *amidst implications it embodies*. Philosophy *ipso facto*, as a human enterprise is a reflection on symbols which are pregnant with sense and meaning. However, the unique relationship of culture to Philosophy is explained in the natural constitution and traditional understanding of man as *animal culturalis* and *homo cogitans*. African cultures being symbolically structured are laden with vital and significant meaning. Hence, a critical reflection on these symbols trying to make the inherent and underlying meanings open and explicit would give credence to what constitutes African Philosophy.

African Philosophy is *scientia rerum per ultima causas* within African reality. Therefore, from onset, African Philosophy has been a discipline and a movement. It was more of a movement as it tries to reclaim its position as

a discipline within the world philosophical heritage. Hence, as a discipline, African Philosophy is a critical cursory look into the inherent problematiques and prospects of Africa as part of the world philosophical heritage. As a movement, African Philosophy searched for the authentic knowledge that is Philosophy and African within the African cultural worldview. Therefore, a definitive thoughtful interpretation and critical analysis of the symbols of African cultures would be African philosophy *qua tale*. More so, a reflection with profound application of criticality, analyticity and originality on African thoughts and cultures give credence to Philosophy and rightly put, African Philosophy. However, such profundity in the critical appreciation of African cultural worldviews make of them, veritable moments for African philosophy. With the methodological moment of proper hermeneutics, one can dependably and realistically infer that African Philosophy is Philosophy with African source and is nourished from African culture as its cultural reservoir and primary critical nourishment. Okere (1983:58-79) was the *primus inter pares* in asserting authoritatively that culture is the foundation of Philosophy by hermeneutically engaging Paul Ricoeur extensively on the existing relationship between culture and philosophy thus:

It is by interpreting the symbols of a culture that one can arrive at reflexion, philosophy. Ricoeur defines reflexion as the connection between the comprehension of signs or symbols and self-comprehension. Reflexion is the appropriation of our effort to exist and of our desire to be across the works which bear witness to this effort and this desire. It is the incorporating of our new understanding of our culture into our own self-understanding. After these preliminary definitions, here is how the author conceives his strategy. In a methodical process from culture to philosophy, the movement from symbols to reflective thought, Ricoeur proposes three stages, or levels of interpretation: the phenomenological stage...the hermeneutical stage... and the reflexive stage...Thus for Ricoeur, one can philosophise from culture, or at least from those elements of culture that can be called symbols. Symbols are pregnant with meaning... There is no symbol which cannot become reflexion or comprehension through an interpretation.

African Philosophy is Philosophy as it is done in and for Africa and others. It is a by-product of human enterprise on people's culture. It is a philosophical tradition that is African within the mainstream of Philosophy as a systematic study. African Philosophy is the critical and universalizing interpretation of the culture and the worldview of African people by philosophers within and outside African continent. It is philosophy done within African philosophical tradition designating the *corpus* of African philosophical writings. However, African Philosophy like other philosophical traditions has an historical development along the path of human consciousness, critically encountering their realities.

This is against some philosophers' views and philosophical currents trying to demean and oppose the existence of African Philosophy. African Philosophy, therefore, is a systematic study within the limits of the *Africanity* of Philosophy and *philosophicality* of African realities and heritage. Osuagwu, I. M. (1999:28) in his criteria for the scientific philosophicality and scientific Africanity of African Philosophy was apt to note thus:

African philosophy is at the same time African and philosophical. In and by these terms, we are searching, on the one hand, for the genuine philosophicality, i.e., formal scientific philosophy, of the said African enterprise, and on the other hand, for the authentic scientific Africanity of that scientific philosophy. These two basic scientific criteria make African philosophy to bear the characteristics marks of its particularity and universality.

