A Second Look at Education in Ex-colonies: A Case for Policy (Re)thinking

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ABSTRACT: *This review of arguments around formal education (schooling) acknowledges the developmental externalities of schooling and suggests that school organisation, knowledge practices and language of instruction in ex-colonies require review to serve national agendas. The arguments developed in the paper provided evidence that educational outcomes are not the same, especially in ex-colonies of Africa. It argues, that schooling in ex-colonies tend to de-historicise students and uproot them from their cultural heritage as colonialism does. As such, ex-colonies face national security risks associated with cultural epistemicide, for the loss of indigeneity including loss of indigenous knowledge, language and national identity. Therefore, there is need for a situated analysis of the political economy of knowledge production in order to deconstruct whose knowledge and interest schooling serves in ex-colonies. It is important for educational policy makers and school administrators to take a second look at schooling in terms of how it accords certain privileges and legitimacy to certain forms of knowing while invalidating indigeneity - Indigenous knowledge, culture and identity in ex-colonies.*
KEY WORDS: education, ex-colonies, security, indigeneity, identities, anti-colonial

INTRODUCTION

Overview of Education and Development Debates
Education is a national security matter, and we fascinated by the international acknowledgements of the critical role formal education plays in both individual and national development (Asafu-Adjaye, 2012). This paper contributes to the education debates dating from the 1960s. In the debates, instrumentalist, functionalist and human rights theorists

eulogized formal education (schooling) as a universal good. There are timeless arguments that formal education is seen as "the universal solvent" (Converse, 1972:324), as multiplier right that addresses innumerable social questions (Tomaševski, 2001), as the most "important predictor" (Putnam, 2000:186) when vectored with other variables such sex, place of residence, occupation, income, age, and so on. Fasih (2008) asserts that countries with low levels of education run the risk of being trapped in technological stagnation and low growth. Research evidence from different developing countries over the decades indicates that investments in education engenders national manpower development for enhanced economic growth, personal employability, wages and productivity (Schultz, 2003).

Neo-liberal theorists identify education with non-labour market outcomes such as general wellbeing - improved health, active participation in political processes and improved ability to assert human rights (Harmon et al., 2000; Tomaševski, 2001; Schultz, 2003). They promote formal education for its potential to enhance life chances in employment, enjoyment for broad range of human rights, intergenerational mobility out of poverty and as a tool for reducing conflicts (Streeten, 1999; Sen, 1999; Novelli, 2009). These arguments are overtly established in the neo-liberal propositions behind Education for All (EFA), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the Fast Track Initiatives (FTI) in failed states such as Somalia, which concentrate on the fact that education serves as an engine for economic growth through the accumulation of human capital and boosting levels of social capital (Smith, 1976). This is evident in the policy literature in Ghana where formal education is a given good - it solves the problem of ignorance and increases human goodness; it gives beneficiaries the means for upward social mobility and economic success (MOESS, 2008).

Gender and postcolonial theorists equally argue that education promotes development by extending knowledge, skill and capabilities to those who are marginalised (Connell, 1995; Dunne, 2008). The exemplar is the promotion of girls' education as "key axes through which efforts for development may be realized" (Dunne, 2008:45). On such grounds, schooling in Ghana, and in most parts of the world, is dominated by views of education as critical to long term improvements in productivity, demographic transition, preventive health care and reductions in inequality (MOESS, 2008).

Post development and neo-Marxist theorists present alternative arguments that education is not a benign 'good' at every moment of its historical path, but rather as a set of practices that have been used differently by individuals, groups, governments and international agencies depending on their intention, power and conceptions (Bloch & Vavrus, 1998). David Orr (1991) and Ron Miller (2006) contend that the modern school curriculum follows industrial capitalists' modes supported by global education regimes that do not promote a diversified agenda – they promote cultural supremacy through school systems in developing countries by presenting Western values as the only modern, technological, and developed. Orr (2004:12) argues that school is "a monstrous destroyer of what is loving and life-affirming in the human soul" because the curriculum is neither designed to nourish, nor to cultivate vision, imagination

gentleness and compassion. Schools ultimately contribute to disintegrating culture as teachers implement a delivered curriculum which largely serves the needs of globalisation.

Scholars of the neo-Marxist left and post-development theorists critique schooling as complicit with the new power structures of global capitalism (Dirlik, 1994; Ahmad, 1995). They contend that uncritical pursuance of internationally agreed goals and targets leaves assumptions about the relationship between education and the politics of economic development unexamined (Dunne, 2008; Adzahlie-Mensah, 2014). They critique functionalist international regimes promoting UBE in developing countries as "Globally Structured Agenda", which assumed that "education measures are applicable globally, independently of the needs and capacities of the countries" (Verger et al., 2012:11). Some suggest education systems in developing countries need to be rebuilt (Novelli & Cardoso, 2008) through a more strategic public pedagogy (Novelli, 2009).

Critical theorists analyse schools as sites and sources of violence. Harber (2004) drew on Green's (1990) historical study of the purposes of schooling which argued that schools were initially designed to:

> assimilate immigrant cultures, to promote established religious doctrines, to spread the standard form of the appointed national language, to forge a national identity and a national culture, to generalise new habits of routine and rational calculation, to encourage patriotic values, to inculcate moral disciplines and, above all, to indoctrinate in the political and economic creeds of the dominant classes. … It sought to create each person as a universal subject but it did so differentially according to class and gender (Green, 1990:80)

As such, Sayilan and Ozkazanc (2008) contended that schools are not only sites for reproduction of the dominance of the privileged culture in 'prismatic' societies but hegemonic sites where occupants are positioned among multiple regimes of power in which identities are (re)constructed. The curriculum expresses authoritarianism or a mode of discourse that unilaterally determines packages of knowledge that bureaucratised teachers deliver to the student (the orient) who is not a free subject of thought and action. These proposition is represented in Foucault's (1995, p. 197) view of schools as

> enclosed, segmented space, observed at every point, in which individuals are inserted in a fixed place, in which the slightest movements are supervised, in which all events are recorded, . . . in which power is exercised without division, according to a continuous hierarchical figure, in which each individual is constantly located, examined.

