APPROPRIATING COLONIALISM: COMPLEXITY AND CHAOS
IN THE MAKING OF A NIGERIA-CENTRIC
EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

BY

JOAN OSARIEMEN OVIAWE

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the requirements for the degree of
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To the Faculty of Washington State University:

The members of the Committee appointed to examine the
Dissertation of JOAN OSARIEMEN OVIAWE find it satisfactory and recommend that
it be accepted.

___________________________________
Michael T. Hayes, Ph.D., Chair

___________________________________
Dawn M. Shinew, Ph.D.

___________________________________
Pauline Sameshima, Ph.D.
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APPROPRIATING COLONIALISM: COMPLEXITY AND CHAOS
IN THE MAKING OF A NIGERIA-CENTRIC
EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Abstract

By Joan Osariemen Oviawe, Ph.D.
Washington State University
December 2013

Chair: Michael T. Hayes

The persisting colonial legacy beclouding the Nigerian education system ensures that, post-independence, education in Nigeria still suffers from the twin crisis of identity and relevance. As a result, the prevailing colonizing epistemology that frames pedagogical and curricula ethos have led to the colonization of the Nigerian mind. This study explores the making of a Nigeria-centric educational system by employing the theoretical frameworks of post-colonial theory and indigenous epistemology and uses Critical Discourse Analysis as a methodology for data gathering and analysis. Additionally, the study draws from Chaos and Complexity theories to support the indigenous epistemological framework used to establish an intellectual lineage between indigenous and western knowledge forms in the creation of a new and hybrid educational system called Nigeria-centric.
This study also argues that to re-imagine Nigerian education is to engage in a decolonization of the mind, as a form of epistemic disobedience against the epistemological imperialism and epistemicide engendered by neo-colonialism and colonialism. It advances a reclamation of core elements of the indigenous system of education that were useful pedagogical tools before the advent of colonialism and combining them with valuable components of western education to create a hybrid system that is culturally responsive, pedagogically regenerative, quality-based, skills-enhancing and technologically advanced.

Finally, the study describes a Nigeria-centric educational model with five main characteristics namely: complex, interdependent and interconnected, oral/written, contemplative/scientific, global and functional. This model is neo-indigenous and promotes inclusiveness while empowering students to master the skills necessary for them to lead productive and self-sufficient lives.

The idea of a Nigeria-centric educational system implies a move towards a philosophical, pedagogical, and curricula framework that is emancipatory, cultured, transformative, localized and empowering. This type of re-imagined education will occupy an important space in society as the site for cultural reproduction, transmission and social change. It will be situated at the nexus of a decolonization of the Nigerian mind and the advancement of sustainable development which will help to build a cohesive national identity, one where each of the ethnic nationalities that constitute Nigeria can “see” their patch-work in the mosaic that makes up the country.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>British Broadcasting Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>BEC</td>
<td>Basic Education Curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BECE</td>
<td>Basic Education Certification Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDA</td>
<td>Critical Discourse Analysis</td>
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<td>CMS</td>
<td>Church Missionary Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>DA</td>
<td>Discourse Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>DfID</td>
<td>Department for International Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education for All</td>
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<tr>
<td>FCT</td>
<td>Federal Capital Territory</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>JSCE</td>
<td>Junior School Certificate Exam</td>
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<td>JSS</td>
<td>Junior Secondary School</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICAI</td>
<td>Independent Commission for Aid Impact</td>
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<td>JAMB</td>
<td>Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSCE</td>
<td>Junior Secondary Certificate Examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>NCE</td>
<td>National Certificate of Education</td>
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<td>NECO</td>
<td>National Examination Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>NERDC</td>
<td>Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCEE</td>
<td>National Common Entrance Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NINLAN</td>
<td>National Institute for Nigerian Languages</td>
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<tr>
<td>NTI</td>
<td>National Teachers Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>SSCE</td>
<td>Senior Secondary Certificate Examination</td>
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<td>SSS</td>
<td>Senior Secondary School</td>
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<td>UTME</td>
<td>Unified Tertiary Matriculation Exam</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Education Fund</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Education and Scientific Committee</td>
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<td>UBE</td>
<td>Universal Basic Education</td>
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<td>UPE</td>
<td>Universal Primary Education</td>
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<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>WAEC</td>
<td>West African Examination Council</td>
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<td>WASSCE</td>
<td>West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination</td>
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Dedication

Dedicated to my beloved sister, role model and shero

Barbara O. Emode (nee Oviawe)

You are the exemplar of how I want to lead my life; imbued with the spirit of kindness, generosity, sacrifice and love

Uruese. Osanobua o khian de ba rue. Ise!
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

“Our students don’t know enough so they cheat”

So, the bottom line is our students don’t know enough to carry them through simple examinations and so they cheat. After spending six years in school, they are still not prepared for their final examinations. This is due to the lack of confidence. It is one thing to cover a syllabus and another to cover it very well and not many schools cover all the topics effectively. So, fundamentally, not much learning and teaching are going on in schools. (Okpala, 2013, para. 4)

Education in Africa perpetuates the colonization of the African mind. This colonization of the mind occurs as a result of an alienating education system that is Eurocentric and seemingly without an African social, cultural and economic identity (p’Bitek, 1989; Nabudare, 2006; Nyamnjoh, 2012; Obanya, 1995; Uchendu, 1979); a colonized and poorly implemented education policy across the three tiers of primary, secondary and tertiary education (Chinweizu, 1987; Jagusah, 2001; Mamdani, 2007; Mazrui, 2001; Thiong’o, 1986); and lastly, borrowed and received education reform initiatives dictated by the funding priorities of first world countries as well as bi-lateral and multi-lateral donor agencies (Brock Utne, 2000; Mazrui, 1997).

In trying to mimic the rhetoric of global development, African elites, governments and policy makers have acquiesced to an education model that is a copy of the original borrowed copy from the metropole, which is more foreign than domestic and which emphasizes what Nyamnjoh (2012) calls “mimicry over creativity” (pg. 1). Notwithstanding the troubled history and deleterious effects of colonial education in Africa, hope still abounds as pockets of forward-
thinking learning initiatives, imaginative and regenerative pedagogies that foster cultural endogenization are cropping up all over the continent. An example is the Gao School Museum in Mali, an educational model that promotes an integrative and mutualistic relationship between the curriculum, classroom and community (Maiga, 1995).

With the end of colonial rule in Africa, education has become a *sin qua non* in the social, cultural and economic development of African countries, as well as in the development of an authentic post-colonial African identity. Education’s new found role and elevated status is couched in terms like ‘knowledge economy,’ ‘human capability’ and ‘human capital’ development. While many independent African countries have tried to expand and build upon the infrastructure and institutions left behind by the colonialists as a means to address new challenges and opportunities in a 21st century technological age, unfortunately, the successes have not been outstanding (Nsamenang & Tchombe, 2011). For example, education policy development and implementation are still very much top-heavy, mis-managed, alienating of the majority of the people and besieged by the twin crisis of identity and relevance (Jagusah, 2001; Mamdani, 2007; Mazrui, 2001).

The “colonial and colonizing epistemology” (Nyamnjoh, 2012, p. 1) dominant in the education system has led to what Nyamnjoh (2012) describes as the “devaluation of African creativity, agency and value systems, [leading] to an internalised sense of inadequacy” (Nyamnjoh, 2012, p.1). This sense of inadequacy is akin to “racial melancholia” (Eng & Han, 2002). Which Koh (2011) defines as the “process whereby racial self-knowledge becomes a site of psychological trauma for colonized subjects” (para. 1). Thus, as education systems in Africa continue to suffer from a crisis of identity, there are growing calls for an African educational
renaissance that will lead to a critical review of the goals and purposes of education in Africa (Nsamenang & Tchombe, 2011).

As many African scholars and post colonial writers continue to critique what they view as the shortcomings of colonial education in Africa, Mazrui (1978) provides a critical analysis of the colonial ideology which serves as the foundations of African education. He sees the neo-colonial forms of control through political, cultural and economic dependencies of African countries on their former colonial rulers as a further subjugation of sovereignty and autonomy of African nations. He writes that “very few educated Africans are even aware that they are also in cultural bondage. All educated Africans … are still cultural captives of the West” (p.13).

Similarly, Uchendu (1979) argues that colonial education had more negatives than positives, thus, he claims, colonial education led to the “subordination of Africans” (p. 3). He alleges that the quality of colonial education that was made available to the colonized were adaptations of the original metropolitan education which served to preserve dominance by the colonial powers. Hence, colonial schools were alienating instead of holistic; individualistic, as opposed to communal; and isolating rather than integrating students back into their indigenous communities as productive citizens and potential leaders (Uchendu, 1979; Woolman, 2001). With the robust body of works critically analyzing colonial education and its legacy, Woolman (2001) concludes that “[o]n the whole, African assessment of pre-independence schooling is negative” (p. 29). This conclusion is supported by other African and Africanist writers in their assessments of the negative effects of colonial education. Woolman (2001) observed also that “[t]he critique of colonial education continues to be significant because this structure conditioned the reactions that led to reform efforts in the post-colonial era” (p. 29). These critiques in a sense birthed a trend that continues to underpin education reform movements in sub-Saharan Africa. While
there has been exponential growth in education since many African countries attained independence, however, the gains in enrollment and literacy rates have been retrogressed by the eroding quality of education and the unskilled graduates from many of the schools on the Continent (Hirsh, 2010). This has led many to argue that the education system has become a space that promotes degenerative pedagogy, rather than one that fosters regenerative learning.

Colonial Education as a site of Alienation and Identity-crisis

Africa’s colonial history is one of colonization of geography, culture, society, economy, resources and of the mind. Nowhere has Africa been more colonized than in the education of Africans. It is this colonization of the mind through schooling that post-colonial education researchers seek to interrogate in order to understand why after 50 years of received Euro-centric education, schools in Africa remain in shambles (Hirsh, 2010; Nsamenang, 2005; Nyamnjoh, 2004). To show why education systems are failing across the Continent, African researchers claim that colonization did not stop with the appropriated ownership and control of African lands and resources, but extended to the successful domination and control of the African mind (Césaire, 1972; Fanon, 2005; Thiong o, 2000). This domination of the mind occurred through the process of colonial education. Examples of the alienating effects of colonial education can be found in Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s Decolonising the Mind. In this literary text, the author’s narrative provides a glimpse into the very crucial role that education plays in the colonization schema. The school systems in colonial Africa were steeped in colonial ideology, an ideology which equated schooling with education, and the school was in turn, used as a vehicle to indoctrinate Africans into accepting the Western worldview as the norm to which all other perspectives were measured against. Ngũgĩ’s lived experience within the colonial education he
received in Kenya provides a compelling tale of how the dominant ideology of the school system was oppositional to the local norms and values. The alienation and identity-crisis orchestrated by colonial education in Africa is discussed by Ngugi wa Thiong’o (1986) when he noted how African names, languages, culture, mental acuity were devalued at school. Thus, the educated Africans were not only hybrids who were deluded and alienated from their cultures, they also gravitated towards the “more civilized” and foreign cultures of the colonizers. Similarly, Rodney (1972) argues that colonial education in Africa “was education for subordination, exploitation, the creation of mental confusion and the development of underdevelopment” (p. 264). Colonial education replaced indigenous collectivism with capitalism; equated education with schooling and eliminated the holistic purpose of education that was the mainstay of pre-colonial education; it gave Africans sub-optimal education and trained them only to fill low skilled positions in the colonial government while the curriculum reinforced the colonial ideology and hegemony. Consequently, Rodney (1972) opines that colonial education birthed the intellectual under-development of Africans. Despite the deleterious effects of colonial education, it is also argued that it produced some unintended consequences that were positive; such as, serving as a catalyst for the movement for African independence and nationalism.

**Colonized and Poorly Formulated and Implemented Education Policy**

Nigeria is a relevant representation of the problematics of education policy formulation and implementation in Africa. Examining education policy in Nigeria and elsewhere, one encounters a troubling practice of policy borrowing and copying from others. Best practices from other countries are often imported into the continent without regard for the suitability of such best practices to the local context. In Nigeria, the borrowing and copying is done without
due consideration for the unique socio-cultural, socio-economic, ethno-religious and geo-political differences between the countries where the ideas are being appropriated and Nigeria. Policy borrowing often occurs when the borrower is unable, for various reasons to come up with their own original policy alternatives and plan of action. As Robertson and Waltman (1993) assert, local policy makers are less interested in the substance of the borrowed educational models, but rather in their “political symbolism and in short-term benefits for which they can claim credit” (p. 29).

In the education policy landscape in Africa, issues of language, culture, indigenous epistemology, indigenous philosophy and gnosticism (Mudimbe, 1988) and school-community partnership are given scant attention. These attributes “are usually dismissed as not necessary for the education of African children.” Thus, “[t]his attitude mis-educates rather than educates for personal, national and continental development” (Jagusah, 2001, p. 113). What this practice of policy copying and borrowing essentially shows is that in many parts of Africa, knowledge is rented and not owned (Asante, 1994).

Additionally, education policies in many African countries, including Nigeria, have embraced the prevailing colonial ideology which is impoverishing rather than developing the continent. Studies have shown that many students are graduating without the skills to eke out a sustainable living, and the talented few often migrate to more developed countries around the world further fueling the brain-drain (Dasen & Akkari, 2008; Nsamenang & Tchombe, 2011; Thiong’o, 1986). For instance, Nsamenang & Tchombe, (2011) claim that “education is creating poverty in Kumbo in the northwest region of Cameroon, and ominously throughout the continent” (p.8). They further assert that the “culprit is the school system itself, which is more suitable for foreign than national labor markets” (p. 8). Consequently, a lot of the graduates
now prefer to go abroad rather than stay in their home countries, thus, “depriving their countries of human resources” (p.8). Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s experience in Kenya with the adoption of English as the language of instruction and interaction is instructive. He tells of the punitive measures meted out to students by teachers to discourage the speaking of Gikuyu, his mother tongue, in school. Anyone caught speaking “vernacular,” as mother tongue is verbally abused and given three to five strokes of the cane on their buttocks, or had to wear a sign around their neck with the inscription: “I AM STUPID” or “I AM A DONKEY” (Thiong’o, 1986, p. 46).

Discourses of colonial and post independence education in Nigeria and other parts of Africa show that the system of education inherited during the colonial era and which are being recycled post-independence by African countries, de-emphasizes African cultural values and identity (Abdi, 2006; Adesina, 1982; Desoto, 1989; Mazrui, 1986; Thiong o, 2005). This is described as “brain-washing” known in Kiswahili as “Kutiwa kasumba” (Obanya, 2011). According to Obanya, the “brain-washing was manifest in the doctrine that pretended that Africa had no history prior to its contact with western explorers” (p. xxv), a situation which Abdi (2006) describes as “schemes of marginalization and deliberate de-historicization of the continent” (p.16). Obanya calls for a “de-Kutiwa-kasumbalisation” and awakening that “education predated schooling, that it is a lot broader and deeper than schooling, and that its primary purpose is intergenerational transmission of cultural heritage” (2011, p. xxv).

The education policy thrusts of many African countries as it relates to what is prioritized in the curriculum, the colonial language of instruction and the imported textbooks reinforces the absence of local content in schools. An example is Nigeria where French language is the second official language and a compulsory subject in secondary schools, while local languages are hardly taught. There is a French language village, whereas none exists for any of the indigenous
languages. To show the dangers of such unthinking acculturation, Obanya (2011) states that “Africa happens to be the only region of the world where all the role models to which its children in their formative years are exposed (angels and saints, great achievers, film stars, etc) are of a race that is different from theirs” (p. xxv). In terms of culture, “African children are the only ones in the world whose socialisation begins with acculturation (learning about other worlds in a foreign language), instead of beginning with enculturation (being deeply entrenched into your own world first and foremost)” (p. xxv). It is not only the policy choices that alienates; the dominant narratives of the pathologies of Africa where the continent has become synonymous with disease, civil wars, poverty and famine also contribute to a feeling of inferiority. Thus, as Obanya opines “African children are the only ones whose region is most lowly represented in international organizations, including the UN agencies, and about whom decisions for their situation and well-being are often taken without even token voices from their people’s representatives” (2011, p. xxv).

A strong case for an African educational independence and glocal (global and local) identity is made by these illuminating statistics: Africa represents 10% of the world’s population but produces only 0.4% of the world’s research and development (Nsamenang & Tchombe, 2011, p.9). More than 1 in 3 adults are unable to read and write (EFA, 2010). Over 47 million youths (ages 15-24) also cannot read or write (EFA, 2010). Approximately, 21 million adolescents are not in school while 32 million primary school age children are out of school (EFA, 2010). As concerns about the eroding quality of education in Africa grows, policy makers, civil society groups and society at large blame the decline in quality on the decaying infrastructure, dearth in the quality of Teachers, lack of funding, corruption and mismanagement and poverty. However, what many fail to consider is that it is the topography of the education
system; the overarching colonial ideology and the colonizing epistemology dominant in schools which frame policy choices that perpetuate the failure that has become so rampant.

**Neo-colonial and Paternalistic Education Funding**

Education funding in Africa remains a crowded field involving several neo-colonial players with competing interests and funding priorities which have created an educational landscape of chaotic, poorly conceptualized and badly implemented education policies. With the advent of independence, African countries have become more dependent on their former colonial rulers for aid in the education sector when the opposite should be the case. Aid money often goes towards textbooks, language of instruction development, curriculum development and overhead expenditures.

According to Brock-Utne (2000), “[w]ith the aid, follows Western curricula and languages, Western culture and the idea of education as schooling” (p. xxiii). She calls this a process of “recolonization” and states “Western donors together with parts of the African elites trained in the West; are involved in this recolonization to the benefit of themselves and to the detriment of the African masses” (p. xxiii). Case in point, the French government has expended millions of Euro for Nigeria to implement French language as the country’s second official language, in addition to English. Although an estimated 500 languages and dialects are spoken in Nigeria, yet, the country has been unable to elevate any one of its numerous indigenous languages to an official language status. The 2004 policy on education states: “…French shall be the second official language in Nigeria and it shall be compulsory in Primary and Junior Secondary Schools but Non-vocational elective at the Senior Secondary School” (Federal Ministry of Education, 2004).
A November 20, 2012 headline of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) reads: “UK aid not improving Nigerian education.” In the news report, it is claimed by a development watchdog group - The Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) that A £230 million British aid program to support schools in Nigeria has failed to produce any “major improvement in pupil learning,” (BBC, 2012, para. 1). They further stated that the aid program was being undermined by a lack of support from local state governments and a shortage of qualified teachers. Rating the aid program on a system of traffic light ratings, the Commission ranked the aid scheme “amber-red,” its second lowest ratings indicating that “significant improvements” were needed (para. 7).

Additionally, the report claims that the Department for International Development (Dfíd) has spent £102 million to support education in 10 of Nigeria’s 36 states, with a further £126 million committed till 2019. In spite of this funding largess from the British government, the Commission found that an estimated 3.7 million school-age children were not in school and those that were, received very poor education. “We are concerned by the very high numbers of out-of-school children and the very poor learning outcomes in nine of the 10 Nigerian states supported by Dfíd” the Commission stated (2012, para. 9). Expanding further on their concern, the Commission opined that “as a result of British aid, a seven-year-old Nigerian girl could be learning in a new school where the teacher had been trained with UK funding, but she still might leave education not knowing how to read or write” (para. 10). Responding to the report of the ICAI, a Dfíd spokesman said the Commission’s exercise “was a limited inquiry in that the team only visited 1% of schools, most of which were in only one state in Nigeria, and they did not take into account the most recent evidence of the project's progress” (BBC, 2012, para. 11). The spokesman went on to promise a careful review of the report’s recommendations and “respond in
due course” (para. 12). The Commission’s findings is coming at a time when some members of the British parliament are strongly opposed to the Prime Minister’s aid commitment abroad at a time of spending cuts in the country.

Policies that originate outside an educational system and which are promoted by external bilateral and multilateral agencies such as the World Bank present particular challenges. These challenges are rooted within the context of ownership of the reform process. Donor agencies operate within globalized frameworks that allow their priorities for reform to differ in varying degrees with the actual local circumstances and the views of local education stakeholders. The reform measures usually initiated by outside donors in Africa tend to be derived from the economic liberalization policies of donor agencies and the political ideology of donor countries. Even in post-independence Africa, education reforms and funding are affected and influenced by western hegemonic ideals (Samoff, 1999). Thus, such policies originating from outside local educational systems have been called “traveling policies”, and the local factors influencing the acceptance, modification, or rejection of traveling policies as “local spaces” (Alexiadou & Jones, 2001).

A UNESCO report claims that in some African countries such as Guinea, Mali, Rwanda and Zambia, development aid accounts for 50% of government education budgets. In general, sub-Saharan African countries spend 5% of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on education, second only to North America and Europe which spend 5.3% of their GDP on Education. Yet, increased educational spending and aid money have not yielded a correlating improvement in educational outcomes. In fact, the disparity between funding and educational outcomes in Africa continues to widen. In one-third of sub-Saharan African countries, half of all children still do not complete primary education and a total of 32 million children remain out of school (UNESCO,
As the population of the five to 14-year-old age range in sub-Saharan Africa is expected to grow by more than 34% over the next 20 years, the region will need to respond to the demands of 77 million new students. With this projected growth, it is likely that more former colonial powers and aspiring neo-colonial powers will join the frenzy to lay a stake in Africa by using financial aid to dictate education policy priorities.

The prevailing regimes of dominance as well as the erasure of indigenous epistemology from the colonial education schema has led to growing calls by some, for an African education renaissance to “erase the lingering colonial smile,” decolonize the African mind and dismantle the remaining vestiges of colonialism in the education sector by utilizing indigenous knowledge and learning forms as a tool to re-claim the African cultural and intellectual identity (Mazrui, 1986; Mundimbe, 1988; Mungazi, 1996; Thiong'o, 2000). However, this seemingly straightforward idea appears to be more theory driven than practice-tested. The overarching question often asked is: how can indigenous ways of knowing be utilized to Africanize the curricula while still ensuring that education adequately addresses societal needs in a post-independence hyper-modern World? And the answer commonly given is thus, indigenizing the education system and curricula does not mean a romanticization of the past; rather, it is about re-imagining, re-defining and re-creating Nigerian and in general, African education in order to develop relevant educational ethos that will accelerate socio-economic development through the creation of a vibrant knowledge economy and a highly literate and technologically advanced human capital (Kanu, 2007). It is also about developing graduates who are not only educated but cultured.
Statement of the Problem

The system of education in Nigeria still maintains its colonial legacy. And the lacking Nigerian identity is becoming more problematic as the public education system at the primary and secondary school levels continue to produce abysmal learning outcomes. In essence, Nigerian education is experiencing the twin crisis of identity and relevance as the school has become a site that reproduces the colonizing epistemology of the West. In addition, the massive failure rate across all levels of schooling continues to be a concern. Attempts at reform of the education system have fallen short due to a lack of foresight, corruption, mismanagement and most of all, the borrowing wholesale or in part, of educational initiatives from other countries - usually former colonial powers; without consideration for the applicability of such initiatives for the social, cultural and economic needs of Nigerian students.

The public primary and secondary education system in Nigeria is failing and this is why: out of the 42.1 million children of primary school age, only 22.1 million are in school. And of the 33.9 million secondary school age children, an estimated 10.4 million are enrolled in school. From 2000 to 2006, only 25% of students who wrote the Senior School Certificate Exam (SSCE) passed with credits in Mathematics and English. This dire statistics are not limited to the primary and secondary levels, at the tertiary level, it is estimated that only 20% of the 1.5 million students seeking admission into tertiary institutions gain admission due to the limited space and carrying capacity of the tertiary institutions (Edukugho, 2010).

According to the 2007 Education for All Global Monitoring Report of UNICEF, 60% of primary school pupils in Nigeria drop out before graduating. In 2004, Nigeria was among the countries with the largest number of out-of-school children. It is one of the 15 countries with the
highest number of illiterates. And lastly, Nigeria is projected to be among the top five countries who will not achieve Education for All by 2015 (Edukugho, 2010).

This study aims to explore the making of a Nigeria-centric educational system using the theories of post-colonialism and indigenous epistemology. This dissertation examines the British education system in Nigeria; its colonial legacies, advantages and disadvantages, as well as the contemporary manifestations of these legacies in the post-independence Nigerian education era. It also offers some perspectives on the current state of education in Nigeria by looking at the challenges and opportunities of the evolving education system in the Country as well as the growing calls for an African education renaissance to decolonize African minds and dismantle the remaining vestiges of colonialism within the existing educational system.

Drawing on the concept of “Sankofa”, which, in the Akan language of Ghana means “Return to the Source and fetch it,” in other words, looking at the past to advance the future, (Tedla, 1995, p. 23) and hybridity (Bhabha, 2004; Gilroy, 2006; Hall, 1996; Spivak, 2006; Young, 1995), this research argues that to re-imagine Nigerian education is to resist colonial and neo-colonial influences in the privileging of western knowledge canons over indigenous knowledge. This study also argues that to re-imagine Nigerian education is to engage in a decolonization of the mind, as a form of epistemic disobedience against the epistemological imperialism and epistemicide engendered by neo-colonialism and colonialism. It advances a reclamation of core elements of the indigenous system of education that were useful pedagogical tools before the advent of colonialism and combining them with valuable components of western education to create a hybrid system that is culturally responsive, pedagogically regenerative, quality-based, skills-enhancing and technologically advanced.
In reaching back to the past to bring forth forgotten African episteme that will aid in the advancement of the future (Sankofa), I argue for both an appropriation of colonialism and a neo-indigenous re-signification of the philosophical underpinnings of education and schooling, its core values, curricula and pedagogy (P’Bitek, 1972; Tedla, 1995). Appropriating colonialism is a statement of reclamation and empowerment, it is about recognizing the impossibility of going back to the way things were prior to colonial contact and instead, fudging a partnership in the new world order of mutualistic and reciprocal relationships. This process of fusion of two disparate but interdependent systems (indigenous and western) allows for the development of a liminal space which privileges both indigenous and western epistemologies. The idea of hybridizing and creating newness and making the unfamiliar familiar is what I call neo-indigenous.

**Research Questions**

This study attempts to answer two overarching research questions:

- What is a Nigeria-centric educational system and can it be developed?
- If a Nigeria-centric educational system can be developed, would it solve the inherent problems in the current Nigerian education system?

To answer these questions, this research will examine the legacy of colonialism and its impact on Nigerian education through a post-colonial lens and the possibility of a re-imagined Nigeria-centric education will be explored by employing the theoretical frameworks of indigenous epistemology and the emerging sciences of complexity and chaos. Although the primary research questions seek to explore the making of a Nigeria-centric educational system, however, there are related issues that need unpacking before the questions can be answered. The following sub-questions will provide useful stepping stones.
1. What is a British-colonial education system?
   i. What are its advantages and disadvantages?
   ii. What is the historical legacy of the British colonial education system in Nigeria?
   iii. What are its contemporary manifestations?

2. What might a Nigeria-centric educational system look like?
   i. What is a Nigerian worldview around which an education system can be built?
   ii. What are the possibilities presented by indigenous knowledge systems for a Nigeria-centric educational system?
   iii. Can this indigenous perspective coexist with western education?

**Significance of the Study**

The relevance and appropriateness of this study comes at time of declining enrollment rates, decreasing literacy rates, increased rates of exam malpractice, mass failure in standardized exams and wide-spread corruption. Nigeria is on track to fall short of meeting the Education For All (EFA) global education objectives for 2015, and the earliest it is expected to meet these benchmarks is by 2020 (EFA, 2012). The six EFA goals are: (i) Expand early childhood care and education; (ii) Provide free and compulsory primary education for all; (iii) Promote learning and life skills for young people and adults; (iv) Increase adult literacy by 50 percent; (v) Achieve gender parity by 2005, gender equality by 2015; and (vi) Improve the quality of education (UNESCO, n.d., para. 1).

A snapshot of the results from one standardized exam, NECO (National Examination Council) shows a troubling trend of under-achievement and mass failure. The
November/December result of the 2012 NECO Exam for senior secondary school students revealed the following grim statistics: a total of 75,623 candidates wrote the exam, of this, at least 28% engaged in exam malpractice, less than one percent of candidates passed Physics, 66% failed English language, 31% passed Chemistry and less than two percent passed Geography (see table 1). In spite of this abysmal performance, the Chair of NECO claimed that the 2012 NECO results were an improvement from the previous two years. According to the Chair, in 2011, only 10% of candidates passed English language and 44.7% passed mathematics, while 4.7% passed English language in 2010, with 19.4% obtaining credit pass in Mathematics (Opara, 2013, para. 7).

Table 1 Nov/Dec 2012 Snapshot of NECO Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Christian Religious</td>
<td>7</td>
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Note: rounded up to the nearest whole number

In contrast to the overt dangers of colonialism, education as a controlling tool, subtly dominates the colonized subconsciously by seeming to be a purposeful means of improving the
lives of the “uneducated” or “savage” minds. By proposing a Nigeria-centric educational system, this dissertation aims to (a) contribute new ideas to the discourses on African education renaissance by moving from theory to praxis; (b) provide a forward-thinking educational alternative to make education in Nigeria more culturally, socially and economically relevant and (c) develop a re-imagined educational system which would help to create a sense of a Nigerian identity in students, establish the purpose and goals of transformative learning as well as define the boundaries of quality education in the implementation of policy.

Overview of Education in Nigeria

Nigeria has a population of approximately 170 million people spread across its 36 states (National Population Commission, n.d.). Of this number, an estimated 30 million are primary and secondary school students. The median age is 19.2 years with an average life expectancy age of 52 years. People 65 years and above make up 3.1% of the total population. So the country is populated predominantly by young people. Although it is estimated that about 500 languages and dialects are spoken in the country, the official languages are English and French. Since gaining independence from the British in 1960, the Nigerian government has expanded education at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. The country’s education philosophy is laid out in its education policy which views education as key to national development, as well as an effective tool for developing productive individuals who will contribute meaningfully to society. The language of instruction is English and the education sector is under the management of the Ministry of Education. Each of the 36 states of the federation has its own ministry of education, and there is a federal level ministry that coordinates the activities of the education sector.
The Nigerian education system is operated on a 6-3-3-4 basis. This means, six years in primary school, three years in junior secondary school, three years in senior secondary school and four years at the university or polytechnic. To advance from primary school to junior secondary school, students are required to pass an exam, and to advance from junior secondary school to senior secondary school, students are required to sit for the Junior School Certificate Examination (JSCE), also known as the Basic Education Certification Examination (BECE) and to graduate from Senior Secondary School, students are required to take the Senior School Certificate Exam (SSCE).

