

# **THE NEED TO DEVELOP AFRICAN CULTURAL CONSERVATION EDUCATION ACADEMIES: A CASE STUDY OF EASTERN AFRICA**

**Jackson Morompi Ole Masago**

Admin Assistant Liason Section, Maasai Mara University, MED Sociology of Education; Former Manager Maasai Mara University Mara Training, Research and Conference Center, Kenya

**Dr. Reuben Gibson Kweingoti (PhD)**

Senior Lecturer in Religious Studies, Member of Curriculum Development- Religious studies, Post Graduate Student's Career Guidance; Former Director Bomet Campus Maasai Mara University, Kenya

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## **ABSTRACT**

This article sought to establish the need for developing cultural conservation educational academies in East Africa. Today, Africa remains the world's poorest continent. There could be several reasons for this but one of the key ones is that education has not been relevant to the needs of the African society. Substantial resources have been expended to boost education in Africa, even though such resources may not have been adequate. The basic problem is that educational structures were formulated by colonialists who had a cultural background different to that obtaining among Africans. Decades of self-rule and independence have not succeeded in empowering Africans through enabling them determine their educational

framework. In part, this difficulty is a result of the continued social and economic ties between African countries and their former colonizing powers. Although Africa is politically independent, it remains technologically and economically dependent on countries that colonized it. Current educational structures are meant mainly to foster this bond, rather than reduce it. Reforms in African education were conceived and implemented within the framework of his relationship, hence they did not go far enough to develop and foster African culture.

**Key Words:** *African cultural conservation education academies, education in pre-colonial Africa, social framework of cultural education in Africa*

## **INTRODUCTION**

This paper is meant to argue that most learning that occurred in Africa was necessitated to meet the exigencies of the whole society through training of its individual members either in groups or on individual basis. This approach fostered cooperation and collaboration amongst the community members and promoted the perfection of knowledge and skills before being transmitted to posterity. According to Mosweunyane (2013) essentially training was intended to enable an individual to play a useful role in society. The learning of the use of words and gestures to convey messages in the most eloquent way was emphasized and rewarded by both the traditional leadership and village elders. As noted by Biggs (2011) Africans at various parts of the continent used a wide range of symbols and motifs for communicating ideas. It is important to mention that the learning did not follow any comprehensive and formal curricula, which in most cases resulted in important knowledge and skills getting lost when the custodians of such knowledge and skills died or lost their cognitive abilities, such as going insane.

The traditional schools, such as Bogwera and bojalein Botswana, played an important role in packaging and passing indigenous knowledge and skills orally from generation to generation. The paper argues that they were impediments to the preservation of approaches that were employed in the training and learning by members of African societies because of the secrecy that surrounded how the processes were conducted. Most importantly, the paper will demonstrate

that less emphasis in the documentation of what was supposed to be learnt compromised standardization and formalization of knowledge and skills.

The paper further argues that the infiltration of Western forces during colonialism facilitated the obtrusion of western knowledge systems into African societies, which undermined the essentiality of African indigenous knowledge systems and destroyed the zeal in Africans to modernize and ameliorate their systems. The infiltration of Western knowledge systems served to re-direct development of the African continent by emphasizing its making in the image of Europe and North America. The Eurocentric approaches, such as class lectures and teleconferencing make Africans undermine their own ways of transmission of knowledge. As noted by Boateng (2009) 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.

The African continent experienced its own form of training and learning before it was colonized and even before the arrival of the missionaries. The training systems of Africans such as the traditional schools did exist, but most importantly, the family unit served as an important structure for knowledge provision and acquisition. It is important to mention that these training facilities got undermined as a result of importation and imposition of knowledge systems from colonial powers. In his lectures on the philosophy of history, Hegel as cited by Akinyemi (2011) is said to have stated that Africa is no historical part of the world; it has no movement or development to exhibit and that is why the colonial era should essentially be an age of enlightenment.

Education was seen as a vehicle through which western cultures can be fostered or promoted in the African continent by its colonizers. This arrangement viewed Africans as having little or no knowledge of their own, which meant they had to learn advanced, organised, systematic or sophisticated skills. Therefore, education in Africa cannot be perfectly understood without first understanding the strengths and intentions of the very forces that gnarled it, which according to Mcgregor as cited by Badat (2009) was originally motivated by the desire to provide “moral” upright and honest Christian clerks, traders, interpreters and chiefs.

An excellent example is that given by Emeagwali (2006) who stated that, all instructions in a school in Tanzania was in French, Latin was studied in preparation for priesthood, and Swahili, which is an African language, was forbidden. Most importantly, as noted by Akinpelu (2008) the imposition of the Western education was meant to reinforce the colonial conditions by inculcating the values of the colonial society and training individuals for the service of the colonial state. It promoted the capitalist system, which feed on the individualistic instinct of mankind and induced in the attitude of human inequality and domination of the weak by the strong.

The African continent is underdeveloped, which leaves it with no choice but to accept what is imposed on it by the developed world as education. The world today is divided into ‘advanced’ or industrialized countries and ‘underdeveloped’ ones most of which are in Africa (Loomba, 2008). It is these divisions that will make Africa rely on what is determined by the developed countries as worthy of been learnt. This is possible chiefly because of the technology that serves to influence the African continent and the rest of the developing world his paper attempts to essentially advance an argument that education existed in what is today known as Africa but lacked the theoretical base. This was even before the continent got into contact with representatives of the civilized North. The limitations in the knowledge about what existed in Africa before colonial invasion can be attributed to lack of documentation to verify that knowledge and skills did exist in Africa long before what is known today.