Foucault's analogy represents schools as akin to the metaphorical panopticon meant to "transform individuals: to act on those it shelters, to provide a hold on their conduct, to carry

the effects of power right to them, to make it possible to know them, to alter them" (Shah & Kesan, 2007, p. 12). The proposition is that, like prisons, schools are places divided into cells (classrooms) where the inmates are constantly watched, categorised and regulated (Harber, 2004). Once in school, students are classified, distributed in space and hierarchical boundaries are ascribed (Piro, 2011). Illich (1971) argued that, with such curriculum, schools become one case of modern institutions which persuade people to exchange their real lives for packaged substitutes assumed to extend the developmental externalities of formal education. As Illich notes

> Many students, especially those who are poor, intuitively know what the schools do for them. They school them to confuse process and substance. … to confuse teaching with learning, grade advancement with education, a diploma with competence, and fluency with the ability to say something new. His imagination is "schooled" to accept service in place of value (Illich, 1971:4).

The teacher does not only stand *in loco parentis* for each student but as moralist that indoctrinates them about what is right or wrong, not only in school but also in society at large. The teacher feels authorized to delve into the personal life of students in order to help them grow up in submitting to a particular vision of truth and sense of what is right. Thus, formal education does not allow for critical consciousness, liberation of mind and innovation but that produces individuals that are conformists, passive and docile.

Anti-colonial theorists critique uncritical eulogy of schooling in developing countries as neglecting the epistemic aspects (Nyerere, 1967; Holt, 1969; Postman & Weingartner, 1969; Illich, 1971; Freire, 1972). They refer to education's role in promoting cultural epistemicide in ex-colonies countries through orientalist modes of curriculum organisation in which the school curriculum reproduces practices that retain colonial styles, imagery and doctrine (Said, 1978; Sanjinés, 2007). Ghandi (1993) argued that schooling from its colonial education roots is a citadel of slavery that denies learners object lessons in liberty and self-respect. Harber (2004) London (2000) and Molteno et al. (2000) argue that the original purpose of schools as institutions of control persists in ex-colonies where they remain entrenched by 'beneficiaries' of the colonial education system who have become peddlers of authoritarianism in schooling. Colonial school organisations - systems of domination that undermine local knowledges and portray students - remain intractable as normalized institutional practices (Dei, 2006). They argue that schooling privileges Western knowledge generated through universities, research institutions and private firms and in doing so ignores 'indigenous' knowledge of people in ex-colonies where the institution has been traditionally used to promote Western hegemony (Malinowski, 1936; Stambach, 2010). By 'Indigenous' knowledge they mean the cultural heritage and histories of peoples (see Dei, 2002). This knowledge is relevant knowledge because it

> encapsulates the common-good-sense ideas and cultural knowledges of local peoples concerning the everyday realities of living … saliency of cultural traditions, values, belief systems and world views that, in any indigenous society are imparted to the

> younger generation by community elders. … traditional knowledge, which is inter-generational knowledge passed on by community elders; empirical knowledge, which is based on careful observations of the surrounding environments (nature, culture and society); and lastly, revealed knowledge, which is provided through dreams, visions and intuition. …Indigenous knowledges view communalism as a mode of thought, emphasizing the sense of belongingness with a people and the land they share. It is not individualized and disconnected into a universal abstract. It is grounded in a people and a place (Dei, 2002:4-5).

Warren (1991) further explained 'indigenous' knowledge as the basis for local-level decision making in agriculture, health care, food preparation, education, natural-resource management, and a host of other activities in rural communities.

Anti-colonialists suggest that schooling in developing countries mainly served to sustain Western values that de-privilege local cultures, local knowledge, local languages and identities (Mignolo, 2007). Indigenous knowledge that is fluid and negotiable when applied is replaced by abstract Western knowledge that is constructed outside of the socio-cultural life experiences of students, and in a language in which the student has very little linguistic capital (Dei, 2004). As such anti-colonialists contend that school practices – organisation, teaching and learning - are ultimately connected to global regimes that are intended to serve a unified agenda (Freire, 1972; Giroux & McLaren, 1994). By unified agenda, these anti-colonial writers mean uncritical international regimentation through EFA initiatives are intend to present globalists' and human capitalists' arguments that schooling is a given good without acknowledging the role the institution in promoting Western dominance and cultural dislocations within developing countries. Illich and many others analyse EFA as a complex interweaving of the relationship between schooling and economic growth that sustains Western dominance (Illich, 1971; Said, 1978; Mignolo, 2007; Dunne, 2008). They argue that fixations on achieving EFA as "pathways of development for low income countries" tends to ignore important historical and geographical differences and "flatten process and experience into outcomes" (Dunne, 2008:46). Illich suggests, for example, that international education regimes create an international order built around a Western worldview of education that has become a monstrous destroyer of other cultures (Illich, 1971). Schooling in ex-colonies mainly serves to sustain Western values that de-privilege local cultures, local knowledge, local languages and identities (Mignolo, 2007). Schools are designed based on enlightenment principles of social class inequalities including sequestration and indoctrination by which the teacher becomes custodian of traditions of knowledge, guiding students through a drawn-out labyrinthine curriculum ritual in which he arbitrates the observance of rules and administers the intricate rubrics of initiation and sets the stage for the acquisition of some skill. Therefore, anti-colonialists contend that school perverts the fundamental style of society because the very process which should prepare for life and safeguards of individual freedom are all cancelled through the school curriculum (Illich, 1971; Ghandi, 1993). In that context, Harber (2004) argued that formal education (schooling) in ex-colonies harms society. As such, Illich argues for *deschooling,* which implies

recognition of the two-faced nature of learning – skill instructions and the development of capacity to transform each moment of living into one of learning, sharing, and caring.