The Federal government funds federal universities and a special class of secondary schools called Unity Schools. There are two unity schools in each of the 36 states of the federation. The goal of the unity schools is to create ethnic integration amongst the over 250 ethnic groups in Nigeria. Both the federal secondary schools and the federal universities tend to be better funded than state-owned secondary schools and universities. Private schools at all levels in the country usually have better infrastructure and pedagogical preparedness than public schools. Each of the states in the country is responsible for the funding and oversight of primary and secondary schools, universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, and technical colleges. The state schools are typically underfunded and poorly managed. Although the state governments claim to provide free basic education to the masses, parents are still responsible for purchasing uniforms, books and paying for exam fees.

The proliferation of private schools at all levels of education in the country has led to the mass exodus of middle-class and high-income students from public schools. Hence, there is a wide earning gap between the social economic status of students of public schools and their counterparts in private schools. Since the children of the policy makers, commissioners,
ministers and other senior managers in the education sector do not attend public schools, there is no incentive to improve the quality of public education. The class sizes of public schools tend to be large, in some cases more than 70 students in one class, whereas, in private schools which are expensive, the average class size tends to be approximately 15 students.

In the Nigerian education system, students are required to take various national examinations to pass from one grade to another. Pupils in their sixth year of basic education, which is also the final year of primary school, write the National Common Entrance Examination (NCEE). This exam is used to select the students with the best results from the 36 states of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) for admission into Federal Unity schools. There are two NCEE exams administered each year. A pupil’s result in the first exam will determine if they qualify to sit for the second examination. The result of the second exam determines if a student will gain admission into a Federal Unity school. Usually, admission is based on a combination of 30% merit; 30% state of origin; 30% environment and 10% discretionary. The quota system is in place as a measure to close the widening gap in academic achievement between the Southern part of the country and the Northern part of the country. Admission cut-off marks are set for each state and the ones for the Southern states tend to be higher than those of the Northern states. For example, “while candidates from Anambra State must score at least 139, which is the highest for any state, those from Jigawa need 44 marks to qualify for admission into the colleges. Yobe has the lowest cut-off, two [points],” and “[o]ther states with low cut-off marks are: Taraba (3), Zamfara (4), Kebbi (9) and Sokoto (9)” (Belo-Osagie, et al., 2013, para. 5). The wide gap between the highest and lowest scores required for admission has led to accusations of discrimination by many from the Southern states with high
cut-off marks; as well as calls to abolish the quota system; also known as Federal Character in the admission to Unity schools.

When in JSS 3, which marks the ninth and final year of basic education, students have to write the Basic Education Certification Examination (BECE) also called the Junior School Certificate Exam (JSCE) to get promoted to Senior Secondary 1 (SS1). 22 subjects are offered in the BECE/JSCE exam, students are expected to sit for a minimum of 10 subjects and a maximum of 13. A candidate is deemed to have passed the BECE if they obtained a pass grade in six subjects including English and Mathematics (NECO, n.d.).

By the time the students advance to Senior Secondary School 3, which is the final year of secondary school, they are required to write the Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (SSCE Internal) and the Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (SSCE External). Students have the option of writing one or both of the exams. The former exam is for students in the secondary school system while the later exam is for students not in the secondary school system. Results from both exams can be combined for admission into a tertiary institution. For the SSCE internal, students have a choice of 40 subjects, of which the minimum number of subjects they can sit for is eight, while the maximum is nine. In all, English and Mathematics are compulsory subjects. The SSCE certificate is a requirement to: (a) gain admission into a university or polytechnic (b) seek employment and (c) run for elected office (NECO, n.d.). The final step to gain admission into the university, polytechnic or college of education is the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Exam (UTME), which is conducted by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB). The minimum score required by universities is 180, while the polytechnics and colleges of education require 150 (Premium Times, 2013). Due to high
incidents of exam malpractice, many universities now conduct what is called internal post-UME exams to further determine the academic ability of incoming students.

Nigerian public education system is in shambles and generations of young people are being deprived access to quality education. Those who manage to successfully go through the education system are graduating without employable skills. They are grossly under-prepared for the requisite skills to succeed in a hyper-modern world. It has been stated that up to 80% of students in Nigeria have poor literacy skills. They are under-educated, mal-educated and mis-educated. In the 2012 Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (SSCE) results, it was reported that of the 1,672,224 students who wrote the exam, only 649,156 candidates, representing 38.81% passed both English Language and Mathematics.

The Head of the Nigerian National Office of the West African Examination Council preceded his announcements of the results with this plea:

The Committee also decried the dearth of qualified teachers, especially in Mathematics and Science subjects, inadequate and dilapidated classrooms, teaching aids, as well as the unavailability of library and laboratory facilities in many of the secondary schools. The Committee passionately appealed to the state and federal governments, as well as proprietors of private schools to address these challenges. The Committee had also appealed to the ministries of education to ensure that only schools with adequate facilities are endorsed by the ministries for recognition and presentation of candidates for the WASSCE. (Uwadiae, 2012, p.1)

Even with global interventions like the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education for All, education and learning outcomes in Nigeria and many sub-Saharan African
countries remain inadequate. The main reasons can be attributed to the degenerative rather than regenerative curricula, corruption and mismanagement and education systems that alienate rather than empower students. Thus, as the public education system deteriorates, affluent Nigerian parents are sending their wards off to school in different countries around the World. Unconfirmed newspaper reports estimate that these parents spend the equivalent of $1 billion a year to pay for tuition in foreign countries (Oluwapelumi, 2012, para. 1). If accurate, this figure shows that wealthy parents spend more money educating their children outside of Nigeria than what the government budgets for education. From 1999 to 2010, the allocation for education in the Federal Budget was 6.3% of the total budget.

Summary

In summary, this introductory chapter provided an overview of the state of education in post-independence Africa, identified the problems of a colonized Nigerian education system and gave background information on Nigeria to help the reader develop a contextual understanding of the issues being discussed. The significance of the study outlined a rationale for why this research is important and the problem statement showed evidence for why a Nigeria-centric educational system is needed at this time. Finally, discussions about the Nigerian education system were linked to the continent-wide issues of the legacy of colonial education and calls for an African education renaissance. The research questions that will guide the analyses in this study were also listed.

Moving forward, chapter two will discuss the theoretical frameworks of Post-colonialism and Indigenous epistemology that will be employed to examine the historical and contemporary issues of education in Nigeria. Using these theories will provide the grounding necessary to
provide a robust analysis of Nigerian education. This study warrants these theoretical frameworks because they provide the pathways for a critical deconstruction, analysis, and examination of the ambivalent and hybrid relationships between the colonizer and the colonized, as well as the system of education that originated from colonial contact.
CHAPTER TWO
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Strange dawn! The morning of the Occident in black Africa was spangled over with smiles, with canon shots, with shining glass beads. Those who had no history were encountering those who carried the world on their shoulders. It was a morning of accouchement: the known world was enriching itself by a birth that took place in mire and blood. From shock, the one side made no resistance. They were a people without a past, therefore without memory. The men who were landing on their shores were White, and mad. Nothing like them had ever been known. The deed was accomplished before the people were even conscious of what had happened. (Kane, 1963, p. 48)

The purpose of this study is to explore the making of a Nigeria-centric education system using post-colonial theory and indigenous epistemology. This dissertation examines the British education system in Nigeria: its colonial legacy, advantages and disadvantages, as well as the contemporary manifestations of this legacy in the post-independence Nigerian education system. It also offers some perspectives on the current state of education in Nigeria by looking at the challenges and opportunities of the evolving educational system in the country as well as the growing calls for an African education renaissance to decolonize African minds and dismantle the remaining vestiges of colonialism within the existing educational system.

This study also analyzes the coexistence of indigenous (pre-colonial) and western (colonial) education systems as a framework upon which a Nigerian worldview of education can
be developed. In this chapter, the overarching theoretical frameworks used are chosen to align with each era of Nigerian education (see figure 1). Thus, colonialism, de-colonization, neo-colonialism and anti-colonialism frame the post-colonial theoretical framework used to deconstruct the eras of pre-colonial, colonial and post-independence education in Nigeria. Additionally, I draw from the emerging sciences of complexity and chaos to support the indigenous epistemological framework adopted to weave an analytical discussion of the hybridization of indigenous and western knowledge forms in the creation of a third and imagined space of a Nigeria-centric educational system.

As figure 1 depicts, this dissertation divides Nigerian education into four eras and each of the theories discussed in this chapter corresponds with an era: the pre-colonial era, which was characterized by indigenous forms of learning and knowledge acquisition aligns with Indigenous epistemology; the colonial era which saw the introduction of western-style education to Nigerians is examined using the concept of Colonialism; the post-independence era denoted by the exit of colonial administrators from Nigeria and the handing-over of political power to Nigerians can be analyzed using Neo-colonialism, Decolonization and Anti-colonialism. All of these concepts will be addressed through the lenses of Post-colonial theory. Finally, the Nigeria-centric era, which is the imagined future for Nigerian education is developed drawing from the theoretical concept of Complexity and Chaos, which will support the Indigenous epistemological underpinnings of the hybridized Nigeria-centric education. Additionally, the theoretical discussions in chapter 2 framed by the concepts outlined above, will be employed in the analysis of the three eras of education in Nigeria that will be discussed in chapter 4.
Colonialism and the Struggle between Yesterday and Tomorrow

Colonization has no doubt impacted Africa and Africans in myriad and complex ways by compelling them to “lighten their darkness” (Nyamnjoh, 2012, p. 1). The disjuncture and discontinuity engendered by colonial era hegemonic policies as well as the entrenched ideology of European superiority manifest abundantly in the education sector where African countries, including Nigeria, continue to struggle to gain freedom from over four centuries of
epistemological violence. As Nyamnjoh (2012) argues: “the right of conquest of the colonists over Africans – body, mind and soul – meant real or attempted epistemicide” leading to “the decimation or near complete killing and replacement of endogenous epistemologies in Africa with the epistemological paradigm of the conqueror” (p.1).

The impact of colonialism in Africa and on African education continues to be the focus of much scholarly debate and analysis. These discourses on African colonial education can be framed within two Africanized resistance models: Nègritude and the Dar es Salaam School.

Nègritude was launched in the 1930’s by francophone Africans and Blacks from the Caribbean; it is an African/Black literary and ideological movement which was started to combat French colonial racism. Influenced by Marxism, founders of the Nègritude movement sought to resist France’s colonial domination and control. These African/Black intellectual activists “found solidarity in their common ideal of affirming pride in their shared black identity and African heritage, and reclaiming African self-determination, self-reliance, and self-respect” (Ngo-Ngijol Banoum, n.d., p. 1). The movement sparked an awakening of race consciousness for continental and diasporic Africans. Consequently, this new awareness that was “rooted in a (re) discovery of the authentic self, sparked a collective condemnation of Western domination, anti-black racism, enslavement and colonization of black people” (Ngo-Ngijol Banoum, n.d., p.1). The movement also sought to reject and resist denigrating stereotypes about Blacks and the marginalization of the Black narrative by “acknowledging their culture, history and achievements, as well as reclaiming their contributions to the world and restoring their rightful place within the global community” (p. 1)

Nègritude propounded the view that colonial education destroys the African mind, it is self-alienating and ultimately, irrelevant to the advancement needs of post-independence African
countries (Fanon, 2005). I note here that the movement’s call for an African cultural and ideological renaissance resonates with the concept of Sankofa, which is, to reach to the past in order to advance the future. Sankofa exemplifies the campaign by scholars of Nègritude for a return to pre-colonial era African ways of being and meaning-making (Césaire, 1976; Diop, 2000; Fanon, 2005; Rodney, 1972; Senghor, 1961).

The second perspective is from the European dubbed “Dar es Salaam” school of thought, which propagated pan-Africanism and African self-help for advancement. Through the use of oral material based methodology, scholars attempted to rewrite African history away from colonial influence and intellectual domination. This self-help ideal is manifested for example, in the use of data from oral history to write the history of Tanzanian and that of other African peoples. Unfortunately, the oral historical methodology was not considered “scientific” or “universal” by the European peer reviewers of these works and hence, they gave the African writers the moniker of the Dar es Salaam school (Nabudere, 2006). Even though oral history did not receive the legitimacy it deserved, it was still widely practiced and extolled by pan-Africanist as the way forward to decolonize African intellectual space. For instance, Walter Rodney in his book How Europe Underdeveloped Africa praised African historians who were reclaiming the European dominated historical narratives by re-writing African history using oral history as a data gathering and research method. Rodney gave as examples, the “pioneering work” of Belgian scholar, Jan Vansina, who employed oral history in his rewriting of the history of Central Africa and Jacob Egharevba, who also employed the oral history methodology in his writing of A Short History of Benin (Nabudere, 2006).

Discussions on colonialism are by no means consensual. Even the definition of the term is a source of problematizing. Several lenses have been used for the definition. King (1999)
defined colonialism as the establishment and maintenance for an extended time, of rule over an alien people that is separated and subordinate to the ruling power. It has also been described as the policy or practice of acquiring political control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically (Oxford Dictionary, 1999). Corbridge (1993) on the other hand, describes colonialism as a system of government which seeks to defend an unequal system of commodity exchange.

In his seminal work “Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview,” Osterhammel (1997) tries to define colonialism by making a distinction among three terms: colonization, colony, and colonialism. According to him, colonization is characterized by expansionism, while colonies are characterized by exploitation and settlement colonies. He went further to provide three types of settlement colonies: the New England type, which led to the displacement and near annihilation of the indigenous peoples, this is associated with colonial New England (in the U.S.); the African type, which was dependent on the exploitation of indigenous labor force; and lastly, the Caribbean type which depended on slave labor.

Osterhammel (1997) defines colonialism as a “relationship of domination between an indigenous (or forcibly imported) majority and a minority of foreign invaders.” (p. 16). He noted that each colonial region had a different form of governance structure. For example, in Africa, the local people were governed by regimes of small settlers from the metropolis; in Latin America, the type of governance structure was patrimonial-bureaucracy and in India and other parts of Asia, there were pro-consular autocracies. The author states that regardless of which form the governance structure was, the colonial system of domination and control remained the same- with the interest of the colonial rulers dictating the pursuit of fundamental decisions
affecting the lives of the colonized people. In describing the contours of colonial-era
governance, Osterhammel states:

its dual character, subordinate and yet omnipotent, its autocratic centralization of power
at the top while using ‘divide and conquer’ at the bottom ... and the unbridgeable
cultural gap between ruler and ruled. The fact that the fundamental loyalty of the
colonial state lay outside its sphere of activity ultimately rendered it unstable or
illegitimate. (p. 58)

While there seems to be a consensus on the characteristics of colonialism, the
delimitations of its definition continue to generate interest in research. Horvath (1972) argues
that the definition of colonialism is too rigid and static and tries to advance a definition that is
more fluid and flexible through a process he calls “definitional analysis” (p. 44). He observed
that the concept of colonialism has remained problematic irrespective of the ubiquity of research
on the topic. His problematizing of the conceptualization of colonialism in a sense, seeks to
reinforce the claim that “the history of colonialism is the history of mankind itself” (p.44). Thus,
he argues:

The changing morality of colonialism contributes to our lack of understanding. People
feel strongly about colonialism—it has either been a dirty business engaged in by
evil people or a praiseworthy endeavor undertaken by fine gentlemen for the
noble purpose of saving the wretched, the savage, the unfortunate. We can hardly
talk about colonialism without referring to the way people feel about it, because
this feeling has given the word myriad connotations. But knowing how people
feel about colonialism does not tell us what it is. (p. 45)
In spite of the foregoing, Horvath (1972) appears to acquiesce to a premise of an operational definition of colonialism as “a form of domination - the control by individuals or groups over the territory and/or behavior of other individuals or groups” (p. 45). The author’s analysis and attempt to provide a more fluid and flexible definition of colonialism is based upon the argument that colonialism is not only about European domination of indigenous peoples, but it is a practice in many non-European societies as well. He argues that before the advent of European colonization, colonialism already existed in many pre-colonial societies within and between ethnic-nationalities. He also claims that former colonies have now appropriated the tools of subjugation and oppression employed by the colonialists to oppress their own people. He makes this point by citing examples of the Republic of Sudan and Nigeria where these governments use “ruthless, exploitative, exterminative colonial policies within their borders to suppress minority groups” (p. 45).

While there remain differences in the operational definitions of colonialism, there seems to be a consensus around what it represents; which is that colonialism is a system of acquisition, domination and control of a people, territory or country by another and that it is about cultural assimilation and imposition of European political, economic, religious and social hegemony, leading to a colonization of minds in addition to a colonization of geography and economies (Said, 1979). The form of colonialism discussed in this research is European colonization from 1500 to 1900.

In the 400 years of Euro-colonization, all of the Americas, Australia, almost all of Africa, and majority of Asia were colonized. The colonizers established their own government and settlers were sent to populate the conquered and or colonized territories. The characteristics of colonialism included: racial and cultural inequality between the colonizer and colonized,
political, ideological, economic and cultural domination, as well as the exploitation of the indigenous peoples.

Although colonial rule is no more, the relationship of domination which characterized colonial regimes still lingers in the global economic system which has divided the world into core countries (developed) and periphery countries (underdeveloped). From the 19th century till now, this system maintains and re-perpetuates a social, cultural, economic, political gap between the developed and developing nations. Hence, important economic, political, cultural and social decisions affecting the lives of independent nations are still being made in the mother country in a new form of neo-colonialism. The mother country is also now evolving into transnational corporations who own and control large percentages of natural resources in the global south.

Studies have also shown a relationship between colonialism and imperialism. Although colonialism and imperialism have often been used interchangeably by scholars in literature, they are two different words with contrasting meanings. While colonialism highlights the domination of a nation by another, imperialism on the other hand accentuates direct or indirect economic and political control of the colonized peoples. Imperialism is the policy of extending a country’s power and influence through colonization, use of military force, or other means’ (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1999). As a result of the relationship between colonialism and imperialism, the definition of colonialism has been challenged by some scholars. For example, Horvath (1972) in a bid to support his argument that the existing definitions of colonialism are rigid and static, used a system of mathematical modeling to establish six basic relationships of colonialism and imperialism. These are: (a) colonialism resulting in extermination (b) Colonialism resulting in assimilation (c) Colonialism resulting in the formation of equilibrium (d) Imperialism resulting in extermination (e) Imperialism resulting in assimilation and (f) Imperialism resulting
in the formation of equilibrium. In his expansive classification of colonialism, he makes a distinction between colonialism and imperialism by distinguishing between both and by making the point that colonialism involves a larger number of settlers than imperialism. Colonialism is not just expansionism; it is also occupation of colonies and territories while imperialism is the extension or imposition of power, control, authority and influence. In Horvath’s analysis, both colonialism and imperialism result in the assimilation of the natives. However, Horvath’s arguments have been faulted on the ground that he fails to recognize the reciprocal nature of colonial contact between the colonizer and colonized. He has also been criticized for assuming that only the colonized benefits from the colonizer, while ignoring any co-optation of the native’s culture by the colonizer.

Although it is widely claimed by paleo-anthropologists that the human species originated from Africa and that the continent is the oldest inhabited territory on Earth (Kimbel, Yoel & Donald, 2004), however, it is worth noting that post-colonial Africa is a relatively young continent. In 2010, 27 African countries celebrated 50 years of independence. This is approximately half of the 54 countries that make up the continent- the number of countries varies between 54 and 57, depending on who is counting (United Nations, n.d.; African Union, n.d.).

Africa is the second-largest continent in population and land mass; with a population of 1 billion people, covering a landmass of approximately 11.7 million square miles (Sayre, 1999). The oldest independent African country is Ethiopia, which was never colonized, and the youngest independent African country is the Republic of South Sudan which became an independent state on July 9, 2011 following a successful referendum to secede from Sudan (The World Factbook, 2013).
The history of modern Africa is invariably linked with European colonialism, imperialism and trans-Atlantic slavery. The scramble for Africa led to the 1884 Berlin conference which was convened by King Leopold II of Belgium (Chamberlain, 1999). The conference sought to draw up a framework for ownership of different African colonies by competing European powers and this race to own Africa sums up “the invasion, occupation, colonization, and annexation of African countries by the European imperial powers” (McKay et al, 2009).

The African map that was drawn up at the Berlin conference without the input of the indigenous Africans laid the groundwork for the geo-political map still being used in much of Africa today. The process of mapping Africa along colonial interests ultimately balkanized and disrupted the geographical space of indigenous societies and ethnic nation-states. As an example, it has been stated that pre-colonial Africa had as many as 10,000 independent ethnic nations, which were characterized by different types of governance systems. For example, Martin (2006) states that some society, like the San people of southern Africa were hunter-gatherers, the Bantu speaking people of central and southern Africa were larger, more structured clan groups, and the Akan, Edo, Yoruba of West Africa were independent city-states and kingdoms; while the Swahili of East Africa had coastal trading towns (p. 1). To the European colonialists, Africa was a no-man’s land and essentially up for grabs. Hence, independent ethnic-nations were treated as one homogenous group. This is why more than 50 years after much of Africa gained their independence, the legacy of the Berlin conference still resonates in the unending inter and intra ethnic land and border conflicts on the Continent. Further, the disempowerment of the native was at the core of the scramble for Africa, which left the continent divided, disjointed and looking like a jigsaw puzzle, with colonial powers laying ownership to
bits and pieces of the continent without consideration for the history and social relations of the people that were jumbled together in the newly divided continent. These acts of domination, demarcation and artificial homogenization had far-reaching and long-lasting consequences for the continent and her peoples. Colonization’s impact was felt most in three core areas: racial domination, resource control and divide and conquer policies.

The racial domination of the majority by a tiny minority is highlighted in the example of apartheid South Africa where racial segregation was legal. According to Craig et al (2007), “the worst legacy of the European presence was the White racist state of modern South Africa, which only ended in 1994” (p. 690). The Afrikaans settlers in South Africa enjoyed better access to quality education, higher standard of living and preferential treatment in all spheres. Such was the indoctrination of colonialism that most felt justified in the oppression of the blacks and colored folks because of a system that conferred superiority status on Whites and inferiority status on Blacks and Browns.

Colonialism led to the take-over of natural resources from the natives by the colonialists. Thus, the identity of African countries became tied to their comparative advantage in the mining of natural resources and in the production of cash crops. All of these raw materials were exported to the metropole which led to a situation whereby the indigenous peoples “produce what they don’t consume and consume what they don’t produce” (Oku, 2009). In addition, while the resources that enriched the mother country came from Africa, African nations remained relatively poor, with little or no infrastructural development. Hence, more than 50 years after many African countries gained independence, the colonial era practice of producing what they do not consume and consuming what they do not produce remains the order of the day as majority of African countries lack production and manufacturing capacity and remain one-commodity or
one-natural resource countries. For example, in Ghana where Cocoa is exported, the local population cannot afford chocolate (a finished product) from the cocoa that is cultivated on their ancestral lands. Also, Nigeria exports crude oil and imports petroleum for local use and at exorbitant prices.

Following the take-over and control of natural resources, colonial-era divide and conquer policies which pitted tribes and ethnic-nationalities against one another have led to serious consequences for many African countries as intra and inter-ethnic conflicts erupt, leading, in some cases to decades-old civil wars. At the 1884 Berlin conference where Africa was divided up, it was without regard to maintaining the integrity of ethnic groups thus; ethnic nationalities were separated and fragmented as non-related groups were grouped together regardless of long-standing and historical tensions between such groups (Oku, 2009). Ethnic fragmentation still remains years after independence. Furthermore, the divide and conquer strategy of the colonizers ensured that some ethnic groups were given more prominence over others, with dire consequences in the long run. An example of an outcome of this divide and conquer policy is the Rwandan genocide, where the Hutus went after the Tutsis in revenge of what was deemed as discrimination and oppression facilitated by the colonizers (Sebahara, 1998). During colonial rule, the Tutsis were considered more intelligent and were thus given preferential treatment over the Hutus. This colonizer created myth was propagated and entrenched in the system of social hierarchy in pre-independence Rwanda. Thus, when the European handed over power to the local people, it was the Tutsis who gained control of governance.

The lingering effects of colonialism continue to warrant critical analysis by African and Africanist writers. In his essay titled “Discourse on Colonialism,” Aimé Césaire, a foremost Black scholar and co-founder of the Nègritude movement, indicts European civilization for the
inhumane quality of colonialism. His critique influenced by Marxist historical materialism, discusses colonization as a form of capitalism which dominated and subordinated the colonized. Césaire’s analysis is situated within Marx’s ideology of class, in which the hierarchy of bourgeois economic dominance over the proletariat disadvantages the later. Marx’s dominant ideology of the ruling class in a social production is seen as the method through which the ruling class maintains their social and economic hegemony of power and control.

Césaire (1972) sought to interrogate colonialism by looking at its underpinning ideology, and the effect on the colonizer and the colonized. He argues that to “see clearly and “to think clearly” is to avoid the deceptiveness of the colonial narrative. He was a proponent of naming colonialism for what it truly was, at least from the point of view of the colonial subjects. Hence, he wrote: “the commonest curse is to be the dupe in good faith of a collective hypocrisy that cleverly misrepresents problems, the better to legitimize the hateful solutions provided for them” (p.172). He went further to argue that when the colonized unthinkingly assimilates the colonial ideal, both the colonizer and colonized exist in a state of what Marx calls “false consciousness.” This state of mind allows the bourgeois to maintain their sense of superiority; by maintaining and reproducing the dominant discourses colonizing the minds of the proletariat.

Césaire (1972) claims that colonization was predicated on the dichotomy of European racial superiority versus inferiority of the natives. This divide is seen in the binary “Christianity = civilization, paganism = savagery” (p. 171). In Africa, the people were seen as barbaric and uncivilized who needed the benevolence of the Europeans. Hence, he states, “the idea of the barbaric Negro is a European invention” (p. 172). In essence and to justify colonialism, the colonized had to be othered, dehumanized and reduced to simply a means of production and a subject of domination.
That Césaire has a negative view of colonization is not in question, he argues further that the negative effects of colonialism far outweighed any positive gains. Memmi (1967) appears to agree that colonialism is negative when he wrote: “[the native] has been torn away from his past and cut off from his future, his traditions are dying and he loses the hope of acquiring a new culture” (p. 127-128). This view is disputed by those who see colonialism as helping to civilize the world in a euro-centric way (Horvath, 1972). Thus, for Césaire (1976), Europe’s colonizing expedition renders Europe culpable and her civilization “morally and spiritually indefensible” (p. 172). In his discourse, Césaire provides several examples of the brutality of colonial conquest and the various attempts to justify the dehumanizing act. He writes that colonialism “dehumanizes even the most civilized man,” and that the “colonial activity, colonial enterprise, colonial conquest, which is based on contempt for the native and justified by that contempt invariably tends to change him who undertakes it.” Hence, “the colonizer, who in order to ease his conscience gets into the habit of seeing the other man as an animal, accustoms himself to treating him like an animal, and tends objectively to transform himself into an animal” (p. 177). This process of de-humanization is what Césaire (1976) calls the “boomerang effect” of colonization.

As under-development continues to plague Africa, it is argued that the legacy of colonialism is a contributory factor to the continent’s social, economic and political woes (Acemoglu et al, 2005). This legacy, in additional to the trans-atlantic slave trade which preceded colonialism and saw the exportation of nearly 20 million Africans into slavery in Europe and the Americas (Nunn 2008). In addition to the foregoing, an area less examined is the impact of the “Scramble for Africa” which began with the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 and ended at the beginning of the 20th century and saw the partitioning of the continent into
protectorates, colonies and free-trade zones (Michaelopoulos & Papaioannou, 2011). In their research, the authors study the effects of the scramble for Africa and opine that “despite their arbitrariness these boundaries endured after African independence. As a result, in most African countries a significant fraction (around 40-45%) of the population belongs to groups that have been partitioned by a national border” (2011, p. 1). In addition, Michaelopoulos and Papaioannou (2011) provide examples of how the various ethnic groups were split at the Berlin conference. According to them “the Maasai have been split between Kenya (62%) and Tanzania (38%), the Anyi between Ghana (58%) and the Ivory Coast (42%), and the Chewa between Mozambique (50%), Malawi (34%), and Zimbabwe (16%)” (p. 1). The authors also calculated “the probability that a randomly chosen pixel of the homeland of an ethnic group falls into different countries” (p. 1). Their findings showed that the ethnic groups with the “highest score in this index are the Malinke, which are split into six different countries; the Ndembu, which are split between Angola, Zaire, and Zambia; and the Nukwe, which are split between Angola, Namibia, Zambia, and Botswana” (p. 1). The social, economic and geographical effects of the scramble for Africa continue to linger decades after the end of colonialism.

Post-colonialism and the Appropriation of the Dominant Voice

Post-colonialism is the theoretical method of deconstructing the hegemonic impact and cultural legacies of colonialism. This theoretical framework is interdisciplinary and draws from a range of disciplines across the social sciences and humanities such as anthropology, political science, sociology, religion, history, feminism, human geography, linguistics, literature, philosophy, and architecture. Post-colonial theory seeks to empower a multiplicity of voices in the discourses around culture and identity by examining the human relations between the
colonizers and the colonized and the manifestations of this relationship of power in the praxis of neo-colonialism as exhibited through the paradigm of representation. It provides a framework for examining the lingering social, cultural and political effects of colonialism on the people who were hitherto colonized (Fischer-Tiné 2011), thereby creating an alternative space for the empowerment of the once-silenced voices of the subaltern peoples.