The evidence that is available is often not accepted by the developed world or deliberately distorted, which disadvantages Africa and denies it an opportunity to be recognized in the global arena as ingenious or inventive. As noted by Boateng (2009), Western formal education did not consider cultural transmission as part of the educative process. It is important to note that it would be difficult for Africa to retrieve its knowledge and skills that existed before the continent was besieged by Western powers. This is because of continued façade to keep the continent under western influence and control. As long as Europe dominates over Africa there is no how the latter’s education systems can gain recognition.

Cultural educational academies existed in Africa long before the continent was colonized or even before the slave trade. Knowledge, skills and attitudes were passed from generation to generation mostly through word of mouth in the African societies. This is because African societies, just like any other society, share the common ancestry which has led to the most unique characteristics, which is the ability to adapt the environment to suit the inhabitants. For instance, Akinyemi (2011) does indicate that the use of tools, the construction of huts, all suggest that human society, including African societies, became much complicated during the past million years. This complication, it has to be explained, was necessitated by the ever changing societal exigencies and the need to adapt to emerging changes. It is this understanding that provides enough evidence those African societies through interacting with their environments learnt skills that were required for them to survive. The making of hunting tools for instance, characterized most African societies, mostly during the time they were peripatetic or nomadic. As noted by Badat (2009), wandering in the bush enabled members of African societies to know their immediate surroundings such as river systems, the hills and forests, the type of flora and fauna and other characteristics. This means knowledge and skills pertaining to resource management was unquestionably obligatory. It has to be noted also that the knowledge that Africans had was scientific and as intricate as any other from other parts of the world. As noted by Emeagwali (2006) Africans while interacting with their environment and transforming various raw materials overtime, arrived at various hypotheses about nature, the natural world and society. The fabrication of metallic tools and implements, textile production, traditional medicine or food

processing, involved the application of various techniques, principles, and propositions arrived at through observation of the environment and experimentation at various levels.

The knowledge and skills were shared with newly found members, such as those who were captured during battles or those who became members through birth and marriage. The learning about the environment also conveyed information about the measures that were employed by African societies in conservation of resources. For instance, in Southern Africa and other parts of the continent, taboos were used as a conservation strategy. For instance, an animal was not killed or eaten because it was respected as a totem. The traditional schools were used to provide the necessary skills and knowledge that African societies needed for their survival. This qualifies as education if we are to borrow a definition by Moumouni as cited by Bappa (2010) who said, education is everything that prepares the young people 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.

The production of tools required skills for immediate use and their modification, which was determined by two distinct challenges. Firstly, the need for African societies to protect themselves against predators meant that tools had to be modified as new techniques and strategies of killing were devised. Secondly, the annexation of members of a tribe and other resources such as land necessitated tribal conflicts. The tribal conflicts meant that strategies in battle were important if the tribe was to maintain its identity and protect its resources. It was noted by Biggs (2011) that the African continent always had small communities which moved quite frequently, sometimes conflicting with each other. This situation often necessitated the mastery of the necessary strategies for society to survive, which promoted the learning of such strategies through demonstrations by the elderly to the young (Breetzke, Eksteen & Pretorius, 2011).

The African societies that got defeated were often conquered, subjugated and integrated into those that emerged victorious. This meant that new members were taught or learnt new values, cultures, strategies and skills. According to Pandey as cited by Dirisu (2009) the children were required to have knowledge, skills and attitudes of societies in which they were born as in the traditional societies of the past all over the world; there was no clear separation between educational activities and socialization. The knowledge, skills and attitudes as well as social norms, mores and values peculiar to a given group were learnt by the children, which meant that transfer of information which translates into learning took place (Gough, 2013).

The tribal battles also meant that divine intervention was always important as defeat was interpreted as a curse that is cast upon a society by its ancestors. This means that the African societies worshipped even before the arrival of members of Western societies who brought foreign religions such as Christianity to the continent. It is therefore palpable that African societies learned important facets to execute their functions of worship. It is disquieting that Kayira (2015) notes that pre-literate, and the religions of pre-literate people not only leave little

historical evidence but are characteristically eclectic, mutable, and unsystematic. With this it is important to acknowledge that some evidence can be extracted from what is surmised to have taken place within traditional schools; suggesting that the schools offered well-arranged training on religious practices (Kreps, 2013).

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The significance of education and knowledge to a country cannot be over underscored; in many parts of the world education is viewed as a fundamental and crucial human right. Education is one of the fundamental criteria to quantify the growth, development and improvement of any country. However, the level, quality and standard of instruction in Africa has seen a geometric drop in the previous two decades and this appalling trend has made Nigeria of the major African country that have the greatest number of students relocating to different parts of the world looking for quality training (Marginson, 2011). In Africa development of cultural educational academies is essential for the realization of the development goals. However it faces various challenges. For instance in east Africa, there is poor funding by government and other responsible bodies. Education in East Africa is managed by the Ministry Of Education in the countries. Local authorities also assume responsibility and liability for executing public education and state schools at regional levels. This makes financing of the educational sector essentially a legislative undertaking (Dugard, 2003). Further the development of cultural educational academies faces a challenge of lack of qualified teachers and lack continuous training for teachers. For instance in Kenya, the poor working condition and poor compensation of teachers and educators are subjected to have demoralized able and qualified instructors from taking up showing occupations, they preferably apply for other preferred paying employments over teaching, while the couple of educators who have taken up the showing calling did as such because of absence of better employments, consequently, their low level of commitment as they are dependably vigilant for greener fields (Mueller & Bentley, 2009). The development of cultural educational academies faces a challenge of corruption, indiscipline and fraud in the academic sector. In Uganda, there have been various reports of indiscipline in Nigeria's academic framework, most particularly in the higher institutions where instances of cultism in schools have been on the ascent and additionally pay off to pass exams. Scholastic extortion and fraud is endemic at all levels of instruction (Mawere, 2015). The other challenge is poor standard of living and bad governance. The issue of bad administration related with most African nations like Nigeria has likewise influenced the development of education in Nigeria as the continuous awful administration has additionally expanded the level of destitution in the nation. There is little literature on the need to develop of cultural educational academies. Therefore this article seeks to bridge this gap and determine the need for developing cultural educational academies in East Africa.

