

## **Decolonizing Nigerian Educational System as an Impetus for a Holistic Development**

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**ABSTRACT:** *The importance of education in the development of individuals and society as a whole cannot be overemphasised. But when it is not indigenised, some of the aims may become defeated as traditional norms are destroyed and social productivity is curtailed. Studies have therefore advocated for a decolonised education as the probable solution to the socio-cultural and economic challenges facing the continent of Africa. Consequently, this paper examined decolonised education in Nigeria as an impetus for a holistic development. In addressing the subject, the paper examined decolonized education in Nigeria; the impacts of western education on Nigeria and indigenous education; and the importance of decolonising education for African centred development. The paper further argued that while the structure for a decolonised education exists in the country, nothing much has been done in the area of implementation in recent times. The paper therefore recommended that concerted efforts must be made to decolonise education at all levels in order to pave way for a holistic and Nigerian centred development.*

**KEY WORDS:** decolonizing, educational system. development, education

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Education according to (National Policy on Education NPE., 2004) is a brilliant mechanism for producing national development. Hence, it is an essential and significant transformative instrument. Garba (2012) view education as a crucial element in the all-round development of any nation or society. Also, Chukwua (2011) stated that education is related to the systematic development and the refinement of the mind and other natural powers. In addition, Odimayo (2019) argued that education is a mechanism for developing an individual in social, mental, physical, emotional, moral and psychological aspects. Thus, education can be considered as a process which allows people to comprehend the metamorphosis between good and bad approach,

right and wrong compartments. Based on this, education can be defined as a mixture of methods and instruments used to achieve empirical knowledge about the beneficial components of life and their uses. It helps the adherents to gain proper understanding of their cultural inheritance and to live a complete and more satisfying life. This comprises the achievement of appropriate talents, knowledge, lifestyles and value for people living in the society. It provides the adherents with the skills to survive in it and to contribute to the development and growth of the wider society (Akule 2006). Malcolm Forbes (2006) once argued that “education’s purpose is to replace an empty mind with an open one”. In line with this, education can be referred to as an instrument of social mobility, as it helps individual to change from the lower to the upper class, slave to master and poor to rich. It can be said that civilisation and education often go together. Obanya (2010) argued that education is the basis of any social group or structured society. In order for the culture and values of any given social group or society to be transmitted, education must come into play. He further argued that education came to existence at the dawn of civilisation in Africa, and that “education existed in Africa since African societies became socially organised” (Obanya, 1995:4; Olaniyi and Olajumoke, 2013; Zulu, 2006). In addition, Mawere (2015) argues that “indigenous knowledge is important to African students and can only be completely comprehended if it is situated within home grown ideas. This however is lacking. Although several scholars had addressed the effect of western education on our indigenous education and also the importance of decolonising education to Africans, not much has been done to explore the importance of indigenous education to the growth of nation and how to eradicate the western approach that sees our indigenous practices as ferocious. Some of the questions that come to mind in this regard are: why is this so? What are the impacts of western education on Nigeria indigenous education? What are political problems or related distractions confronting decolonising education in Nigeria? What are the ways to correct our mind set about African practices/education? And finally, how can indigenous education be brought into mainstreamed of our educational system. These and others constitute the focus of this article.

## **THE FOUNDATION OF EDUCATION IN AFRICA**

Education which serves as an instrument for the development of both the individual child and the society is not new to any race. Every society, irrespective of time, people or place has evolved one educational system or the other (Abiri, 2005). According to Moumouni as cited by Koma (1976) education is seen as everything that prepares the young generation for either integration in a given specific society with the aim of perpetuating the established values and norms of such society or transforming and changing such values and norms. Hence, Africa societies before colonialism had been training their members, by giving survival skills to individuals who were supposed to selflessly serve their societies. Members of African societies learnt through their interaction with their physical and spiritual milieus, as evidenced by their design of tools which they used mostly in their agro activities and in fighting for resources. The other area in which learning took place was that of spirituality or mysticism, as some superstitious members of African communities were believed to have powers of communicating with their ancestors. Education in pre-colonial era in