Epistemologically, post colonial theory seeks to address the intersections of the discourses about race, language, class and gender in the formation of a post-colonial national identity. It also seeks to examine the binaries in the relationship between the colonizer and colonized; the powerful and the powerless; and the dominant and the ‘othered.’ As well as to critically interrogate the discourses which legitimatize domination and control of one group of people over another (Ashcroft, Griffins, & Tiffin, 1995; Bhabha, 1994; Loomba, 1998).

Post-colonialism is also about critical inquiry and critical deconstruction of the tropes that support western hegemony. It is an alternative way of seeing and knowing the world through the narratives of the subaltern peoples who have appropriated the dominant voice to speak for themselves and in the process engendered the dismantling of the dominant “Us-and-Them” narratives, between the western colonizers and the indigenous peoples (Said, 1978). Although post-colonial theory is largely a theoretical framework, it is also sometimes used literally to denote a period of independence from colonial control and domination. This latter assertion is seen to be problematic because of the idea that colonialism never ended because with independence came new forms of neo-colonial power relations of control and domination (Sharp 2008).

In Post-Colonial Drama: Theory, Practice, Politics (1996), Gilbert & Tompkins sought to clarify the definition of post-colonialism as “frequently misunderstood as a temporal concept,
meaning the time after colonialism has ceased, or the time following the politically determined Independence Day on which a country breaks away from its governance by another state” (p.14). However, they argued that post-colonialism is not a linear temporal sequence that came after colonization rather, it engages and challenges colonial discourses, power structure and social hierarchies in response to the chronology of colonialism. In this research, post-colonialism is not used as a “temporal concept” to denote the era after colonialism, rather, it is used as a tool to contest the discourses of colonial dominance, power, control and cultural assimilation. Post-independence in this dissertation, refers to the period after the official end of colonialism, when the indigenous peoples gained their independence from their colonial overlords.

In order to fit the subaltern peoples in categories that suit the dominant discourse, the Western worldview tends to see the world in binaries of: developed/under-developed; global North/global South; first world and third world and wealthy/poor. Gilbert and Tompkins (1996) stated that these uncritical binaries “reduces the de-colonized peoples, their cultures, and their countries, into a homogeneous whole, such as “The Third World”, which conceptually comprises Africa, most of Asia, Latin America, and Oceania” (p. 16). The same binary came into play in the dichotomy between the Orient and the Occident. Said (1978) argued that by, using the socially constructed Us and Them binary, the Western representations of the “Oriental World”, became a pass to label them as uncivilized, inferior, barbaric, and wild. This misrepresentation enabled the projection of Europe as superior, civilized, advanced and rational in comparison to the ‘other.’ Post-colonial theory analyzes and criticizes such an over-inclusive term and its philosophical functions, to establish the fact that the Third World is composed of heterogeneous peoples and cultures and that the impact of colonialism varied by country, people, and culture.
Similarly, Gilbert and Tompkins (1996) opined that the connections among the “heart and margins” of the colonial empire are demonstrated by analyses of the ways in which “relations, practices, and representations” of the past are “reproduced or transformed”, and how knowledge of the world is generated and controlled (p.16).

Post-colonial theory provides the intellectual space for a critical dismantling of dominant ideological discourses by the West. These discourses were often shaped by the representation of the colonized as inferior, barbaric and in need of a benevolent intervention by the colonialists. In challenging assumptions of cultural and intellectual superiority, which underline colonialism, Post-colonial writers often look at identity formation after colonial rule and how these reclaimed identities subsist, shaped from and are shaped by the hegemonic underpinnings of the metropole. Thus, post-colonialism provides the impetus, the tools and the mechanics for the subalterns to tackle the colonial legacy by “writing back to the center” (Ashcroft, 1990), challenge the status quo and resist western hegemony.

Said in his book Orientalism (1978), discusses how “The Orient” came to be named and defined by western scholars who, without regard for the voices and perspectives of the people comprising the Orient: Middle Easterners and Asians, elected to proscribe from their own privileged Eurocentric knowledge canons what Orientalism is about. In the process of this take-over of the cultural space of the peoples of “The Orient,” western writers privileged their own definitions of what Orientalism is- thereby reinforcing their notion of superiority: cultural and racial. This hegemonic control of the knowledge space is aided by colonial imperialism which provides the impetus for naming, and defining the ‘other.’

Claiming the ability to write back to the center, many post colonial writers, mostly from the developing world have taken to the forefront of resisting western intellectual power and
control by providing alternative narratives and advancing a non-western worldview. Post-colonial writers who are considered the ‘subaltern’ peoples in the colonial discourse have, in their bid to define and effectuate a post-colonial identity, used their writings as a process of decolonization to interrogate and unpack the imposed identity and subjugation by the dominant discourses that is often produced and reproduced for and about them. They seek to move away from their naming as colonial subjects to a reclaiming of their identity from the colonialists social, political, economic and cultural hegemony. It has been said that they create their own stories in order to define and establish their decolonized identity (ies) (Appadurai, 1996; Fanon, 2005; Spivak, 1988).

In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Frantz Fanon (1963) discusses the deleterious effects of colonialism on the psycho-social wellbeing of the people of color who had been forced to live under a system of colonial subjugation. This led him to call for a resistance movement against the violent system of colonial rule which denied colonized peoples “all attributes of humanity” (p. 250). Fanon viewed his call for a violent resistance against colonialism as being both freeing, empowering and a restorative process for the men and women who had been politically and economically dominated through various forms of violence propagated by the colonial state using its institutions of power. Additionally, his analyses of the psycho-social impact of colonialism came more than five decades after India’s Mahatma Gandhi had, in 1909, in his quest to end British colonial rule in India launched *Hind Swaraj* or “Indian Home Rule” in which he sought to bring attention to the negative emotional and mental impact of British colonial rule on the indigenous peoples of the Indian subcontinent (Fischer-Tiné 2011). Fanon’s work on the negative mental and psychosocial effects of colonialism is a form of post-colonial praxis informed by the argument that colonialism and imperialism are a “degenerate form of
capitalism,” which requires immense human exploitation to ensure a profitable return on investment. To support this argument, Said (1978) co-opted the term Orientalism, which was used by western intellectuals to describe their narratives of “The Orient,” and expanded its meaning and usage to introduce the social construction of the world into “Orient” and “Occident,” The East and The West (Said, 1978). Further complicating the binary, Said argued that the Occident and Orient could not exist one without the other, they were mutually constitutive; with each existing because of ‘the other.’ And by creating their narratives of “The East,” “The West” essentially homogenized all the peoples of the Orient, without consideration for their cultural, geographical and ethnic heterogeneity. Using Foucault’s notion of Power and Knowledge, Said (1978) posits that power and knowledge form the basis of a binary relationship. In other words, by generating the discourses of the Orient, the West held the power to name people, places, and cultures, and thus the power to control them, the peoples of the East (Sharp, 2008). Foucault’s power and knowledge binary brings to the fore an in depth understanding of European colonialism that is essential in the freeing and empowering ethos of post-colonialism. Therefore, Said wrote:

To the extent that Western scholars were aware of contemporary Orientals or Oriental movements of thought and culture, these were perceived either as silent shadows to be animated by the Orientalist, brought into reality by them, or as a kind of cultural and international proletariat useful for the Orientalist’s grander interpretive activity. (1978, p. 208)

Although critics of Said’s Orientalism have argued that the binary relationship of “Orient” and “Occident” proposes a homogeneity that fails to address the variants of Orientalism, Said countered this argument by asserting that the European west applied
Orientalism as a homogeneous form of the ‘other’ to facilitate the formation of a cohesive, collective European cultural identity (Said, 1978).

In reaching back to the past to bring forth forgotten African episteme that will aid in the advancement of the future (*Sankofa*), there is a need for a post-indigenous re-signification of the philosophical underpinnings of education and schooling, its core values, the curricula and pedagogy (Kanu, 2007; Smith, 2012, Tedla, 1995). Re-signification in this context denotes significations, sign, signifiers and signifieds of indigenous language and cultural identity through a rejection of alienating discontinuities and dominant narratives in the education system which is erasing African knowledge forms. Resignification in semiotics means the creation of meaning from signs. Resignification both reflects and assists cultural mutation (Holden, 2001). This means that new meanings can be derived from symbols of western hegemony in the privileging of western ontological and epistemological forms appropriated and used in the narrative of Nigerian or African epistemologies. *Sankofa* can be aided through the process of hybridity.

**Hybridization of the Dominant and the ‘Othered’**

Post-colonial writers often posit that the ideology of power and control which propelled and sustained colonialism are still very much a part of modern society (Fischer-Tiné, 2011). Both colonial and post-independence societies have been described as hybrids characterized by ambiguity. For example, Bhabha (1994) argues that a separation of western worldview from the indigenous worldview by ignoring their inter-dependence gives the erroneous impression that each system is independent of the other. Gilroy (2005), makes a similar case for multiculturalism in *Post-colonial Melancholia*, where he drew on the works of Frantz Fanon, W.E.B. DuBois and George Orwell to make the case that it is possible to embrace
multiculturalism without being fearful of the ‘other’ or resort to violence or hate against otherness.

Young (2006) defines hybridity as “…a disruption and forcing together…making one of two distinct things… the forcing of a single entity into two or more parts, a severing of a single object in two, turning sameness into difference” (p.158). He describes hybridity as making difference into sameness, and sameness into difference in a way that makes the same no longer the same, and the different no longer simply different. Young (2006) connects hybridity with the underlying notion of joining and breakage inherent in Derrida (1997) notion of “brisure,” which provides the mechanism for thinking of two things simultaneously. The idea of two disparate things occurring at once prevents the urge to place things in a hierarchical order or to use one to cancel out the other. In this sense, hybridity is understood as the coming together and coming apart of two disparate cultures occurring at a level of simultaneity which is almost impossible. In other words, hybridity espouses the impossibility of existentialism. The existential notions of self and being which framed the notion of cultural origins in the pre-colonial era have become almost impossible in the post-colonial modern societies guided by the interactions and mutual reciprocity of borrowing, loaning and appropriating tendencies of cultures that make up the modern age. Young (2006) believes that there is no singularity to hybridity, “it changes as it repeats,” and “also repeats as it changes” (p. 159). Hybridity allows for the possibility of a constructed notion of self and being, moving away from fixed existential categories which place static labels on identity formation.

Bhabha (2004) defines the concept as a mixture of cultures (colonized and colonizer) which empowers, rather than disempowers. Although the concept of hybridity has its critics (Adelson, 2003; Werbner & Modood, 1997; Young, 1995), as an identity marker, it has become
an integral part of postcolonial discourse. Bhabha and other post-colonial theorists treat this mixing of cultures not necessarily as a site for alienation or conflict, but as socially regenerative sites that go beyond the binary of colonizer/colonized. Hence, “Hybridity is a problematic of colonial representation and individuation that reverses the effects of the colonialist disavowal, so that other ‘denied’ knowledges enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority - its rule of recognition” (Bhabha, 199, p.162).

Hybridization as used in this context means to take from two complex and interdependent systems: indigenous and colonial and create a new, more all encompassing system. In a sense, this hybrid is not simply a merger but a creation of a third space that is Nigeria-centric, and will provide a much needed road map for a revamping of primary and secondary school education in the Country. Further, the notion of hybridity is prevalent in post-colonial discourses. This process of fusion of two disparate but interdependent systems (indigenous and western) allows for the development of a liminal space which privileges both indigenous and western epistemologies as shown in figure 2.
In summary, post-independence African education is a “victim of a colonial and colonizing epistemology” (Nyamnjoh, 2012, p.1) as the ideology of Western superiority and intellectual hegemony continues to underpin the philosophical foundations of African educational systems. These alienating set of values limits educational possibilities and thus renders the knowledge acquired to be inadequate in addressing the social, cultural, economic, and political needs of African countries. The need to evaluate and examine the purpose and goals of African education through the interrogation of the dominant western epistemology which have been counterproductive and oppositional to African intellectual and normative values, have given rise to calls that privilege what Nyamnjoh (2012) calls “endogenous epistemologies,” According to the author,

“Endogenous” is used… in opposition to the rather limited and limiting notion of
“indigenous”, to evoke the dynamism, negotiability, adaptability and capacity for autonomy and interdependence, creativity and innovation in African societies and beyond. It counters the widespread and stubborn misrepresentation of African cultures as static, bounded and primitive, and of Africa as needing the benevolence and enlightenment of colonialism and Cartesian rationalism to come alive” (p. 2)

African control and ownership of the African educational space involves a post-colonial, anti-colonial and de-colonial imperatives that most be effected if the “lingering colonial smile” is to be erased and the African educational curriculum complicated in a bid to render Africa visible to Africans and the rest of the World. A popular African proverb goes thus: “until the lions [prey] produce their own historian, the story of the hunt will glorify only the hunter” (Achebe, 2007, quoted in Nyamnjoh, 2012, p.2). Further, if education systems in Africa continue to render Africa invisible, de-historicized and marginalized, this will perpetuate “Joseph Conrad’s imagery of Africa as “heart of darkness”, where everything is “very quiet” and where visiting “humans” – real humans from Europe that is – feel like “wanderers on a prehistoric earth” (Nyamnjoh, 2012, p. 2).

Post-colonial writers have shown that knowledge production and acquisition are not neutral or objective, rather, it is a process encumbered by the subjectivities of euro epistemic warrants and intellectual dominance with the corresponding normalizing of European narratives to the detriment of all other narratives, particularly of the subaltern peoples. However, within the contemporary global geo political situation, it would be impossible to simply disregard all aspects of western/European/ colonial education as there are some elements that can be retained so that Nigerian students develop a decolonized identity while still able to participate (or resist.
and refuse) in the building of a global society.

**Neo-colonialism and the Emergence of the Colonial Gaze**

Neo-colonialism enables former colonizers to maintain their economic, political and cultural power over former colonies using global-capitalist hegemonic tools to indirectly control from afar (Sartre, 2001). Kwame Nkrumah, one of modern Ghana’s founding fathers is credited with coining the word: neo-colonialism; which he used as a descriptive term to describe the lingering colonial presence in post-independence Africa. He viewed neo-colonialism as a geopolitical, socio-economic and socio-cultural domination and control manifested by using the epistemic warrants of language, economics and culture. Thus, the privileging of the cultural hegemony of the neo-colonialists, facilities a new and continuing cultural assimilation of the colonized which disadvantages them and renders them vulnerable to the exploitative practices of the government and trans-national corporations of the former colonialists.

Neo-colonialism in post-colonial studies refers to the praxis of social, economic and cultural domination of developing countries by their former colonial rulers. These rulers have a say in the domestic affairs of these countries irrespective of the former colonies’ sovereign status. Even with independence, many colonial powers continue to benefit from their colonial-era policies and treatises which ceded economic benefits and control to them. And so they retain control. The ideological and practical manifestations of neo-colonialism are examined at length by Sartre (2001) in his book *Colonialism and Neo-colonialism*.

In *Neo-Colonialism, the Last Stage of Imperialism*, Nkrumah (1964) asserts that neo-colonialism has replaced colonialism as the main instrument of imperialism. Consequently, neo-colonialism, like colonialism, “is an attempt to export the social conflicts of the capitalist
countries. The result of neo-colonialism is that foreign capital is used for the exploitation rather than for the development of the less developed parts of the world” (p. 1). Thus, “investment, under neo-colonialism, increases, rather than decreases the gap between the rich and the poor countries of the world. The struggle against neo-colonialism is not aimed at excluding the capital of the developed world from operating in less developed countries” rather, “[i]t is aimed at preventing the financial power of the developed countries being used in such a way as to impoverish the less developed” (1964, p. 1).

In post-colonial studies, neo-colonialism denotes the regimes of domination; culturally, socially and economically by wealthy countries in the global North over poor countries in the global south. It is the strong presence and influence of the former in the internal affairs of the latter. Thus, in spite of their independence, developing countries are still colonially dependent on their former colonizers. In a sense, former colonial powers are still reaping the benefits of colonialism, by maintaining the social, political and economic status quo. A critique of neo-colonialism addresses the domination and control perpetuated by former colonial powers, mostly carried out through multinational and transnational corporations who use capital to control nation-states. This form of economic control is akin to what prevailed during the colonial era.

Opponents of neo-colonialism critique the socio-cultural, socio-economic and geopolitical colonization of developed nations using tools such as language, education, religion and media to dominate poor countries for economic profit. The inherent colonial mentality distorts the sense of identity of colonial subjects so that over time, they view themselves, their worth and their cultural value in relation to the colonizers and start to, in a sense, accept what has been indoctrinated in them that the colonizer is superior and the western way of life becomes normative. As a result, resistance against cultural and mental colonialism as espoused by
movements such as Negritude have become viable resistance measures against the sustenance and re-perpetuation of the colonial hegemony.

Resisting neo-colonialism in the education sector, which manifests in the form of financial aid from multilateral and bilateral donor agencies, aid money which in turn dictates the curricula priorities of many educational systems in Africa requires a critical unpacking and interrogation of the kind of knowledge these donor agencies are touting as important for sustainable development. It also requires an understanding of the colonial legacy and its contemporary manifestations in the education system. As Willinsky (1998) writes in *Learning to Divide the World*, educators must expose the full spectrum of the imperial legacy present in the contemporary classroom that is helping to perpetuate the imperialistic dominance of western intellectualism. Such an exposition will help students to become familiar with how the colonial past shapes what they are learning now. It also enables them to understand how these structural inequalities in school can lead to outcomes like “scientific racism.”

In summary, a post-colonial analysis of neo-colonialism examines how it fosters the cultural legacy of colonialism and its lingering impact on the cultural identity of the colonized subjects. Neo-colonialism presents a post-independence dilemma in the attempt by former colonies to create a post-colonial identity. These identities have to first be reclaimed from the colonizing effects of the western world while still maintaining strong linkages with former colonial rulers. It also looks at how knowledge of the subaltern peoples is created from a Eurocentric worldview to reinforce the superiority of the colonial race and the inferiority of the other.
Decolonization and Re-claiming the Identity of the Subaltern Peoples

In 1960, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 1514 also known as the Declaration on Decolonization, the Resolution declared, among other things that “the subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation constitutes a denial of fundamental human rights, is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and is an impediment to the promotion of world peace and co-operation” (UN, n.d., p. 2). Decolonization is the elimination of colonialism. It can be referenced in two ways: as the elimination of political colonialism through the attainment of independence; and secondly, as the elimination of the deleterious cultural effects of colonialism on the minds of the colonized. Decolonization is used in this research to mean the elimination of the hegemonic cultural influences of colonialism, in other words, colonization of the mind. Although, according to the UN, the process of political decolonization is almost complete, because “more than 80 former colonies comprising some 750 million people have gained independence since the creation of the United Nations [and] at present, 16 Non-Self-Governing Territories (NSGTs) across the globe remain to be decolonized, home to nearly 2 million people” (UN, n.d., pg. 1). However, the landscape for cultural decolonization is still very much colored by the neo-colonial dominating presence of former colonialists. Thus, criticisms of colonialism have shifted from its more obvious manifestations as political, economic and social domination, to the less tangible and insidious effects of cultural domination in what is called “colonization of the mind” (Chinweizu, 1987; Mignolo, 2009; wa Thiong o, 1986;). Colonization of the mind simply refers to a situation whereby the colonized subject believes that the colonizer’s worldview is the norm and standard by which all other worldviews are measured; leading to the uncritical acceptance of the norm. wa Thiong o calls this “…the final triumph of a system of domination when the dominated start singing its virtues”
Hence, post-colonial theorists continue to call for decolonization as an antidote to the mental colonization engendered by the colonial regime.

The call to decolonize the minds of colonized peoples around the world continues to grow as more and more people come to view “coloniality as a fundamental problem” (Maldonado-Torres, 2011, p. 2). However, critics of the call to decolonize aver the inherent danger of rushing “toward that inviting community called ‘humanity’[that] turns out to be no less than a succumbing to a world defined by Europe” (Imbo, 1998, p. 131). Mignolo (2009) calls for an “epistemic disobedience” to disassociate indigenous worldview from the dominant western view of a “detached and neutral point of observation” (p. 160) through which knowledge is acquired. Examples of Mignolo’s epistemic disobedience can be found in the works of indigenous scholars across Africa, Asia, New Zealand and Australia. These indigenous worldviews are often constructed in oppositional analysis to western positivist traditions which were reinforced by colonialism.

Freire (1996) in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* examined a form of mind colonization when he discussed the oppression taking place at schools in the form of pedagogical methods utilized to impact knowledge on pupils. He calls this the banking model, whereby knowledge is seen to reside wholly with the teachers, who in turn, pass on the knowledge to the students. In a nutshell, the students are passive receptacles for the knowledge that the teacher passes on irrespective of how the teacher came to acquire that knowledge and how the said teacher privileges which knowledge to transmit to the students. As the locus of knowledge in the classroom, the teacher thus possesses epistemic warrants that confer legitimacy on which knowledge they choose to impact on the students. In the African classrooms, it is a truism that the knowledge often passed down to students, using the banking model, is knowledge shaped by
western intellectual hegemony which have tended to distort the students understanding of self (Africans), in relation to others (non Africans). This colonization of the mind is a process that occurs over a period of time. In the case of the colonizer to the colonized, the colonization of the mind that took place is justified as civilizing the natives by providing them with a set of tools to navigate a more advanced belief system so that they can thrive in the more civilized colonial environment. The colonialists applied epistemic validity to Eurocentric worldview while devaluing the indigenous one. Schools provided the opportunity and space for the colonization of the mind to occur en masse.

Colonization of the mind is entrenched when a set of beliefs, usually western, eurocentric have been successfully inducted in the mind of the colonial subject through a cognitive process, through the use of language, and through an acceptance of the preeminence of the colonizer’s epistemology (Overing, 1987). The author writes: “If you think about it, most of our jargon designates ‘primitiveness’ and therefore ‘lesser’. We wish to capture the difference of ‘the other’; yet in so doing we often denigrate ‘the other’ through the very process of labeling him/her as different. (p. 82). This system of labeling proscribes names to indigenous practices and inventions, names that end up invalidating their importance to human advancement. The author sees this as true of “…such labels as ‘kinship-based society’, ‘magical rites’, ‘mythology’, ‘shaman’, and so on” (p. 82). In addition, these labels have less to do with technological advancement and more to do with descriptions of “social roles, frameworks of thought, symbols, systems of morality, axioms, values and sentiments – all areas of life and related theory that may well be more sophisticated than the same areas of life and relate theory in our own society” (Overing, 1987, p.82). Thus, the colonized mind exists in this binary of inferior and superior while accepting uncritically the narrative of superiority that have been established by the
colonizer. It is in an attempt to reverse the effects of colonization of the mind that many African and other indigenous researchers around the world are calling for a decolonization of the mind, as a form of epistemic disobedience against the epistemological violence and epistemicide engendered by colonialism and neo-colonialism.

Memmi (1967) sees the colonial relationship has creating a dependent relationship between the colonizer and the colonized in such a way that they have “an implacable dependence, which molded their respective characters and dictated their culture” (p. ix). Espousing the view that colonialism’s main goal is economic domination that eliminates any “moral or cultural mission” (p. xii), the colonial system is such that mainstream anti-colonial resistance of colonialism renders it difficult to escape, thus, he writes: “…it is not easy to escape mentally from a concrete situation, to refuse its ideology while continuing to live with its actual relationships” (p. 20). This he calls the “humanitarian romanticism” of the colonizer who aspires to be moral but is viewed negatively by his colonial peers. Once the sympathetic colonizer realizes they are powerless to change the system, they also share the unflattering view of the colonized by asking the same question that their peers have become comfortable asking: “[h]ow can one deny that they are under-developed, that their customs are oddly changeable and their culture outdated?” (p. 24). Hence, regardless of their support or non-support of colonization, the “humanitarian romanticists” are invariably influenced by the dominant colonial ideology and they too start to see a justification for colonial rule by appropriating the binary of civilizer and the uncivilized: “[n]othing could better justify the colonizer’s privileged position than his industry, and nothing could better justify the colonized’s destitution than his indolence” (p. 79).

In the long run, Memmi, states that there is a “fundamental need for change,” because “The colonial situation, by its own internal inevitability, brings on revolt” (p. 128). The revolt that
Memmi proposes will have to be two-pronged: that is, a fight for political independence as well as a rejection of the mentally colonizing ethos of colonialism, invariably, “the colonized’s liberation must be carried out through a recovery of self and of autonomous dignity. Attempts at imitating the colonizer required self-denial; the colonizer’s rejection is the indispensable prelude to self-discovery” (p. 128). “The important thing now is to rebuild his people, whatever be their authentic nature; to reform their unity, communicate with it and to feel that they belong.” (Memmi, 1967, p. 135).

While condemning the colonizing legacy of colonialism, Memmi (2006) appears to indict both the colonizers and the colonized elite for their inability to complete the process of decolonization and remove all vestiges of colonial power and control. As post-independence African countries continue to struggle and in some cases, worsen, Memmi bemoans the “[w]idespread corruption and tyranny and the resulting tendency to use force, the restriction of intellectual growth through the adherence to long-standing tradition, violence toward women, xenophobia, and the persecution of minorities” (p. xi). He writes, “there seems to be no end to the postulant sores weakening these young nations” (p. xi).

Memmi (2006) indicts the colonized elite for their eagerness to absolve themselves of blame for the rot in their country and described this behavior as “dolorism… the natural tendency to exaggerate one’s pains and attribute them to another” (p. 19). He went on to say: “If the economy fails, it’s always the fault of the ex-colonizer, not the systematic bloodletting of the economy by the new masters” (Memmi 2006 p. 20). As a result, “the shortcomings of intellectuals, whether characterized as resignation or betrayal, play a part in national cultural lethargy” (p. 40). Consequently, “intellectuals seem to be afflicted by the same paralysis of thought and action that has affected everyone else” (p. 30).
The colonization of the mind plays a role in colonization and the failure of the decolonization project: “There is yet another paradox to the decolonized’s national aspiration: his nation has come into existence at a time when the Western national ideal that served as a model has begun to weaken throughout the rest of the world” (Memmi, 2006, p.55). As a result of the colonial dependency, he argues that “the presidents of the new republics generally mimic what is most arbitrary about the colonial power” (p. 60).

In Fanon’s (1965, 1967) campaign to combat colonialism, a link is made between the fight for independence and the resistance against cultural and mental domination. According to him, “colonial domination, because it is total and tends to over-simplify, very soon manages to disrupt in spectacular fashion the cultural life of a conquered people”, and “every effort is made to bring the colonized person to admit the inferiority of his culture.” Thus, indigenous culture becomes a casualty of the colonial project and can only be protected or sustained through “national liberation and the renaissance of the state.” Whereby culture is represented by a form of “national consciousness.” According to Fanon, with independence comes the elimination of colonialism and the elimination of the colonized man (p. 45).

Moving away from the Fanonian strategy of both political and cultural decolonization, mental colonization was designed to gain control of the African mind through a process of separating Africans from their heritage and culture. This process of deculturalization or “seasoning” in American slavery lingo, is what Obayan (2011) calls Kutiwa Kasumba a brain-washing which leads to racial melancholia, a state of inferiority complex. Education is a dominant tool for deculturalization because of the de-historicization and erasure of the African experience from the classroom and curriculum.
Similarly, Chinweizu (1987) writes: “[t]he central objective in decolonizing the African mind is to overthrow the authority which alien traditions exercise over the African.” Thus, “[t]his demands the dismantling of white supremacist beliefs and the structures which uphold them, in every area of African life”. The call to dismantle western superiority beliefs is necessary because the process of deculturalization and brain-washing alienates African people from their heritage and makes them susceptible to neo-colonial manipulation and control.

In summary, a decolonization of the African mind means that theory and praxis of education and learning must do away with pedagogies and curriculum which serve to define or portray Africa and her peoples in simplistic terms, define the continent through the tropes of the pathologies of disease, civil war and poverty and which omits the contributions of pre-colonial Africa and post-independence Africa to human civilization. This process of decolonizing the schools is what Hotep (2008) calls “reversing the seasoning process.” Carruthers (1999) calls the decolonization process “intellectual warfare,” which must begin from an early age.

Decolonizing the African mind requires a first step which is the replacement of the dominant worldview with a liberating alternative worldview to prevent re-colonization from occurring. This alternative worldview needs to be framed by norms, values, systems; beliefs and customs that legitimize the African way of being and it is a form of decolonization which Hotep (2008) calls “Re-Africanization.”

**Anti-colonial Erasure of the Lingering Colonial Smile**

The exigency for researchers with a more critical and radical bent to provide a countering to the dominance of white supremacy orthodoxy has led to the growing usage of anti-colonialism as a resistant lens to interrogate the hegemony of the West. Researchers who choose to advance
their lines of inquiry through an anti-colonial point of view tend to do so because of the prevailing critique of post-colonialism’s limitations to address the historical as well as contemporary manifestations of power and dominance. Thus, according to Brown Spencer (2006) “anti-colonial theory goes beyond theories such as Anti-Racism, Black Feminism and Afro-centricism that are used to interpret the minoritized status” (p. 114). Taking it further, Dei and Asgharzadeh (2001) describes anti-colonialism as: “an epistemology of the colonized, anchored in the indigenous sense of collective and common colonial consciousness. Colonial in this sense is conceptualized not simply as foreign or alien, but rather as imposed and dominating” (p. 300). Furthermore, “its goal is to question, interrogate, and challenge the foundations of institutionalized power and privilege and the accompanying rationale for dominance in social relations” thus, “the anti-colonial discursive framework emphasizes the saliency of colonialism and imperialism and their continuing effect on marginalized communities” (p. 300).

Brown Spencer (2006) provides an illuminating comparison between post-colonialism and anti-colonialism, she writes: “the key distinction between anti-colonialism and post-colonialism lies in their respective understandings of the colonial encounter” (p. 114). The author agrees that “post-colonial theory has offered a terrain to interpret issues of diversity and multiple oppressions in ways that were previously undermined” by providing “careful insights into the power structures that have undermined the development of people” (p. 14).