Perspectives of Schooling in Ex-colonies

Critical scholars assert that the modern institution of schooling in ex-colonies (former colonies of European empires) is connected to colonial ideologies (London, 2002; Harber, 2004; Freire, 2021). They consider school in Foucault's terms as a colonial institution, suing that colonisation is not a finished business (Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001). The *colonial* is considered not simply as "foreign" or "alien" but something "imposed" and "dominating" (Dei, 2004:15) in terms of persisting "vocabulary of power" and discourses "located within traditions of western rationality" (Rizvi et al., 2006: 251). They argue that a key purpose for the creation and spread of mass systems of formal schooling to ex-colonies was the "need to control populations in those colonies" (Harber, 2004:71). They suggest this control works in multiple ways – producing citizen workers for European merchant houses; creating a consumer taste for European goods; and creating a mind-set of colonial practices as the standard, etc. (Macedo, 1999; Dei, 2004). Therefore, critical anti-colonial theorists argue that analysis of schooling in ex-colonies is not productive "unless the legacies of colonialism are examined" (Viruru, 2005:10) because the fundamental purpose of using schools as institutions of control has "proved impervious to change" (Harber, 2004:71). They justify such analysis for its potential to initiate "radical rethinking of knowledge and social identities authored and authorized by colonialism" (Prakash, 1994:1475).

One research argued that "there has been little critical review of bequeathed colonial school practices" (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2014: xiii) due to "the dismal failure of the postcolonial state to change the existing system so that it reflects changing times, circumstances and social realities" (Dei, 2004: 6). The evidence from research and timeless reading show school practices in ex-colonies mainly perpetuate Western dominance through authoritarian curriculum modes that de-privilege indigeneity and solidify social class distinctions and inequalities (Dunne and Adzahlie-Mensah, 2016; Adzahlie-Mensah and Dunne, 2019). Therefore, I became interested in critical anti-colonial analysis of schooling in ex-colonies by questioning institutional hierarchies, contestations around knowledge production and the implications for social identities (Freire, 2021). Anti-colonial analysis recognizes the importance of Indigenous knowledges emanating from cultural histories and argues that "colonial constructions affect knowledge production with profound material consequences" (Dei, 2006:13). It questions the marginalisation of Indigenous knowledges in the curriculum as an important entry point to account for colonial modes of representation perpetuated through schooling; and how these reproduce inequalities in which discourse and power are inextricably linked (Viruru, 2005).

Within anti-colonial thinking, schooling is one avenue to explain "the way society becomes deposited in persons in the form of lasting dispositions, or trained capacities and structured propensities to think, feel and act in determinant ways, which then guide them" (Wacquant 2005:316). In this view, schooling is presented as the force that creates social norms, and

defines reality for people (Navarro, 2006:16). The institutional 'habitus' is neither determined by free will nor 'structure' because it is created "over a long historical period" (Navarro, 2006:16). Schools consist of rules, principles and structural properties as well as social systems of interaction that support the reflexive monitoring of people. The institutional relations also include 'routinization' of social encounters. Routinization implies assignment of roles and duties that occasion discursive consciousness - that people know their places and perform according to the rules of social order within the institution "in an unquestioning way" (Giddens, 1990:419).

In their analysis of schooling, critical anti-colonial scholars examine the co-existence of different cultures, knowledge and identities (Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001) as well as how institutional power is employed to marginalise as critical indexes (Sayed, 1971; Foucault, 1977; Dei, 2004) to understand the creation of stereotypes and identities and promotion of cultural or national values (Mignolo, 2004). In terms of knowledge construction in school, the critical anti-colonial analysis sits uncomfortably with the performance model of curriculum organisation. They question the implementation of standard curriculum and the regulation of the morphemes in every dialectic expression between teachers and students inside or outside the classroom. In their view, the standard curriculum eulogizes knowledges that are pre-determined, horizontally structured and hierarchically organised and its measures of competence prescribe "behaviour, conduct or practice in one form or another" (Bernstein 2000:166). These standards become 'pedagogic devices' or 'perfection codes' (Evans & Davies, 2005) which tends to regulate and shape the interplay of social interactions. Anti-colonialists view performance modes of knowledge production as the perpetration of the so called 'civilising agenda' (Harber, 2004; Dei, 2004). They suggest that, within the context of Bernstein's performance model, schooling also has other significant roles – control and reproduction – which makes school "a site of struggle, where the negotiations taking place can either strengthen or weaken possibilities for change" (Epstein, 1993:157).