Philosophicality simply places African Philosophy at par with *philosophia*, which is love of wisdom. To this extent, African Philosophy remains part of the *world philosophical heritage* with one philosophical monoculture though from African *weltannchaunng*. Philosophicality nevertheless prunes African Philosophy of the old socio-cultural bias of existence, of a mere movement of reclaiming lost status and mere sceptical influence with pseudo-philosophical orientations. However, by this singular application of philosophicality, African Philosophy is philosophy *qua* philosophy irrespective of the philosophical traditions and or philosophers' postulations as long as it expresses the needed *love for wisdom* and maintains the search for knowledge with an unaided reason as the most basic instrument within philosophical innuendoes. Onebunne, J. I. (2019a:19) summarily opined thus:

Philosophicality, as a basic scientific criterion makes African philosophy to bear the characteristic mark of its universality. Hence, echoing Osuagwu, I.M., therefore, in line with this understanding, African philosophy is, therefore, a universalization, a universal vocation, ordination, destination and determination of and in the African particular.

Equally, the *Africanity* of African philosophy worths the salt. Scientific *Africanity* is a complementary principle in the definition of African Philosophy. *Africanity* is a criterion that defines African Philosophy properly with some parameters. According to Osuagwu, I.M. (2001:24): “by its *africanity*, it is a particular, that is to say, a particular reflection, concentration, concretization, contextualization, experience, identification and differentiation of the philosophic, scientific universal”. *Africanity* tries to solve the controversy and the project of African Philosophy by going beyond the boundaries of the geographical Africa. Within the geographical context, *Africanity* expresses what it takes for any Philosophy to be qualified, identified and differentiated as specifically and typically African. It contextualizes African experiences, life and reality within the realm of Philosophy. For I. Osuagwu, I. M. (2001:26) therefore:

Scientific *Africanity* refers to a set of African parameters or factors which include nature and culture, persons, places, times, events, doctrine, text and methods involved in philosophic enterprises so designated. These factors and many more constitute the common requirements by which a given subject matter is said to be African.

Borrowing an impressive idea from J. Kinyongo, Osuagwu, I. M. (1999: 28) writes that “African Philosophy is carried on at the same time according to philosophy’s general scientific exigencies and Africa’s particular natural and cultural factors. In this cooperation, and mutual integration, Philosophy and *Africanity* look into each other to detect, engage and determine the scientifically valid and available in themselves”.

African Philosophy therefore, has a share in the mainstream of philosophical traditions growing as a human enterprise as a result of critical interpretation of tradition and cultural realities. Okere, T. (1983:38) asserts that “all philosophy is essentially an historical and time bound interpretation of being”. Amidst all sorts of bizarre and false ideas on the

capability of African man to philosophize, questioning the depth of their philosophy, one can boast of African philosophical scholarship as well as African authorship. However, Iroegbu (1994:116) an optimistic contemporary philosopher was very apt in defining African philosophy as:

The reflective inquiry into the marvels and problematics that confront one in African world, in view of producing systematic explanation and sustained responses to them. It is an inquiry with two aspects: *philosophical* and *African*.

Iroegbu, P. was very *premier* in giving this succinct definition. In this definition one can read a *kind* of defense as regards African philosophy. This is why for Iroegbu, P., African philosophy is a *philo-sophia*, a *quest for African wisdom*. However, Iroegbu was academically astute enough to reiterate that “African philosophy is philosophy done in an African context...the different aspects and complexities of existence that challenge him as an African person. In this respect, every philosophy is contextual philosophy”. For Iroegbu, P, therefore, these philosophical concepts alone “are what we generally call the African philosophical *philosophemena*: raw materials for philosophical reflection, questioning, responses, analysis and eventual synthesis”. In this statement of fact, Iroegbu, P. continue to echo his teacher Okere Theophilus who had earlier conceived the idea of *philosophemes* as deposit of conceptual data or realities for philosophical enterprise.

Perceptive on Education

Education derived from two Latin words thus: *educere* as the process of leading one out of ignorance and *educare* as the consequent act of cultivating or leading one into knowledge. Education literally means the ability to lead one out of ignorance and train or lead one into knowledge which is power. Education, formal or informal, therefore has a normative implication of dealing with ignorance with all the instruments of knowledge. And the product is always discipline that is value oriented. Education in this regard is a human enterprise that trains and tames the animality in human beings with rationality. Education, therefore, is an all round project as it positively affects the holistic and societal development of the human person for himself and for the society. This why John Dewey asserts that *Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself*. This is why Hugo Victor says that *he who opens a school door, closes a prison*.