Another positive attribute of post-colonialism is that it “captures the history of imperialism and the colonizer/colonized relationship through an examination of the power structures of the West” (Brown Spence, 2006, p. 14). While post-colonial writers and theorists continue to utilize this framework in the analysis of the regimes of dominance and control that
pervades global relations, the theoretical framework is still critiqued for “dwelling on the oppression of the self to the degree that it can result in an intellectual abyss where the individual is paralyzed in her self-construction thus limiting her from Seeing outside the box of “oppression” (Brown Spencer, 2006, p. 115). Post-colonial theorist will argue against this charge by stating the importance of emphasizing the oppression and continuing oppression of the subalterns. Schiele (2003) definition of oppression provides some understanding. According to her, oppression can be defines as:

A systematic and deliberate strategy to suppress the power and potentiality of people by legitimizing and institutionalizing inhumanistic and person-delimiting values such as materialism, fragmentation, individualism and inordinate competition. These values together undergird a society that teaches people to see themselves primarily as material, physical beings seeking immediate pleasure for their material, physical, or sexual desires…This situation leads to a kind of alienation from the spiritual and the moral. (p. 191)

This definition of oppression is a departure from the norm in that oppression is characterized as an alienation from the spiritual and the moral due to a dominant culture that promotes materialism and individualism. Oppression in post-colonial terms takes a different form and meaning that is more within the realm of how power is used to dominant and strip people of their identity as oppose to how it affects their spirituality. Perhaps, the question of spirituality is implied in post-colonialism.

Therefore, “over-focusing” on oppression has post-colonialism is critiqued for doing, prioritizes the oppression narrative over the community, tradition and spirituality, which are the key elements of the indigenous personhood. In this regard, anti-colonialism is argued to be a
more effective tool for including diverse epistemologies, indigenous knowledge, multiple ways of knowing and “uncovering experiences lost in the colonial encounter” (Brown Spencer, 2006, p. 15). The author seems to think that anti-colonialism allows marginalized people to gain agency without getting entangled in the identity question that post-colonialism raises. This is evident when she states: “[anti-colonialism] is a direct counter to post-colonial and western interpretations of colonization as it opens spaces for effective theorizing of the colonial and colonized relations by looking at how the oppressed have fought against oppression in liberating ways” (Brown Spencer, 2006, p. 115). Along this line, Dirlik (1997) posits that, “post-colonialism appears as the ideology of articulate groups within diasporic populations who challenged earlier configurations of ethnicity and culture with a new consciousness that sprung from their own conditions of existence” (p. 9). Thus, “post-colonialism, then, can be regarded as a discourse of new-found power where those who have the power and privilege to speak, appropriate the concerns of minoritized voices” (Brown Spencer, 2006, p. 115). Similarly, Dei and Asgharzadeh argues that “whereas post-colonial theorists mainly depend on Western models of analysis conceptualization, and theorization, the anti-colonial theorists seek to work with alternative, oppositional paradigms based on the use of indigenous concepts and analytical systems and cultural frames of reference” (2001, p. 301). They add that the post-colonial narrative has “usurp and appropriated the realms, which traditionally have belonged- and currently do belong-to anti-colonial discourse and praxis” (p. 307). Furthermore, post-colonialism “de-centers” because it is a derivative of a Eurocentric understanding of identity which can complicate individual notions of identity, whereas, anti-colonialism enables individuals to be firmly situated in their identities Anti-colonial theorists are about dismantling
the systems of oppression in racial, class-based classed and gendered societies (Brown Spencer, 2006; Dei and Asgharzadeh, 2001).

Understanding the infrastructure of dominance that exists enables people to become conscious of the more sublime and controlling structures of neo-colonialism. Memmi (1969) writes: “we have seen that colonization materially kills the colonized. It must be added that it kills him spiritually. Colonization distorts relationships, destroys or petrifies institutions and corrupts men, both colonizers and colonized” (p. 151). Therefore, “to live, the colonized needs to do away with colonization…he must go away with the colonized being that he has become…the colonized must rise above his colonized being (p. 151).

How does one “rise above their colonized being”? Is it through the process of decolonization, anti-colonialism or indigenous epistemology? Erasing the long standing effects of colonialism is not as straightforward as Memmi suggests, Cabral (1970) provides an inclination of what might be required to rise above the colonized being when he writes that “History teaches us that, in certain circumstances, it is very easy for the foreigner to impose his domination on a people. But it also teaches us that, whatever may be the material aspects of this domination, it can be maintained only by the permanent, organized repression of the cultural life of the people concerned” (p. 3). This understanding of the role of culture in perpetuating dominance leads to Brown Spencer (2006) assertion that “this is why anti-colonial movements such as Negritude, Black Theology and the evolvement of the Black Church under slavery were based on cultural same-ness” (p. 117). This cultural awareness enables the colonized to “cease from defining himself through the categories of colonizers” (Memmi, 1969, p. 152) and attain a true state of decolonization.
According to Dei and Asgharzadeh (2001), along with “casting our gaze on race and racialization, the anti-colonial approach encourages us to interrogate the interlocking systems of power and dominance...how dominance is reproduced and maintained, and how the disempowered are subjugated and kept under constant control” (p. 317). Anti-colonialism looks beyond cultural domination and spiritual oppression and also interrogates the dominance of capital inherent in the global economic system that pits the countries in the center against countries in the periphery in a new form of neo-colonialism and neo-imperialism. As Kempf (2006) writes in the case of India, “With telemarketers in India trained to mimic the accents of people in certain US and Canadian regions (so that incoming calls sound “local” to “first” world ears) it is clear that with the intensification of the global market, comes an intensification of cultural and economic imperialism. We should be careful also, to search out opportunities for, and histories of, resistance within the colonial encounter” (p. 135).

In summary, anti-colonialism is influenced by indigenous ways of knowing and meaning-making, it is a holistic perspective about spirituality and collectivity, each individual in relation to others. Anti-colonialism is a challenge to any form of “economic, cultural, political and spiritual dominance. It is about identifying and countering all forms of colonial domination” that are inherent in every day practice, “including individual and collective social practices, as well as global interactions” (Dei, 2006, p. 5). To be anti-colonial means to be conscious of how dominance and oppression are produced and reproduced in society. Anti-colonialism is therefore a resistance against the “dominant relations of knowledge production that sustain hierarchies and systems of power. It challenges the colonizer’s sense of reason, authority and control” (Dei, 2006, p. 5).
Indigenous Epistemology in the Re-imagination of the Future

The hegemony of the dominant western worldview provides the imperative for an epistemic privileging of alternative ways of knowing and meaning-making, such as those of the marginalized voices of indigenous peoples. Even as researchers seek to adopt and or incorporate indigenous knowledge or framework in their research, it is important that the lure to filter indigenous epistemologies through the strain of western ontology is resisted. Indigenous epistemology does not lend itself to the “Us,” and “Them,” binary. Rather, it is a holistic and all encompassing way of viewing the world and valuing the hybrid relationships between cultures.

Before presenting a description of Indigenous Epistemology, it is important to address the problematic of attempting to define indigenous knowledge. According to Kuokkanen (2012) “[t]he problem of defining indigenous knowledge through Western or dominant epistemological conventions (norms regarding the nature and kinds of knowledge and how this relates to notions such as truth-value and belief) is widely recognized” and “in many ways, they represent two different systems of knowledge based on different conceptions of the world” (para. 5). As a result of this differing worldview, “many Indigenous people have noted that imposing definitions from other epistemological conventions would violate the integrity of indigenous systems of knowledge and distort them” (para. 5). Battiste and Henderson (2000) espouse similar views on the shortcomings of defining indigenous knowledge through western epistemological lenses. They claim that it is more proper to understand indigenous knowledge instead of trying to define it. Understanding fosters a more open interest in indigenous knowledge whereas, defining invariably leads to comparisons between knowledge forms which are in turn problematic because there are no existing methodologies that allow for the comparisons of disparate knowledge systems.
The classification of indigenous people worldwide is far from being homogenous. This is so because indigenous knowledge is largely place-based (Oliveira, 2006). Although different, many indigenous groups have their own distinctive worldviews with significant similarities and overlaps with other indigenous knowledge systems (Friesen & Friesen, 2002). Prior to colonial contact, indigenous peoples had established knowledge systems which encompassed the notions of epistemology, culture and native philosophy (Battiste, Bell & Findley, 2002).

Indigenous epistemology can be described as an understanding of the world as a complex interconnected and interdependent system that is holistic (Aluli-Meyer 2001; Deloria, 1999; Ermine, 1995; Friesen & Friesen, 2002). Thus, the world is a network of complex and chaotic connections and mutualistic relationships. The individual plays a significant role in this network because each person has a function in the system and they form the sum of the whole (Deloria, 1999; Ermine, 1995). This broad outlook is in contrast with the more narrowly focused worldview of the western cultural frame of reference. Indigenous epistemology understands life has being in a symbiotic relationship with the environment. Thus, everything is interconnected and mutually dependent (Cajete, 1994).

Indigenous epistemology helps to construct an identity that is place-based and locational. Place is an important aspect of the indigenous worldview as it doubles as a geographical location as well as a carrier of meaning. Indigenous knowledge is bounded by culture and tradition and emphasizes place in the same way as western knowledge transcends place and is more spatial (Giddens, 1991). In western epistemology, space is privileged over place; hence, knowledge is not tied to a specific location, in a sense, western knowledge takes on an impersonal, less connected de-territorial relationship. Despite this binary, it is important to note that the
indigenous epistemology is a vehicle for social cohesion which is key to indigenous identity construction.

Escobar (2001) defines place as “the experience of, and from, a particular location with some sense of boundaries, grounds, and links to everyday practices” (p. 152). This definition provides a pathway for understanding how identity is constructed among indigenous peoples. Given the importance of place in the indigenous worldview, indigenous epistemology becomes key as a tool for resisting the discontinuity between place and space and the erasure of place in the dominant worldview. Additionally, the exclusionary attribute of western intellectual hegemony which dis-allows epistemological diversity and privileges a western unilateral episteme, creates disequilibrium in the balanced system between the interconnected networks and mutualistic relationship of humans and nature. The western thought process is linear, hierarchical and compartmentalizes knowledge whereas; the indigenous is all encompassing and more inclusive. At school, when students are disconnected from their place, it becomes difficult to construct an identity. Without a sense of identity, it is near impossible for learning to take place. Indigenous epistemology will erase the tension between old and new.

In Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples, Tuhiwai Smith (1999) discusses the imperialistic impact of western research on the voice and identity of indigenous populations. These exploitative research practices which tend to benefit the western researcher at the expense of the research subjects (indigenous peoples) requires an epistemological shift necessary for researchers to develop a mutually beneficial, reciprocal and respectful framework for creating a space for the voices of the indigenous communities to be heard. Imperialistic influences have shaped the way research has been colonized and co-opted
into perpetuating the grand narrative of normalizing western ways of meaning-making. Thus, she argues, this imperialist research paradigm must be examined, evaluated and deconstructed for silencing the indigenous voice. Tuhiwai Smith (1999) posits that there is power and knowledge entrenched in the binaries of colonizer/colonized and oppressor/oppressed (Foucault, 1972/1984; Freire, 1970; Memmi, 1991; Said, 1978) and dismantling these binaries will lead to the inclusion of heterogeneous voices both as researchers and the researched. This kind of heterogeneity of voices is what the Maori people call Mana and Rangatiratanga a principle of individual agency and self-determination (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999).

Further, indigenous critics of the dominant western knowledge canons argue that indigenous epistemologies provide alternative viewpoints from which the world can be known and through which a deconstruction and resistance against western knowledge hegemony can be fostered. However criticisms of the marginalization of the indigenous knowledge systems should not swing the pendulum to the opposite extreme of romanticizing indigenous way of life and meaning-making. As Hountondji (2002) posits, this romanticization can lead “to overvalue our heritage,” considering when indigenous knowledge “can be said to be less ‘systematic’ than scientific knowledge” (2002, p. 25). This reflects Silitoe (1998) assertion that “we need to guard against any romantic tendency to idealise it“ (p. 227).

In order to move beyond the trap of potentially romanticizing ‘epistemic disobedience,’ it is equally important for indigenous researchers to engage in ‘decolonial knowledge-making’ as a way to develop indigenous knowledge as a viable alternative in a post-colonial and decolonized knowledge space. As Tuhiwai Smith (1999) states, writing about the indigenous experience and worldview must go beyond simply chronicling the injustices of colonialism and imperialism and
must include a method of restoring the invisibility and misappropriated knowledge of indigenous peoples and cultures around the World. Privileging indigenous epistemologies is important because of its inclusiveness. There is no singular way of knowing; since knowledge goes beyond social construction to acquisition and transmission. It also includes “local…located…situated and situating” (Turnbull, 2003, p. 19).

In summary, indigenous epistemology is holistic and it is a framework that goes beyond the empiricism of a physical universe that is unified. It merges both the physical and the spiritual (Semali and Kincheloe, 1999; Smith, 1999; Fixico, 2003; Kovach, 2005; Moreton-Robinson, 2006). This is unlike the dominant western epistemology which tends to compartmentalize and make assumptions about the singularity of each element set apart from the whole. In indigenous epistemology, the quest for knowledge is tied in with a spiritual journey; consequently, “the greatest mysteries lie within the self at the spiritual level and are accessed ‘living in a sea of relationships. In each place they lived, they [Indigenous peoples] learned the subtle, but all important, language of relationship’ (Cajete, 2000, 178). It is these set of beliefs, practiced and nurtured over time that creates the network of interconnected and interdependent relationships between humans, animals, plants and place.

**Education as a Chaotic and Complex Adaptive System**

Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2006) posits that early scientists like Newton (1642- 1727) and Laplace (1749-1827) understood the universe to be “rationalistic, deterministic and of clockwork order; effects were functions of causes, small causes (minimal initial conditions) produced small effects (minimal and predictable) and large causes (multiple initial conditions) produced large (multiple) effects.” Thus, “[p]redictability, causality, patterning, universality and
‘grand’ overarching theories, linearity, continuity, stability, objectivity,” all contributed to the view of “the universe as an ordered and internally harmonistic mechanism in an albeit complex equilibrium, a rational, closed and deterministic system susceptible to comparatively straightforward scientific discovery and laws” (para. 1). This view of the linearity of causality of the Universal is in contrast with the indigenous view of a universe that is interdependent, interconnected and complex. Similar to the indigenous worldview, the theories of chaos and complexity are also challenging the earlier held view of Newton et al. Chaos and complexity theories help to understand the complexity of systems such as education which are non-linear, dynamic and adaptive.

Chaos theory traces its origins to the field of mathematics but its usage has become trans-disciplinary, with applicability in physics, engineering, biology and in the social sciences; in economics and education. Chaos theory is a theory of non-linear systems and the study of complex, dynamical systems whose behavior is very sensitive to small changes in conditions. This cause and effect element is known as the “butterfly effect” (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2006). The butterfly effect is used to denote changes, especially in weather patterns, whereby a slight atmospheric change in one part of the world can lead to adverse weather conditions in another part of the world. Although emerging out of the sciences, Chaos theory is very much applicable to the study of human behavior, specifically, education. This is so because, the school is a complex adaptive system and as Cafolla (n.d.) asserts: “adaptation and plasticity are two basic features of nonlinear dynamical systems. They also happen to be fundamental characteristics of society and classrooms in the context of education” (para. 2). In addition, “chaos is equipped to adequately describe the system that is the human brain with its 100 trillion connections between 12 billion neurons” (para. 2).
Chaos theory has commonality with cognitive and constructivist learning models, all three emphasize the “role of disequilibrium,” in the learning process as “it is widely accepted that this kind of intellectual turbulence can be the impetus for learning through adaptation and accommodation. Order can arise from this type of chaotic tension” (Cafolla, n.d. para. 6). Thus, “the spontaneous nature of new insight is produced by the tension of chaotic conditions and a system’s tendency towards self-organization” (para. 6). Human interactions are circular, rather than linear, including the process of learning, since learning is highly individualistic, learning therefore occurs according to the internal processes- the workings of the brain and other connected cells and transmitters which facilitate the inner processes of learning, as a result of the individual-specific internal processes of learning, no single method of instruction works for all students. This understanding therefore challenges the prevalent ideology of how teaching and learning have been design as a one-size-fits-all process. In education, learning is chaotic, as it arbors a cause and effect relationship to prevailing conditions in the classroom and around the learning environment. Understanding this cause and effect relationship between learners and the learning environment will provide a useful pathway for education, curriculum, pedagogy and adopting teaching strategies that will yield better learning outcomes.

For the typical student, the surrounding environment is one big laboratory of new discoveries which can pique their intellectual curiosity, hence, Chaos theorists would argue for a learning that is more experiential, constructivist and that the rigid structure of the learning environment particularly, in the third world, where the banking model of teaching and learning is still very much in place and the pedagogy remains oppressive conflicts with the flexible, emergent intellectual curiosity of children. Applying this scientific paradigm to behavioral
endeavor will show that the many activity going on in a child’s brain are all facilitating learning and the acquisition of knowledge, thus, out of the chaos comes order.

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2006), lists the following principles as central to chaos theory (para. 2).

- Small-scale changes in initial conditions can produce massive and unpredictable changes in outcome (e.g. a butterfly’s wing beat in the Caribbean can produce a hurricane in America);
- Very similar conditions can produce very dissimilar outcomes (e.g. using simple mathematical equations (Stewart, 1990);
- Regularity and conformity break down to irregularity and diversity;
- Even if differential equations are very simple, the behaviour of the system that they are modelling may not be simple;
- Effects are not straightforward continuous functions of causes;
- The universe is largely unpredictable;
- If something works once there is no guarantee that it will work in the same way a second time;
- Determinism is replaced by indeterminism; deterministic, linear and stable systems are replaced by ‘dynamical’, changing, evolving systems and non-linear explanations of phenomena;
- Continuity is replaced by discontinuity, turbulence and irreversible transformation;
- Grand, universal, all-encompassing theories and large-scale explanations provide inadequate accounts of localized and specific phenomena;
• Long-term prediction is impossible.

• Order is not predetermined and fixed; Social behaviour, education and learning are emergent, and are marked by recursion, feedback, evolution, autocatalysis, openness, connectedness and self-organization (e.g. Doll, 1993);

• Social life, education and learning take place through the interactions of participants with their environments (however defined, e.g. interpersonal, social, intrapersonal, physical, material, intellectual, emotional) in ways which cannot be controlled in an experiment;

• Local rules and behaviours generate diversity and heterogeneity of practice, undermining generalizability from experiments about ‘what works’.

Chaos theory fosters a movement away from the artificial, scientific lab into the humanistic and behavioral lab of the community. In this vein, educational research must embrace empiricism that is experiential.

Complexity theory can also trace its origins to mathematics and computer science. And like Chaos theory, its usage has extended from the sciences to the social sciences. Complexity theory is used in Education, economics, in political science, public policy and so on. Complexity is the study of complex systems, it provides alternative ways of understanding a complex or set of complex adaptive systems. In figure 4, the key elements of complexity is shown. As can be observed, the elements show that a complex system must deal with networks of mutualistic relationships, connectedness, holism, diversity, non-linear and so on. As the educational landscape changes, as theorists continue to observe the best way to de-colonize the educational terrain in Africa and other former colonized peoples
Figure 3: Components of Complexity Theory

(Adapted From: Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K., 2006, Chapter 1)
Complexity provides a mechanism for examining the world beyond the causality model, linearity, predictability and instead, provides a more holistic, organic and non-linear approaches that have dependent and interconnected relationship with other elements in a network (Santonus, 1998, Wheatley, 1999; Youngblood, 1997). Bar-Yam (1997) posits that a complex system is made up of its elements and that the system as a whole is greater than the sum of its parts. For a complex system to function there must be a state of input and output (feedback) between the interacting elements of the system.

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2006):

The input and output structure in a complex system when applied to a learning environment

*Feedback* must occur between the interacting elements of the system…operates on an associationist or connectedness principle (‘joined-up thinking’): if X and Y occur together then an association between the two is formed in the brain synapses; if there is recurrence of the association between X and Y then the strength of that connection is increased into strong ‘cell assemblies’; if recurrence is minimal or non-existent then the association decays and dies. If, each time I encounter mathematics, I experience pain, then, naturally, I will tend to associate pain with mathematics, and this will shape my reactions to it. I may avoid mathematics or take steps to reduce the pain etc., i.e. I have learned something and it affects my behavior. (para. 9)

There are two types of feedback: negative and positive. A fail grade is an example of a negative feedback. Negative feedback usually have diminishing returns and it is regulatory (Marion, 1999, p. 75); whereas positive feedback yields increasing returns that leads to growth and
development and it is not regulatory (Wheatley, 1999, p. 78). Positive feedback also serves as an amplifier; any little change can lead to growth and development (Stacey, 1992; Youngblood, 1997). From this feedback loop, once a young learner advances cognitively, such as learning how to read, the positive feedback triggers a quest for more knowledge. Thus, “not only can feedback be positive, it also needs to be rich. If I simply award a grade to a student’s work, she cannot learn much from it except that she is a success or a failure, or somewhere in between. If, on the other hand, I provide rich feedback she can learn more; if I only point out two matters in my feedback then the student might only learn those two matters; if I itemize ten points then the student might learn all ten of them. We have to recall that the root of ‘feedback’ is ‘food’, nourishment rather than simply information of low-level curriculum facts” (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2006, para. 11).

The idea of connectedness is one of the key elements of complexity theory. Connection exists everywhere in society, the curriculum, classroom, community have overlaps that can be explored, for example, within the school, students are connected to their families, teachers, peers, other members of their community; while the teachers are connected to other teachers, other educators, professional bodies, like the teacher’s union, government and policy makers. From this standpoint, the school is not an isolated unit, but is connected “externally” and “internally” in a myriad of ways. Key to these connections and feedback loop is an effective communication and collaboration, without these, learning cannot not occur. Hence, “if learning through feedback is to take place, if connectedness is to work successfully, and if knowledge is to be collected from a distributed, dispersed system, then an essential requirement is effective communication and collaborative learning. Communication and collaboration are key variables Communication is central to complexity theory” (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2006, para. 16).
Chaos and complexity theories have implications for teaching and learning. They provide a pathway to engage alternative approaches of instructional design, away from the linear, deterministic, mechanistic and closed systems which may be ideal in a scientific lab, but which are counterproductive in the social world of education.

**Summary**

This chapter provides a discussion of the theoretical frameworks underpinning this study which seeks to explore the making of a Nigeria-centric educational system. The framework that has been laid out will form the tools used in the analysis of Nigerian education from the past to the present. This chapter provides a detailed discussion on post-colonial theory and indigenous epistemology, in addition to an examination of colonialism, neo-colonialism, decolonization, anti-colonialism. To aid in the explication of a Nigeria-centric model of education in chapter 5, an overview of chaos and complexity theories was advanced to provide the groundwork for alternative approaches of conceptualizing education and educational research.

The literature and theories reviewed in this chapter showed that to be able to develop a Nigeria-centric educational system and to decolonize the existing education system, there needs to be a dismantling of colonial influences in the education policy, school curriculum and pedagogical methods. Chapter 3 describes the research methodology and how the study was conducted.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The colonization of each other’s minds

is the price we pay for thought

(Douglas, 2007).

This chapter discusses the research design and methodological approaches used in this study. The first section of the chapter provides an in depth overview of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which is the interdisciplinary methodological framework employed in this research. The appropriateness of utilizing CDA as a tool for analyzing the discourses surrounding pre-colonial, colonial and post-independence education in Nigeria and for exploring the making of a Nigeria-centric education is outlined. Other topics covered in this chapter include the different methods of data collection and the approaches taken for data analyses. The chapter concludes with a reflection on the researcher’s own positionality and experiential connection to the study.

Methodological Approach

The central purpose of this study is to explore the making of a Nigeria-centric Education system using the theories of post-colonialism and indigenous epistemology. In addition, this research also aims to examine and critique the British created education system in Nigeria: its colonial legacies, advantages and disadvantages, as well as the colonial structures still inherent in the current educational system. Some perspectives on the current state of education in Nigeria are offered, by looking at the challenges and opportunities of the evolving educational system in
the Country as well as the growing calls for an African education renaissance to decolonize African minds and dismantle the remaining vestiges of colonialism within the existing educational system.

Critical Discourse Analysis enables me to analyze the development of education in Nigeria by providing the framework for a critical analysis of the texts, language and discourses surrounding Nigerian education. I look at the history of education in Nigeria to examine the discourses on schooling, curriculum and policy, during the: pre-colonial, colonial and post independence eras, by comparing the appropriation of these discourses inside and outside of Nigeria and seeking to focus attention on the symbiotic relationships between colonizer and the colonized. This approach allows me to use a set of discursive frameworks to unpack the text and interrogate the language of discourse around colonial and post-independence education in Nigeria. These texts are analyzed in the ways in which they impact local people within their local contexts. For example, with this approach I can critically analyze the historical trajectory of the Nigerian education; looking at how colonial-era policy thrusts have been maintained till date and further reinforced by neo-colonial global economic practices that are shaping schooling in the country.

The CDA methodological approach used in this research is compatible with the qualitative research method. Qualitative research is defined as involving “...an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter: it attempts to make sense of or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.3). According to Domegan and Fleming (2007), “Qualitative research aims to explore and to discover issues about the problem on hand, because very little is known about the problem. There is usually uncertainty about dimensions and characteristics of [the] problem. It uses ‘soft’ data and gets
‘rich’ data” (p. 24). Qualitative research is explorative, complex, naturalistic and emergent in nature, hence, it is designed to enable researchers explore the complexities of people and the social and cultural contexts which inform their lived experiences. While these two definitions provide an understanding of the epistemology underpinning qualitative research as well as the strategies for data collection and analysis, Nkwi, Nyamongo and Ryan (2001) provide a more straightforward definition. According to the authors: “[q]ualitative research involves any research that uses data that do not indicate ordinal values” (p.1). This definition is helpful because it provides a clear criterion for differentiating between qualitative and quantitative research. It also shows that the very nature of qualitative research which seeks to bring deeper meaning and significance to data beyond numerical values, lends it the flexibility to be organic and inclusive of diverse techniques of data collection and analysis (Guest et al, 2012).

In the process of exploring Nigerian colonial education and the making of a Nigeria-centric education system, the product of this research effort can best be described as a rich mosaic consisting of a hybrid of indigenous ways of knowing and meaning making and western epistemological worldview to create a re-imagined and forward-looking educational system that is Nigeria-centric. This can be called a *Bricolage*; a term Denzin and Lincoln (1994) use to describe “a complex, dense, reflexive, collage–like creation that represents the researcher’s images, understanding and interpretations of the world or phenomenon under analysis (p.3).” This study connects the parts to the whole by intertwining a complex collage of narratives and discourses of Nigerian colonial education as embedded in my understanding and interpretations of the research problem.

In addition, my perspective as a researcher, as well as the diverse theoretical epistemologies utilized in this study and which are compatible with qualitative research provide
the basis for validity and rigor. Qualitative research is the appropriate research method for this study because it allows for an exploration of the richness and complexity of data derived from the study (Ande, 2009). Thus enabling the “phenomenon of interest [to unfold] naturally” (Patton, 1990, p.39). This process involves “multiple construction and interpretation of realities that are in flux and that change over time” (Merriam, 2002, p.4).

My understanding of the context of colonial education in Nigeria is enriched and deepened by my vivid experience as a Nigerian woman who spent her formative years in Nigeria and attended public and quasi-private schools and who now lives and schools abroad and whose worldview has been shaped by her prolonged encounter with the western hegemonic education systems of the U.S. and Canada. I understand that research is interactive and shaped by my positionality, gender, race, social class and ethnicity/nationality. These attributes also shape to a large extent, the experiences of the colonized peoples who are at the epicenter of my research.

**Critical Discourse Analysis in Educational Research**

Fairclough (1993) defines CDA as an:

an analysis which aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony. (p. 135)
In CDA, language is used as a cultural tool to examine the relationships of power and privilege in social interactions, institutions, and in the normalization of privileged western epistemology. According to Guest et al (2012), Discourse Analysis (DA) is one of the numerous methodological approaches of qualitative research that draws from the “ethnomethodological tradition which is the study of the ways in which people produce recognizable social orders and processes.” Hence, the primary use of DA is to examine “text as an object of analysis” (p.14). Critical discourse analysis (CDA) provides an interdisciplinary approach to the study of how language and discourse are appropriated in the production and reproduction of power, knowledge and privilege among individuals, at school, in the work place and within other social institutions and society at large (Bourdieu, 1977; Davies & Harre, 1990; Foucault, 1972; Gee, 1999; Luke, 1995/1996). This qualitative research approach ultimately aims to excavate socio-cultural meanings and phenomena from the discourses produced by documents and various forms of texts.

According to Luke (n.d.), text is the “principal unit of analysis for critical discourse analysis. Texts are taken to be social actions, meaningful and coherent instances of spoken and written language use. Yet, their shape and form is not random or arbitrary” (p. 1.). Different types of texts serve specific purposes and they are used to achieve particular aims. Examples include, texts considered as “functional,” such as business letters, forms, policies and textbooks; texts that are derived from orally communicated interactions such as “clinical exchanges, service exchanges, classroom lessons,” and finally, multimedia, visual and electronic texts, such as “internet home pages” (p. 1). In my study, colonial-era policy texts, post-independence education policy documents, and extant literature on indigenous era education are some of the
artifacts of the historical and social actions that impact Nigerian education. These different types of texts are “dynamic and continually subject to innovation and reinvention” (Luke, n.d., p. 1).

CDA draws its corpus from “three intellectual traditions, each emphasizing the linguistic turns in the social sciences” (Rogers, 2005, p. 367). They are: feminist post-structuralism as exemplified by the works of Butler, 1990 and Davies 1993, critical linguistics derived from the works of (Fowler, Hodge, Kress, & Trew, 1979; Halliday & Hasan, 1989; Hodge & Kress, 1979/1993; Pecheux, 1975; Pennycook, 2001; Willig, 1999) and discourse studies influenced by (Benveniste, 1958/1971; Derrida, 1974; Foucault, 1972/1995; Pecheux, 1975). These three traditions provide the framework for CDA to be used as either a theoretical or methodological tool for data analysis (Rogers, 2005) and for interrogating how language and text are complicit in the construction of identity, power, knowledge and social relationships in society and in other sites of institutional and social interactions. Rogers et al (2004) posit that “the history of the critical study of discourse can be traced back …to language philosophers and social theorists such as Bakhtin (1981), DuBois (1903/1990), Pecheux (1975), Volosinov (1930/1973), and Wittgenstein (1953), among others” (p.365). The evolution of the term Critical Discourse Analysis, according to Rogers et al (2004) is attributed to the publications of Fairclough’s “Language of Power” in 1989.