In terms of *control,* anti-colonial theorists suggest that schools operate "on the principle of normalisation" (Sayed, 2004:22) or the creation of a monoculture that limits spaces of freedom for students (Foucault, 1972:208). The relationship between teachers and students is structured within a frame of logic (Said, 1978) where knowledge is predetermined, and functions as a mechanism for coding their relationships (Lawrence & Low, 1990:485). The relationship involves teaching (transmission by teachers), learning (acquisition by students) and evaluation (assessment by teachers) which suggests that teachers determine *what* knowledge students must receive (McLean and Abbas, 2009). This institutional *habitus* is also criticised as creating conditions for *reproduction* - where schooling rather than ameliorates, perpetuates or reaffirms social class inequalities in society (Haber, 2004; Meighan, 1997). One suggestion is that school relations and classroom interactions between teachers and students tend to reproduce inequality (Harber, 2004; Dei, 2004). Teaching is by a delivery model – something teachers (*givers of knowledge*) know is transferred to students who are *recipients* (Harber, 2004). This legitimises students as *sequestered* and *peripheral* beings in the construction of knowledge (Lave &

Wenger, 1991). The dominant classroom interaction is *passive students* whose activities are limited to rote learning (Salisbury & Jackson, 1996) that produces *clever conformists* than *daring innovators* as 'obedient conformity' is rewarded and 'deviant innovation' is punished (Wright, 1997). Thus the school curriculum positions teachers to stress unbalanced cognitive intellectualism (Slee et al., 1998), which requires that students become *indoctrinated* into accepting the 'sacred' knowledge (McLean & Abbas, 2009).

Giddens (1990) argued further that schooling actually perpetrates forms of violence, even making it worse. Harber (2004:69) referred to the "dehumanising nature" of schools. He argued that schools fail to recognise individual's or even group's needs and peculiarities because they are not necessarily designed to do so. He draws on Green's (1990) historical review of schooling and Foucault's theoretical analysis to argue that school relations are characterised by bureaucratic routines – constantly measuring, categorising, ordering and regulating students - essentially designed to prepare people with subordinate values and behaviours. This would suggest that analysis of schooling in ex-colonies should include examining the regimes of power and how these are implicated in the formation of student identities. Therefore, the following sections discuss anti-colonial conceptions of schools as locations of power and identities.

Schools as Locations of Power
Central to critical understandings of schooling is the idea that certain regimes of power in colonial schooling "remain entrenched in ex-colonies and education ministry officials continue to be resistant to the suggestion of changes that appear to offer anything less rigidly defined" (Moletno et al., 2000:13). By regimes of power, I mean the structure of school organisation and social practices that are framed and modulated spatially to ensure continuous control and regulation; and in which students become immersed and resigned (Freire, 2021). Writers from ex-colonies argue that schools have "power configurations embedded in ideas, cultures, and histories of knowledge production, validation, and use" (Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001:300). These ideas of schools as locations of power are expressed in two key concepts: *the coloniality of power* and *coloniality of knowledge*.

What Quijano (2000:547) calls *coloniality of power* connects schools as "geohistorical places" that serve material, political and ideological interests located within "long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism" (Maldonad-Torres, 2007:243). Quijano viewed school as a living legacy of colonialism, informing policy long after colonialism, sustaining practices that position one group over the other by imposing observance of its norms, through the school curriculum for example, in ways that are necessarily characteristic of colonial rule. Stambach (2010) explains that schools were initially designed to help Africans adjust to colonialism.

Discussions of coloniality of power views international regimes on compulsory education, and the promotion of formal education through international spaces and development vehicles

aiming to achieve EFA as meant to asynchronously sustain Western values and principles in ex-colonies (Dei, 2006). In practical terms, school curriculum promotes the use of Western foreign language in place of indigenous languages, of behaviour, of attitudes, of knowledge. Power regimes dating from colonial times are integral in the bells, timetables, hierarchies, standardisations, assessment and rules of discipline that have substantial basis in regulated bodily comportment (Harber, 2004; Dei, 2004; London, 2002; Molteno et al., 2000). School policy and organisational hierarchies are corporeal devices, ensuring that peaceful laws and practices, which help to maintain law and order in schools, may be *instruments*, *masks* or *guises* (CRDD, 2001: 7) that ensure that European superiority reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, learning processes and everyday lives (Foucault, 1980: 39). School processes are framed to control students through routinized authoritarianism, definitive linguistic labels, norms of behaviour, promotion of dominant values and basic assumptions that underlie schooling. For this purpose, students are watched as *subjects* of "uninterrupted examination" (Foucault, 1977: 186) and their "slightest words are linked to obligations that condemn their slightest innovation to conformity" (Foucault, 1972: 208). This ensures that school power regimes extend to "the furthest recesses of task, activity and interaction, mediated through routine, rule and ritual" (Alexander, 2000:562).

In reference to Ghana, Agbenyegah (2008:58) explained that schools should be understood as "spaces of learning and … place" where each event or episode shapes people by giving positions of power to some but not others. Actions, symbolisms and representations in school affect people, shape relationships drawing categories and identities based on social and positional power. Writers cite studies from former colonies including India, Mali, Lebanon, Liberia, Mozambique, Pakistan, Mongolia, and Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, Ghana, which identified the persistence of colonial-style characteristics of authoritarianism, stress on conformity and regulation of students in school (Molteno et al., 2000; London, 2002; Harber, 2004).

Coloniality of knowledge is an epistemic process of privileging some knowledge as more valid for development (Sanjinés, 2007). Proponents suggest that school curricula is exclusionary and do not necessarily serve the development needs of ex-colonies (Escobar, 2007; Mignolo, 2007). As colonial institutions, schools outlived formal colonialism and became "the country town" or "retail trading station" (Smith, 2005:16) for unabashed Eurocentric ideas. They refer to the use of prescribed curriculum and foreign language for instruction, for example, as wholesale disparagement and discard of indigeneity in ex-colonies while serving the agenda of modernity and globalisation (Mignolo, 2002). Colonial control over knowledge remain entrenched in former colonies because education ministry officials continue to be resistant to any change with the refrain that abolition would result in classroom disorder and failure (Moletno et al., 2000; Harber, 2004). For learners, the situation is bleak as Harber (2004:24) explains:

> …power over what is taught and learned, how it is taught and learned, where it is taught and learned, when it is taught and learned and what the general learning environment is like is not in the hands of pupils.