Africa community was informal, parents were at the fore front of the education, to fulfil the process of giving their children systematic instruction on the appropriate knowledge, values, habits, attitudes and behavioural patterns that he or she needed to function as a useful and acceptable member of the community (Seroto, 2011). The immediate family and elders in the community also assisted in transferring knowledge, onto the new generations, thus, helping them to adapt better to their environment and to enjoy life to the fullest. Pre-colonial Africa schooling made use of words and gestures to convey messages to the learners in a well-expressed way, adherent of younger generation to this message were stressed and rewarded by both the traditional leaders and village elders. This was explained by Emeagwali (2006) in his research work that “Africans across the continent used a wide range of symbols and motifs for communicating ideas”. Although in pre-colonial African setting education did not follow any comprehensive or formal curricula, which resulted in the loss of some most vital information, knowledge and skills in Africa, especially when the real custodial of the knowledge and the skill is no longer in existence or unable to impart knowledge again. But despite this challenge, the educational system still played a vital role in convening and passing indigenous knowledge and skills orally from generation to generation.

The curriculum of indigenous education during the pre-colonial period consisted of traditions, legends and tales and the procedures and knowledge associated with rituals which were handed down orally from generation to generation within each tribe (Lawrence C.A 2009). This process was closely incorporated with the social, cultural, artistic, religious and recreational life of the indigenous peoples. In this light, before the introduction of Islamic and Western education respectively in Nigeria, there had been a traditional system of education (Amaele, 2003). This education is still relevant in the society today. The birth of Nigerian education categorized as traditional/indigenous education was liberal in nature, because of its prominence on functionalism. Nwanosike, and Onyije, (2011), traditional education is fundamental in any Nigeria society for the preservation of the lives of the members and the maintenance of the social structure. Under this traditional education promotes social change. The larger percentage of this education is acquired by the young through imitation and from the example and behaviour of elders in the society. Under customary conditions, education grows out of the environment and the learning process was directly related to the pattern of work in the society. The methods of teaching in this educational system include indoctrination, modelling, initiation ceremonies, reward and punishment, imitation, role play, oral literature, poetry, instruction, observation, intention, participation, apprenticeship (Amaele, 2003). Emphasis is laid on practical knowledge, skills and character (Amaele, 2003). The people of Nigeria, like their counterparts all over the world, had their peculiar way of life, a culture which they handed over from one generation to another before the introduction of Islamic and Christian education (Fafunwa, 1874). Traditional education in Nigeria was geared towards the preservation of the lives of the society. It also maintains the social, cultural and economic structures of the people. The education is built on solid and practical foundations. It is in close harmony with the life, needs and aspirations of the community. The curriculum of the traditional education covers all the virtues and ideas that encourage healthy living. “The local community constituted the school as well as the farm, the workshop, the dispensary and a field for experiments

(particularly in agriculture and medicine)” (Ifeanacho and Irikana, 2001). The education is a complete system of life as it provides for the people assistance in almost every aspect of their needs: physically, socially, mentally, spiritually and morally. Walter (1972) identified the following features of indigenous African education which are: its close links with social life, both in material and spiritual sense, its collective nature, its many- sidedness; and progressive development of the child. He maintained that there was no separation of education and productive activity or any division between manual and intellectual education. Altogether through mainly informal means, pre-colonial African education matched the realities of pre-colonial African society and produced well rounded personalities to fit into that society.