Fairclough (1989) provides a three-dimensional framework for discourse analysis. They are: the analysis of oral or written texts; analysis of discourse praxis, such as the process of textual production, distribution and consumption; and analysis of discursive events as examples of socio-cultural praxis (Fairclough & Holes, 1995, Fairclough, 2001). To aid the three-dimensional framework for analysis, the author combines what he calls micro, meso and macro-level interpretations of texts. At the micro level, the text’s syntax and structure are considered in
the analytical process, the meso level concerns itself with textual production and consumption and how they influence power relations and finally, the macro level lends itself to an intertextual analysis of texts and how external variables alter the text under examination (Barry et al, 2006; Alvesson & Karreman, 2000). CDA draws its interdisciplinary approach primarily from linguistic theory and social theory. In addition to the language philosophers and social theorists Rogers et al (2004) listed, CDA also benefits from the works of Marx, Gramsci, Althusser, Habermas, Foucault, Derrida and Bourdieu in their deconstructions of the ideologies and power inherent in discourse.

CDA is an inclusive methodological field encompassing many disciplines; therefore, it is important to discuss the distinction between upper case CDA and lowercase cda. Gee (2004) describes uppercase CDA as the branch of discourse analysis influenced by the works of Fairclough (1989, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1995), Hodge & Kress (1979, 1988, 1993), Wodak (1996), van Dijk (1984, 1993, 1997, 2001), and van Leeuwen (2006). Uppercase CDA discourses are integral to the culture where their usage is situated and can be found across a wide array of texts. On the other hand, lowercase cda, are discourses whose usage and context are localized and may be limited to the context where the discourse is produced. Although Gee and other discourse analysts like Gumperz (1982), Hymes (1972), Michaels (1981), and Scollon & Scollon (1981) engage in “critically oriented forms of discourse analysis, they do not specifically call their work CDA (Rogers et al, 2005, p. 367). On why he does not label his work as CDA, Gee argues that critical approaches to discourse analysis “treat social practices in terms of their implications for things like status, solidarity, distribution of social goods, and power” (p. 33). And “because language is a social practice and because not all social practices are created and treated equally, all analyses of language are inherently critical” (Rogers et al, 2005, p. 367).
Although it is widely suggested that critical thinking about and analysis of situations or texts is as old as mankind or philosophy itself, Discourse Analysis is generally viewed as a postmodern analytical tool (Fairclough 1992; 1995; Gee, 1999). Critical discourse analysis provides the opportunity for textual and inter-textual readings aimed at deconstructing concepts, beliefs, values, and systems. In addition, there exists an expansive body of work using (1972) and Derrida (1974), which writes or attempts to write the voices of the marginalized subaltern peoples back into history thereby giving voices to multiple narratives. Examples of these include: works on autobiographies of women, indigenous cultures and racial minorities (Luke, n.d.). Post-colonial theorists and Post-structural feminists share a singular bond; which is, “the need to generate a public and intellectual “space” for critique of dominant discourses and for the speaking and writing of the “unsaid”, “subaltern” voices and stories that historically have been silenced” and “[w]thin the fields of “critical pedagogy” and “feminist pedagogy”, this work is seen to serve educative and emancipatory political projects” (Luke, n.d., p.1).

Many Postcolonial education researchers often use Critical Discourse Analysis as a method to interpret, explain, deconstruct and analyze educational problems and the different ways in which the dominant culture achieves power and domination (Kinchloe & McLaren, 2003). With the changing social and cultural dynamics in the World, educators now have to deal with the challenges of what Hall (1996) calls “new times.” This new era denotes population shifts, demographic changes, migration, changing social and cultural dynamics, new communities powered by social media, hybrid cultural identities, and changing structures of work and economy (Luke, n.d.). In the developed and developing world, the challenges posed by this new era in the education sector have provided the impetus for post-colonial, post-modern, post-structuralist researchers and critical analysts to focus on the roles of text, discourse and
language which are the cores of CDA as they increasingly play a central role in shaping ideology and power relations in the emerging new world order.

Several studies in education have and continue to use the critical discourse analysis approach in the study of phenomenon. In education research, the CDA approach allows for a comprehensive study of education policy documents, curriculum documents, textbooks, teachers’ guidebooks, and student writings (Luke, n.d.). It has also been used to study a wide variety of “natural” and “artificial” discursive texts.

Critical Discourse Analysis methodology has been utilized for analyzing the power inherent in the education policy discourse and understanding of the linkages between policy and the consumers of policy. For example, Woodside-Jiron (2004) used CDA as a framework to critically analyze how power alters policy in his study of the changes in literacy policies in the California school system between 1995 and 1997. He was able to examine how power is used in the production and dissemination of different kinds of ideologies, texts, discourse practices in school and society. By understanding how power works, the researcher believes society becomes more attuned to the way power produces and reproduces structures which represent and benefit the status quo. In his findings, the author opined that those he calls “policy players,” and “policy informants” where in the locus of power while parents, teachers, administrators and tax payers and students were in the periphery. Consequently, he argues that the mode of participation in the language and power of policy impact their social relations, agenda and surrounding social structures. He calls this an invisible process which strengthens the language, power and participation processes. He sees a role for researchers and education leaders to communicate such practices to the public in order to educate them on the discourses.
Critical Discourse Analysis has also been used in unraveling the interaction and experiences of students in the classroom. Hinchman and Young (2001) in their study of how two students participated in classroom talk about texts explained how student’s participation in talk could be complicated in ways that seemed tied to a variety of social constructions inside and outside the classroom. The study showed that one student participated in text with an assumption of expertise while the other talks from assumption of equality only to lose credibility when his teacher expected richer interpretive insights. The study emphasized the need to develop more equitable literacy pedagogy by monitoring individuals' participation in classroom talk which has been proven in this study to hurt institutional and societal discourses.

In “Talking Science,” Lemke (1990) uses Critical Discourse Analysis to examine the role of language in the teaching and communication of scientific and technical subjects. The many strategies utilized by teachers and students to transmit their views of science, which in turn influence the beliefs and behaviors of others are also identified and analyzed. The analysis examined the role of language and semantics in the communication of scientific concepts, method of social interaction, and the overarching social values and views which propel these patterns of communication. Lemke (1990) draws his analysis from transcripts of recordings made in science classrooms to show that the contents of scientific and technical subjects are actually communicated through the semantic patterns that teachers and students intertwine with language. CDA techniques provide the tools for the author to place the communication of science in the context of classroom lessons, debates, and disruptions. A critical analysis of the text and language of communicating scientific knowledge reveals the hidden social interest served in the manner in which science and technical subjects are communicated.
Critical discourse analysis emerged as a response to the non-critical version of discourse analysis traditionally used in linguistics; this emergence has added a new dimension to the practice of textual analysis. Critics often ask the overriding question “does CDA produce valid knowledge”? (Haig, 2002, p.133). As a result of its critical ideological bent, CDA has its fair share of critics and supporters, with opponents and proponents espousing why they are for or against the approach. CDA has been criticized for being susceptible to the political and ideologically bias of the analyst, thus giving rise to the concern that the analyst would read their own pre-existing meaning into text, rather than deriving meaning out of the text. And this concern is heightened by the accusation that the analysts would select only those texts which will reinforce their bias. In response to the criticism of CDA, proponents of CDA are not reticent about acknowledging its potential bias: Wodak and Meyer (2001) note that “…critical discourse analysis research combines what perhaps somewhat pompously used to be called ‘solidarity with the oppressed’ with an attitude of opposition and dissent against those who abuse text and talk in order to establish, confirm or legitimate their abuse of power. Unlike much other scholarship, CDA does not deny but explicitly defines and defends its own socio-political position, That is CDA is biased – and proud of it” (p. 96).

The individual researcher’s bias in the application of Critical Discourse Analysis has been highlighted by critics. Specifically, it has been noted that it is highly implausible to separate the ideological beliefs of the researcher from the interpretations of the text and this susceptibility to the researcher’s bias can lead to skewed interpretation of text; which is contrary to the core values of CDA. Fish (1981) cautions about the dangers of using pre-formed decisions and philosophical leanings to affirm the interpretation of the meaning of a text. Maley (1994) also seems to downplay the importance of individual ideology in the interpretation of texts as a flaw
of the critical discourse analysis methodology. He opines that social groups should accept the repression of their ideology willingly rather than by coercion as defined by CDA. However, Fairclough (1996) believes that the effect of individual ideology on the interpretation of texts is exaggerated. He noted that such assumption is trivial as Critical Discourse analysts are unlikely to interpret texts in such a way as to muddle up the social constructs of the interpretation. He advised instead of researchers to focus on the impact of a person’s ideology on how the texts are analyzed in CDA, the concern should be about the implications of questioning the purposes and intentions of the texts.

In summary, discourse means communicating through words; they provide numerous ways of knowing and experiencing the world. Discourse can be use for power and domination and it can also be used for resistance and critique. Discourse exist in every day contexts for producing and reproducing power and knowledge, for control, normalizing, establishing and maintaining hegemony and to develop new knowledge and power relations. Given the importance of discourse in the form of text and language, CDA is therefore a necessary tool for analyzing, critiquing, interpreting and describing the social structures that are embedded in text (Luke, 1997). CDA helps to show discursive sources of power, dominance and control, how they are produced, maintained and reproduced and appropriated within social, economic, political and historical contexts (Van Dijk, 1988). Finally, CDA provides an understanding of how reality is constructed to privilege the interests of those in control of the apparatus of power, thus, by revealing these practices, CDA provides parallel discourses to energize the marginalized into resistance against the norm (Foucault, 1995).
In this study, CDA provides the methodological approach to analyze the Nigerian education system and how the discursive texts of colonialism and neo-colonialism serve to reinforce the marginalization and de-historicization of the Nigerian narrative.

**Sociopolitical Context and Key Demographics of Phenomenon Under Study**

It is in a context of political, social, economic and infrastructural underdevelopment that the Nigerian government at all three tiers of governance have attempted to improve the state of education in the Country. Demographically, the total population of Nigeria has grown exponentially from 33 million in 1950 (Kent & Haub, 2005) to approximately 170 million in 2011 (National Population Commission, n.d.). The United Nations estimates that by 2100, Nigeria’s population will be between 505 million and 1.03 billion people (UN, 2010). Nigeria is the most populous nation in Africa and the seventh most populous nation in the World (Library of Congress, 2011). The country accounts for more than 20% of the World’s Black population and one-sixth of the African population. 1 out of every 4 Africans is a Nigerian (BBC News, 2006).

Since the first western-style school was founded in Nigeria in 1843 by the Methodists missionaries, education in the country continues to be at the center of heated debates on the best strategies for reform (Obiakor, 2009). Unfortunately, the unstable political environment and weak political and institutional structures have had long term negative impact on the delivery of education in the Country. Rapid turn-over in the management of the education sector also contributes to the disarray of education policy and reform initiatives. For example, in the last 14 years, there have been at least 10 ministers of Education, with an average tenure in office of less than two years. The same turn-over and disarray is evident at the state government level.
When one education minister leaves, the successor almost always begins from scratch which leads to a lack of institutional memory and in many cases, policy reversals.

**Research Questions**

This study attempts to answer two overarching research questions:

- What is a Nigeria-centric educational system and can it be developed?
- If a Nigeria-centric educational system can be developed, would it solve the inherent problems in the current Nigerian education system?

Although the primary research questions seeks to explore the making of a Nigeria-centric education system, there are related issues that need unpacking before the question can be answered. The following sub-questions will provide stepping stones.

1. **What is a British-colonial education system?**
   i. What are its advantages and disadvantages?
   ii. What is the historical legacy of the British colonial education system in Nigeria?
   iii. What are its contemporary manifestations?

2. **What might a Nigeria-centric educational system look like?**
   i. What is a Nigerian worldview around which an education system can be built?
   ii. What are the possibilities presented by indigenous knowledge systems for a Nigeria-centric educational system?
   iii. Can this indigenous perspective coexist with western education?

**Data Collection**

Data collection for this research was from multiple sources. I reviewed extant research pertinent to primary and secondary education in Nigeria or that were related to Nigerian
education reform and policy documents, I also reviewed articles and books that have been written about other educational systems in Africa. My rationale for doing this is that I wanted to see the range of approaches, theories and perspectives that relate to Nigerian and by extension, other African education systems. To collect my artifacts on Nigerian education, I searched data bases in the social sciences with search terms like “education in Nigeria,” “colonial education in Nigeria,” “colonial education in Africa,” “education in Africa,” “African indigenous epistemologies,” “national policy on education,” “Missionary education,” “Islamic education,” “Indigenous education” and “History of education in Nigeria.” There was no restriction on year of publication as I searched for recent journal articles, books and colonial-era publications. My data is primarily collected from the following eight sources:

- **Books:** for example, *A History of Education in Nigeria* (Fafunwa, 1974), *Discourse on Colonialism* (Césaire, 1972), *Wretched of the Earth* (Fanon, 2005) and *Decolonizing the mind: The politics of language in African literature.* (Thiong o, 1986).
- **Peer-reviewed journal articles:** for example, Nyamnjoh (2012), The greenhouse effect of colonial education in Africa, Nsame (2005). Educational development and knowledge flow: Local and global forces in human development in Africa.
- **Nigerian government documents such as:** National Policy on Education in Nigeria (2004),
- **Colonial-era reports,** including: Phelps-Stokes reports on education in Africa (1962)
- **Multilateral Agency Reports like:** World Bank Development Indicators Report, IMF Economic Report, UNICEF and Education for All Progress Reports
• Bilateral Government Report such as: United States Agency for International Development (USAID, Nigerian Education Report)

• Newspaper Articles from major Nigerian and foreign publications such as: BBC, New York Times, The Nation, Punch, Tribune and Vanguard.


Reviewing extant reports on education in Africa from the colonial and early post-independence era was also important for me to access many of the seminal works in colonialism and post-colonialism written by African writers and Black diasporic social theorists (Césaire, 1972; Fafunwa, 1982; Fanon, 2005; Obanya, 1995; Rodney, 1976; Thiong'o, 1986). I also employed bibliographic branching to source for more books and articles. I reviewed article abstracts from online searches and also reviewed the table of contents of online, peer-reviewed journals in education research, education policy, indigenous education, and decolonization to find more extant literature. I reviewed research that was published in peer-reviewed journals (Nyamnjoh, 2012; Schipper, 1990; Soyinka, 1994; Werbner, 1996; Zeleza, 1997), policy documents (National Policy on Education, 2004) online materials on various blogs and websites (EFA Report, 2012, UNICEF Nigeria, Country Profile, 2011), newspaper publications (BBC, 2012, Punch, 2012, Tribute, 2011, Vanguard, 2013), books (Fanon, 2005; Fairclough, 1989; Foucault, 1972). To be relevant, the material had to have some direct or comparative relationship to education in Nigeria or colonial education in Africa. I relied on seminal books and articles published in reputable peer-reviewed academic journals in the field to help limit unreliability of data from internet sources, although, as is often the case, internet sources tend to
have the most current information. Also, since I am attempting my study from outside of Nigeria, internet sources where a useful method of getting close to pertinent data. In cases of conflicting information, I determined the validity or reliability of the data by using an assessment of the source of the information. For instance, articles in a peer-reviewed reputable journal take precedence over a non-reviewed, newspaper article or information on a website.

To determine the veracity of some figures or claims, I cross examined multiple sources of data using triangulation research methodology. Data triangulation involves the use of multiple sources of information in order to increase the validity of a study. According to O’Donoghue and Punch (2003), triangulation is a “method of cross-checking data from multiple sources to search for regularities in the research data” (p. 78). Cohen and Manion (2000) also define triangulation as an “attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behavior by studying it from more than one standpoint” (p. 254). Triangulation is a common research technique that has been shown to increase confidence in research data, creating innovative ways of understanding a phenomenon, revealing unique findings, challenging or integrating theories, and providing a clearer understanding of the problem” (Thurmond, 2001, p. 254). A major disadvantage of triangulation is that it could be time consuming and there could be “possible disharmony based on investigator biases, conflicts because of theoretical frameworks, and lack of understanding about why triangulation strategies were used” (Thurmond, 2001, p. 256). In spite of the disadvantage, triangulation has proved to be a very helpful tool in qualitative research.
Method of Analysis

My analysis is guided by the indigenous epistemology and post-colonial theoretical frameworks employed in this study. The CDA approach allows me to critically interrogate perspectives that have been “buried, written over, or erased.” In making dominant and familiar narratives about Nigerian education unfamiliar, I draw from the work of Kaomea (2003), whose research in the Hawaiian education system led her to conclude that:

“educational investigations into the colonialist and oppressive tendencies of schooling, in Hawai‘i and elsewhere, should employ defamiliarizing analytic tools borrowed from literary and critical theory to peel back familiar, dominant appearances and expose previously silenced and potentially disturbing accounts of the oppressive conditions in our schools. (p. 14)

Using these “defamiliarizing” tools I observe that within the context of the historical marginalization of indigenous knowledge in colonial education in Nigeria and the prevailing western neo-colonial hegemony, “seemingly benign or progressive instructional efforts can have unanticipated, counterproductive effects” (p. 14).

I also rely on critical ethnography to inform my analytical strategies. Critical ethnography is an empirical research methodology that is grounded in social critical theory. According to (Ma, 2009), the strength of critical ethnography lies in its ability to unravel power relations by appropriating the meaning and conceptualization of the social systems. This approach enables me to be self-reflexive about my own discontent with a colonized Nigerian education and to be aware of the important position I occupy as a researcher who is “both presenting and representing the lives and stories of others [whom I] have come to know…” (Thomas, 1993, p.4). How I interpret and represent the discourses of colonial education in
Nigeria is also important because representation has consequences, how people are represented is how they are treated (Hall, 1997). To ground my understanding of critical ethnography, I rely on the work of Madison (2003), which shows the productive links between theory and method and how both become more valuable as they interact through fieldwork. Post-colonial theory and Indigenous epistemology provides two very critical lenses from which I am able to excavate and critically interpreted buried, erased, written-over and dominant discourses of Nigerian education. Imagination is another approach that informs my analysis. According to Hayes (2013), “new strategies emerge for the ethnographer to explore the nature of social and cultural lived experience. Central to these is the imagination” (p.1).

Contemporary newspaper reports regarding mass failure in standardized tests were examined. Instead of prima facie examination of a news headline, I uncovered the critique of the prevailing education system in the country and also focused on the symbiotic relationship between the school as a place of nurturing, influenced by indigenous practices of holistic knowledge acquisition, to the distant, institutionalized, formalized and artificial learning environment and excessive testing which stifle the creativity of students- creating a crisis of mass failure. These discourses is what Popkewitz (2003) refers to as the indigenous foreigner, a “narrative without specific historical references and practices … a discourse that is empty of history but that directs us to the understanding of systems of reason and to the actors who are authorised to speak” (p. 278). The “indigenous foreigner” notion can be located in the Eurocentric curriculum of Nigerian schools.

In my data analysis, I try to approach the text under examination in two steps: (a) first reading of the text is an uncritical acceptance of the status quo in what Price (2002) describes as “engagement without estrangement.” The second step involves reading the text more critically
by raising questions about its intent, by imagining alternatives ways the text could have been constructed and by a mental comparison to related texts. For example, how Nigeria’s education policy is constructed in relationship to Britain’s.

Before beginning my analysis, I place the text in their various genre types, for example, books, journal articles, government document, donor reports, multilateral agency reports and so on. I do this because each genre has its own rules that guide it and are constructed differently. For example, an academic journal article typically has an organizational format such as: problem statement, literature review, theoretical framework, methodology, findings, discussion, recommendations and conclusion. Since this template is created by the institution that owns the genre “the genre becomes a means through which the institution extends power” (McGregor, 2004).

**Limitations**

Access to government documents, out of print books and colonial-era policy documents were difficult due to poor record keeping and poorly maintained archives and library systems in Nigeria. As a result of the rapid turn-over rate in the Ministry of Education, institutional memory is almost non-existent as government officials and ministry staffers are unable to produce primary government documents. In some cases where reports were available, the lack of adequate referencing made it difficult to ascertain the veracity of claims made. A major implication of the dearth in available primary materials from the Nigerian government means that there were gaps in available documentation that could have helped to provide a more complete picture of reform efforts since independence. In addition, policy changes were sometimes announced without documented references to those changes.
(Re)searching the Re(search)er

My identity as a Nigerian woman and a global citizen (based on my experiences in schooling, living and working in Africa, North America and Central Asia), plays a crucial role in how I interpret and analyze data. I bring my insights from my experiential knowledge of the Nigerian education system and indigenous cultural practices in my ancestral land to bear on my analysis. I decided to research the topic of education in Nigeria because I am a product of both the public and quasi-private school systems in the Country.

Growing up in Nigeria, I did not realize how westernized the curriculum was until much later in graduate school in America when I started deconstructing my schooling experience. My education from kindergarten through high school was in English, I do not recall learning my mother tongue at school, the consequence of this being that I can read, write and speak English fluently, but only able to speak my mother tongue with very basic reading and writing skills. A Eurocentric curriculum did not teach me about other African countries. I knew far more about far away European and North American countries than I did our neighboring West African countries of Ghana, Niger, Chad, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Benin Republic or Ivory Coast. I could name western capital cities, western food and western pop culture aesthetics, but was in the dark about other Nigerian ethnic groups, some of their foods, customs and values. I was a foreigner in my country.

The hidden curriculum colonizing our subconscious was that White was superior and Black was inferior. The short-coming of such a westernized education is exemplified by the fact that the curriculum also did not address colonialism and trans-Atlantic slavery; neither did we learn about the Nigerian civil war in our social studies class. In fact, we were largely in the dark about happenings outside of school. In contrast, my high school experience in Canada was
completely different. The curriculum, pedagogical methods, textbooks used, language of instruction and school activities all had a decidedly Canadian identity. We learned Canadian history, English and French language were languages of instruction and communication, we stood up for the Canadian national anthem every morning in class, we were instructed in civics; what it meant to be good Canadian citizens, topical issues of the day were discussed, sporting events, plays, recitals and other extramural activities provided opportunities for parents and other family members to visit the school regularly. We had to engage in after-school volunteerism and received credits for internships and co-ops. I started high school in Canada, a colonized Nigerian, lacking a Nigerianized identity and I graduated high school with a firmly entrenched Canadian worldview. In a nutshell, I became a Canadian long before I could carry a Canadian passport.

While I may not be the subject of this research, I believe my lived experience as a former student of a colonized Nigerian education system helps me understand the nuances and the intertextuality inherent in the texts I analyze. As I do this, I also maintain standard research protocols in data collection and analysis. I see my lived experience being very much reflected in the data I collect. My personal encounters with the legacies of colonialism and the dominating white supremacist ideology of neo-colonialism are part of the reason why I undertook this research. I am hopeful that the findings of this study will help to kick-start the process of developing a Nigeria-centric educational system that will provide quality and Nigerianized education to the next generation of Nigerians.

Summary

In summary, this chapter lays out the methodological approach utilized in this study. A comprehensive discussion on the methodological approach of Critical Discourse Analysis is
provided, its definitions, limitations, uses and examples of its applicability are explained. A contextual overview of Nigeria is also provided to give the reader a context to situate the Nigerian education system. Finally, the research questions guiding this study are unveiled; data collection and data analysis methods are discussed, including an explanation of the limitations of the research and a narrative of the researcher’s positionality. The analysis of the data gathered will be presented in chapter 5, following a comprehensive discussion of the history of Nigerian education through three eras in chapter 4.
CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION

“When the Missionaries arrived, the Africans had the land and the Missionaries had the Bible. They taught us how to pray with our eyes closed. When we opened them, they had the land and we had the Bible”

– Jomo Kenyatta

Eras Of Nigerian Education

The history of Nigerian education can be divided into three eras: the pre-colonial era, which was characterized by a holistic system of indigenous education; the colonial period, which saw the introduction of Islamic and missionary education and finally, the post-independence era which is the period after Nigeria gained her independence from Britain in 1960 and which has been characterized by poor learning outcomes as well as largely unsuccessful education reform attempts. Exploring the creation of a fourth era which I call Nigeria-centric, is the focus of this study. Chapter 4 is divided into three sections and each section discusses the history and characteristics of the type of education in that period. The data for the three eras of Nigerian education which is comprehensively laid out in this chapter will form the basis of a critical analysis of the themes surrounding Nigerian education. My analysis in chapter 5 will end with a discussion of the Nigeria-centric education model.
Pre-colonial Nigeria

Before the geographical location which the British colonialists named Nigeria came into existence, there were many autonomous kingdoms and acephalous societies (Coombs, Prosser, & Ahmed, 1973; Damachi, 1972; Dzobo, 1975) and many of these kingdoms and empires were politically, socially, economically and educationally well structured. All across the area now known as Nigeria, different ethnic-nationalities thrived in their own enclaves, while some societies were based on a monarchical system of governance, others, like the Igbo of southeastern Nigeria had a Republican system of governance, where each head of household was the authority figure. The system of education practiced in these societies was indigenous education which will be discussed at length later in this chapter. Some examples of the highly organized traditional societies included the empires of Benin, Bornu, and Oyo.

Located in southwest Nigeria, the Oyo Empire was founded in approximately 1300 C.E. and it became a British protectorate in 1888. At the height of the empire’s prominence from 1650 -1750, it controlled the trade routes to what is now Northern Nigeria, Gao, Timbuktu and other parts of present-day West Africa (Gaon, 2001). Textiles and iron goods were among the commodities traded. In 1911, German ethnographer and leader of the German inner-African exploring expedition, Leo Frobenius, visited Ile-Ife, the seat of the Oyo monarchy and unearthed religious artifacts that the Yoruba had buried underground, one of such artifact is the “Ori Olokun,” after his discovery, Frobenius sent a report to the New York Times on January, 29, 1911 which later formed the basis of a New York Times article titled: “German discovers Atlantis in Africa; Leo Frobenius says find of Bronze Poseidon fixes Lost Continent’s place”;

Frobenius wrote that he had “discovered indisputable proofs of the existence of Plato’s legendary Continent of Atlantis” and described the “Ori Olokun” as “a (finely traced) work of
high artistic merit” with “faultless mould”, with “eloquent of a symmetry, a vitality, a delicacy of form directly reminiscent of ancient Greece and proof that once upon a time, a race, far superior in strain to the Negro had settled here.” And stating that “it is entirely devoid of Negro characteristics and there is no doubt that it cannot have been made of local casting” he went on to say: “I was moved to melancholy at the thought that this assembly of degenerate and feeble-minded posterity should be the legitimate guardians of so much loveliness” (Archibong, 2010, para. 4). Frobenius’ view was synonymous with the prevailing white supremacist sentiments of the era: that of the inferior minded natives who were incapable of producing anything of worth. This attitude of downplaying the abilities of indigenous peoples certainly provided an impetus for the latter day expropriation of indigenous artifacts. Unfortunately, this view still lingers today in a less obvious manner. As an example, I refer to the debate about the return of stolen artifacts to colonized peoples around the World. In a recent visit to India, the British Prime Minister, when asked, if the 105karat Koh-i-Noor diamond which once graced the crown of Queen Elizabeth I and which remains part of the British collection of crown jewels will be returned to its rightful owners, the people of India, the Prime minister said he does not believe in “returnism.” According to him: “I don’t think that’s the right approach…The right answer is for the British Museum and other cultural institutions to do exactly what they do, which is to link up with other institutions around the world to make sure that the things which we have and look after so well are properly shared with people around the world…I certainly don’t believe in ‘returnism’, as it were. I don’t think that’s sensible” (Reuters, 2012, para. 3). The Koh-I-Noor was taken away from India during the colonial era in 1849 by Lord Dalhousie who viewed the gem as a spoil of war after the Treaty of Lahore formalized Britain’s occupation of Punjab. In
the case of the *Ori Olokun* of the Oyo Empire, it is believed that the original piece is now housed in a British Museum.

Another pre-colonial empire that thrived before the advent of the British colonizers is the Benin Empire which was at its zenith from 1440-1897 (Gaon, 2001). It is located in the South-southern region of present day Nigeria. The Benin Empire is renowned for its bronze, iron and ivory artworks. Some of its more prominent artworks, such as the bronze head of the Oba of Benin are displayed in the Smithsonian in the United States of America and in other museums across Europe. The Portuguese were the first European explorers to reach Benin around 1485 and as a result, a trading relationship developed between Benin and Portugal. By the early 16\(^{th}\) century, Benin and Lisbon had developed diplomatic relations, which prompted the Oba of Benin to send an ambassador to Lisbon and the King of Portugal in turn sent Christian missionaries to Benin (Macgregor, 2010).

The first English expedition to Benin was in 1553 where significant relationship developed between Benin and England. Visitors in the 16\(^{th}\) and 17\(^{th}\) centuries returned home to Europe with tales of “the Great Benin,” described as a renowned city of impressive buildings and ruled by an equally impressive King. Among those who were in awe of what they encountered in Benin was the 17\(^{th}\) century Dutch explorer, Olfert Dapper who described Benin in his engraving of 1668 as beautiful, with long square galleries that were as large as the “Exchange” at Amsterdam. Benin Empire suffered a setback after the British punitive expedition of 1887 wherein their troops captured Oba Ovoranmwen N'Ogbaisi, sent him on exile, looted the palace artifacts and burned down the city. A lot of the stolen artworks from “Great Benin” are now prominently displayed in museums and personal collections around the World.
The Bornu Empire was another pre-colonial indigenous state which thrived from 1380–1893 and encompassed areas that are today parts of the countries of Chad, Niger and Cameroon. At the height of the empire in the 14th century, the Mai (ruler) of Bornu had diplomatic relations with Egypt, Tripoli and the Ottoman Empire (Gaon, 2001). Throughout its reign, the Bornu Empire fought wars with neighboring states and other States as far as Sudan. The Empire was still thriving until the mid-17th century when its power began to wane. By the late 18th century, it had declined from sustained encounters with the Fulani Jihad. The Bornu Empire eventually became part of the British colony.