Miller (1990) described such practice as a 'poisonous pedagogy' that positions teachers as carriers of traditions of knowledge. Poisonous because it is directed toward breaking the will of students, in order to make them obedient subjects, with the aid of open or concealed use of force, manipulation, and repression of their feelings. The result, said Miller, is mostly depression, ebbing of vitality and the loss of self. This power practices connect coloniality of power to the coloniality of knowledge as inseparable twins. Freire (1972:46-47) depicted this further:

1. The teacher teaches and the students are taught
2. The teacher knows everything and the students know nothing
3. The teacher thinks and the students are thought about
4. The teacher talks and the students listen –meekly
5. The teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined
6. The teacher chooses and enforces his or her choice and the students comply
7. The teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher
8. The teacher chooses the programme content and the students comply
9. The teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with professional authority which he or she sets in opposition to the freedom of the students
10. The teacher is a subject of the learning process while the student are mere objects

What Freire depicts is how coloniality of knowledge leads to *reproduction of knowledge,* occasioning rote learning of fixed concepts pre-determined in the curriculum where teachers act as "constrained actors" and students as "subjugated knowers" (Talbot, 1998:157). Teachers act as authoritarian transmitters of packaged knowledge prescribed in nationally delivered curriculum that homogenises human experience by totalising and educating students to particular regimes of knowledge (Foucault, 2021; Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001; Freire, 1972). The accompanying syllabus and teaching guides make teachers use delivery modes of instruction or "styles of classroom discipline" that were current in colonial times (Molteno et al, 2000:13). The delivered curriculum assumes that human beings have universal corporeal potential to standards, where individual characteristics are referred to a whole that is "at once a field of comparison, a space of differentiation" (Foucault, 1977: 182). Academic assessments become a process of differentiation - of identifying the *failures*, *academically incompetent* and *the excellent* - setting up a competitive schooling regime that produces resentment towards *academic failures* while positioning 'academic' success as the main door to progress. Using his personal experience, as a product of schooling in Ghana, Adjei (2007) depicted how this coloniality of knowledge makes Ghanaian students feel disenfranchised and disengaged from the knowledge that is being produced, validated, and disseminated in schools. Research in Ghanaian basic schools show coloniality of knowledge has several effects including silent

exclusion, dropping out, students self-perception as knowing nothing and the loss of indigeneity (Akyeampong and Adzahlie-Mensah, 2018; Dunne and Adzahlie-Mensah, 2019; Adzahlie-Mensah, 2014, Alhassan and Adzahlie-Mensah, 2010). On this ground, analysis of schooling in ex-colonies ought to question the political economy of knowledge production, in terms of *what* knowledge is important in the curricula, *whose* knowledge is important, *what and whose* interests such knowledge serves, and *how* the curriculum and pedagogy serve (or do not serve) differing interests (Adzhlie-Mensah, 2014).

Schools as Locations of Identities

In a previous work, I discussed schools as locations of identities with evidence from a Ghanaian Basic School (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2017). In ex-colonies, Harber explains that colonial education "left a legacy of classifications, labels and negative relationships" (Harber, 2004:85-86). In Ghana, Quartey (2007:8) argued that foundational colonial missionary educational practices inhabited "diverse practices … grounded in the causality of race, gender, space, and temporality". Dei (2004:237) pointed to schools as "sites and sources" for the manifestation of "bias, discrimination, exclusion and marginality" proffering that schooling denies heterogeneity and inequalities persist and grow along constructed lines of difference" (p.247). Dei argued that, for the students who are asked to subsume their difference under the rubric of the 'common', the intellectual stakes are high, particularly as a result of hidden and open emotional and spiritual injuries that are inflicted on victims when the expression of their differences are denied or construed in deficit (Dei et al., 2006:57). These arguments suggest that schools have place characteristics for the production of identities. In exploring the literature on schools as locations of identities, I take a relational view of *identities* as "*being-with … others*" (Nancy, 2000:32) or 'becomings' within particular normative and technical regimes (du Gay, 2007). I see *identities* as organised distinctions and classifications within social groups. Schools, writes Nayak and Kehily (2008:111) are endowed with "powerful imaginary tropes of identification". Harber (2004) argues that schooling has always played a part in the creation, reproduction and modification of group identities.

Uzzell (2005:3) argued that "schooling inescapably involves judgments about truth and virtue, about what kind of person a youngster should aspire to be". Others explicated argue that school relations make students subservient members as public pedagogy allows teachers to author views about students, describing them, teaching them and 'ruling' over them (Agbenyega & Klibthong's, 2011:407). Also, the institution position students to develop *positive* and *negative* "academic identities" (Olitsky, 2008:30). The *positive academic identities* imply that individuals consider themselves as insiders to education; they see themselves as members of scholarly learning communities. Students with positive academic identities seek to accomplish school-related goals through actions such as completing assignments, reading independently, and studying for tests (Jackson, 2003). These individuals align themselves with academic cultures, identifying with teachers and conscientious peers. They see themselves connected with academic ways of life. They display positive academic identities when they present themselves as the kinds of people who embrace formal education, who take school seriously.

Students who display *negative academic* identities tend to see themselves as lost in school, as educational outsiders, as unsuccessful learners who do not belong in academic settings (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2014). Students who demonstrate negative academic identities often act out apathetic or defiant behaviours as they resist school and school-related literacies. Students from marginalised communities, usually develop negative academic identities because schools are part of the dominant culture that has historically discriminated against them; and they put in little of the time and effort needed to excel academically, because they view striving to achieve in school as futile (Olitsky, 2008). Some students who develop negative academic identities become *demotivated,* lose self-esteem and feel that *they* "are performing to meet *someone* else's expectation and goals".