## **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The objective of this article was to establish the need for developing cultural conservation educational academies in East Africa.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **The Social Framework of Cultural Education in Africa**

This section sets out the social framework of education in Africa through outlining the relationship between African societies and their educational systems with reference to both the pre-colonial and the colonial period. Following Ogunniyi (2011) the subject matter of the section is analyzed with reference to a number of concepts including 'industrial and pre-industrial societies', 'primary and secondary groups', 'subsistence and exchange economy', 'social stratification', 'division of labor', occupational, specialization', and' formal and informal education.

Africa in the pre-colonial period included a large number of autonomous societies. Some of these attained a high degree of political organization, for example, the kingdoms of Ashanti and Dahomey in West Africa, and the Zulu under Shaka in South Africa. Other societies were acephalous, that is, without organized kings or chiefs, such as the Talletsi, the Ibo and the Yako of West Africa, the Nuer of southern Sudan, and the Tonga of southern Zambia. Despite such political differences, pre-colonial African societies were marked by certain distinctive traits so that it may be in order to treat them together in a study such as this. An individual in such a society was born, grew up, and spent most of his life in his village, which contained a small number of people. Much of his time was spent in the production of food. There was a simple division of labour based chiefly on sex and age. Men lived in close relationship with nature (the land, vegetation, and animals) because of limited technological development. They were related to each other by extended ties of kinship which bound them to such unilineal kinship groups as the lineage and the clan. These ties supported a network of reciprocal ritual, social and economic obligations (Parker & Rathbone, 2007).

In this framework marriage involved a contractual agreement between two groups of kindred. Political power was based on religion and partly emanated from the ritual relationship of the chief, or the king, to the land and to the ancestral spirits. Despite differences in status, emphasized by formal etiquette and ritual behavior, there was a general uniformity in the standard of living (Mosweunyane, 2013). Although the society was stratified between the rich and the poor, the main aim of the former was to gain followers by giving poor people land, for which they themselves had no use, and surplus stocks of cattle and grain.

## **Education in Pre-colonial Africa**

How was education organized in societies of this nature? In the early phase of colonial administration some missionaries in Africa believed that they were bringing education to entirely uneducated peoples. This supposition would have been valid if educated were equated with literacy and formal schooling. In fact, detailed accounts of African peoples by anthropologists leave one in no doubt that African societies did possess a kind of customary education, a system which worked reasonably well, given limits imposed by the society within which it had to operate. In this section an attempt is made to highlight some of the more important aspects of traditional African education. It should be noted that although the past tense has been used, the system described persists even now, to a limited extent, in various areas (Parker & Rathbone, 2007).

The main aims of African customary education may be identified as follows: 1. to preserve the cultural heritage of the extended family, the clan and the tribe; 2. to adapt members of the new generation to their physical environment and teach them how to control and use it; and to explain to them that their own future, and that of their community, depends on the understanding and perpetuation of the institutions, laws, language and values inherited from the past. Understandably in accordance with these objectives the content of African customary education grew out of the physical and, what is more important for our present purpose, social situation. As to methods, both formal and informal processes were utilized for the transmission of knowledge, skills, ideas, attitudes and patterns of behavior (Sharpes, 2013). Thus tribal legends and proverbs were told and retold by the evening fireside, and through them much of the cultural heritage of the tribe was kept alive and passed onto the children). There were riddles to test children's judgement, and myths to explain the origin of the tribe and the genesis of man. Such oral traditions, narrated with care and repetition, additionally constituted the African child's training in what was often a complicated linguistic system without a script. Names of trees, plants, animals and insects, as well as the dangers and uses of each were learnt as boys herded cattle or farmed land with their fathers, and girls helped their mothers in household work (Tilbury, 2011).

Imitative play, too, formed an important part of informal education. Boys staged mock battles, and made model huts and cattle pens; girls made dolls, played at husband and wife and cooked imaginary meals. The importance of play in customary education in Africa has been underlined by many observers. Indeed in many traditional societies of Africa, formal education most strongly manifested itself in the initiation ceremony. This ceremony marked the transition from adolescence to adulthood and often consisted of circumcision for boys and clitoridectomy for girls. The extent of formalism in the initiation and the post-initiation training can, with advantage be illustrated with reference to the Poro society in West Africa. This society functioned among the Kpelle, the Gbunde, the Loma and the related peoples of Sierra (Warren, 2011).