The accounts of the Oyo, Benin and Bornu Empires offer a snapshot of relatively well structured and sophisticated indigenous societies, many of which existed before the advent of colonialism. It was important to foreground my discussion of indigenous education with this examples of thriving kingdoms and empires in pre-colonial Nigeria in order to make the case that the indigenous peoples were not “primitive,” as was alluded to by the European explorers and secondly they were educated in a holistic, functional and integrated system of learning because in pre-colonial societies, education was lifelong and the opportunities for learning were boundless and not delimited by the restricting four walls of a school building.

**Indigenous Education as Purposeful Learning**

What was the nature of education in pre-colonial Nigeria? During the early days of colonial contact, many missionary explorations into Africa were predicated on the notion of bringing education to the uneducated ‘savages,’ the natives were seen as unformed and a step below the ladder of human evolution. French anthropologist, Lévy-Bruhl (1910) expounded this western ideology in his writings about the “primitive mind” of the native. To him, the human
mindset was a binary of “primitive” and “western.” As a result of the native’s ‘primitiveness,’ they needed the civilizing western education to aid the native’s evolution from a “primitive” mind to a “civilized” mind. Although education is equated with literacy and formal schooling, however, early anthropological accounts of African societies documented evidence of indigenous forms of education which complimented the agrarian lifestyles of the people. African indigenous education had three main aims: cultural preservation, nature adaptation and social adaptation (Mazonde, 2001). In a History of Education in Nigeria Fanfunwa (1974) provides a comprehensive narrative of the advent of education in Nigeria, from the pre-colonial to the post-independence era. The author’s account explores the characteristics of: Traditional, Islamic/Missionary and post-independence education.

In Indigenous societies, because education was functional, holistic and integrated with community life, it was regarded “as a means to an end and not as an end in itself,” (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 15). The education of the child began from infancy, from the moment they were born till they attained adulthood. Hence, the education of the child was a community affair as the child went through one stage of developmental growth to the next. Fafunwa (1974) states that education in that era emphasized “social responsibility, job orientation, political participation and spiritual and moral values” (p. 15). Children learnt new skills by doing and observing the adults, they engaged in experiential learning through “ceremonies, rituals, imitation, recitation and demonstration” (p. 16).

In a non-compartmentalized educational setting, age-grouping was an important mechanism for indigenous societies to determine the cognitive abilities of children and what kinds of activities were age-appropriate. Thus, when a child grows out of one age group, there is a “passing out” ceremony or initiation ceremony into the next age grouping. Fafuwa (1974)
provides a general classification of age as shown in table 2. According to him, some indigenous groups had age-grading systems based on intervals of two years. Age is an important attribute in indigenous societies as elders are often revered and seen as the repository of wisdom, knowledge and history. Since many of these societies had no written texts, oral traditions passed down by elders became the source of communal memory. Consequently, the older one was, the more respected and revered they were. This reverence for age is still very much a part of contemporary Nigerian society such that “a man (or woman) will overstate his age rather than understate it” (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 19). Further, as the historians of the community, the elders had a responsibility to ensure that the people’s history was passed down from generation to generation. As Fafunwa (1974) opines: “History is to a people what memory is to the individual” (p.13), thus, a society without knowledge of its past is simply without a collective sense of identity or heritage. Carr (1987) defines history as an “unending dialogue between the present and the past” (p.30).

**Table 2: Age Group Classification in Indigenous Societies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Groupings by year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>36-39</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>40-43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>44-47</td>
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<tr>
<td>20-23</td>
<td>48-51</td>
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<tr>
<td>24-27</td>
<td>52-56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28-31</td>
<td>57-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32-35</td>
<td>61 and above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In pre-colonial societies, indigenous education played a crucial role in fostering individual and communal “wholeness.” According to Waterman (1990) “[m]uch of Indigenous education can be called “endogenous” education; it revolves around a transformational process of learning by bringing forth illumination from one’s ego center” (para. 1). Thus, “[e]ducating and enlivening the inner self is the imperative of Indigenous education embodied in the metaphor, “seeking life” or for “life’s sake.” Inherent in this metaphor is the realization that ritual, myth, vision, art, and learning the art of relationship in a particular environment, facilitates the health and wholeness of the individual, family, and community” (para. 1). Therefore, education, as a process of creating and maintaining “wholeness,” seeks a state of “harmony between individuals and their world,” this is considered “an ancient foundation of the educational process of all cultures in its most natural dimension, all true education is transformative and Nature centered. Indeed, the Latin root educare meaning “to draw out,” embodies the spirit of the transformative quality of education” (Waterman, 1990, para. 1).

The Seven Goals of Indigenous Education in Nigeria

Based on the extensive review of literature relating to indigenous education in pre-colonial Nigeria and as well as in other parts of Africa, indigenous education can be said to consist of seven fundamental goals, which are:

a. Understanding of Nature and the Environment
e. Skills Acquisition

b. Character Development
f. Social Responsibility
c. Respect for Elders
g. Enculturation
d. Intellectual Development
Education can only be relevant for any group if it is socially constructed to address the cultural, economic and political needs of a community. Thus, “socializing the individual to the collective culture of the group” (Waterman, 1990, para. 4). This type of education is regenerative and transformational and allows for the exploration of a person in relation to their connection with their family, community and environment. The following seven goals of indigenous education in pre-colonial Nigerian societies were socially constructed and designed to serve the needs of the individual and the community.

**Understanding of Nature and the Environment**

Children are naturally curious and their innate creativity enables them to mimic what they observe in their immediate environment, including copying the behavior of adults. This penchant is universal as Fafunwa notes “there is no cultural difference between the African, European or the Asiatic Child, but the Modus Operandi may vary in terms of method and equipment” (p.20). In the indigenous societies, children had free reign to explore their environment and engage in physical activity. Fafunwa (1974) states: “the child intuitively jumps, climbs a tree, dances or performs a balancing act because his siblings or his elders do the same” (p.20). This pedagogical method of indigenous education allowed the child to construct their own knowledge and acquire new skills through experiential learning. In a sense, the community was a classroom without walls and the extent of a child’s cognitive development was without limit in such an environment. As a result, the “African child, unlike the European child, has unlimited access to the stimulating world of African music and dance. He needs no teacher or specialist to teach him the first steps. He observes the adults and other children and naturally falls in step. The infinite variety of African dance movement offers the child one of the best media for physical exercise” (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 20). In addition, the music and dance steps had
intrinsic cultural values and communicated norms such as “team work.” These early-child hood exploratory process proved beneficial to the children. Raum (1940), classifies physical activities into three categories: “…first, the playful exercise of sensory and motor apparatus resulting in the adaptation of the organism to its physical environment; secondly, imitative play consisting of representation of adult life to fit the social needs of childhood; and thirdly, competitive games which test the physical, intellectual, and social qualities of the individual” (p. 250). Through these play activities; the indigenous child was able to develop the life skills required for a mastery of their environment, useful skills that will serve them throughout their lifetime.

While this first goal of indigenous education may seem rather simplistic and without much value, it is important to note that it shares a similarity with adopted western learning strategies such as the constructivist approach to learning. Indigenous societies have always recognized the value of constructivist and experiential approaches to learning which have become a part of the discourses in the West of how to improve the delivery of education. Fafunwa (1974) highlights this growing trend of co-opting indigenous educational methods when he states “educators are beginning to talk about universities without walls, schools without classes, and subjects without grades” (Fafunwa, 1974, p.15). Additionally, many research out of neuroscience have endorsed this mode of learning as the way people naturally learn (Zull, 2002). Montessori (1946) espouses the view that natural processes spontaneously carried out by individuals are active learning which are not necessarily encountered through pupil’s interaction with teachers. Thus, she writes: “scientific observation has established that education is not what the teacher gives; education is a natural process spontaneously carried out by the human individual, and is acquired not by listening to words but by experiences upon the environment.” Consequently, “the task of the teacher becomes that of preparing a series of motives of cultural
activity, spread over a specially prepared environment, and then refraining from obtrusive interference (1946, p. x).

**Character Development**

Character development is central to indigenous education. In discussing character development among the Yoruba indigenous society, Fadipe (1970) emphasizes the roles members of the family, relatives, and the community play in the education of a young Yoruba child in the customs, values and laws of the society thus, the “more inclusive the group the less the direct responsibility of the average member of that group for the training of the child” (p. 311). He notes that although the mother and other members of the child’s family are primarily responsible for the child’s education, the communal efforts are also very important. Hence, the popular African proverb: “it takes a village to raise a child.”

Character education involved three steps. First, character education can be done by trial and error. In this step, children are allowed to make mistakes and they are taught important character codes of the community as they go along. Punishment is also used as a corrective measure for children who are delinquent. Secondly, training can be done through observation. This step involves the child observing how older children and adults behave in different social situations. Lastly, a child can be educated through the process of cultural assimilation. This involves the child subconsciously imbibing the values and norms of the community. The author asserts that it is the duty of a mother to train their children about the aesthetical conventions of the community. For example: “one of the most important of these is in regard to the use of the right and left hands. Owing principally to the fact that before the diffusion of the white man’s culture, the use of forks and spoons for eating was unknown, the employment of the right hand, traditionally used for eating, had come to be forbidden for handling dirty objects. For instance,
unless strictly unavoidable, the right hand must not be brought into contact with mucous or with any of the other waste products which come out of the human body” (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 22).

In other indigenous societies, character education took the form of competition among age-grades, this was meant to instill a sense of team spirit and teach the children how to win or lose graciously. Proverbs and folktales were also employed as mediums of communicating the value of ethics and good character as well as the consequences of unethical practices. Each child or youth is also expected to know about hospitality, etiquette and other social graces. And in some cases, parents set out to deliberately entrap their children to test the child’s adherence to the values of honesty, truthfulness and perseverance. These methods of indirect education of character development provide the child with practical experience of social codes and the consequences of violating them.

In *The Science of Character Education*, Berkowitz (2002) makes a case for why Character education is important in schools. He sees it as developing virtues which are good for the individual and the society and which helps in the entrenchment of the right kind of values for good citizenship as well as good judgment, honesty, empathy and self-discipline and respect.

**Respect for Elders**

Respect for elders is closely aligned with character development and it is a key attribute of the developmental process of any child. Every child must learn how to be respectful, particularly towards those who are older and occupy revered positions in the community. For example, indigenous ways of exchanging pleasantries could be very complicated, as there are specific ways to greet parents, elders, peers and subordinates. Greetings also vary based on the time of the day and social situations. Children are expected to master the
nuances in the greetings before they reach adulthood. Fafunwa (1974) describes some of the intricacies of Nigerian salutations and greetings as follows

…there are special salutations for different kinds of festivals and ceremonies on such occasions as birthdays, burials, marriages, yam festivals (and) observance of ancestor worship …Verbal greetings are often accompanied by physical gestures. A Yoruba man will prostrate to his elders and chief even if the chief is younger, but he merely shakes hands with members of his peer-group. The Yoruba woman in a similar situation will kneel. Among the Nupe, men crouch, and women kneel. While Nupe men of the same age-group crouch simultaneously for each other. Likewise Yoruba female peers exchange verbal greetings while Nupe women crouch for each other. The Hausa raises his clenched right fist to greet a superior or a chief, while the Yoruba in a certain sub-groups rolls himself on the ground when greeting a very important Oba. (p. 25)

Respect for elders is an integral feature of many indigenous and Aboriginal communities, elders are revered because they are the source of knowledge and carriers of culture and hence, they are the link between the past and the present. Wilson (1996) describes the role of Aboriginal elders as “…elders must convey a spiritual continuity of the past, present, and future. It is the special ability to apply this knowledge, wisdom, and spirituality to the well-being of the community that makes the elder such an important and unique individual” (p. 47). Therefore, “it is the elders’ responsibility to interpret the events of today into the cultural framework of the traditions of the people (p. 48).
**Intellectual Development**

This stage of the indigenous education process is the equivalent of higher education (Fafunwa, 1974). It is when the child moves from observation and mimicry to a more rigorous and specialized form of training and exposure to the corpus of the philosophy and epistemology of the community. While the indigenous child learns by participating, imitating and observing, however, at the cognitive development stage of their education, they are expected to start knowing how to interact with their environment, make a living out of the environment and protect the environment. They learn their history through oral traditions of their elders, they learn geography, by familiarity with the topography of the environment, they understand meteorology, by knowing the different seasons: rainy and dry seasons; they learn the songs and stories of their people; they learn about herbs, and farming techniques and they learn how to care for plants and animals by observing others do it. At this level of training, learning-by-doing is the primary mode of instruction. Other pedagogical methods utilized in this learning stage include riddles and proverbs.

As the child grows from one age group to another, they are exposed to more advanced and complex training that will challenge their physical and mental abilities. They are given more responsibilities in the household and in the community as a form of preparation for entry into the stage of more specialized training by apprenticeship. For example, Fafunwa (1974) states that “most professional groups, for example herbalists, hunters, chiefs, cult leaders and priests, have elaborate and often very complicated systems of pre-initiation training. As this constitutes the higher education level for the younger adults, admission is restricted to those who have demonstrated capacity for further growth and ability to keep secrets secret” (p. 27). This is also
when the “neophyte learns the secret of power (real and imaginary), native philosophy and science as well as the theology of animism” (p. 27).

**Skills Acquisition**

Once the child masters the cognitive skills and intellectual ability required for higher order thinking and knowledge acquisition, they advance to the skills training stage. This stage is important as the child approaches adulthood because the primary goals of indigenous education is “character-training and Job-orientation” (Fafunwa, p. 30). Thus, without the right kind of skills-set, a child will not grow into a self sufficient and productive adult. Vocational training in pre-colonial societies is centered around three areas: (i) Agricultural education such as: farming, fishing, animal husbandry; (ii) Trades and crafts like: weaving (baskets and cloth), smiting (iron, silver, gold, etc); hunting, carving, drumming, and (iii) Professions, for example: priests, judges, shrine keepers, and witch doctors (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 30).

According to Callaway (1964), the indigenous apprenticeship system is a process through which the community passes on its cultural heritage from one generation to the next, thus, the specialized skills or profession of a family were highly valued and in some profession such as the herbalist, trade secrets are usually guarded. With each family specializing in a particular craft, Callaway (1964) observed that “pottery-making, for example, centers around certain families with the skills taught by a mother to her daughter or niece, or a father to his son or nephew, depending on the customs of the area” (p. 63). Apprenticeship began with the students providing domestic services to the master. Young boys were often sent to leave with relatives who would be their guardian, taking care of their upkeep and after having served the master, they are “then gradually introduced to the craft of the guardian” (p. 63).

Agricultural training in agrarian indigenous societies was very strict. Children were
trained on to know best practices in farming, they learned how to determine the fertility of a soil, they were also taught how to differentiate between soil types and what was conducive to particular kinds of crops. Techniques used to determine the suitability of a parcel of land for farming included plunging a machete into the soil and if it struck rocks, then, the soil is deemed not suitable for crops with deep roots. If the soil is porous, then, it is considered suitable for planting creeping crops such as groundnuts, beans and melons (Fafunwa, 1974). Other farming techniques that the children learned included how to clear the ground; this involved the use of fire and an indigenous method of testing the direction of the wind: “for instance the children were instructed mostly through observation, to pick up a leaf and hold it straight up into the air. When the leaf either bowed forward or backward, common sense dictated to the children at once where to set fire to the bush” (p.32).

The children were also taught different methods of planting crops. For example, by observing how their father prepared the yam for planting, by cutting them into sets, the boys learned how to do it. They also learned arithmetic by being asked to count the yams in groups of two hundred. In addition to planting techniques, the children also mastered the skill to differentiate between planting and harvesting seasons. Hence, despite the fact that there were no calendars, the indigenous people had their own way of identifying the seasons. As an example, Fafunwa (1974) notes that the appearance of certain butterflies in the area was an indication that rainy season was approaching and it was time to plant early maize while “the arrival of the cattle egrets indicated the beginning of the dry season and when harvesting of some crops began” (p. 33). At a certain age, the boys were paired in their age grouping to work on the farm. Through this process, they learned team-work and those more adept at certain skills would serve as peer-mentors.
The second area of vocational education involves trades and crafts training. One feature of indigenous education is that it is largely gendered; consequently, while the boys learnt how to farm, the girls were home with their mothers learning domestic work. They were taught how to cook, clean and take care of the house and their training centered on their future roles as mothers and wives and developing the proper etiquette and code of conduct as female members of the community. To facilitate mastery in trades and crafts, parents often send their children away for a period of time to live with relatives so that they can learn a trade. They do this because; it is generally believed that the children were bound to take the apprenticeship more seriously if they were working under a relative instead of a parent. According to Fafunwa (1974) there were three categories of people who were in charge of the apprenticeship training: master-craftsman, parents and lastly, friends. Of the three, the master-craftsman provided the best training. The apprenticeship usually lasted for a few years and at the end, each graduating apprentice performs a ceremony and they were “given an authority, which was the equivalent of a certificate, to go and establish their own trade” (p. 35). Girls also went through the apprenticeship system; however, they learnt their crafts from women and not men. There were some trades like farming, trading and weaving, in which both genders could be apprenticed, girls learnt crafts like: dyeing and hair plaiting.

The third area of vocational education involves professional training. Depending on the kind of trade, certain professions required several years of apprenticeship before a skill can be mastered. Thus, the age of professional education varied from between 9 and 40 years, while majority usually undertook their training between the ages of 12 and 25 (Fafunwa, 1974). The onus for mastering the profession rested on the apprentice and not the teacher, since the master is
often travelling for work, they are unable to provide individual training to the apprentice. Hence, they have to “observe and imitate” what the master is doing. The apprentice is on “probation during the first few months, to determine how well he can learn” (p. 43). The apprenticeship system does not provide room for experimentation or creativity, so students have to adhere strictly to how the master does his work. In addition, since the students were subordinate to the master, they were not encouraged to question the master or offer suggestions (Fafunwa, 1974).

Social Responsibility

From infancy, the role of a child as an integral member of the community is without question. The training of the child is a community affair, hence, the saying: “it takes a village to raise a child.” Children are trained on how to be responsible members of the community, their civic responsibility to family members and society-at large and as part of the training process, young people learn to be caring and provide assistance to relatives who are in need and everyone is their brother’s keeper (Fafunwa, 1974). Milestones in individuals’ lives were also shared collectively, thus when there is a birth, marriage or a death in the family, everyone is involved. Quoting Pandit Nehru, Fafunwa (1974) states “there are three great events in the life of people in rural areas: the day they are born, the day they get married and the day they die” (p. 48).

In indigenous societies, social responsibility was compatible with the kinship system, which helped to situate each person in relationship to every other person in the community and determined the behavior of an individual to others. Kinship system provided the framework for the communal duties and responsibilities of each person to others based on their relationship thus; the codes of behavior such as caring for others, outlined an individual’s duties and responsibilities in society. For example, a man had a responsibility to look out for the wellbeing of his nephews and nieces in the event that their parents cannot care for them. This communal
mindset promotes collectivism over individualism. As a result of this collective responsibility towards the wellbeing of every member of the community it meant that no one was in the margins of society as everyone was squarely in the center.

**Enculturation**

Enculturation can be described as involving the three types of learning styles: seeing, hearing and doing. Children see culture, they engage with it and it is told to them on a repeated basis, hence, it becomes a part of them and who they are. It is also a process by which “people learn the requirements of their surrounding culture and acquire values and behaviours appropriate or necessary in that culture.” As part of this process, “the influences that limit, direct, or shape the individual (whether deliberately or not) include parents, other adults, and peers. If successful, enculturation results in competence in the language, values and rituals of the culture” (Grusec & Hastings, 2007, p. 547).

Enculturation is very important in the indigenous education process, there are no elaborate pedagogical methods involved in the training, the “child just grows into and within the cultural heritage of his people” (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 49). Children are acculturated into the community norms, values and customs and they imbibe it. Hence, ”culture, in traditional society, is not taught: it is caught” (p. 49). Therefore, to learn the ways of their people, observation, imitation and mimicry are key processes of knowledge acquisition. Cultural and ceremonial events like rituals, weddings and funerals, coronation of a new king, yam festival, are important occasions for acculturation. The child also learns from participating in “dance and acrobatic displays of guilds and age-sets, and often participates with his own age-group or his relations in the activities” (p. 49). In a nutshell, the children in indigenous societies are
surrounded by culture and it is impossible for them to become alienated from their traditional ways.

Overall, the traditional system of education effectively addressed the needs of an agrarian society, learning was geared towards inculcating the values of the community into the children and they in turn, were expected to pass that knowledge to their children. In this vein, one can argue that this system of education reinforced a stable social order within pre-colonial societies as roles were clearly defined, expectations where explicit, and there was a cogent link between theory and praxis. From the description of indigenous education, it can be stated that indigenous education had six characteristics: (i) education was largely informal, except during initiation rites and apprenticeship; (ii) indigenous education was gendered; (iii) instructions were passed down through unwritten, linguistic forms; (iv) learning was purposeful. It was practical and intuitive; (v) education was holistic, functional and integrative (vi) beliefs, customs, traditions and education were inextricably integrated.

Colonial Education Spoils the Native

One of the many legacies of colonialism is the advent of western education in Nigeria. Colonial education was a conduit for producing and maintaining western hegemonic ideas of cultural supremacy and dominance and as such, the education of the natives was designed to meet the wants and needs of the colonial rulers, thus, the educated natives were trained just enough that they could provide the manpower for lower-level, mostly clerical and interpreter jobs that non-natives would not do, this invariably established the system of superior-subordinate relationship.
Colonial education introduced a new form of hierarchy into the socio-cultural milieu of Nigeria by creating a class of educated elite and the uneducated masses. The first students of colonial education were the children of Kings and Chiefs, many of whom, after going through western education became alienated from their communities. For example, they had to adopt western names in replacement of their native names; these names replaced their native names which had meanings and significance to their life-as most native names tend to be a reflection of the circumstances of a child’s birth, family status and so on. The missionary schools renamed the students and gave them names like Samuel, Josiah, Boniface and so on; these are names of Catholic saints and biblical personalities, and names that evoked no cultural connection. Above all, while indigenous education was holistic, functional and integrative, western education was compartmentalized and served a very narrow purpose, which was to provide lower-level indigenous workforce for the colonial enterprise. It also did not help prepare graduates to master their environment as the knowledge taught in schools was less practical and more abstract.

According to the Christian Missionaries in 1842, when they arrived the Southern part of Nigeria, the aim of education was to help the natives develop literacy skills enough to read the bible and learn other basic skills. While colonial-missionary education is criticized for its colonization of the Nigerian mind, however, there are those who argue that colonial education was not all bad. For example, Ozigi and Ocho (1981) argue that the enduring legacy of colonial missionary education was the development of indigenous languages in written form.

Colonial education in Nigeria had many players, beginning with Islamic schools, followed by Christian missionary schools such as the Portuguese missionaries, Methodists, Catholics, and Anglicans. In the end, when it became clear to the British government that the education provided by the missionaries was designed to first serve the interests of the particular
missionary denomination, the British government eventually took over the formulation and implementation of education policy between 1882 and 1926 (Sulaiman, 2012).

**Islamic Education in Nigeria**

Islamic education, Barazangi (1998) explains, “is the process of shaping character within the Islamic worldview (Qurʾān 3:110). This process requires the Muslim family to expose its children and adults to all knowledge as a means of understanding the parameters set in the Qurʾān to achieve *taqwā*, an equilibrated, constructive relationship with God, other human beings, and nature” (para. 2). The spread of Islamic education can be attributed to the learned Muslims called *muʿallim* or *mudarris* who were committed to making the teachings of the Qurʾān more accessible to Muslims in the community, they started religious schools known as the *Madrasah* or Islamic School. These religious schools could be located in a variety of venues such as: mosques, private homes, storefronts or out in the open. The *Madrasah* served a vital social function as the only vehicle for formal public instruction for primary-age children and continued so until western models of education were introduced in Northern and Southern Nigeria. The Qurʾānic school continues to be an important means of religious instruction in post-independence Nigeria.

According to historians, “Islam reached the savannah region of West Africa in the eight century A.D., the date from which the written history of West Africa begins” (Ifemesia, 1967, p. 44). And Islamic education was not formally established in Nigeria until the 14th century, while Christian education came later in the 19th century (Fafunwa, 1974). Additionally, Islamic education preceded Christian missionary education by over 300 years (Fafunwa, 1974). Islamic education, like the Missionary education that would come later was about proselytizing, as Alkali (1967) notes: “the history of the teaching of Arabic throughout the Islamic world, but
particularly in the non-Arab world, has been the history of the spread of Islam” (p. 11). In the Islamic schools, Arabic and Islam were the focus of the curriculum; hence, they were called Qur’anic schools. “When a pupil began to read the Arabic alphabet, he did so with an intention to read the Qur’an. Thus, two types of Qur’anic schools developed in Hausa land: Makarantar Allo or Tablet-school,’ and Makarantar ‘llmi or the higher school” (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 55). The first school is for beginners, while the latter is for advanced studies of Islam.

Islamic education in Nigeria occurred through the Qur’anic School System. Qur’anic schools are usually located within the premises of a mosque. In these schools, the umma sits under a tree or in his living room while the students gather round him in a squatting position on the floor. They each carry a wooden slate from which they recite Qur’anic verses. Islamic education begins as early as age three (Fafunwa, 1974), the first stage of learning in Qur’anic school involves the memorization of short chapters of the Muslim Holy Book. This is achieved through rote-learning as the verses are usually recited in a sing song manner. According to Fafunwa (1974), the method of “instruction is as follows: the teacher recites to his pupils the verse to be learnt and they repeat it after him. He does this several times until he is satisfied that they have mastered the correct pronunciation. Then the pupil (or group) is left on his own to continue repeating the verse until he has thoroughly memorized it” (p. 60). The mastery of the verses is done on a cumulative basis until the child masters every chapter of the Qur’an.

The Qur’an is divided into sixty parts called “esus,” and each of which contains a certain number of chapters. Beginners, considered the equivalent of primary-level schooling, are expected to memorize one or more of the 60 esus, starting with the easier to learn shorter chapters. These beginning chapters are required for use during daily prayers. The next stage of the Qur’anic education involves learning the Arabic alphabet, which consists of 26 letters, all of
which are consonants (Fafunwa, 1974). This alphabet learning stage goes from between 6 to 36 weeks, and the length of time depends on how fast a student can learn the alphabets. The next stage is learning the four vowels that can be generated using four different notations in the Arabic letters. Once this is accomplished, the student applies what they have learnt in the reading of the first two parts of the Qur’an. This stage of learning lasts for approximately between 6 to 18 months. The student’s pronunciation of the alphabets is influenced by the accent and linguistic background of the teacher. The ability to spell enables the student to develop proficiency in reading skills needed to read Arabic texts.

Learning how to write in Arabic is more tedious and tends to come much later in the education process. Once the students complete the mastery of the first two esus, they are able to read and write in Arabic, but however, they do not understand what they are reading or writing. Fafunwa (1974) writes: “although the pupil has committed the first two esus to memory and is now able to read and write in Arabic, he still generally does not know the meaning of the verses of the Qur’an, except for a few translations which he picks up unconsciously either at sermons (waaz) or during other ceremonies” (p. 61). Memorizing the Qu’ran is an important step in the act of practicing the religion because prayer and performance of religious duties like the Salat, birth, funeral and marriage are performed in Arabic.

The next stage of the education process is the equivalent of the secondary level of schooling, this stage has a much in depth and rigorous curriculum. At this level, the student learns the meaning of the verses he has memorized. This is usually a tasking process for both the teacher and the students. It is at this stage the student is introduced to the Hadith, known as the traditions of the Prophets. Again, repetition and rote-learning are the methods of learning and the curriculum covered in this stage includes:
“as-sarf (grammatical inflexions); annahw (syntax); al-mantiq (logic); al-hisab (arithmetic); al-jabr wa 'l muqabalah (algebra); al-ma'na'w wa 'l-bayan (rhetoric and versification); al-fīgh (jurisprudence); al-'aqīd (scholastic theology); ae-tafsīr (commentaries on the Qur'an); 'ilmu 'l 'usul (treatises on exegesis, and the principles and rules of interpretation of the laws of Islam); and al-Hadith (the Traditions of the Prophet and commentaries thereon) (p. 62).

Since the curriculum at this stage is more rigorous, it is usually the case that more than one teacher teach the students because one teacher may not have attained mastery in all the areas. It is also at this level of training that the student selects an area of specialization. The end of this stage marks the beginning of the equivalent of a University-level education. “Having chosen his specialist subject, he proceeds to a university (usually one of the celebrated universities at Fez, Sankore, Timbuktu or Al-Azhar or continues at home learning from local specialists” (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 62).

Qur'anic schools, were not institutionalized, in other words, students’ behavior was guarded more by conventional practices as oppose to strict or “codified rules.” For example, punctuality was not strictly enforced; the teacher had the prerogative to declare a school day off if he has other obligations to attend to like a burial or naming ceremony. The teacher is regarded as the custodian of his students “his duty being primarily to train them to be good citizens” (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 62). When a student is sick, it is customary for the teacher to visit them at home, this is due to the close relationship between the teacher and the students.

The school week began from Saturday and ends Wednesday, uniforms consisted of everyday clothes and school hours varied from teacher to teacher. School was scheduled for two hours block, three times a day: morning, afternoon and evening. The morning session started at 8am
and ended at 10am; the afternoon session began at 2pm and ended at 4pm while the evening session started at 7:30pm right after night prayers and ended at 9pm. “when a child is old enough to go out and learn a trade, the hours of schooling are reduced and the afternoon session is cancelled” (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 62).

Qur’anic schools did not have a fixed tuition rate, since what students paid was dependent on the teacher’s fee; remuneration was in cash or kind. The teacher usually received gifts of food items from parents and particularly during Muslim festivals. The students were also obligated to do chores for the teacher. For example, during the month of Ramadhan, it was the duty of the students who were old enough to accompany their teacher to his preaching ground and assist with necessary logistics for the event.