Some view schools as institutions implicated the creation of images of 'otherness' located in the exteriority of space (Foucault, 1977; Escobar, 2004:214) where students become *objects of inspection* (Foucault, 1977:186). As Foucault suggests, students become *coerced subjects:* they come to anticipate responses to their actions with *anxiety-provoking* feelings, which damages children by removing imagination, creation and the importance of emotions in relationships. Foucault's perception of school, as a space deliberately designed for supervising and hierarchizing further suggests that the institution creates conditions "seriation of school subjects" (Piro, 2008). Seriation implies the institution singles out individuals or groups and enables comparisons to be made between *the lazy, the stubborn, the incurably imbecile* and others. Seriation provides ways in which students think memories that structure understandings of *self* and gives positions of power (Košir & Pečjak, 2005). This suggests that school hierarchy is an important 'regulator' and determinant of group and individual identities.

Apple's (2006:70) notion of "structures of feeling" or a set of metaphorical concentric circles stacked on top of each other in a way that limit the possibilities of social action also suggest the role of schools in developing student identities. Gordon et al., (2000) take this view further by suggesting that students develop a 'desert of feelings' of various kinds - pleasures, desires, anxieties, joys, fears - by which individuals, with some measure of agency and resistance, contextualize schooling within the broader circumstances of their lives to make present and future decisions. Harber (2004) adds that schools map aptitudes, assesses characters, draws up rigorous classifications, and ultimately acts to structure particular subjectivities. Thus it is important to explore student perspectives on the curriculum to deconstruct their views on construction of knowledge and spatial distributions within the institution.

School language and identities
One of the powerful aspects of colonial education was the imposition of the language of the colonizer as the medium in which teaching and learning should happen in schools. In contexts such as Ghana, the British Education Ordinance of 1852, legislated the use of English as the language of instruction (GES, 2001) and condemned indigenous languages as inadequate teaching media. This has since persisted in educational policy despite postcolonial psychology's description of the replacement of indigenous languages by the languages of

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colonizers as *linguistic imperialism* (Macleod & Bhatia, 2008:581). Scholars have noted, the use of the language of the colonizer for education in ex-colonies have become the "stealer of dreams, swallower of identities" (Glowacka and Boos, 2002:295) the erasure of an identities (Irvin & Gal, 2000:38), the cutting of a tongue (Painter, 2010) and the silencing of a people (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2014). As Fanon argued, language was the "arsenal of complexes that has been developed by the colonial environment" (p.23) for "the amputation of … being" (p.17). Teaching in foreign language is capable of radically uprooting students from their ancestry, for it is "implicit that to speak is to exist absolutely for the other" (Fanon, 1967:13).

Johnson (2000:177) argued that, to impose a language is to radically remove a significant and powerful dimension of personal and social identity. As Painter (2010:252) explains, such practice positions the colonial subject as not "having a language". The use of English, French, Spanish and Portuguese as language of instruction in ex-countries constitutes both erasure of local languages and the sustenance of colonial linguistic regimes as educational language choice is neither neutral nor separable from issues of power and ideological constructions (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2022).

Critical pedagogy theorists argue that the use of foreign language for instruction places limitations on students' 'talk' and represents a "logical and structural dominance of one language over the other, the standard over the non-standard" (Bhat, 2008:2). Research in Ghana shows that using English as medium of instruction is an ideological de-legitimation of indigenous languages, cultures and the identities of students (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2020; Adzahlie-Mensah, 2014). It promotes English culture and systems of thought as the primary measure of academic competence to the effect that students cannot progress in school if they possess limited English language capital. I have argued that this poses a national security risk to Ghana as national values are sacrificed (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2022) as English is "an insignia for colonial authority and a signifier of colonial desire" for monoculturalism that "sustain a tradition of English "cultural" authority' (Bhabha, 2004:146-150). However, the colonial use foreign language for education have been kept in place in ex-colonies on the logic of national lingua franca without recognizing the epistemic effects and the existential contradictions. This should concern national security actors who are concerned about citizenship and the development of Ghanaian national identity.

School culture and identities
Anti-colonial analysis takes school culture and social relationships seriously as key factors involved in the production of student identities. A historical study Quartey (2007:8) explained, colonial roots of education in ex-colonies inhabited

> "discourse and actions that touch on the articulation of values, thought, ethnography and cultural symbolisms that express power relationships between the missionaries and the local inhabitants... arising from the confrontations between imperial and local cultural identities."

Quartey explained that missionary schooling involved imposition of European ideals: "the moral codes they cast, their religious ambitions" (Quartey, 2007:8). School practices were dominated by the missionary teachers' national values, beliefs and "Western styles for dominating" (Rizvi et al., 2006:250). As c*ulture* is both product (of the accumulated history and practices) and a process (constantly renewed and recreated by existential circumstances) that regulates social conduct, I take a view of *culture* as aspects of the institution that are less visible, less openly acknowledged and constituting a largely hidden agenda although inextricably linked to formal, organisational structures of interactions that set up expectations and constraints of performing certain *social acts* and verbally displaying certain *stances.* Some earlier works, present *social acts* as socially recognised, goal directed behaviour, while *stances* meant a display of socially recognised points of view or attitudes, whether epistemic or affective (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2014). The utility of this understanding resides in a view that school members may use cultural acts and stances to construct both their own identities and those of other interlocutors.