Although, “traditional African education is not appreciated by the western because it’s being indigenous to Africa; rather, it was regarded as an ordinary enduring justification thought” (Enoch, 1996). The traditional education was trampled upon and gradually faded away with the advent of Christian missionaries and successive colonization of Nigeria by the British colonial masters, essentialism was imposed on Nigerian educational system (Joseph, 2007). The colonial kind of education regarded education as a “central body of essential knowledge that must be transmitted to all by going to school” (Wango 1978). In line with this type of education, teachers are expected to be trained, to be strict and well behaved; they are to be seen as a model of emulation by their students (Wango, 1978). Teachers are expected to use one of these teaching methods depending on the age and calibres of student concerned; play way or Socratic teaching approach, lecturing, experimentation etc. while the learner was expected to learn what the teacher is teaching by memorization and reproducing it during examination (Joseph, 2007). Hence, this form of education became dominant and was regarded as formal Education which was universally accepted as the bedrock and engine of growth. It is seen as a child’s escape way from poverty; the highly treasured possession that anyone can have in society is this education. It is believed to be the foundation for higher living standards and a vital tool for future eradication of poverty (Joseph, 2007). For a nation like Nigeria, being an independent and developing nation confronted with the problems of nation building, social integration and economic growth, adopting education was argued to be the only way to compact with the great problem of national development (Garba, 2012). In spite of the qualities attributed to formal education, Ali (2012) had argued that the instinctive elite had failed in deconstructing colonial philosophies and epistemologies of education, and has not done much in restructuring indigenous systems that affirm the identities as well as the existentialities of the populace.

## **DECOLONISED EDUCATION IN AFRICA**

Africa as a continent had been in connection with western advancement for over a century (Safiya, 2012). Their first contact was through slave trade trailed by colonization and then decolonization (Fafunwa, 1974 cited in Safiya 2012). Similar to Asia and Latin America, Africa has remained on the western invented path of development on which it has been part of the diverse waffles, such as underdeveloped, unindustrialized, third world, (Austen 1987, and Law 2002). Cambridge

dictionary defines decolonisation as “the process in which a country that was previously a colony controlled by another country becomes politically independent” and Oxford dictionary defines education as “the process of receiving or giving systematic instruction, especially at a school or university”. Hence, the decolonised education can simply be defined as an independent nation with regards to the acquisition of knowledge skills, values, beliefs and habits. The demands for decolonisation of education emerged first on the African continent in the context of decolonising struggles against colonial rule during the 1950s and 1960s (Abiri, 2005). It is established on the nullification of modern colonial education whose organising principle centred on shaping the colonised into colonial subjects, in the process, shedding them of their humanity and full potential (Aslam, 2018).

According to Smith (2012), decolonization is the renaissance of the traditions of existence and perceptiveness proceeded to colonization, while finding the method in which colonization was achieved. It is not only sufficient to merely reconnect with the past, in order to track decolonization, but we must also unravel the difficult grid of internalized domination created by colonization. Hence, decolonization is the process of abolishing colonization practices. For some intellectuals, decolonization “simply means the development in which research and performance of appreciating, repossessing, and foregrounding Indigenous expression” (Swadener & Mutua, 2008, p. 31). For others, decolonizing education is basically a political movement, as it pushes back on historical and contemporary forms of colonialism and on the notion of one general truth or information system elevated above all others (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2000; Battiste, 2013; May & Aikman, 2003; Smith, 2012). Then, decolonizing education must first and foremost be framed within concepts of dialogue, respect for the educational pluralities, multiplicities, and diversities” (Battiste, 2013, p. 107) of all Indigenous peoples.

Furthermore, decolonized education system is the opposing and confounding of the colonization practices that have influenced education system earlier, and which still exist today. Decolonizing education in Africa must be severe, constant process of serious rendezvous that does not propagate the impression that local or indigenous education is inferior (Adebisi, 2016). Decolonized education is ingrained in connections to indigenous based education, empowers students and helps reinstate cultural knowledge. These processes of decolonizing education system involve transformation and rebuilding links with traditions and cultural understanding. Transformation and re-establishing link with indigenous education is very important as these links are essential for contextualizing knowledge, developing understanding, inspiring community participation, and reconnecting students with a vibrant support system. Decolonized education eschews static knowledge orientations. It is founded on a type of complex knowledge dynamism in fidelity to disciplinary and trans-disciplinary foundations, and always alert to a type of problem-posing dynamism. In other words, knowledge constructions is believed to be approached as dynamic, disciplined, and patient constructions that advance sustainable livelihoods (Alidou; Boly; Brock-Utne; Diallo; and Wolff, 2006). In order to achieve these aims, most African countries have

channelled their education system towards capacity building and investing in human capital (Adeyemi and Adeyinka, 2003).