A coming-of-age ceremony thus sustained the individual at a critical stage in his life, the transitional period between late childhood and adulthood, through interaction with his peers. In

many places different clans, villages and segments of a tribe participated together in the ceremony, thereby stressing the integration of the entire society. It was during the ceremony and the accompanying training that a major part of the tribal mythology, accumulated knowledge and skills, and appropriate attitudes were transferred to the young initiates. But to the extent that adults took part in the ceremony some of these cultural components were reinforced for them too. To make the occasion memorable, sanctions of all kinds were brought to bear upon the neophytes, thereby asserting the authority of the society over the individual. The ceremony was attended by considerable pomp and spectacle which impressed upon the participants the significance of the occasion. Popular display was always contrasted with certain secret rites (a series of acts including gestures and verbal expression, their sequence established by tradition) that were confined to those who had themselves gone through similar experiences (Tamtam, Gallagher, Olabi & Naher, 2011).

In those societies where Islam gained a foothold, a formal system of instruction was provided through Koranic schools. Religious education, a basic requirement of Moslem societies, involved the learning of the Koran. Thus, various African countries saw the establishment of Koranic schools to arrange for the teaching and learning of the Koran and the Arabic language. A Koranic school was usually set up in or near a mosque. The teacher sat in front of his pupils, controlled their activities and recited to them the verses from the holy book which was repeated by the pupils. Older pupils were taught to read and write the Arabic script. For most pupils formal education ended with the memorization of a part of the Koran and the acquisition of the skill to read and write the Arabic script; but more able and ambitious pupils could enter the next stage of schooling which involved the comprehension of the meaning of the Koranic verses learnt by rote, reading other writings such as Hadith (that is, the traditions of the Prophet), followed later by learning the rules of grammar. The programme of studies at this stage might also include other branches of knowledge, viz, theology, commentaries on the Koran, logic and jurisprudence (Tilbury, 2011).

Apart from formal training for all adolescents, there was, in most societies, formal education for a number of functional categories. Among these could be included herbalists, drummers, blacksmiths and priests. In most cases, training for such occupations was organized through a kind of apprenticeship system. In a limited number of societies which developed standing armies, formal training in warfare was imparted through an institutional arrangement of the state. The training of children took note of sex-difference very early. This was justified on the ground that boys and girls at a later age would be expected to perform different tasks, boys engaging mostly in farming, house-building, herding and hunting, and girls in cooking, keeping the home and child-rearing. Thus boys were ridiculed if they dabbled in something which was supposed to be the preserve of girls, but were encouraged when they tried to take part in operations considered appropriate for boys. The sex role of the girls was emphasized in like manner (Ogilvie, 2013).

The differentiation of sex roles was pointedly brought to the fore in mantoombwa, a popular game among Tonga children. In this make-believe game children built themselves play houses on the outskirts of the village. In the building process, boys did the work that was generally done by grown-up men in hut-building. They went to the bush and cut poles and constructed huts. The girls undertook women's work, involving cutting grass for thatching the huts and preparing food for the working men (Ogunniyi, 2011).

### **African Cultural Erosion in the Expense of Western Cultures**

Africa has remained underdevelopment regardless being endowed with natural resources. Perhaps, this is the reason why Zambia is one of the poorest in terms of economic development. We often follow the blue print development models of west thinking there are a solution to the economic ills the country has faced over many years now. This is a difficult issue that begs a very honest answer exactly from the policy makers. Many scholars have expressed different thoughts as to why this is so. The challenges of Africa being underdevelopment are a matter of concern among many of its inhabitants (Rodney, 2012, p.263). Some theorists argue that Zambia has on several times copied development theories from the west at the expense of their traditions and culture identity. On the contrary, other theorists do argue that our underdevelopment is a result of exploitation of the natural.

According to critics of neo-colonialism, they argued that the western culture expresses itself in form capitalism or globalization which advocates for liberalization and market economy of forces of demand and supply (Amin, 2013, p.41). The global capitalism thrives on cultural imperialism overtime. This is a system of making the culture and taste of the indigenous people to look inferior to the imperialist. In the developing countries, colonial administrators, Christian Missionaries as well as Anthropologists were the main instruments of changing the ways of the indigenous people and enthronement of the Western culture which in essence was to create the desire for food, clothing, education, religion and other aspect of western culture (Igwe, 2010, p.158). The creation of this desire transformed into the demand for western products which empirically is the backbone for the expansion of markets for the finished products of these countries; and indeed, the basis for the lopsided trade relationship between the west and the developing world; and the fabrication of dependency syndrome (Igwe, 2010, p.158). The fallout of this is the internationalization of western culture, as Africans and other indigenous values were trampled upon as irrelevant, unprogressive, backward primitive, conservation, traditional and unscientific; compared to the assumed modern, civilized dynamic and scientific values of the Europeans and her allies (Igwe, 2010, p.159). This was concretized by the western education which further indoctrinates Zambia and other developing nations to the point of unquestionable preference for the western culture as evidence in the adoption of Jewish/European names, religions, languages and the craze for western music, dances, dresses, housing, household appliances as well as diet.<sup>6</sup> The situation is more pathetic in this era of globalization when information and communication technology has eliminated the national boundaries which would

have reduced the domination of the local values by the predatory western values through internet, satellite television and radio (Sida, 2009, p. 18).