For example, Illich (1971) argued that school cultural practices teach students to know their place and to sit still in it. Rwomire (1998:8) argued further that cultural apparatuses, usually opreationalised through the hidden curriculum and social practices infantilise students in knowledge construction. Freire (2021) highlights this in terms of 'oppressor and oppressed' states of domination. First, it supports *prescription*, which involves teachers peddling official pedagogic discourse to *students* that are pedagogically conceptualised as *empty vessels* into which standardised materials (textbook knowledge that is fixed) are poured (Harber, 2004). Second, the official knowledge sets as both the norm and the standard for "occluding particular identities or ways of behaving, of constructing knowledge and, of understanding" (Freire, 1993:29), "following as it does the guidelines of the oppressor" (Freire, 1993:27). Third, the oppressor-oppressed relationship produces "sub-oppressors" (Freire, 1993:27) whose ideal is to adopt an attitude of "adhesion" to the oppressor as their self-perception as oppressed is impaired by their submersion in the reality of oppression. A study of school regimes in Ghanaian schools explained that the sub-oppressors included school head, teachers, prefects and seniors-on-duty (see Adzahlie-Mensah, 2014). These sub-oppressors adapt to the structures of domination, resign to it in a self-regulating manner and implore others to do same so long as they feel incapable of challenging their oppression.

Using the case of Ghana, Agbenyega (2008:52) suggested that there is "connectivity between the school place, pedagogy, identify forms and learning". He draws on James et al. (1998) to suggest that irrespective of children's own agency, potential and competence in creating positive cultural identities, place factors such as aversive control of students, coupled with transmission pedagogy cause students to experience a diminishing sense of themselves. Research in a Ghanaian basic school shows that place factors in the school tend to damage students to extent that they have a self-perception as being nobodies (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2014).

Religious identities in schooling

There are arguments questioning religious plurality or discrimination in schooling on the grounds that the colonial establishment of schooling came on the heels of the works of missionaries (see Crossouard et al., 2021; Asare-Danso, 2008). Luggard (1922) argued that the British colonial administration inherited "communities whose standards have been moulded by centuries of Christian ethics" (Luggard, 1922:432). They see school religious practices under colonialism as an important political, social, and economic force by placing the issue squarely in the context of ecclesiology – the relationship between the church and modern civilization, which was a major aspect of the colonial agenda promoted through the institution of schooling (see Thomas, 2001). Commentaries highlighting the use of mission schooling to reshape social life are not hard to find (Stambach, 2010; Brenner, 2007; Hoernl´e 1931;). Some argue that schools 'religified' norms (Stambach, 2010) which subordinate local cultural codes and forms of knowing "to connections among religion, opportunity, and education" (Stambach, 2010:362). Brenner (2007) discussed how religious imposition through schools was designed with the attempt to control culture and to control knowledge in West Africa during colonization. Brenner used the case of Mali and argued that it was in opposition to French colonial authority that the first medersas (Muslim schools) appeared.

Stambach (2010) suggested that the present EFA mechanism of social inclusion and reform should regard religious practices associating schools in Africa with European Christian missions and unabashed Eurocentric ideas that represent an affront to today's sensibilities and represent "a key point for understanding the salvational overtones of functionalism in relation to schooling and development policy." From the historical connections, Bowie (2000) equally suggested that religious-based social stratification is attributable to religious legacies embedded in school cultural codes. The suggestion is that religious practices in schools turn to marginalise certain identities and occlude them. Ghana once attempted to address this when a legislation was passed that,

> religion should be put on either the first or the last period on the school time-table so that parents who did not want their children to study Religion could withdraw them from the class during the lesson period (MOE Report, 1957:10).

However, the literature on school religious practices shows a reversal. Evidence exists that students are forced to observe particular practices (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2014) supporting criticisms that school religious practices can be used for oriental purposes (see Said, 1978). Reminiscent of what is depicted in Haviland's (2002:362) *cultural anthropology,* school religious practices were being used in ways that support Luggard's (1922:432) eulogy of the ways in which missionary religious activities have been 'helpful' in transforming the colonized societies into states of dislocations and tensions. Evidence from research in Ghana, shows that religious difference was is not tolerated in Ghanaian public schools (Adzahlie-Mensah, 2014). In each basic or high school, administrators ensure the observance of one religious practice. While religious freedom is entrenched is entrenched as a fundamental human right in Chapter

Five of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, each public school endorses only a particular form of religious practice and forces all students (whether or not they shared that religious belief) to participate public. In basic schools, Wednesday mornings are used for worship. The global conclusion has been that Education Ministry Officials find it difficult to abandon persisting legacies of religious regulation which they experienced under colonialism's civilizing mission (Molteno et al., 2000). School administrators argue that tolerating religious differences will bring chaos to the institution. The important lesson is that schools become sites where religious identities are constructed and reconstructed in ways that make the decolonisation of schools an imperative.

Gender identities in schooling

Scholars in some ex-colonies argue that gender discrimination in ex-colonies was largely brought through the establishment of the schools and practices that promoted European and missionary gender systems in which women were marginalised. Gender analysis of schooling explains "school as a site for perpetuating or challenging gender violence and injustices" (see Parkes et al., 2013:553). Anti-colonial analysis argues that "an integral part of the strategies that underlies and permeates" school discourses are the silences and absences of the ways in which the institution reproduces gender constructions in society (Foucault, 1976:27). For Foucault, arrangements of institutions and the broader panoptical modes of surveillance embodied in the architecture of schools shows that the organisers took gender permanently into account. Nayak and Kehily (2008:98) view the modern institution of schooling "as sites where particular technologies for gender production are in occurrence". In Ghana, the historical literature on the beginnings of schooling explains that 'native girls' "were trained as good servants and housewives, but above all for the Lord" (Debrunner, 1967:149-150; Pfann, 1965:23). Girls were trained in needle work or sewing and educated to become celibate while carpentry, masonry, blacksmithing, shoemaking were organised for boys (Debrunner, 1967). This practice is usually cited as the beginning of formal gender divide into schooling. The argument is that school practices institutionalise gender variously. This substantiated in some earlier works (see Adzahlie-Mensah and Eshun, 2017; Dunne and Adzahlie-Mensah, 2016; Adzahlie-Mensah, 2014) that explained how the "corporeal dimensions of belonging together" in school "are implicated in the (re)production of stereotypic inferiorisation of females within the wider society" such that "femaleness is associated with being short, being watched and exhibited in … the performance of service functions" due to "the role of schools … in the reproduction of ideologies of female subordination."