Colonized education system had made Nigerians to see their indigenous language, education and ways of life as barbaric, in fact the language are forbidden in school as it considered to be vernaculars that must not be used in school. Certainly, the ascription of inferiority is constructed into the education system and the curriculum and student grow with that knowledge up to higher education. The process undermines indigenous education because students from early stage of life, had been taught to speak English language and see their indigenous language or practices as 'old school' that is no longer tenable in the society. In this light, Musitha and Mafukata (2018) opined that the "education system was intentionally designed to demoralize the educational and skills development of the colonized.

## **DECOLONIZED EDUCATION IN NIGERIA**

Decolonizing education necessitates recognizing how colonization has impacted education and working to unsettle colonial structures, systems, and dynamics in educational contexts. We use the term education in these descriptions broadly to name the sociocultural task of understanding ways of knowing and being (epistemological and ontological systems) and the on-going formation and transmission of knowledge: for instance, we mean both formal education as structured through western schooling and other forms of education such as those traditionally practiced within Indigenous families and communities.

It is important to understand that essential training is envisioned by every society to facilitate an individual to play a worthwhile role in the community, for the progress of the society at large. Therefore, education is paramount in every society, in which Nigeria is not an exception to this. The penetration of western education systems served to re-direct development in Nigeria education system, by emphasizing its making in the image of Europe and North America. The focus on European system of education by introducing class, teacher, boarding system, lectures and teleconferencing weaken their own ways of transmission of knowledge. As noted by Boateng (1985) cited in (Dama 2013) that "in Africa, the introduction of western formal education has often served as obstacles to the process of cultural transmission and intergenerational communication, which are viewed culturally as some of the functions of the school. One area which served as an important educational vehicle for the youth in traditional Africa was the oral literature. Oral literature encompasses fables, folktales, legends myths and proverbs". Therefore, decolonisation of education in Africa particularly in Nigeria helps to:

- ❖ Reduce the reinforcement of colonial conditions by inculcating the values of the colonial society and training individuals for the service of the colonial state.
- ❖ Reduce the effect of capitalist system, on the individualistic instinct of mankind and discouraged the attitude
- ❖ Integrate both the intellectual development of the individual and with the needs, goals

- ❖ Integrate verbal leaning with classroom teaching that is, it assists in merging both formal and informal education together.
- ❖ Meet the cultural, social, moral and intellectual, as well as political and economic needs of Africa it has to be adapted and integrated into indigenous form of education (Gboku and Lekoko , 2007).
- ❖ Favours an inter-cultural understanding of heretical forms of being human. That is, all knowledge forms have to be brought into play in an intercultural education that promotes a type of epistemic openness to the knowledge of all human beings
- ❖ Re-established links to the community Education. that is, contextualizing knowledge, deepening understanding, encouraging community involvement, and reconnecting students with a vital support system
- ❖ Students to form their identities, rather than forcing an identity on them and Valuing cultural heritage and place-based knowledge

Decoloniality further becomes important considering its call for a type of cognitive justice based on an overhaul and expansion of the western knowledge canon. In addition, decolonization of education in Nigeria has the superimposition of colonial values on the African continent and changed the lifestyle of Africans in many ways. The Africans received western education which was meant to ‘civilize them’. As stated by Mkandawire (2005) one task of education in both enslavement and colonialization of Africa was to dehumanize the enslaved and the colonized by denying their history and denigrating their achievements and capacities. Also, it led to the possession of individual material wealth being the major criterion of social merit and worth (Mkandawire, 2005). It also replaced the Africa communal life with individualistic (Lawson and Silver, 1973:18) and emphasised the use of foreign language such as English which gained social respectability with the gradual recognition of its suitability for business and literature, and its use in writing rapidly.