It can also be debated that through interaction of various cultural norms and traditions, the Africans continued to borrow and diffuse of its own cultures in the westernization style. In reality, globalization process has raised controversy because it has given impetus to the spread of a global culture. In view of global trends of western culture, western values and traditions are gradually being transported across the globe as the standard and acceptable way of behavior while Africa remains on the backseat of cultural transformation (Akinyemi, 2011). No wonder the once respected and rich African culture has been abandoned if not totally collapsed over the years and we have nothing to show our own cultural identity. This paper, therefore, argues that the Africans were brain washed critically thinking that following our cultural straits as being backwards because we live in one global village. The western colonist used the education system to try and exert their influence of western civilization on the Africans (Standage 2005, p.34). The reality of globalization on the Africans is that there is so much controversy with regards to the rise of a global culture in which Western life is being adopted as the normal way of life. However, the impact of globalization on individuals, nations and the global world is that the westernization is considered supremacy though many scholars have expressed divergent and dissenting views (Standage, 2015, p.34). Though it is generally agreed that globalization has a political, economic, cultural and even religious impact on individuals, nations and the world at large, however, many specialists disagree on the nature and extent of this impact. While some people agree that it is all positive, some people are of the considered view that it has nothing but negative impacts on the cultural norms and tradition of any given society (Standage, 2015, p.34).

The argument so far shows that the west has often underplayed the impact of slave trade on Africa's development. But it is a known fact that during slavery millions of able-bodied Africans were forcefully taken to Europe and America thereby denying Africa the needed man-power for development (Rodney, 2012, p.236).Also, Modernization theory de-emphasizes the impact of colonialism on development and how different types of colonialism affected different countries of the world differently (Rodney, 2012, p.236).It is on record that Africa where extractive colonialism took place witnessed more exploitation than colonies in South America and Asia. In fact, from all indications, colonialism and neo-colonialism penetrated and dis-articulated Zambian economy and structured it in such a way that we now perpetually remain dependent and underdeveloped (Rodney, 2012, p.236).

According to the Japanese, interpersonal trust is an important cultural strength, especially in large corporations, and if a person loses this trust he or she brings shame to the entire family. There have even been occasions where people have been forced to commit suicide. In Africa, as a consequence of colonization, most of the traditional cultural values have been eroded or weakened, in particular, the concept of trust. In many African countries people do not trust their governments because they feel that they are not doing much to reduce unemployment and

poverty or to combat corruption. In Japan, if a senior government official is accused of corruption, the official immediately resigns to face the law (Breetzke, Eksteen & Pretorius, 2011). In Africa, nobody resigns; if anything, they will fight back and claim that their detractors are on a witch-hunt. In Africa, at the business level, the concept of trust is selective. For example, in fields such as law and medicine there are some professionals who share facilities but maintain separate and distinct accounts. In family-owned small and medium-sized enterprises, it often happens that family members find it difficult to get along together once the head of the family dies. In some cases, siblings and children start fighting, resulting in protracted legal suits (Kreps, 2013).

### **Importance of Conserving African Valuable Cultural Practices for the Benefit of African People and the World**

The importance of educating youth in their own cultures, as well as using indigenous languages to educate them is essential in conserving cultural education. Educational and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) observed that millions of children continued to be taught in languages they did not use or even understand. It noted that the participation of indigenous peoples in designing curricula was still limited, and education still fell short of eliminating prejudice and discrimination targeted at indigenous peoples (Marginson, 2011). The lack of indigenous education, emphasized a representative of indigenous youth, would continue to set indigenous youth apart from their own cultures. Keeping in mind that education was the key to self-determination, its recommended that educational instruction take place in indigenous languages. Most of children were at a much higher risk of dropping out of school due to the discrimination, which could be addressed by teaching African culture and history in public schools. At present, many Africans are deprived of the opportunity to take pride in their indigenous background, which hindered their identification with the Ainu culture and history (Dugard, 2003).

African culture is embedded in strong moral considerations. It has a system of various beliefs and customs which every individual ought to keep in order to live long and to avoid bringing curses on them and others. Social values can simply be seen as those beliefs and practices that are practiced by any particular society. The society has a way of dictating the beliefs and practices that are performed either routinely by its members or performed whenever the occasion demands. Hence, we have festivals, games, sports and dances that are peculiar to different societies. Religion in African societies seems to be the fulcrum around which every activity revolves. Hence religious values are not toyed with (Mueller & Bentley, 2009). African traditional religion, wherever it is practiced, has some defining characteristics. For instance, it possesses the concept of a Supreme Being which is invisible and indigenous. It holds a belief in the existence of the human soul and the soul does not die with the body. African traditional religion also has the belief that good and bad spirits do exist and that these spirits are what make communication with the Supreme Being possible. Economic values of the traditional African society are marked by cooperation. The traditional economy, which is mainly based on farming

and fishing, was co-operative in nature (Mawere, 2015). It is important that African countries try to preserve indigenous languages and sacred sites, as well as recognizing traditional lands and natural resources. Lamenting the tragic disappearance of entire indigenous cultures, governments are urged to protect traditional languages in national constitutions, and encouraged UNESCO to set up programs aimed at recovering indigenous culture. The importance of culture either in a developed or developing country is evident in the lives of the people. Culture is a binding force among the people, as people are united through cultural identity. Thomas–Hoffman (n.d) identifies cultural identity as essential for the peaceful cooperation and civilizations. She noted that if people have a strong sense of self-identity through culture, they are more likely to interact peacefully with other cultures. Most of the cultural identities of a people include language, dress, song, food among others (Badat, 2009). Oral information as an aspect of culture according to Okoro (2010) is relevant, reliable and is provided at the nick of time. It is transmitted directly and verbally. Nielson (2007) opines that culture is the set of distinctive, spiritual, materials, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group and it encompasses art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and belief. In fact, the protection and preservation of the diverse culture of the world is one of the foundations on which the United Nations was built (Bappa, 2010).