Education is the bed rock of every successful country. As one of the oldest industries in human history, education is the main instrument employed by the society to preserve, maintain and grapple with its

social balance; hence a society's future depends largely on the quality of her citizens' education. Education, therefore, is an instrument of change and value orientation. However, Nelson Mandela was credited the saying that *"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."*

African Traditional Education

Europeans' Invasion and Exploration of African boomed with slavery, colonization and later capital flow. Africa was and has existed with vagaries of human enterprise like indigenous or traditional education and all forms of enterprising merchandise before the advent of Whiteman and his cohorts started to partition and plunder Africa. African Traditional Education was a means of transmitting one's culture from one generation to another. Martins-Umeh, N. F. (2018:88) writes "indigenous system of education is the training that our forefathers gave that was indigenous to every society." It is a process of bringing about a relatively permanent change in human attitude within a human society. Education is a very important aspect of every society and a major determinant of how far the society can rise in progress. This is because no nation can rise above the quality of her educational system. Mara (2006:2) asserts that African Traditional Education is aimed at inducting the members of the society into activities and mode of thought that align to the norms and values of the society. Mara, further maintains that African societies were noted for her rich cultural heritage which was preserved and transmitted from generation to generation through a system of traditional education.

In line with the above assertion of Mara, the process of education in African traditional society was intimately ingrained in the social, cultural, artistic, religious and recreational life of the community. Notably, the ideas of schooling and education were integrated in the traditional system. The traditional system of education incorporated the ideas of learning skill, social and cultural values as well as the norms into its purpose and method. Hence, in African traditional society, the education of her progenies started at birth and continued to adulthood (Murray, 1967: 14). African traditional system of education has been described as education that prepared one for one's responsibilities as an adult in his home, village or tribe.

Notably, African philosophy of traditional education was quite pragmatic and aimed at providing a gate way to the life of the community. It was based on the philosophy of productivity and functionalism, practicality and workability. It was utility based and in

African education, there is an end in view such that anyone who has undergone this level of education was expected to have acquired the competence and shows it in the course of his performance. African Traditional Education is a practical means of inculcating knowledge, skills and gaining the expected empowerment. Therefore Mara (1998, 72), further avers that though there were few theoretical abstractions, but the main objective of traditional education was to inculcate a sense of social responsibility of the community to the individual members, who were becoming contributing members of the society. Hence one of the major features of traditional education was apprenticeship model of learning, whereby people learned under masters like Igbo Apprenticeship System (*id est Igbaodibo*). The traditional education is therefore a process by which every society attempts to preserve and upgrade the accumulated knowledge, skills and attitude in its cultural setting and heritage to foster continually the well-being of mankind.

The foremost focus on African vocational education was the preparation of African child for his or her responsibilities in the community. Traditional African Education is 'the bush school' the trains the young ones in preparation for different walks of life via their age grade or during initiation ceremony into different phases of life or the other. African Traditional Education informally exposed and initiates one into African culture, tradition, values, norms, and skills on how to be lively and practicable. Sadly, we are losing the warmth of Africa and the curriculums have not helped in restoring this warmth.

Colonized Western Philosophy of Education

Colonialism would have been the best for African Nation States, if it has been a form tutoring or mentoring so as to bring out the best in Africans for Africa who then would be complaining. The effects of colonialism seem to be *double-edge-sword*. There is positive side of the coin with regard to introduction of formalized system of education, advent of Christianity and economic perspectives. Negatively, colonial education rubs African her *being* thereby trying to recreate an African person into an European maroon. Ezeani, E (2013:22) quoted a Briton, Lord Macaulay's *Minutes on Education* on the aim of their colonial education in the colonies of Africa thus: "to train at least a class of persons Indian (or Africans) in blood but English in opinion, in morals and intellect". Such was behind whatever informed the colonizers and their education for Africans even with regard to *French Policy of Assimilation*. In this process, every Africa and her black nature became fake and original and must be *westernized* or *europeanized*. Such education in

the end estranged African man from his environment and his very person. As Ezeani, E., (2013:23) lamented: "for a good number of Africans, adoption of anything foreign is a mark of *onye ma ife* (educatednss or civilized person) as this is interpreted to be a symbol of education...education became associated with western knowledge and culture." By this we become inferior to them losing our sense of worth. But this was not what education ought to be. It ought to be integrally holistic and sums up every facet of the societal life. Ezeani, E. (2013:25) continuing laments thus: "one of the most serious negative impacts of colonial education on Africa is *de-Africanization* of Africa-a process which dispossessed the people of their culture, values, languages and human dignity." What then remains of an African person?