The call for decolonising education is nothing less than the full incorporation of humanity’s knowledge systems into the curriculum and knowledge selection systems of universities and schools. The modalities of such incorporation, I believe, ought to be the subject of urgent conversation in policy circles, among curriculum workers, learning materials and textbook designers, and, crucially, among university lecturers and school teachers. Education across Africa today, specifically, in most West African countries, is driven by the need for effective modernisation in all areas of life, improvement in science and technology, stable and sustainable economic growth through mass production of quality goods and services, national unity and the application of the culture of globalisation. We shall return to this later.

## **EXPLAINING DECOLONIALITY THROUGH CRITICAL THEORY**

Further explanations regarding decolonisation of education is further sought from the explanations of the critical perspective. Critical theory was developed out from the Marxist tradition and it was

established by group of sociologists at the University of Frankfurt in Germany, whom they referred to as The Frankfurt School. This theory as it is recognized nowadays can be traced to Marx's critique of the economy and society put forth in his many works. Critical theory was greatly inspired by Marx's theoretical formulation of the relationship between economic base and ideology a superstructure and tends to focus on how power and domination operate, particularly, in the realm of the superstructure. Subsequent to Marx's critical paths, Hungarian György Lukács and Italian Antonio Gramsci developed theories that discovered the cultural and ideological sides of power and domination. Both Lukács and Gramsci concentrated on the critique of the social forces that prevent people from identifying and understanding the forms of power and domination that exist in society and that affect their lives.

According to Max Horkheimer critical theory in his book "Traditional and Critical Theory" Critical Theory is defined as "social theory concerned with evaluating and changing society as a whole, in contrast to traditional theory oriented only to understanding or explaining it". He wanted to extricate critical theory as a radical, emancipatory form of Marxian theory, critiquing both the model of science put forward by logical positivism and what he and his colleagues saw as the covert positivism and authoritarianism of orthodox Marxism and Communism. He described a theory as critical in so far as it seeks "to liberate human beings from the circumstances that enslave them"[Horkheimer 1982]. Critical theory comprises of normative element, either through criticizing society from some general theory of values, norms, or "oughts", or through criticizing it in terms of its own embraced values.[ Bohman,2016] The basic proposition of critical theorist relate to the fact that critical social theory should focus on the totality of society in its historical specificity (i.e. how it came to be constructed at a specific point in time), and that critical theory should develop understanding of society by integrating all the major social sciences disciplines comprising geography, economics, sociology, history, political science, anthropology, and psychology.

Smith's (2012) critical theory has provided a strong theoretical basis upon which to build a deeper and wider understanding of knowledge production, outside the narrow confines of a hegemonic standpoint. Similarly, some education scholars, following the standard of Paulo Freire's liberatory pedagogy, have expressed emancipatory, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive approaches to emphasize the importance of critical consideration within the work of education (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2015; St. Denis, 2007). In a bid to help educators gain consciousness and understanding of the role of colonialism in contemporary schooling, some advocate for a "pedagogy of discomfort" (Boler & Zembylas, 2003; Zembylas, 2015) where learning and teaching is problematic to make it possible.

Finally, the acknowledgment of how "epistemologies of ignorance" (Malewski & Jaramillo, 2011) can be situated to help disrupt a hegemonic, and seldom questioned, world of inequities is also underway, that is, inadequate understanding of western education led to negation of indigenous education which eventually relegate of our culture and traditional values.



## **THE IMPACTS OF WESTERN EDUCATION ON NIGERIA INDIGENOUS EDUCATION**

The impact of Western Education on Africa indigenous education provides a wider perspective on the phenomenon of westernization in Africa. The Western education is a guarantee to neoliberalism, liberal democracy, consumerism and Christian worldview as the origin of western education (Dama, 2013). Western education serves as eye opener for Nigerian to go against colonialism and endemic slave trade. This helped Nigerians to fight for their independence and this was in line with obtaining independence from their colonial masters. This was in tandem with the assertion of Okpilike (2012) that “Our ancestors had to gather enough knowledge before they understood they could fight for their freedom, and this is how Nigeria became an independent republic”. This helped Nigerian to find mutual grounds with nations of the world and gain universal recognition across the globe as a result of their knowledge in western education. This gave Nigerians and some African country opportunity to participate in international competitions and show themselves in positive images as a resort of western education.