In Africa, cultural values are transmitted from the elderly to the younger generations orally. This is done in form of folklores, folktales, stories, and songs among others. It presents in-depth meaning to what a people believe and binds them together. Mirja (2009) opines that culture has a special role in building up the modern society and in mobilizing the capacity of its members. Technology has contributed so much to further transmit cultural values in the present age. With the advent of video recording and satellite televisions, most people are identifying with their culture everywhere in the world. This was confirmed by Mirja (2009) that information technology will even make it easier to combine these elements in future than in the past. The value of information and communication technology is far reaching. Dirisu (2009) citing Wikipedia (2005) says information and communication technology could be defined as an umbrella or a general term that encompasses all technologies that assist in the manipulation of communication.

Africa has many cultural values and beliefs. Successful organizations believe in competition and rely on the hard work, commitment and loyalty of their employees. Interestingly, many African employees of major multinationals have worked hard and given exemplary service which has helped to make these companies profitable (Breetzke, Eksteen & Pretorius, 2011). Instructive examples of this are legion, including Lonrho in East Africa and mining companies in South Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Zambia. A typical example is the case of foreign mining companies in South Africa, such as De Beers, which traditionally were very keen to recruit Basotho workers and also nationals of other neighboring countries to work in their mines because they were so dependable and hard working. Ironically, when these Basotho miners and those of other nationalities returned home in 1994, many of them failed to find work

because they had no experience in areas outside the mining industry. Many former miners were unable to adjust easily and take on other, unrelated but available, jobs without upgrading their skills (Biggs, 2011).

By and large, there are marked differences between the working attitudes and values of those Africans who have worked for foreign companies and those who have always worked for themselves. Specifically, those Africans who worked for foreign employers learned discipline and commitment to the companies for which they worked, and this helped them to manage their own businesses as individuals. Apart from these cases of individuals who worked for foreign firms, there are also African communities which are reputed to have great business acumen or entrepreneurial skills and whose members are versatile in various sectors of their economies. Examples of such peoples include the Chaga in Tanzania, the Serahule in the Gambia, the Fulas in Guinea, Mali, the Niger and other nearby countries, the Ibos and Hausas in Nigeria, and the Kikuyu in Kenya (Dirisu, 2009).

### **Cultural Conservation Education Academies in Africa**

Education did not start only after the famous Berlin conference of 1884-1885, which was Africa's undoing in more ways than one. As noted by Blij and Muller (2003) the colonial powers superimposed their domains in the African continent and by the time Africa regained its independence after the late 1950s, it could no longer fully regain its indigenous education. As noted by Margalit (2014) European ideas about politics were inevitably transmitted to the colonial subjects, along with science, religion, economics and literature (p. 38). The superimposition of colonial values on the African continent changed the lifestyle of Africans in many ways, which meant changes also in those things that Africans had to learn. The Africans received Western education which was meant to 'civilize them'. As stated by Mkandawire (2015) 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. Adedeji (2016) points out that, the education introduced in what is Tanzania today was modelled on the British system, but with even heavier emphasis on subservient attitudes and on white collar skill. It emphasized and encouraged the individualistic instincts of mankind.

It led to the possession of individual material wealth being the major criterion of social merit and worth. This meant that colonial education induced attitudes of human inequality, and in practice underpinned the domination of the weak by the strong. Education in Africa during colonialism was used to convert Africans into foreign religions. For instance, in Botswana some schools were built by Catholics for purposes of providing Western education and religious teachings. According to Farouk (2009) the missionaries realized that African religion, art, music and other social activities were very closely connected with each other. The colonialists were not accommodative and aggressively wanted to replace any forms of learning that the African continent already had when they arrived.

This was despite their understanding that changes can be effected on what society already has. For instance, between 1050 and 1200 BC changes took place in England and Western Europe generally, which opened a new era in intellectual life and education. Modern European-style education in Africa was begun by the Portuguese missionaries in the fifteenth century. There is very little written evidence to indicate what they achieved. Later, in isolated cases, European administrators and traders set up schools formulated for African children. But the real foundation of the Western-type school system in Africa was laid by the eighteenth-century missionaries. This is true of most colonial powers such as Britain, France and Portugal, although there were national and local differences. In the period following the First World War, colonial administrations in Africa assumed greater responsibility for education. In most colonial territories Directors of Education were appointed and committees were set up in European capitals for assistance to formulate official policies on African education. The result of such activities was to create a system of education that continued to operate, with some changes, until the 1930s (Fiala, 2008).

The church-government dualism in Africa was symptomatic at once of the limitation of the colonial administration and the social function of, the missions. In lending help to the missions, European administrations in Africa were working on the basis of their experience at home. The understanding between the church and the state in Europe was extended to Africa but, in so doing, colonial powers were considerably relieved of administrative and financial burden. On the other hand, the character of the missionary society conditioned, in effect, the type of schooling offered. While Anglican and Catholic missions, constituting by far the largest majority, were principally concerned with providing academic education, evangelical missions, whose preachers originated more often from the artisan class in the metropolitan society, tended to teach manual skills, over and above literacy and arithmetic. The importance of missionary schools was further reflected in the economic function they performed. With the expansion of trade and administration, both the government and commercial enterprises heeded local staff to fill the lower posts which it would have been impossible to fill by expatriates (Mosweunyane, 2013).