The most auspicious day in the life of the student is the day he graduates, called Wolimat. The graduation ceremony is usually an elaborate affair involving the whole community. According to Fafunwa (1974):

“[t]he Wolimat can take place once the Muslim has gone through the ‘primary’ level.

The graduand takes his slate to his teacher who writes a chapter of the Qur’an on one side and on the other draws a rectangular figure filled with a number of geometrical patterns. On the scheduled day, the graduand, his decorated slate in his hand, tours the houses of his teachers, his in-laws and his own parents and relatives with an entourage of friends. At each station he reads the chapter written on one side of the slate as though to convince his hearers that he has truly completed the Qu’ran. At the end of the ‘recitation’ he is given presents. (p. 64)

For the graduation festivities, a ram or cow purchased by the family of the graduating
student is slaughtered at the teacher’s house and the teacher may elect to keep as much of the slaughtered animal as he likes, for his personal use. The teacher also receives other gifts of grain, millet, money and clothes. The teachers are revered and often showered with gifts because, teaching, in Islam is considered a noble endeavor on behalf of the religion.

Islamic education have no formal teacher education programs, thus, the qualifications of Qur’anic school teachers differs from teacher to teacher and from place to place. “Sometimes they are highly learned ‘Ulama,’ well versed in Islamic studies, but this is rare. Then there are those whose only qualification is that they can recite the Qur’an and write Arabic characters. Such people usually start up a class with their own children, and neighbours are encouraged to send their children along” (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 64).

According to Islamic traditions, adherents of the faith are enjoined to learn the Qur’an and then teach it. Thus, Islamic education started on this Prophetic advice (Doi, 1970). As a result, Islamic teaching was considered a vocation that required no remuneration. Islamic education began in Northern Nigeria where the teachers in the early stage “depended for their living on charity or to be precise Sadagah; for the teacher is one of those persons to whom Sadagah is prescribed Fi Sabil Allah (in the way of Allah)” (Alkali, 1967, p. 10). Thus, according to Fafunwa (1974), “[t]his noble principle, which was successfully applied in the early stage of the development of Islamic education, reduced the status of a teacher (Mu’allim) to that of a mere beggar; he came to occupy socially a rather low status” (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 55). The teacher had to go around seeking patronage from charitable Muslims who would give him food and shelter. The students were also sent out to beg for alms on behalf of the teacher. Both the teacher and students were considered to be “Muhajirun (emigrants) who had left their homes in search of knowledge. Even today a pupil (undergoing training) in the traditional way of
education is called *Almajiri* in Hausa, which is a corrupt form of *Al-Muhajir*, meaning an emigrant” (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 56). Not all Islamic teachers had to rely on alms for economic survival, for example, “the Ulama, who were deeply learned in the science of the *Qu’ran* and the *Hadith*, Islamic theology and etymology, were highly respected...The rulers employed Muslim scholars as administrators since they could correspond with the North African Muslim rulers” (p. 56).

**Islamic Education in Southern Nigeria**

According to historians, Islam came to Yorubaland in southwest Nigeria towards the end of the 18th century (Johnson, 1966). It can be argued that the Yoruba Islamization was not of the same extent as the North, which is predominantly Muslim, while the South is generally more religiously diverse. Yoruba called Islam ‘*Imale*’ which translates loosely to hard knowledge, because the dictates of Islam seemed difficult to adhere to. Islamic education came to southwestern Nigeria because of the necessity of the Arabic language in many Muslim religious rituals. According to Ibrahim (2013) “the venues of the schools suggested why educational facilities that could aid teaching and learning were totally inadequate. Mats and ram or cow skin were the common furniture in such schools. The only recommended text by then was *Qaidat Baghdadiyyah* an Arabic text for beginners which contains Arabic alphabets in various forms as well as the last *juz’u* of the Qur’an” (para 2). From the author’s description, it can be determined that the setup of Qur’anic schools in the southwest was similar to what obtained in the North. The only difference maybe that in the southwest, it appears there were rewards built into each stage of the learning process to motivate students to keep at it. Thus, according to Ibrahim (2012): “this method was used to encourage lazy students to sit up. As such, on getting to chapter 105 (*suratul-fil*), a fowl feast is made. On chapter 96 (*suratul ‘Alaq*) cooked beans and Eko are
prepared. On chapter 87 (suratul-a’la), a fowl feast is made. On reaching chapter 55(suratur-Rahman), a he-goat feast in made. On chapter 36 (suratu-yasin), a ram is slaughtered and finally on the completion of the whole Qur’an, an elaborate feast where a cow in slaughtered is organize (para. 2). Ibrahim (2013) further asserts that:

Qur’anic education in Yoruba land did not enjoy as high a level of patronage as the North. Two reasons are generally provided for this: “lack of direct trade link with the Arab world and the geography of the area which by its density was frightful for strangers to penetrate. In addition to this, Muslim education at its initial stage in Yorubaland did not enjoy the royal patronage as it did in Hausaland except in rare cases where spiritual assistance was rendered by Muslim scholars. (para. 2). Also, the Muslim teachers that migrated to southwest Nigeria were “patronized majorly for healing and medication rather than education” (para. 3.).

Although Islam is known as a “religion of the book,” it is claimed that the majority of Muslims generally rely on their socio-cultural traditions to guide their religious education and daily practice of Islam. From the preceding explanation, Islamic education in Nigeria can be characterized as having the following primary attributes: (i) acquisition of religious/spiritual knowledge; (ii) learning is based on rote memorization; (iii) education is not bureaucratized; (iv) education is steeped in religious orthodoxy and (v) education focused solely on the acquisition of religious knowledge.

Missionary Education in Nigeria

The late 18th century evangelical revival movements in Europe ushered in a new era of missionary activism in Nigeria and in other parts of Africa, this was an endeavor which had been abandoned in the 15th century during the slavery interregnum after a failed attempt by the
Portuguese to set up a Church in the Oba’s Palace in Benin Kingdom in 1515. The evangelical fervor sweeping Europe at the time was fuelled by the “Protestant Evangelical Awakening” led by the actions of John Wesley, the Anglican cleric and Christian theologian whose challenge of the Anglican orthodoxy encouraged people to develop individual relationship with God as oppose to going through a middle person (the priest). Wesley was influential in the formation of societies of Christians, one of which was the Church Missionary Society (CMS) which was formed in 1799 as an evangelical arm of the Church of England (Bassey, 1991). CMS became one of the earliest missionary groups to reach Nigeria.

Once the missionaries arrived Nigeria, which was at the time divided into the Northern and Southern Protectorates and the colony of Lagos, they mostly stayed in the South because the North was predominantly Muslim. Reactions among the local people towards the missionaries were mixed; some people embraced the missionaries because of perceived benefits of doing so while others were not amenable to fostering a relationship with them. For example, In Yorubaland and among the Efiks of southern Nigeria, the missionaries were well received, The Efik people of Calabar welcome the missionaries because they wanted to be taught advanced methods of farming and how to make sugar. Hence, in 1848, the chiefs of Bonny requested for missionaries who could teach the English language to their children (Ayandele, 1969; Bassey, 1991; Berman, 1975). In Bonny and Calabar, Samuel Ajayi Crowther, observed: “[t]hey [the Bonny chiefs] did not want religious teaching, for that the children have enough at home; they teach them that themselves; that they want them to be taught how to gauge palm-oil and the other mercantile business as soon as possible” (cited in Fafunwa, 1974, p. 134). Since the missionaries only had permission to educate the people and not convert them to Christianity, they were forced to limit their missionary work to education.
The acceptance of missionaries in the southern protectorate was predicated on the perceived opportunities that may ensue. For example amongst the Yoruba, Oba Kurumi of Ijaye welcomed the missionaries to his domain because he thought their presence will raise the community’s profile and create trade opportunities for them; Oba Sodeke of the Egbas perceived military assistance from the British government against their enemies. Similarly in Ijebuland, King Manuwa hoped his relationship with the missionaries would boost the chances of his town becoming the trading entrepot for the Ijesha, Ondo, and Ekiti districts (Bassey 1991).

Irrespective of the willingness of some of the traditional rulers to welcome the missionaries into their domains, for the most part, missionaries were looked upon with suspicion. Since the adults were indisposed towards the missionaries, the missionaries soon realized the difficulty of trying to convert adults in the community thus; they focused their proselytizing on the kids. The missionaries however, decried the unwillingness of the adults and influential people in Southern Nigeria to convert to Christianity, hence, conversion through education became an alternative method deplored by them. This strategy is reflected in this sentiment by William Boyd, one of the missionaries who states: “it must be kept in mind that the Church undertook the business of education not because it regarded education as good in itself,” but because “it found that it could not do its own proper work without giving its adherents, and especially its clergy, as much of the formal learning as was required for the study of the sacred writings and for the performance of their religious duties” (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 76).

A Chronological Account of Missionary Arrivals in Colonial Nigeria

In 1472, the Portuguese Catholic missionaries were the first Europeans to set foot on the territory now part of modern day Nigeria. While the Portuguese were primarily interested in trade, they were also interested in importing Christianity and education to the locals once they
realized the benefit accrued to them if their local trade partners could read and write. In that period, religion and trade were not mutually exclusive, the missionaries depended on the European explorers/traders to provide armed protection when necessary; and the explorers in turn relied on the missionaries to alleviate any anti-European resistance with evangelism. This led to Fanfuwa (1974) assertion that the “missionary endeavor to achieve peaceful trade relations with the Africans, Commerce, Christianity and Colonialism, or Bible, Business and Bullet combined to exploit the African’s soul, his goods and his land” (p. 78).

In 1472, Portuguese merchants visited Lagos and Benin where they met with the Oba (King) and thus on a return trip in 1485, some Portuguese traders started a trade relationship with the Benin Empire. The first missionary activity in Benin began in 1515 when Catholic missionaries started a school inside the Oba’s palace for his sons and the sons of his chiefs. Between 1515 and 1552 the Portuguese traders established a number of trading posts along the River Benin and around Lagos, this elevated Lagos to an important trading outlet, especially during the slave-trade. Through the influence of the Portuguese traders, Catholics became the first missionaries to set sail in Nigeria. A seminary was established in 1571 on the Island of Sao Tome whose mandate was to educate the natives and convert them to Christianity. The progress of the Catholic missionaries was “almost wiped out by the slave trade which ravaged West Africa for nearly three hundred years. Slaves were exchanged for gunpowder, silk, alcohol, firearms and the like, and the chief foreign participants were the Portuguese, the English, the French, the Dutch and Danish” (Fafunwa, 1972, p. 79).

The Methodist missionaries arrived in 1842 and the first missionary school to be established in Southern Nigeria in 1843 was the “Nursery of the Infant Church,” located in Badagry. The school was established by Mr. and Mrs. de Graft and majority of the
approximately 50 students at the school were children of Sierra Leone immigrants, a smaller number of the students were children of the natives (Fafunwa, 1974).

In his Journal entry on July 4, 1843, de Graft penned a vivid narrative of how he spent his day:

The friends I invited to witness and partake of the same, made their prompt attendance, in a handsome manner, in proper time, among whom were two native chiefs with their numerous retinue…The chapel was crowded and wore, on the whole, a very cheerful aspect. The children, about forty in number, both of Sierra Leoneans and of this place, were neatly dressed in the European clothes, and the members of the society who attended were all in their best; the chiefs also wore their neat country costume. The crowded meeting and the chapel, nicely arranged and well lighted up, gave a very delightful appearance. I opened the meeting with singing and prayer, and then had the tea, cakes and bread shared out to the children, to the chiefs and to the members of our Society present; and while the Children were drinking their tea, we had eight of our principal men in the society by turns to improve the time by short and appropriate addresses to the children and to the meeting at large, in the English tongue as well as in the vernacular language (cited in Fafunwa, p. 82).

The missionaries’ journal entries provide an insight into how the early missionary schools were managed and the type of relationships the missionaries cultivated with the local people. In the case of de Graft’s journal entry in 1843, it is clear that the missionaries went out of their way to socialize with community members and in the process use the social events as recruitment opportunity.
In 1845, the Church Missionary Society (CMS) of the Anglican Church landed in colonial Nigeria. Thomas Buxton, Vice President of CMS, who was a prominent English member of Parliament, was instrumental in the missionary incursions of CMS in Nigeria. In 1839, Buxton wrote a book titled *The African Slave Trade and its Remedy*, in it, he argued for the abolition of the slave trade, negotiation of treaties with the natives and the development of trade relations. Buxton’s rationale for wanting the slave trade abolished was that, in the long run, trading in Africa’s natural resources would prove more profitable than trading in her human resources. Thus, Buxton’s requested the cooperation of government and the missionary societies in the “deliverance” of Africa. According to him: “Let missionaries and schoolmasters, the plough and the spade, go together and agriculture will flourish; the avenues to legitimate commerce will be opened; confidence between man and man will be inspired; whilst civilization will advance as the natural effect, and Christianity operate as the proximate cause, of this happy change” (cited in Bassey, 1991, p. 37). The British government was inspired by Buxton’s idea and the Niger expedition set out in 1841. Of the 144 Europeans and 1 African who went on this trip, 48 died of malaria and other illnesses (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 78). The African in the group was Nigerian clergy, Samuel Ajayi Crowther. In August 1846, the CMS party finally reached Abeokuta and started work in earnest, they built a mission house, a church and a school. These moves were not well received by the Methodists who had been the first to start evangelical work in Nigeria. They too sent a lay missionary to Abeokuta to start work there. This was the beginning of the missionary rivalry or scramble for the souls of the indigenous people that was to last for more than a century in the Nigerian education enterprise (Fafunwa, 1974).

In 1846, the Church of Scotland Missionaries (also known as the Presbyterians) docked in colonial Nigeria. The entourage of the Church of Scotland included Reverend “Hope
Masterton Waddell, an English printer, a mulatto carpenter and a negro teacher” (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 82). When these missionaries got to Calabar, they found out that the King and his son were literate and had mastered the 3 Rs: English, writing and Arithmetic even at a more advanced level than some members of Waddell’s entourage. This was possible because prior to the arrival of the Church of Scotland missionaries, the Efik in Calabar were already trading in palm oil with the Europeans for a century before the missionaries arrived, hence, they had learnt how to read and write in the English language. Records and journals, dating 1767 and earlier kept by the Calabar rulers on their daily affairs were found. Though, the locals embraced missionary education, however, the level of commitment to the endeavor was not very strong, for example, Fafunwa (1974) provides the following account: “in Waddell’s school at Creek Town in 1854 there were 210 names on the roll, The average attendance in July was 68, in August 78, in September 81, in October 75, in November 54, in December 47. When, in November 1861, a missionary visited Isaga, an out-station to the west of Abeokuta there were nine children present, seven absent, “among them all the best boys.” The four most advanced pupils present were all girls” (p. 134).

In 1850, the American Baptist Missionaries joined other missionary groups in colonial Nigeria. Thomas Bowen, the American Baptist missionary arrived in Badagry intending to establish Baptist missions in the hinterland. However, political unrest in Badagry at the time compelled Bowen to stay in Abeokuta for a year as guest of the CMS missionary. According to Fafunwa (1974), attempts at establishing missions in Ketu and Iseyin were unsuccessful and the first Baptist mission was built at Ijaye. Once settled, other Baptist missionaries arrived and established a mission in Ogbomosho in 1854. That year a Black American from Liberia, J.M.
Harden, joined the Baptist group and established a Baptist mission in Lagos. The mission later extended its influence to Oyo, Shaki, Igboho and Ilorin (Fafunwa, 1974).

In 1868, the Roman Catholic Missionaries landed in colonial Nigeria. In what has been called the “spiritual scramble” for Africa (Fafunwa, 1974), the Roman Catholic missionaries arrived Nigeria in 1868 on the invitation of the Brazilian ex-slaves who had settled in Lagos and who wanted a Catholic mission school in Lagos. In a nutshell, the major missionary presence in colonial Nigeria were the: Methodists, Church Missionary Society, Baptists, and the Roman Catholics. Others included the Church of Scotland Missions, known as the United Presbyterians; the Qua Ibo of Northern Ireland, which first established a mission in Eket and Uyo areas in 1887; the Primitive Methodist Missionary Society, which established its first post in Calabar and Owerri Provinces in 1892; and the Basel Mission, with its first base in the Cameroons (Fafunwa, 1974).

Early missionary schools sought to convert the pagan natives to Christians using education as a tool for conversion. The essentials of a good Christian, which the missionaries aimed to teach the natives, were: knowledge of the bible, ability to sing hymns and recite the catechisms as well as written and verbal proficiency. Preferred language of instruction was English, and over time, they developed the “vernacular” so that the indigenous catechists and clergy would be able to preach the gospel in their native languages. In spite of their seemingly altruistic Christian purpose, the missionaries were incredibly biased and prejudiced against the local culture. They believed, according to Lord Lugard, who was the first Governor General of the Colony and Protectorates of Nigeria, that the locals did not have “no system of ethics, and no principle of conduct,” (Lugard, 1965, p. 417). It was thus, with this mindset that the missionaries
strove to acculturate the native peoples away from their culture and away from their values and norms. As Leach (1969) observed about what took place in early century England:

The missionaries had to come with the Latin service book in one hand and the Latin grammar in the other. Not only had the native priests to be taught the tongue in which their services were performed, but their converts…had to be taught the elements of grammar before they could grasp the elements of religion. So the grammar school became in theory, as it often was in fact, the necessary ante-room, the vestibule of the Church. But as there were no schools any more than there were churches in England, Augustine had to create both.” (p. 3)

Comparatively, the Christian missionary schools employed similar pedagogical methods as the Qur’anic schools. Both religion-based education systems taught students to repeat religious verses and “rote-learning predominated and the teacher taught practically everything from one textbook… The Bible, like the Qur’an, was the master textbook and every subject, no matter how remote had to be connected in some way with the holy writ” (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 84). As with the Qur’anic schools, the primary goal of the missionary schools was religious conversion, thus, all Christian denominations, Methodists, CMS., Baptist, Catholic, Presbyterian, Qua Ibo and others, based their curriculum on religious studies. This goal of religious conversion is evident in what one of the missionaries, Samuel Ajayi Crowther told a delegation of the King of Nupe in Onitsha in 1856 : “[w]e are Anasare [i.e. Nasarenes- or Christians]. There [pointing to the schoolroom] we teach the Christian religion…”(p. Solaru, 1964, p. 9). The missionary purpose in Nigeria was made very clear; evangelism took priority over sound education.

While each of the Christian denominations were largely similar in their beliefs, however, a sense of competition dictated that they all try to amplify their differences in a bid to win more
converts for their denomination. This rivalry is partly credited for the proliferation of schools across Southern Nigeria. Even as they fiercely competed for new converts, they never lost sight of what Henry Venn admonished thusly: “[y]ou must seek to convert the heart before you can instruct the mind” (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 84). Many of the missionaries, if not all, kept copious records of their daily activities and chronicled their missionary experience in journal entries. The journal entries of Mrs. Anna Hinderer, who kept a diary of her 17 years experience as a teacher, provides a glimpse of the initial struggles of the missionary schools:

26 August 1853

*I have had a treat today, my sixteen school children to dinner. They were so good while I was ill that I wished to give them a treat when well again...They were delighted indeed, and after a little more eating of agidi (six agidi), and an orange I sent them off by 6 o’clock, and then we had visits from their parents to thank us. It was a real pleasure to me to see them getting on so nicely, four of them now begin to read the Yoruba Testament; all have learnt Watt’s little catechism which has been translated, and the Commandments; two are learning also the English primer; they extremely like to learn English sentences, and names of things...When walking out with my four boys, they tell me Yoruba names of things, and then ask for the English in return, and they remember the English name much than I do the Yoruba.*

1 October 1853

*Our school does not increase at present, people are afraid to send their children, they think “book” will make them cowards, but those we have are going on very nice. My little African boys and girls are going on well so far and are sheltered from much evil, but need the rod of correction now and then.*
Another little boy has been taken away from me by his heathen parents, a child who has been a long time with me. The worst is, I can never see him, he does not come near me, so that I cannot tell whether his heart is still with us, or whether he has been turned to former fashions. It is a sore trial for me. I have felt I would rather have laid him in our quiet burial ground” (Fafunwa, 1974, pp. 85-86).

From Anna Hinderer’s journal entries, one can discern that while the locals may have acquiesced to missionary education, enrollment and attendance were not a priority for them; therefore, there were many instances of parents pulling their children out of school to do farm work or to run errands. One can also read from Mrs. Hinderer’s diary that the missionary teachers were quite zealous in their commitment to convert the natives at all cost. For example, writing about a little boy whose parents withdrew from her school, she writes: “…I have felt I would rather have laid him in our quiet burial ground” (p. 86). In other words, she would rather have the boy dead than have him removed from school and convert back to his pagan ways.

The curriculum of the missionary schools was quite basic. It consisted of: bible reading in the local language, catechism, bible stories about Jesus Christ, singing and prayers. The girls were taught how to sew, while the boys learnt farming. There was no standard curriculum among the missions; in each missionary school system, the curriculum was tailored to the interests and abilities of the teachers. According to Fafunwa (1974), the missionary education curriculum was basically the “four R’s: Reading; WRiting, [A]Rithmetic and Religion” (p. 87). The daily timetable that was used in the Methodist mission schools was:

9 a.m.: Singing, rehearsals of scripture passages, reading one chapter of scripture, prayers.
9.15 – 12 noon: Grammar, reading, spelling, writing, geography, tables (except Wednesday, when there was catechism in place of grammar),

2.p.m, - 4p.m.: Ciphering (i.e. arithmetic), reading, spelling, meaning of words

4 p.m.: Closing prayers (p. 88).

In the early years of missionary education, tuition was free. And in order to attract as many students as possible, the missionaries went on aggressive recruitment drives to enroll students; some missionaries went door-to-door knocking to garner interest from parents and students. As a result of the perception that many locals had about education- that it was a waste of time, hence, some of them asked for remuneration from the missionaries in order to allow their children attend missionary schools (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 88)

Many of the children that were attending missionary schools were placed in boarding house. This was so because majority of the mission schools wanted the students to live with them for the following reasons: (a) it would (hopefully) make indoctrination total and complete; (b) it would guarantee regular attendance and systemic instruction; (c) it would encourage slave-owners who wanted to lighten their responsibility to do so more readily. At any rate, many of the slave-owners preferred to send their slaves to school instead of their own children; consequently many of the Nigerians that were among the first crop of students to encounter missionary education were ex-home slaves (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 89). Many of the parents allowed their children to stay in boarding school because they felt it was more convenient. And as Sarah Harden, one of the missionaries noted in her journal entry: “whoever wishes to instruct them [their children] must feed and clothe them too, for their idea is that it is a great favour shown to us when we[the missionaries] are permitted to teach their children” (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 89).
Majority of the missionary schools were boarding schools, this was so because the missionaries felt strongly that the students had to be isolated from the corrupting influences of their homes and community, moreover, they felt students needed to be groomed and supervised on a daily basis in order for them to develop the right kind of Eurocentric attributes. As a result of the isolating effect of boarding school, by the time the students graduated, they were alienated from their community. According to Fafunwa (1974):

Children in boarding schools considered themselves superior to those who still remained in the village or town. They tended to shun the culture of their people. They preferred the music, dress, habits, food, art, etc. of the Western world. Most of the parents and the missionaries hoped to produce a group of people who were Nigerian only in blood but European in the religion, thought and habit. This trait persisted for almost a century and became a constant source of reference whenever Christian education was criticized (p. 90).

Notwithstanding the shortcomings of the missionary schools, over time, they began to enjoy increased patronage as parents and children came to view missionary education as tool for upward mobility. Those who graduated were hired as catechists or became teachers or clerks.

Since the students did not pay tuition to attend boarding school, the missionaries raised funds through the support of their home missions, local church contributions and from their contacts. These gifts were usually money, textbooks, copy books, slates, pencils, clothes, and classroom equipment. In addition to providing education, some missions created funds for use in freeing slaves and to take care of their necessities. While the Boarding school system has some similarity with the traditional practice of sending children away to leave with and apprentice under a master craftsman, however, the outcomes of both systems were vast different.
Since the adults were resistant to missionary education and conversion to Christianity, it was the children who were mostly the students of the missionary schools. Consequently, the missionaries combined ‘book learning’ with ‘vocational training.’ “At Abeokuta, for instance, and later at Onitsha, Lokoja and Calabar, agriculture, carpentry, brick-laying, ginnery, etc. was encouraged by the CMS., the Church of Scotland and other missions. In Topo, near Badagry the famous Topo Industrial School for delinquent children was started in 1876 by the Roman Catholic Mission” (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 89).

The medium of instruction was English. “Even the parents encouraged the use of English and wanted their children to learn ‘the language of commerce, civilization and Christianity” (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 89). However, as the missionaries’ knowledge of the local language developed, they tended to use it, particularly for religious instruction – in order to ensure that the Bible was fully comprehended. The missionaries realized the benefit of mother tongue and incorporated it in the curriculum. Between 1845 and 1865, the missionaries were sending some of the children abroad for further vocational training. For example, some went to Kew Gardens to learn more about botany.

**Local Resistance to Christian Missionary Education**

In addition to propagating western-style education, the missionaries were also very much interested in setting the moral codes for which the community should live by. This particular point became contentious for many of the locals who felt that some of the Christian codes such as the ban on polygamy contradicted their traditional belief which encouraged polygamy.

Further, the people’s reaction to missionary education varied. For instance, in some of the villages in the South, there were tendencies for competition as one village tried to outdo the other and in some other villages, more than one missionary denomination had a presence, competing
fiercely for new converts and in many cases targeting the same group of people. While some parts of Southern Nigeria were fiercely against missionary education, others welcome them gladly (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 118).

It was not until the 1920’s, seven decades after the missionaries got to Nigeria that the independent African religious movements emerged in resistance to and rejection of Christianity. There were two types of movement: the African Church movement which aimed to retain their African beliefs system, and the African Indigenous Religion, whose purpose was the re-awakening of animism (p. 118). The two movements wanted the “preservation of the Nigerian cultural heritage and the need to make the education of the child relevant to his community and life-style” (p. 119). A number of these movements and (few individual Nigerians) started their own schools. “A sterling example was that of Mojola Agbebi, an African educator and leader of an African church, who preached ‘the gospel of coffee, cocoa, cotton and work as well as scriptures’ and established the Agbowa Industrial Mission as early as 1895.” And “As might have been expected, none of these movements received the blessing of either the colonial government or the missionaries. Consequently all of the schools were ‘un-assisted’ and their existence was either ignored by or unknown to the government of the day” (Fafunwa, 1974, p. 119).

While the colonial government was not interested in promoting the education of the colonized peoples, the missionaries were primarily in charge of educating the natives, though, as has been shown, their intentions were not altogether altruistic. Education was a vehicle for converting the heathen natives to Christianity. Irrespective of the intentions of the missionaries, which were suspect at best, however, they managed to achieve some feats that are worth outlining. The missionaries successfully translated the English bible into local languages such as
Yoruba, Ibo, Efik and Nupe; they introduced a new form of vocational education (which was different from the apprenticeship system that was in place during the indigenous education era); at the detriment of the natives, they successful assimilated many of the locals into European culture. They were also successful in disrupting the cultural ecology of the indigenous people forever.

As the Christian missionaries continued to establish more schools in Southern Nigeria, particularly in the Lagos colony with the support of the colonial government, Muslims in Lagos became concerned by the growing educational disparity between the Christian and Muslim communities, still, they remained disinclined to send their children to Christian missionary schools for fear of having their children converted from Islam to Christianity. Consequently, the agitation of the Muslim community led to the establishment of the first government sponsored primary school in Lagos in 1899 for Muslim children.

Overall, it can be said that the period of Missionary education in Nigeria witnessed an increased in the number of Nigerians who were exposed to western-style education. Missionary education can be said to have dismantled Indigenous education as more and more natives embraced missionary education or more aptly, as they became resigned to the inevitability of colonial conquest. From the discussion on Missionary education in colonial Nigeria, it can be stated that Missionary education had the following attributes: (i) it was based on Christian values; (ii) it was meant to inculcate western values on indigenous children; (iii) it was both abstract and practical; (iv) it promoted reading and writing literacy and (v) it was formal

**Colonial Education Policy from 1944 to Independence in 1960**

After the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates in 1914 to form Nigeria, the colonial government saw the need for a unified education policy for the country,
especially given the fact that up until the creation of Nigeria, the colonial government had ceded the responsibility for education to the missionaries. Hence, without proper oversight, the missionaries ran the school systems as they saw fit. In addition, due to the religious differences between the Muslim North and Christian South, missionary education was overwhelming concentrated in the South arguably, to the detriment of the North- who only had the Qur’ anic schools where they memorize Arabic and the Qur-an.

With the end of World War II, and the changing global political and economic dynamics, many countries in Africa, including Nigeria, started to agitate for independence. By this time, Nigeria had a sizeable number of patriots who had gone abroad to study and some of them had been exposed to the civil rights agitations in the U.S. and became a part of the worldwide continental and diasporic Black/African movement for self-determination. It is thus ironic that amongst the first crop of Nigerians who went through missionary and colonial schooling and went abroad to study at European and North American universities came back home with a quest for self-determination and independence. It is within this context that the colonial government education policies from 1944 to 1960 when Nigeria was granted her independence is examined.

The promulgation of the Education Ordinance in 1948 led to the decentralization of education administration in the country. It was at this point that the Colonial government reviewed its 10 years education plan for the country and for the first time appointed a Director of Education, laying out, amongst other things how to fund both missionary and government schools that had been established across the North and South (Fagbunmi, 2005).

Even at this time, the education standards and requirements where not uniform across the country, there were still discrepancies between educational requirements in the North and educational requirements in the South. Notwithstanding these differences, the 1948 Ordinance
became a milestone in colonial government administration as it relates with its focus in the education sector and because it was the first time there was an attempt at unifying the education system across the country (Fafunwa, 1974).