In addition, it helps in improving the living conditions of most African countries, particularly Nigerians, although this could not still be compared to the life of our fore fathers especially in the in the area of welfarism, but looking into modern technologies we were indeed much better than those of our ancestors in the pre-colonial era. This corroborates Okpilike (2012) that ‘We are not lagging behind the rest of the world because we can now apply modern solutions in our everyday life issues’. For example, western education had reduced infant mortality, maternal mortality and even helped in the use of modern birth control methods as against the past rapid growth in families and high level of infant mortality with the tag “abiku” (stillbirth) with its attendant pain and agony for the affected families. The development of technology and science through western education had helped us develop from aboriginal life style to modern ways of life. Several technological developments made it possible to make life more comfortable and holds a lot of things that we can use to improve our future and guarantee good living conditions.

Although despite all the positive impact of western education on Africa, it has series of negative influence on our indigenous education especially on our family system, western educations brought a lot of moral decadence and reduce the level of respect in the traditional family between parent and children, siblings, and husband and wife. This is akin to Okpilike (2012), that the level of morality in Nigeria among youths has dropped considerably’. Immoral acts like adultery, juvenile delinquency, prostitution, immoral dressing have become the order of the day due to the influence of western education which was in contrast to indigenous teaching of modesty, truthfulness and children protecting the image and glory of their family. Western education has gradually reduced parental control and children are now being brought up by third party which neglect the indigenous moral teachings, parent pay less attention to their children and thereby eroding the African traditions and culture. This was in line with Okpilike (2012) that “the administrative ways of our ancestors were much more reliable than the ones we have now and

there was less chaos and strict discipline was maintained”. Youths have lost interest in agriculture and white collar job had replaced a lot of vocational job/family skill that develop youth in the traditional era. This challenge has impact of this sphere on our economy.

Christian missionaries introduced western education to Nigerians and some countries because they saw education as an effective instrument of evangelization. Subsequently, most cherished and valued traditional religions were jettisoned to pave way for Christianity in Nigeria. Fear, justice and equity that pervaded African societies became eroded and gave way to a lot of atrocities due to the phasing out of the belief in the African gods and ancestors (which are renowned for instant justice). Consequently, African traditional religion became replaced with the Christian faith whose God is so merciful and kind such that judgment for wrongdoings is reserved to the last day. This of course is not to suggest that Africans lacked the capacity for self-control and equity; the social norm, partly enforced by the religious institutions was dislocated and replaced with alien religions which had no synergy with the existing norms and values the African society further contributed to these distortions. Also, communalism and group solidarity that characterized the African societies have writhed seriously. This was in line with Oroka (1990) that “African is his brother’s keeper and African societies believe that the individual cannot successfully live in isolation”. Africans believe in communal life characterized by a network of closely-nit kinship, social and religious relationship. Then came western education which emphasizes individualism, and communal life was thrown overboard. Western education thus weakened the moral values of African societies. Currently, western education has been fully absorbed into the African society as against indigenous education practice in the past. But opposing to expectation, the major objective of education had not been accomplished in any part of the African continent. This was in line with Anene (1966) that the non-integrating nature of western education to the African culture had brought a lot of problem to African societies. The British came to Africa with predetermined notions of superiority of race and religion; they saw African customs and institution as inferior to their own. Apart from the economic resources in Africa for which reason they came, every other thing in Africa was uncivilized and unfit for their consideration; part of which is the indigenous knowledge. This is the major reason why a lot of activities in western education were set out to cleanse African culture, values and practices (Odia, 2005). The result of their activities on the African soil had brought about the complete loss of the African pride, the African language, the breakdown of moral and social discipline, the dethronement of collectivism and the shift from reputation to greediness and materialism (Odia, 2005). Based on this, African must look for means of removing this cultural obliteration of western education in Africa.