The second feature of colonial education was that it was minimal in nature. The number of students who benefited from it was small. On the Gold Coast the first Director of Education was appointed in 1890, but by 1902 the number of children in primary and middle schools was only 15000, rising to 35 000 in 1920. The population of the territory during this period was between two and three million. In French Africa pupils were chosen with great care. The first contingent always included the sons of chiefs. Next in order were sons of notables, civil servants in the colonial administration, employees of European trading companies and business houses and former members of the Senegalese infantry. It was not only that the number of children who went to primary schools was small; whatever education could be provided touched the pupils but lightly. This was mainly due to the high drop-out rate in schools. Many children left school after only a short stay, semi-literate at best (Mosweunyane, 2013).

Colonial education was not merely limited quantitatively, it was also marked by a heavy stress on primary education. The spread of secondary education in British dependencies of Africa has been uneven. Sierra Leone witnessed the establishment of the first grammar school for boys in 1845, and for girls in 1849. About 30 years later the first secondary schools were opened in Nigeria and the Gold Coast (Ghana). By 1937 fifty-eight schools were classified as secondary schools in the four British dependencies of West Africa; but not all of them provided a full secondary program. As opposed to this, in Uganda only Makerere College offered facilities for full secondary education, while Kenya could boast of two junior secondary schools; both run by missionary societies. In French West Africa an annual supply of thirty-five secondary school teachers was considered sufficient, not merely to provide against attrition due to normal retirements but also to satisfy the needs of a gradual expansion of education at this level. This number was meant for a territory which now comprises eight countries (Mauritania, Mali, Senegal, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Upper Volta, Benin and Niger) and which is about as large as Western Europe (Mosweunyane, 2013).

The general neglect of secondary education in the colonial period is illustrated by the fact that in 1952 (at the beginning of the last decade before large-scale decolonization in Africa) enrolment in African secondary schools came to less than 8 per cent of the total primary school enrolment in Northern Rhodesia (now 'Zambia'). The corresponding figures for other countries were: the Gold Coast (Ghana) 2.1 per cent, Nigeria 2.9 percent, Sierra Leone 8 percent, Uganda 3.5 per cent, Kenya 2.1 per cent and Tanganyika 11.8 per cent.<sup>13</sup> However, in several territories colonial governments set up certain institutions modelled on English grammar schools which became well known for their academic excellence. Some of these were the Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone, Achimota in the Gold Coast (Ghana), Katsina in Nigeria, King's College, Budo, in Uganda, the Alliance High School in Kenya and Munali in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia)(Parker & Rathbone, 2007).

Colonial education was characterized, too, by a pronounced European bias. This was reflected in the provision for the medium of instruction and in the curricula. Teaching was generally conducted in the language of the colonial power. Finally, colonial education in Africa was generally marked by a major stress on the liberal arts. There was little by way of technical, vocational or professional instruction. Agricultural training was not highly developed in societies which depended overwhelmingly on farming. This was the general picture of what happened in practice. In a number of cases the colonial administration, as well as missions, devised vocational curricula and attempts were made to implement them. Thus, on the Gold Coast, an official move sought to introduce training programmes in agriculture and trades as early as the 1850s. Various official documents repeated the need for the vocational education several times until the independence of the territory in 1957(Mosweunyane, 2013).

### **The need to Develop Cultural Conservation Education Academies in East Africa**

Cultural conservation education academies and training in Kenya has undergone tremendous transformation over the last five decades. Interestingly, for many years, legal education and training was under the superintendence of no clearly discernible regulatory agency.<sup>3</sup>As exquisitely observed, “In the 70 years of colonial rule in Kenya, no facility for legal education was set up.”<sup>4</sup> This was perhaps because other professionals, such as engineers, doctors and agriculturalists were considered more important than lawyers. One commentator contends that during the colonial era, lawyers were assigned relatively minor roles (Parker & Rathbone, 2007).

Despite a large national commitment of personal and financial support, many problems occurred as primary education became available to large numbers of Nigerian children. Many millions of children received a primary education but it was often of low quality (Bray, 2009). Inspectors responsible for primary schools were surveyed a decade after the initiation of the effort to achieve universal primary education. They indicated that conditions in Cultural Conservation Education Academies were continuing to be such that quality education was difficult to obtain (Sunal et al., 2009). Most research studies carried out in Uganda used government statistics or focused on the reports of administrators. As has been true elsewhere in Africa, little data have been available from those who teach primary school students. A study carried out by Sunal and Sunal (2011) interviewed primary teachers, and attempted to build a profile of the status of primary education as it was experienced and perceived by those who taught at that level.

The other important area in which Africans were secretly trained was on witchcraft. According to Brain (2009), in African societies witchcraft did exist and was passed on from generation to generation by those who practiced it. It is important to indicate that witchcraft lacked scientific explanation in the Western sense, which made it less favorable. For instance, Brain (2012) indicates that, there was the widespread notion of a mystical power or force which can be tapped by elders through the medium of ancestral spirits and which traditionally was one of the most effective means of disciplining the young to obedience of the old (p. 373). It is lack of scientific evidence on witchcraft that provoked attempts to reject and abolish it by Western powers. According to Dirisu (2009) the common practice of the use of medicine to harm or protect, to ensure health and fertility in peace, safety and victory in war was common amongst African societies. Some medicines were herbal remedies, others purely magical. Some were common knowledge, others the property of guilds or individual specialists. The specialists were trained, which means that formed part of African education. It is evident that learning that was brought into the African societies got structured to produce individuals who did not fully identify with the values of the continent. According to Koma (2011) The characteristics of colonial education are that it promoted and encouraged individualism, it regarded accumulation of wealth as a measure of success in life, and it conditioned those who received it to despise those who did not receive it, made its recipients despise manual work and made its victims accept anything European as the paragon of excellence.