Unfortunately Africa is yet to recover from the Whiteman's plundering of and the consequent capital flow from Africa in the name of colonization after years of slavery. African still suffers the stolen legacies and the inherent indoctrinization that everything black is evil alongside the confusion in our founding fathers that were trained in European mentality and clothed with colonial garb to witch-hunt their brother Africans. Why Colonial Education instead of African Education? As far back as 1933Carter G. Woodson has published *The Miseducation of the Negro*. Is the Nigeria Amalgamation of 1914 not a hoax but an unholy alliance between the Jihadist of Othman Dan Fodio and the colonial master on how to share Nigeria peacefully without war? Till now, 2020AD, many African countries are still paying uncompromised allegiance with financial obeisance and socioeconomic cum political dependence to the countries that colonized and gave them the much lauded independence especially with regard to country like France where most critical issues of her colonized countries are still decided by them. What of Nigeria where the British influence is still depended on?

The pessimistic effects of the colonial system of Education in African are closely associated with the aims of the colonizers as stated in Lord Macaulay's (a Briton) Minutes on Education. For them therefore, their education for us was "*to train at least a class of persons Indian (or African) in blood but English in opinion, morals and intellect.*" French colonies applied same inhuman methodology in view of recreating persons *who are Africans in blood, but French in opinion, morals and intellect.* Such were Britain's and French *policies of assimilation* explicitly intended to be accomplished. Their pattern of colonization of African required that Africans should discard their own world-view and adopt that of their almighty colonial masters be it of English, Portuguese, French, Spanish or the Arab world. Hence, the

instrument of their teaching or Education was for them the most efficient for their plan to be accomplished.

Plans by Africans for African Education

The African Union (AU) is a continental organ with 55 member states that make up the countries of the African Continent. On 9.9.1999, the Heads of State and Government of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU, 1963-1999) issued the Sirte Declaration calling for the establishment of an African Union. It was officially launched in 2002 as a successor to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). The OAU, now AU, was the manifestation of the pan-African vision for an Africa that was united, free and in control of its own destiny in response to the aspirations of Africans for brother-hood and solidarity. The guiding philosophy was that of Pan-Africanism which centred on African socialism and promoted by African unity, the communal characteristic and practices of African communities, and a drive to embrace Africa's culture and common heritage. This guiding philosophy ought to affect the needed education that is just African. However, one of the main objectives of the AU was to rid the African continent of the remaining vestiges of colonisation and apartheid of 350 years then in South Africa. OAU then with this formation tries to organize and cooperate for holistic development of Africa by jointly move towards eradication of all forms of colonialism from Africa. One may see that it as a response to Bob Marley & Wailers prophetic lyrics calling Africans to unite thus:

Lyrics

Africa unite/'Cause we're moving right out of Babylon
And we're going to our Father's land
How good and how pleasant it would be
Before God and man, yeah
To see the unification of all Africans, yeah

So, Africa unite
Afri, Africa unite, yeah!
Unite for the benefit (Africa unite) of your people!
Unite for it's later (Africa unite) than you think!
Unite for the benefit (Africa unite) of my children!
Unite for it's later (Africa uniting) than you think!
Africa awaits (Africa unite) its creators!
Africa awaiting (Africa uniting) its creator!
Africa, you're my (Africa unite) forefather cornerstone!

Unite for the Africans (Africa uniting) abroad!
Unite for the Africans (Africa unite) a yard!