## **DECOLONISING EDUCATION FOR AFRICAN CENTRED DEVELOPMENT**

Decolonizing education fits within larger understandings of decolonization and indigenization at socio-political levels. However, these undertakings address in particular the colonization of the mind, of knowledge, language, and culture, and the impacts of colonization at personal and collective levels of physical, emotional, spiritual, psychological, and intellectual experience

(Yvonne; Dustin; Aubrey; and Jacqueline, 2018). In this time of transition, the work of decolonizing schooling necessarily precedes that of indigenizing education for most educators and learners; yet, in keeping with indigenous knowledge traditions, education must remain in a state of flux as we come to know this work collectively (Armitage, 2008). Decolonizing education, then, is turning away from a homogeneous and staid approach to education to one of embracing alternative, unexpected, and always-changing knowledge systems (Brean, 2016). Generally, decolonizing practices that counter the destructive aspects of schooling are inclusive, community- and strength-oriented, and culturally responsive, and foster collaborative, integrated (wrap-around) approaches to supporting students (Olatokun, and Ayanbode, 2009).

According to Odia (2005) “culture is an important aspect of the human society”. Man’s possession of culture makes him unique and differentiated from other animals in the animal kingdom. In line with this, Morrish (1974) sees culture as a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, laws, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of a society. In corroboration with this Ezewu (1983) wrote that culture is the totality of a people's way of life, the way they do things and the way they feel and behave. This means that to a certain extent, culture determines how members of any social group think, reason, feel, and direct their actions and define their acceptable ways of behaviour for its members. The diversity in of culture across society causes diversities in societies, and groups. In relation to this Oninyama and Oninyame (2002) referred to values as the aspect of cultural practices, actions or objects that are valued in the society. Cultural values of every society must be cherished to the extent that the society will want them not only to be preserved, but wants them transmitted from one generation to another. Based on this, indigenous education should be restored back to main education syllabus to bridge the gap between the formal and informal education. They dominate a very wide area of activities among the Africans ranging from the traditional institutions. This was in tandem with Itedjere (1997) that “the modes of transmission of these values are usually by means of indigenous education” such that, through the process, the community seeks to introduce the young ones and all the individuals to the indigenous education and morals within it. Traditional cultures should be used to improve the younger minds, which would help to develop them at this stage, as that is the main stream of development in life; younger minds must be trained both to receive it and to criticize it and improve upon it. Beginning from indigenous language, children must train in a way that their indigenous language would be cherished and valued. All the communities should also try to preserve and transmit all the important aspects of their culture from generation to generation. This corroborates with the National Policy on Education (2004) that the mother tongue should be the language of instruction at least at the lower level in our elementary School’. This is not seen in our schools as suggested by the policy. Unfortunately, in most African societies today, western education has tended to destroy this trend. Rather, there is competition among parents regarding who among their kids speaks ‘queens’ English better. In Nigeria, where English language is the medium of instruction in almost all levels of education, the situation is made worse by making the language compulsory. On the other hand, penalties are imposed on pupils who speak their mother

tongue, all in a bid to emphasize the superiority of the English language over the language of the people. This act should be discouraged by Nigeria government.

## CONCLUSION

This paper examined decolonising education for African centred development. What remains clear is that there is need to pay attention to home grown ideas in dispensing knowledge. The template for this has been set in some of the policy documents on the subject; what is however lacking is a follow up and implementation. Consequently, this paper recommends that there must be a concerted efforts and following up on many of these documents regarding the subject. Indigenous language and culture should be incorporated into school curriculum in a more meaningful and systematic manner. The western education knowledge should be used to improve their agricultural practice instead of neglecting it. Students, especially, should be made to understand the danger of western education to African culture and reason while there must be decolonisation in our educational system in Nigeria. Also, youths should be encouraged to value the indigenous languages and culture. Public orientation could assist in many of these areas. Also, the orientation agency should be encouraged to acculturate the best aspects of the western education system in order to improve our African practices and to rekindle the dying fire of our ridiculed traditional practice; most especially, religion and language. In that way, this tool will pave way for a happy future, full of new perspectives and conveniences.

Tradition and local history should be viewed from local perspectives, differently from the perspectives of the colonial masters and their associates. The use of indigenous languages as a punitive measure must be eradicated as no culture should be seen as superior to our indigenous culture.

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