A major effect of *coloniality of knowledge* is the *coloniality of gender* (Lugones, 2008:8) in terms of how schooling "expresses and reaffirms existing inequalities far more than it acts to change them" (Giddens, 1997:420). A typical example is how the modern system of schooling contributes to the reproduction of gender norms such as "the exclusion of women" (Oyěwùmí, 1997:123) "introduced by the West as a tool of domination that designates two binarily opposed and hierarchical social categories" (Lugones, 2008:8). Although reflections on 'borderwork' undertaken in schooling showed that male-female "borders are regularly challenged and transgressed" (Nayak & Kehily, 2008:119), Amnesty International (2008:1) noted that "schools reflect wider society" and cites the example that "the same forms of violence –

physical, sexual and psychological – which women suffer throughout their lives are present in the lives of girls in and around schools". Also, research by Parkes and Heslop (2011) shows that pathological identities are reproduced through the institution of schooling.

There is plenty literature explaining that schools cannot be ignored as part of the gender order and they were not immune to being used as institutions for the regulation and (re)production of gender identities (Adzahlie-Mensah and Eshun, 2017; Dunne and Adzahlie-Mensah, 2016; Parkes et al., 2013; Parkes & Heslop, 2011). It is maintained that schools are masculine spaces "connected to a web of local and global flows" in which gender formation "is subject to state governmentality" (p.97-98). They argued that there are direct relationships between school and the nation state that does not allow students to challenge the popular culture that is trans-imposed on them through schooling. The literature suggests that entrenched hidden curriculum practices provide spaces where ideas about gender learning are processed, contested and culturally re-imagined (Dunne and Adzahlie-Mensah, 2016). Thus, as colonial institutions, schools outlived formal colonialism by sustaining persistent categorization and discriminatory discourse including the historic European ranking of women as inferior that was reflected in the social and economic order of colonial times (Lugones, 2007). In that sense, national security vehicles such as the ends desired in national gender policies fundamentally remain on paper, explaining why ex-colonies struggle to achieve gender equity in political arenas and in other economic and social processes. The argument is that schools are locations where power is expressed in terms of both social relationships and knowledge production processes that delegitimizes national value systems while sustaining Westernized ideas and practices.

Concluding Comments

The arguments developed in this paper raise various issues for the attention of national security policy and strategy, social policy as well as educational administration and management. The arguments suggest that formal education (schooling) in ex-colonies does not simply serve human capital needs unless it is critically evaluated in terms of *whose* knowledge is important in the curricula, *what* knowledge is important, *what and whose* interests such knowledge serves, and *how* the curriculum and pedagogy serve (or do not serve) differing interests. From the discussions, the present system of education in ex-colonies inhabit colonial ideologies and practices. In particular, the school curriculum is structured and restructured to validate Western knowledge and traditions of Western rationality. There are power and identity issues emanating from the colonial ideological origins of formal education. The developmental externalities are compromised on grounds that the language of instruction choice and much of what is learnt is designed to serve the needs of global agendas. Indigenous knowledge and languages remains outside the curriculum. This detachment of knowledge from local needs especially using foreign language for instruction has epistemic effects – 'killing' Indigenous languages, and national cultural identities.

The colonial nature of schools is implicated in the production of centre-periphery identities. In particular, pedagogic processes constrained both teachers and students to be conformists, docile and controlled at every level of task, activity and interaction. The use of pre-determined

national curriculum that is delivered through performance modes of knowledge production makes students passive receivers of packaged knowledge transmitted via textbooks and authoritarian teachers. Knowledge production processes strip students of the knowledge and skills that they bring with them to the schooling setting – in favour of objectified Western knowledge and practices. The social practices within school are based on normalisation of particular identities and religious practices. Education, which is needed to develop an individual's sense of belonging to community with a history and a culture, is inappropriately sacrificed for certain knowledge and skills required to access employment in both state and private organizations. This affects the ability of the school system to contextualize standards and excellence to needs and conditions of the local people, resulting in an intelligentsia with little or no relevant skills and knowledge to address national needs. This situation traduces the developmental externalities of schooling, requiring a careful review of the education system being implemented in ex-colonies.

From this background, it is important to take a second look at formal education (schooling) in ex-colonial "African countries [that] are still influenced by their colonial history" (Verger et al., 2012:126). The use of foreign language for instruction should be a national security concern. The concern should not be to discontinue the use of foreign language per se. It should concern an evaluation of the curriculum in terms of how it serves national needs of developing national identities, protecting indigeneity and developing skills fundamental to national development. As Dei's (2004:219) argued, "developing critical knowledge of the content and quality of instruction" will highlight the structural processes that permeate the processes of educational delivery as well as the need for "explicating ideologies that continue to create and perpetuate" colonial educational outcomes. Without this, ex-colonies face national security risks associated with cultural epistemicide - the loss of indigeneity including loss of indigenous knowledge, language and national identity. Therefore, educational administrators and policy makers in ex-colonies ought to take a second look at educational policy making and administration. There is the need for a comprehensive national security assessment of how educational policy, the curriculum and practice at the school site serve the national interests and preserves national values.

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