The Directorate of Education, an organ of AU in her mission statement agrees to a responsibility of contributing towards responsive educational systems for Africa thus:

To contribute towards revitalized, quality, relevant, and harmonized education systems responsive to the needs of Africa, taking into account Africa's aspiration and capacity in terms of human and material resources; systems that produce Africans with appropriate attitudes, values, knowledge and skills to facilitate attainment of the AU vision; systems that generate applied and new knowledge and contribute towards its harnessing for meeting Africa's challenges as well as placing Africa firmly within the core of the global knowledge economy.

Hence, there are other steering committees like Continental Educational Strategy for Africa CESA 16-25 with their "ten year continental education strategy (CESA) presented to the Ministers for adoption is a response to the AU Agenda 2063. It is in line with the Global Education 2030 Programme and contributes to the achievement of objective 4 of the SDGs. CESA 16-25 calls for a paradigm shift towards transformative education and training systems to meet the knowledge, competencies, skills, research, innovation and creativity required to nurture African core values and promote sustainable development". Another one, *Pan-African Institute for Education for Development (IPED)*, is a specialized institution of the African Union, tasked with the responsibility to function as Africa's Education Observatory ensuring quality, responsive and inclusive education development in Africa. Likewise there is *Education Management Information Systems (EMIS)*. EMIS is very crucial and most decisive area of focus in education development in Africa. These are efforts by Africans via AU to give Africa an African Education with an attendant and proper and fitting philosophy. It's time to realise that Africa is a beautifully *attractive* continent with great many human and natural resources. Of course, Africa has been very attractive to the West world and that has given chance to exploration. Expanding this idea, an eloquent Kenyan lawyer, erudite orator Prof. Patrick Loch Otieno Lumumba (2019), has this to say about the ever

attractiveness of Africa in one of his speeches, what an interesting long quote thus:

Africa has always remained attractive. All through the ages, she has always been attractive. It was attractive to the Portuguese and even to the Spanish. It was attractive to the Arabs and also to the Jews. Africa was attractive to all these people, but the good news is that Africa is attractive again. It is so attractive that every two years the Japanese call our leaders to Japan. That is how attractive it is. They call them to Japan to discuss how Japan is going to work with Africa for the benefit of Africans, I do not believe it, it must be for the benefit of Japan. Even the Chinese call Africans to Beijing, the 54 of them, they say this is how the Chinese are going to work for the benefit of Africa, but I refuse to believe that, there must be something that is being done for the benefit of Beijing. It is so attractive that the Russians called our leaders only a few months ago in Sochi. And when they invite them they invite them to the best places, it's interesting. They tell them this is how Russia is going to work for the benefit of Africa. That is how attractive she is. It is so attractive that the Germans also invited our leaders to Berlin. Her attraction also caught the eyes of the Arabs as they invited them to Doha.

However, PLO Lumumba was very articulate to question their continued invitation to Africans. Why haven't they invited Latin American countries or Arab countries? It is only Africans who have been always invited severally. Is it a bad thing? But, why African countries only? It is a truism that they always use us to their advantage. Complimenting the beauty of Africa, moreover he says:

When I look at Africa and see how attractive she is, one word comes to mind 'globalisation. When they talk about globalization, they talk about it as if it were new. Africans were once globalized as a commodity in the slave market, we were sold everywhere in the world, that was globalization. Then we were globalized again through colonization. Then, again, through neo-colonization. Now we are being globalised again in the context of opening our markets: It was Julius Nyerere who in many of his

enlightened moments said, "We should open our markets in the name of globalization and they say that the rules are the same." "I laugh," he said. Then he went on to say, "it's like a boxing match, the rules are the same but you don't put a heavyweight boxer with a lightweight boxer in the same ring and say the rules are the same, it's murder. Imagine the USA with a GDP of about 19 trillion to 20 trillion is now entering into a bilateral agreement with Lesotho, whose GDP is 2 billion and you say the rules are the same, it is a joke, it is murder because the revenue generated by the City of Los Angeles alone in a day is more than the GDP of Lesotho. So we are being told to open our markets and when we did you know what happens? Out textile industries died. The dye textile industry we knew about in Kaduna, Nigeria, died. Our Cotton industries died. Our sugar industries died. The answer to why Africa is so attractive is simple: Economic gains.