Boateng (2009) also states that, the traditional role of education- bridging the gap between the adult generation and youth- is gradually giving way to the development of the so-called creative individual who is completely removed from his/her tradition (p. 109). It is important to indicate that Western education antagonized efforts by Africans to influence it and to appreciate the contributions made by Africans. As noted by Emeagwali (2006) for example, they are connections that exist between Egyptian mathematics and the so-called discoveries that made celebrities out of Greek scholars, such as Archimedes and Pythagoras. The written sources of African history such as works by Africans themselves namely: Hamadhari, Al Masudi, Al Bakri, Al Idrisi, Al Umari, AlMuhallabi were not taught in African institutions. Equally affected were significant African historical writings of the twelfth and thirteen centuries such as, The Tarikh al of Sudan, The Tarikh al Fattash, The Kano Chronicle and The Chronicles of Abuja that are originally based on Orature (p. 231). The Africans that excelled in schools received scholarships to go and study in European and American universities, which further distanced them from their African cultures. The learning and teaching strategies and techniques that African societies had employed for lengthy durations were discarded (Breetzke, Eksteen & Pretorius, 2011).

A major part of the cultural heritage of an African people was transmitted to children and adolescents through these informal activities. Additionally, many societies had organized instruction. Lucy Mair in *An African People in the Twentieth Century* describes how Ganda fathers would, through formal instruction, teach their children appropriate manners and the knowledge of genealogical positions of different clansmen. Kenyatta, in *Facing Mount Kenya*, analyses how, among the Kikuyu who are endowed with a pronounced age-set system, formal education was, in the past, imparted through succeeding stages of initiation, from status to status. The assumption of each status was accompanied by a sequence of rites which organized instruction of one sort or another. Initiation ceremonies and formal training for adulthood have also been reported from many other societies of the continent, especially from East, Central and Southern Africa. Among these may be mentioned the Sidamo (Ethiopia), the Nandi (Kenya), the Masai (Kenya and Tanzania) and the Pare and the Makonde (Tanzania) (Parker & Rathbone, 2007).

## **CONCLUSIONS**

It is very important to conclude by indicating that Africa had its own form of education that made African societies to survive. The arrival of the colonial forces embarked on an agenda to make African knowledge and skills to be inconsequential and engaged in an undertaking to replace them. Even where African institutions were researched on and found to be credible, such as Egyptian civilization, they were not accommodated in the education of the Africans in the manner that would have made them to have a sense that they were equally capable and had a history worth studying. To a large extent it has to be admitted that the colonial powers did achieve their objective of an intrusion of a foreign education in the continent. It has to be noted

that indigenous knowledge, skills and attitudes were important for the continent of Africa because they were relevant and the continent would have advanced if it was left to develop its education systems. It can be concluded that it is necessary for more research to be done to unearth important knowledge systems that belong to Africa, which can be utilized in the economic, political and social advancement of the continent. It is important to admit that it will be impossible to retrieve the knowledge, skills and attitudes that existed in Africa before the continent experienced colonialism because in majority of cases no documentation that is reliable can be found. The infiltration of foreign educational systems that took place and continue to take place have benefitted and continue to benefit the Africans so much that they will resist any effort geared towards taking them to the form of education that Africa had before colonialism. It has to be noted that the African continent is part of the 'global village' and cannot in its current economic, social and political situation afford to function in isolation. This means the technological advancement that is so far realized will remain attractive to Africans, which will further compound the problem of indigenization. It has to be admitted that the African continent has experienced changes that are important for its education system to alien, if it has to remain on course in adding value to the development of the continent. It will also benefit the continent to encourage African scholars who are in the continent to conduct research in order to salvage what can be of use in giving the world a new understanding about the continent's knowledge systems.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Many recommended that indigenous languages be integrated into national curricula, and urged United Nations agencies to design materials sensitive to the cultural and educational needs of indigenous peoples. They also stressed that multilingual education should occur at all educational levels, and that indigenous peoples be trained so that they could compete both nationally and internationally. There is a need to Develop African Cultural Conservation Academies to boost African Cultural Education programmes by encouraging development of African Cultural archives among others. Culture is indeed a vital factor to be taken into consideration when discussing or contemplating action in development. Rather than see this as an impediment to development, the continent should take advantage of this rich cultural diversity in its quest for economic development and should change its attitude towards work, interpersonal trust, time, youth and women. Successes in Botswana and other countries prove that Africans can be punctual, innovative, entrepreneurial and forward-looking. In addition, much greater use should be made of the creative talents available in the continent, of its drama, films and music as effective tools for raising awareness among the African people of the need for education and for a change in their negative attitudes and values to boost their economic development. There is a need for awareness of the diverse nature of society in the country. The Africans need to accommodate experiences of all people and be part of educational planning. The handling of diversity will be a contentious issue for years to come, during which upheavals and changes in educational philosophy and practice will still be part of South Africans' lives. To handle diversity effectively in education, educators need to recognize the validity of differences. It

requires firstly a reappraisal of personal and institutional ideologies and perceptions, and secondly a frank conviction and dedication to facilitate and manage learner diversity.

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