African Philosophy of Education

is a very important aspect of every society and a major determinant of how far the society can rise in developmental progress and otherwise. This is because no nation can rise above the quality of her education. Quite dauntingly, educational system in Nigeria lacks consistency. It is so disheartening that today, amidst the lingering system that has been in place over the years, there are unchecked imported educational systems that are foreign to African world view starting with Montessori and Chinese Educational system. Education in this regard is people oriented and therefore culture bound as it affects the way of life of the people. As African people we need African education and proper philosophy backing it.

Philosophy of Education is an applied philosophy. It is an application of philosophical principles and a kind of intelligent questioning on teaching methodologies and learning principles as depicted in every field of education per se. It is within the proper limits of Philosophy of Education therefore to define the appropriate boundaries of the curriculum and its content development with regard to teaching and learning. It is an indubitable fact that no nation rises above the quality of her educational system. The quality of any educational system is within the bounds of curriculum. It is, therefore, with the limits of Philosophy of Education to delineate the content of curriculum with which the teacher teaches and what the pupils or students learn. Ezeani, E. (2013) summarizes it thus: "in

philosophy of Education, philosophy is a tool with which to examine education, its nature, its aims and its relevance in a given society. It also helps in the formulation of educational content or curriculum”.

It is now pertinently clear that we need a system of education that is African for Africans. In line with this, Willis, D. in the book *A Philosophy of Education For African Nations* writes: “As independent nations with self governance for over 50years in many cases, African government must be held accountable for the content and the philosophy of education with which their young people, who are future leaders, are provided. The buck stops with the African Governments”. It is sad to note that most philosophy of education in African is adopted from and still dated to the yore-days of the colonial masters. Their educational system disfavor our entire societal life and indigenous languages and they never took cognizance of our mother tongue thereby gave us a bilingual educational system which Ezeani, E. (2013) would have recommended thus: “for there is no doubt that a bilingual African Child is linguistically richer and sociometrically and psychologically healthier than his or her monolingual counterpart. Many African countries are in these shackles of ignorance in educational system”. Africa as a continent is very peculiar. Her peculiarity has to do with the blessings of her natural and human resources alongside her privileged opportunity of being the mother and cradle of civilization. African must be acknowledged as part of world educational heritage as such, hence the need for philosophy. African Philosophy of Education is most *ad rem* for the nations in developmental crisis after these years of slavery, colonization, and continued capital flow. Such an African Philosophy of Education will definitely address and attend to African problems from African point of view. This is why African Philosophy of Education, as an applied discipline, is the application of African critical wisdom and other African philosophical issues on African education as a process of leading one out of ignorance and consequently leading same person into knowledge.

African Philosophy of Education is for credible African education. In this line of thought Mbakela and Luthuli in Ezeani, E., (2013: 15) opines that “African Philosophy of Education...has to do with reflecting upon, analyzing and criticizing the current African situation and education system”. As a developing nation state and continent of global south, Africa needs a kind of education that will confront their realities amidst other nations of the world. This is why African Philosophy Education should be dynamically progressive and enthusiastically historical, developmental in scope and apologetic in style as it exposes Africans to their past glory and assures them of a prospective future in view of exploring the world. African

Philosophy of Education must borrow heavily from African Philosophy as reiterated above. For Iroegbu, P., (1994), however, African Philosophy *is a philo-sophia, a quest for African wisdom*. African Philosophy of Education is a minor *philosophia*, an African quest for African wisdom. It is an African critical thinking on education as a process of teaching and learning formally and informally. African Philosophy of Education is a discipline done in an African context with different aspects and complexities of teaching and learning amidst challenges as an African person. In this respect, African Philosophy of Education is a contextual education.

Conclusion

African Philosophy of Education, nevertheless, is aimed at enhancing the African worldview which should evidently be seen in the development of curriculum, implementation of those African which will in turn build the authentic personality of the African person. Development is the level of man's consciousness to his environment. African philosophy of education in recent time pictures the three Cs that the Europeans came with which are, *Colonization, Christianization and Commercialization*. In the same vein, curriculum introduced to African school was such that reflected these major aims. African Philosophy of Education should now be for Africans for the world.

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