Further political developments in the country, such as the creation of three regions from the hitherto two regions of North and South led to the promulgation of the 1952 Education Ordinance which empowered the three regions of Eastern, Western and Northern Nigeria. The Southern region had been divided into East and West. Thus, in a move from the 1948 Education Ordinance which sought to unify education systems across the country, the 1952 Ordinance gave each region the impetus to develop their own education policies and systems (Taiwo, 1980; Fafunwa, 1974) and the centralized colonial Education Board was abolished.

Additionally, while these changes were being effected in the education sector, the Nigerian educated elite were still clamoring for self-rule. To address these agitations for independence, the British colonial government convened two constitutional conferences between 1951 and 1954. The outcome of the two constitutional conferences was the drafting of a Constitution in 1954 (Dike, 1980). The constitution further empowered the three regions to make their own laws and to also develop their own educational policies. This led to the promulgation of the Education Law of 1955 in the Western Region, the Education Laws of 1956 in the Eastern and Northern Regions and the Lagos Education Ordinance in 1957 (Taiwo, 1980, Fagbunmi, 2005). These regional education laws were derived from the Education Act 1944 of Wales and England (Taiwo, 1980). While the three regions had slightly differing educational policies, they however maintained the same three levels of schooling across the board, which were primary, secondary and post-secondary education. The length of primary education varied from region to region; however, the secondary education was the same length of time (Sasnett &
Vocational education was offered in all three regions through the Federal government education department as well as through the regional Education Ministries (Odukoya, 2009).

The 1954 Constitution of pre-independence Nigeria, emphasized the policy of decentralization and regional policy thrusts that would address the unique needs of each region, consequently, in 1955, the Western region initiated Universal Primary Education which was subsequently enacted in 1957 by both the Eastern and Northern regions (Fafunwa, 1974). While considerable efforts were made to close the educational attainment gap between the North and the other two regions, school enrollment remained low (Ozigi & Ocho, 1981). For example, in the North, tuition was free in Government schools; however, many of the parents were still disinterested about sending their children to school. For the most part, the parents still preferred to send their children to Qur’anic schools. This apathy towards western-style education was in part fueled by the Colonial government’s policy to restrict Christian missionary work in the North for fear of causing religious unrest between adherents of the two faiths; Christianity and Islam (Fagbuni, 2005). Thus, while missionaries had a free reign to establish schools in Southern Nigeria, they were barred from evangelizing in the North and while the missionary schools in the south enjoyed some funding from the colonial government, the Qur’anic schools in the North were excluded from such funding largesse. Qur’anic schools focused primarily on religious studies and nothing else was taught the students unlike missionary schools which attempted to teach vocational skills.

The education sector continued to experience change such that in 1959, the Ashby Commission was setup to identify the higher level skills needed in the country for the next twenty years, this was in preparation for independence in 1960. With the colonial administrators
exiting the country, it was thought that the Country needed to grow its indigenous manpower, to be able to handle self-rule successfully. This would be the first time that the government will look at the need for higher education; prior to now, Nigerians who wanted to take university level courses had to take them via correspondence from home (in Nigeria) and from any of the Universities based in Britain. The Ashby Commission Report reinforced what was already well known that education is key to national development (Aliu, 1997). For the first time also, Nigerians were actually given the opportunity to participate in the work of the Commission and to decide their educational future. The decentralized powers in the education sector remained in place until Nigeria’s independence in 1960.

After independence, instead of a unified national identity, ethnic and religious differences became anathema to national unity which led to further instability in the country and invariably stunted educational progress. The growing political, social, economic and cultural discontent among the people eventually led to a civil war between 1967 and 1970 in which an estimated 3 million people, mostly of the Igbo ethnic group in the Eastern region died. With the exit of the missionaries and later, colonial government from the education sector in Nigeria, unfortunately, the people did not have any effective structure to inherit, consequently, the education policies from when the first missionaries arrived Nigeria have remained largely disjointed and with limited purpose. Graduates are trained with basic literacy and numeracy skills and not how to think and analyze critically. In a nutshell, an analysis of the colonial education policy from 1944 to 1960 shows that the purpose of education was limited to the following: (i) education as a means to religious conversion; (ii) education as means for raising a new generation of Nigerians who can read and write and supply manpower for low-level positions in the colonial government; (iii) education as a means for providing the natives with the basic literacy skills required to
function in a colonized society; (iv) education that was divided between the North and South of Nigeria and (v) education that did not unify or promote a national identity.

**Post-Independence Education Without a Purpose**

The primary purpose of the post-independence education policy in Nigeria was the development of a human capital to fill the positions vacated by Europeans as well as to “Africanize” the Nigerian civil service (Woolman, 2001). The colonial legacy continues to plague the Nigerian government as it struggles to find a footing and a governance system that is suitable for the peculiar needs of the Country. As a result, the education sector suffers from a lack of sustained leadership, which is reflected in the criticisms of the early post-independence education policy which included curricula that was irrelevant to address the needs of a newly independent country, outdated pedagogical methods, high drop-out rates, high repetition rates and the lack of critical thinking skills of graduates (Rwomire, 1998). In addition, Uchendu (1979) identified other problems such as ethnic and geographical disparities between the groups, as well as the different curriculums used in the regular government schools and the existing mission schools.

As a step towards redefining the educational policy of the country, a National Curriculum Conference was convened in 1969 to identify new national goals and future directions for the country. This conference became the first attempt to dismantle the colonial underpinnings of the Nigerian education system and to promote national identity and self-sufficiency. The government provided a compelling rhetoric that it was committed to the provision of quality education (Taiwo, 1980). And thus, in 1973, the Federal government constituted a gathering of experts to discuss and come up with recommendations for a Nigerian national education policy.
which truly reflects the national ethos and independence of the country. Members of the committee included representatives of the two primary religions in the country: Christianity and Islam. The outcomes of the committee’s deliberations became the Draft National Policy of Education. During this period also, the Federal government took over ownership of mission schools in a bid to make education primarily a government funded venture. Shortly after independence in 1976, the government replaced the regional government with state governments and power became centralized at the Federal level instead of as it was previously in the regions. Thus, when the number of states was increased to 19 in 1976, each state had their own enactments for the regulation, management and provision of education in their respective states. Following the Federal government example, the State government also took over control of private schools in their domains. This was the period when majority of the schools in Nigeria were public (Fagbunmi, 2005).

In the same year, the Federal Government had an unexpected windfall from the oil boom of the 1970s and consequently had substantial resources to invest in the education sector, this led to the creation of Universal Primary Education (UPE) program, which increased the capacity of higher institutions in the country and increased the number of Unity schools. The goal of the UPE was to provide free primary education to children between the ages of six and twelve free access to primary education, which would in turn close the educational gap between different parts of the country as well as reduce the illiteracy rate. Implementation of the new UPE policy did not go without a hitch, prior to opening the schools, it was estimated that the number of students was approximately 2.3 million, however, when the schools were opened, over 3 million prospective students showed up for enrollment (Fafunwa, 1974). The under-estimation of the number of potential students led to the resultant inadequate provision of classrooms and qualified
teachers. In the case of the teachers, many of them got trained within a year in the teachers
colleges that were setup to train teachers for the expanded education sector.

In addition to government eliminating private schools, a unified educational system was
developed called the 7-5-2-3 system. It was seven years of basic primary education, five years of
secondary education, two years of higher school certificate and 3 years at the university level.
This system replaced the existing 8-5-2-3 system which was: eight years of basic primary
education, five years of secondary school education, and two years of higher school certificate
and 3 years of university education. To move from one class level to another, external
examinations were administered. This was also the period in the history of the nation when
higher education was tuition-free. Since then higher education at the Federal level, universities
and polytechnics run by the Federal government are heavily subsidized and better funded, while
the ones controlled by the State governments tend to be less well funded and tuition is much
higher.

At the end of the initial attempts at reforming the education sector in 1977, a National Policy
on Education was launched. This National Policy on Education introduced the 6-3-3-4 education
system which was said to have been influenced by the American education system. Hence,
instead of the previous 18 years students were meant to spend in school, the number of years was
reduced to 15 years. It was six years of primary education, three years of junior secondary
school, three years of senior secondary school and four years of university (Nwagwu, 2007).
The 1977 policy continued the previous aspirations for a unified system which fosters a national
identity, it is important to place this yearning for a national identity within the context of the
socio-political problems that were plaguing Nigeria after gaining independence from the British
in 1960: civil war, military coups, increased tribalism and ethno-centricism. The key component
of this policy was the push for a more self-reliant and skilled manpower to address the Nation’s development goals and also to make free Universal Primary Education (UPE) compulsory for all children. To achieve this goal, education was centralized, making the Federal government responsible for funding the education sector. This change in funding structure differed from what obtained in the past, where funding for education was shared among stakeholders: government, community and parents (Ibadin, 2004). By the time the National Policy on Education came to fruition, Nigeria’s economy was no longer as vibrant as it was in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Taiwo 1980).

As the changes facilitated by the new National Policy on Education were being implemented, a New Constitution was introduced in 1979. This constitution was Nigeria’s second attempt at transitioning from military rule to democratic governance. Thus, education became a part of legislative governance. And constitutionally, the oversight of education was shared among the Federal, State and Local Governments. The Federal government had controlling influence over higher education; provision of primary education was seceded to both the State and Local Governments and the local governments were in charge of paying teachers’ salaries. The addition of education in the 1979 Constitution led to a revision of the National Policy on Education in 1981, known as the second edition. The main focus of the revision was the implementation of the compulsory Universal Primary Education which was recording some progress particularly in the areas that had not seen much of missionary education like the North where the Qur’anic system of education was still thriving at the detriment of implementing UPE. Also in the North, primary education was not made compulsory for all children. Comparatively, the UPE outcomes in the south were different from the North. For example, Universal Primary
Education was already being implemented in the South from the 1950s and therefore the expansion and establishment of new schools was limited (Osili, 2005).

With the continued economic decline in the country, in 1981 UPE was discontinued because the Federal government transferred responsibility for financing primary education to the State and Local Governments. This was a reversal of the 1977 policy to fund primary education (Nwagwu, 2011). With the decline in oil revenue which accounted for about 80% of government revenue, the resultant effect was poor funding of schools, lack of timely payment of teachers’ salaries and inability to upgrade school facilities. The cuts in spending led to strikes by faculty members at the University level (Odukoya, 2009). With the struggling financial situation and spending cuts for primary education, tuition was introduced in the 1980s and enrollment rate took a dive (Osili, 2005). In addition, students were no longer promoted automatically from one grade to the next; methods of evaluation and assessment were introduced. The revised policy also introduced the promotion of mother tongue learning. Therefore, each child had to learn one of the three major languages of Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo in addition to their own mother tongue.

In 1998 and 2004 respectively, the National Policy on Education went through another revision so that education could be better positioned to address the growing needs of the country such as the exploding population growth. The 1998 revised National Policy on Education replaced UPE with UBE (Universal basic Education) which became compulsory for all children. UBE was for a total of nine years: six years in primary school and three years in junior secondary school. In 1999 the UBE program was launched to increase literacy rates and close the achievement gap across the country, however, this policy was not fully implemented.

The third revised edition of the National Policy on Education sought to focus on teacher qualifications. Therefore, the National Certificate of Education (NCE) replaced the Teacher
Grade II certificate as the minimum entry requirement for the teaching profession. An Education Tax Fund was introduced as an additional funding source for the education sector. This revised edition also aimed to address glaring gaps in the educational needs of the population, for example, programs like Nomadic Education was included, to address the Fulani cattle rears and the Ijaw fishermen (Umar and Tahir, 2000). This edition also reinforced government’s commitment to provide secular education. The National Policy on Education has gone through several revisions and is still being revised while this study is ongoing. How it will end remains to be seen.

The terrain of post-independence education policy formulation and implementation in Nigeria has been littered with discarded policies, borrowed and copied ideas from others as well as a lack of purpose. This is why 53 years after independence from British colonial rule, the Nigerian education system is still in a crisis of identity and relevance. Unfortunately, the education sector has been slow in transforming in order to produce the requisite skilled and knowledgeable manpower required for the development of a knowledge economy. An evaluation of the Nigerian government’s education policy in the decades after independence would highlight the following: (i) expansion of the education sector, the government increased the number of schools from what they were during missionary and colonial education eras; (ii) attempts at developing a National Policy on Education that would foster unity and national identity; (iii) politicization of education, what happens in the political arena also affects education; (iv) government take-over of mission school as well as the regulation and oversight of the education sector; (v) inability to align the two dominant education systems in the country: Islamic education in the North and Christian education in the South; (vi) poorly trained teachers; (vii) corruption and mismanagement and (viii) curricula initiatives that are not fully implement.
Summary

The detailed discussion of the three eras of education in Nigeria provides a comprehensive overview which traced Nigerian education from the indigenous era to the post-independence era. As can be deduced from the narrative, each of the prevailing education system had its own unique attributes and was designed to serve a specific purpose. Both the indigenous era education system and the missionary and colonial era educational systems can be said to have been largely successful at achieving their aims while the post-independence education era continues to fall short of meeting its goals. The information presented in chapter four will form the basis of the analysis in chapter 5, which will discuss the prominent themes that have risen out of the date data gathered for this study.
My husband

Has read at Makerere University

He has read deeply and widely…

My husband has read much

He has read extensively and deeply

He has read among White men

And he is clever like White men….

…the reading

Has killed my man

In the ways of his people

He has become

A stump

Bile burns my inside!

I feel like vomiting!

For all young men

Were finished in the forest [of books]

Their manhood was finished

In the classroom,

Their testicles

Were smashed

With large books

(P’Bitek, 1989)
CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS

Reimagining Nigerian Education: What Is, What Was and What Should Be

At 53, and with a population of approximately 170 million people, 250 ethnic groups and up to 500 languages and dialects spoken, Nigeria presents a picture of chaos and complexity. To understand the complex structures that encase the educational landscape, this chapter analyzes the dominant themes in Nigerian education and how the impact of the colonial legacy in the borrowing, receiving and adaptation of educational ideas and praxis have come to shape the struggles for a quality education in the post-independence era. The examination of the themes embedded in the discourses of Nigerian education provides a fitting segue for the unveiling of an imagined education for the future; one that is Nigeria-centric and which borrows its conceptualization from the narratives of the pre-colonial, colonial and post-independence eras of education in the country. Additionally, the foundation of the Nigeria-centric model is girded by a hybridization of the Western and the Indigenous educational systems to create a new system which occupies a third and re-imagined space that is socially, culturally, economically and technologically relevant. Hybridity creates this possibility and also allows for a movement beyond the dichotomy of Western and Indigenous. Understanding both systems as complex and interdependent complicates the discourse in a way that makes it possible to move beyond the simple classificatory binary which describes colonialism and by extension, colonial education as either good or bad. This dissertation examines both ends of the spectrum and lands in the middle of the continuum of good and bad. In other words, colonial education has its enduring qualities
that can be appropriated to compliment an equally valuable and reconstructed indigenous education.

This chapter unpacks the discourses surrounding the continued and persistently lingering “colonial smile” which yielded several important themes from the comprehensive overview of the historical and contemporary discourses of education in Nigeria as highlighted in chapter 4 and which form the basis for the analysis in chapter 5. The following prominent themes and sub-themes have been classified into three broad categories: Identity, Curriculum and Funding. These three thematic areas encapsulate several sub-themes that frame the dominant narratives of colonial education in Nigeria. Identity is further broken down into: culture, language and religion. The thematic area of curriculum reveals a privileging of western knowledge over indigenous knowledge; this theme brings up many of the underlying attributes in the current education system which promotes Euro-centrism and invariably perpetuates the colonization of the Nigerian mind. Curriculum contains the sub-themes of: pedagogy, hidden curriculum and null curriculum. Funding is the third thematic area and it reveals the interplay between different factors such as: corruption, mismanagement and the existing neo-colonial dependency which shows in the active participation in the education sector by several donor countries like the U.S. France and Britain.

The themes that have emerged from a comprehensive review of the history of Nigerian education in chapter 4 provide pathways for a critical look at the legacy and lingering effects of colonial education; which continues to be the subject of much critical interrogation ultimately leading to questions about the purpose of education and education as a tool for decolonization and anti-colonial resistance against neo-colonialism.
Of Culture, Language and Religion: Unpacking Identity

Colonial education promoted western ideology and supremacy while devaluing the indigenous world view. As a result, the colonized ended up with little or no sense of their past. Hence, the indigenous way of life, history, customs and traditions that once formed the bedrock of an individual’s identity is disrupted subsequently leading to a state of “racial melancholia.” This is a complex, psycho-analytical process whereby a person’s awareness of their racial identity can lead to a sense of inferiority complex. Thus, “[f]or sufferers of racial melancholia, racial self-knowledge is a form of psychic injury (Koh, 2013). In Black Skin, White Masks, Fanon (2008) posited that “the juxtaposition of the white and black races had created a massive psycho existential complex” (p. 14). Further opining that “the colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country’s cultural standards” (p. 18). The experience of cultural amnesia and racial melancholia can create a deep-rooted sense of racial inferiority complex and subconscious self loathing.

For the Nigerian child, going through the colonial education system brings them to a condition of hybridity, which is a situation whereby their identities are created at the intersection of colonial hegemony, privileged western knowledge and the dynamics of power and control. Thus, education becomes, a posteriori a process of disrupting their indigenous identity and replacing it with a new and disjointed one that is neither British nor Nigerian. This practice is replicated throughout Africa and the rest of the colonized world. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o (1981), provides an example of this effect when he argues that colonial education is a process that “annihilate a people’s belief in their names, in their languages, in their environment, in their heritage of struggle, in their unity, in their capacities and ultimately in themselves.” Thus, “it
makes them see their past as one wasteland of non-achievement and it makes them want to distance themselves from that wasteland.” And as a result, “it makes them want to identify with that which is furthest removed from themselves” (p. 3). Colonial education not only fosters cultural amnesia, it also alienates individuals from their heritage. One of the ways, this occurs is through the fetishization of indigenous cultural practices. Students are constantly receiving the message that certain local practices are barbaric or primitive. For example, in Nigeria, tribal marks have been used for centuries as a marker of specific ethnic identity however, in a recent interview of young Nigerians with tribal marks; many of them expressed their dissatisfaction with the practice, viewing it as abusive and without value. Some saw the tribal marks as been tantamount to a lack of education. In other words, those who have it are viewed as “illiterate”. One of the interviewees said:

If I had a choice in the matter, I would have preferred to be viewed a bastard than to have these marks on my face. It would have ruined me if I had not fought the esteem killing effect it had on me. I remember when I approach people back in the days and even till date, the expression on their faces were often discouraging. Mere looking at me, people already have the notion that I am an uneducated person. I wish I could wipe it off, because relationship and career wise, I have lost a lot of things because of the marks and every time I think about it, I curse the person that initiated the idea of giving me these marks” (Adeoye, 2013, para. 13).

Tribal marks have now been outlawed in some states in the country. For example in Osun state, the extant law banning tribal marks and tattoos reads: “[n]o person shall tattoo or make a skin mark or cause any tattoo or skin mark to be made on a child,” while Section 24 (2) of the law says: “[a] person who tattoos or makes a skin mark on a child commits an offence under this
law and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding N5,000 or imprisonment for a term not exceeding one month or to both such fine and imprisonment” (Adeoye, 2013, p. 1). Considering that tribal marks and tattoos are permanent identity markers, perhaps there is value in providing people with the choice of whether to be so marked or not. Ironically, while tribal marks and tattoos are increasingly considered outdated cultural aesthetics, the appropriation of tattoos as a mode of individualized expression in the West continues to be in vogue to the point that young Nigerians are now re-appropriating tattooing as a fashion statement copied from the West, instead of the cultural aesthetic it provided for earlier generations.

Western education has, for long been indicted as a tool for colonizing the minds of the subaltern peoples who subconsciously accept and internalize their inferiority status in what DuBois (1994) calls “double consciousness,” a state of being defined as “this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity...” (p. 3). This psycho-social challenge of reconciling one’s indigenous heritage with the cultural indoctrination of western education is what Woodson (1990) refers to as the “mis-education of the negro.” Thus the mis-education of the Nigerian child creates a cultural disconnect between one generation to another.

Understanding education as a shaper of culture and identity is important in the process of taking an inventory of the history of education in Nigeria: what it was, what it is now and what it should be. Thus as Gramsci states: “The beginning of a critical elaboration is the consciousness of that which really is, that is to say a ‘knowing of yourself’ as a product of the process of history that has unfolded thus far and has left in you, yourself, an infinity of traces collected without the benefit of an inventory. It is necessary initially to make such an inventory” (cited in Serequeberhan, 2001, p. 1). An inventory of Colonial education reveals many things: that it
provided the basis for mass education, reading and writing literacy and over time, opened the eyes of the indigenous person to the world, thus, the world became far and near. The inventory also shows that colonial education incorporated a pedagogy that was epistemologically violent and fostered western intellectual hegemony. The missionaries cum educators used the self propagating ideology of “The White Man’s Burden,” to shape the identity of the colonized; they were taught to accept the superiority of the European colonizers and taught to aspire to be like the colonizers in the adoption of names, language, mode of dressing and other socio-cultural aesthetics of whiteness. An example is the adoption of western-style school uniform which are often not suitable to local weather conditions. The adoption of western names in favor of indigenous ones is still a prevalent practice across the country. In addition, many students are familiar with the history of Europe; they can list the capital cities of major European countries and can recite lines from Shakespeare’s plays, yet, have little or no knowledge of Nigeria’s geography, folklore, and history. Consequently, a new breed of westernized Nigerians emerged out of this “epistemicide” (Nyamjoh, 2012) who were burnished in the image of the British colonizers and through a decidedly British cultural frame of reference began to understand their place in relation to the colonial master as subordinate and servant. They were taught to accept their subservient role as a form of civilizing necessity that was beneficial only to them. A long standing effect of this is the continuing colonial dependency. This foundation at the school level carries through to politics where government continues to seek the nod of approval of first world nations like the U.S. and Britain. Recently, there was a scandal of sorts when it was reported that the Nigerian government had retained a public relations firm, paying it substantial amount of money to help the government secure interviews on CNN. This act of desperation to be seen and heard by the Western media comes from an administration that rarely grants interviews to the
local press. The school, as an ideological apparatus of the state enables this “ideological pacification” through a process which Obanya (2011) calls “Kutiwa Kasumba” in Kiswahili, meaning brain-washing. In essence, during the colonial era and now, students are still being brain-washed into marginalizing indigenous knowledge. As Fanon (1968) points out: “In the colonial context, the colonizer does not stop his work of breaking in the colonized until the latter admits loudly and clearly the supremacy of white values” (p. 43). For example, decades after the end of colonialism, the lingering effects of “breaking in” the colonized continue to provide the former colonizers the hegemonic control over the independent colonies. For example, failure to develop indigenous knowledge leads to renting knowledge from the west through the process of borrowing text book content. This marginalization of indigenous knowledge can lead to a loss of historical memory with the subsequent implication of a loss of identity. And as Serequeberhan (2001) aptly notes: “[t]o date, the most enduring cultural legacy of colonialism has been this broken sector of African society that has internalized the colonial model of human existence and history. This is the segment that, on the whole, rules contemporary Africa. Not grounded in an indigenous history, but the residual dregs of colonial Europe, it has, as the yardstick of its existence, what lies beyond its shores. This is what Fanon refers to as the worship of the “Greco-Latin pedestal” (para. 13).

Furthermore, the ideology of colonial supremacy and native inferiority was entrenched as a result of the discursive frameworks of visual and textual narratives that were generated about and for the colonized. Thus, as Achebe (2000) notes: there was “a four-hundred-year period from the sixteenth century to the twentieth,” of discourses that “developed into a tradition with a vast storehouse of lurid images to which writers went again and again through the centuries to draw ‘material’ for their books” (p. 26). What Achebe so aptly describes forms the corpus of the
systemic and inter-textual narratives and lessening of the colonized’s culture and identity
grounded in Western understanding of the people. Which thus begs the questions: how many of
these “lurid images” that Achebe talks about are prominently placed in the textbooks used in
Nigerian schools? How have Nigerian students been taught to critically engage these images and
question the messages they send? An uncritical acceptance of the status quo promotes what Said
(2000) refers to as “the epistemology of imperialism” (p. 376). Not only the images but the
language used in portraying these messages is a signifier of white supremacy orthodoxy.

Language occupies a pivotal position in education because it is significant in social,
cultural and identity reconstruction as well as for pedagogical efficiency. Colonial education
bequeathed to the Nigerian education system English as the language of instruction even though
there are over 500 indigenous languages and dialects spoken in Nigeria. It is worth noting that
there are 29 Nigerian languages on UNESCO’s list of endangered languages (Moseley, 2010).
In a nutshell, proficiency in English or French is considered a marker of “high culture” and
sound education. This invariably positions the western educated Nigerian elite on a hierarchical
scale elevated above the rest of the masses who are losing proficiency in both mother tongue and
are yet to master the colonial official language. Ironically, this hierarchy reproduces the class
system that thrived under colonialism.

As the most populous country in Africa, Nigeria’s language diversity is not particularly
unique. For example, in Kenya, there are 42 indigenous languages; while English is the official
language, Kiswahili, a common lingua franca in the East African sub-region is the national
language. In Mozambique, there are 20 different types of Bantu languages; Portuguese is the
official language and represents the mother tongue of less than 1% of the population. In Mali, 12
local languages are spoken and French was the official and national language until the 1980s
(Woolman, 2001, p. 38). About 12 of the 500 languages and dialects spoken in Nigeria are spoken by 85% of the population, while English remains the official language; the major languages of the three most populous ethnic groups of Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo have been made the national languages. However, designation of these national languages appears not to have gone beyond the catch phrase of “WAZOBIA” which represents the word ‘come’ in all three languages Yoruba- Wa; Hausa- Zo; and Igbo – Bia. In a nutshell, Nigeria continues to struggle with fostering national unity and identity and as a result, no one indigenous language has been elevated to the status of official language. Ironically, the colonial language represents the unifying and “culturally-neutral” means of communication as Woolman (2001) notes: “the alien European languages provide continuity with colonial political foundations and a basis for essential contact with the outside world” (p. 38).

Nigeria’s complex and diverse language terrain presents a serious challenge for the adoption of mother tongue as language of instruction in schools. The common refrain for the inability to incorporate mother tongue as part of the language of instruction continues to be the difficulty and the politics of which language to pick over others in a country of competing ethno-lingua interests. This impasse is unfortunate because language is critical to identity formation, cultural preservation and Nigeria nationalism. In 2012, the Nigerian Senate committee on Education summoned the Country’s Minister of Education over the closure of the National Institute for Nigerian Languages (NINLAN). The Chair of the Senate committee was quoted as saying:

It is unimaginable that the institute backed by law to promote our indigenous languages was scrapped, while the French Institute in Lagos and the Arabic Institute in Borno, which were not backed by law as at then, are allowed to operate. We need
NINLAN to function because our indigenous languages are no longer appealing to our children. The ministry has to do something about this.” (Wakili, 2012, para. 4)

It was stated at the hearing that NINLAN which was established to promote the learning of indigenous Nigerian languages had, at the time of its closure, 20 students, whereas there are approximately 300 languages spoken in the Country (Wakili, 2012, para. 5). The low enrollment number highlights the problem of prioritizing the learning of mother tongue in the country. The issue of funding NINLAN reflects the continued inability of policy makers to provide a stable structure for the promotion and adoption of indigenous Nigerian languages in schools.

The history of education in Nigeria shows that early Christian missionary schools made an effort to promote reading and writing in indigenous languages, thus, the bible was translated into several local languages. However, usage of mother tongue as language of instruction did not advance beyond the basic level of education because the written forms of the languages had not been developed at the time. Unfortunately, education language policy post-independence has reflected the disconnect between the rhetoric of using mother tongue as a language of instruction and the privileging of the colonial language- English as the primary language of instruction. Often times, the excuse given is that the infrastructure does not exist for the wholesale adoption of mother tongue- because of a dearth in qualified teachers as well as in texts and other educational materials. While Nigeria continues to struggle to maintain a stable structure of mother tongue instruction, some other countries in Africa are making the effort to incorporate other languages in schools. For example, in Mozambique, it used to be that Portuguese which is spoken by less than 20% of the population was the sole language of instruction, now, this has been changed when it was determined that the absence of the mother tongue in schools was a
contributory factor in the decline in educational achievement. As a consequence, all 13 national languages of the country have been included in the language of instruction package. In Nigeria, competing ethno-political interests also add to the complexity of effectively instituting mother tongue as the language of instruction. As it is now, many of the ethnic nationalities outside of the WAZOBIA tripod seems ready to kick-against any attempt to impose Yoruba, Hausa, or Igbo on them as a required indigenous language. The compromise thus far is that the language most spoken in any given area gains prominence as a language to be studied, in addition to learning this language, students have a choice of another elective.

As Woolman (2001) asserts, “In all, 270 Nigerian languages may qualify as instructional tongues for early primary classrooms; many of the smaller languages have no written orthography, which makes materials production quite difficult” (p. 39). Thus, “from grade 4 on, English becomes the language of instruction and the mother tongue is studied as a subject. Arabic reading and writing is taught to Islamic students in Koranic schools” (p. 39). And “at the secondary level, teaching continues in English, with the local language studied as a first language and one other Nigerian national language taken as a second language. In addition, French and Arabic studies are offered as electives in some schools” (p. 39). Treating mother tongue as an elective course does not really promote wide-spread proficiency in it.

Closely connected to language is religion; which played a major role in colonial education due to the strong influence of missionaries in establishing schools. The Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists, Catholics, Presbyterians and many others engaged in a scramble for converts mirroring the scramble for Africa that led to the 1884 Berlin conference which subsequently partitioned the continent along the whims and mercantilist interests of the colonizers. Religion in essence became an accomplice in the colonial adventure. According to
Andrews (2010) Christian missionaries were initially adjudged to be “visible saints, exemplars of ideal piety in a sea of persistent savagery.” However, this laudable view of missionaries changed when towards the end of the colonial era, missionaries were now seen as “ideological shock troops for colonial invasion whose zealotry blinded them (p. 663) as well as “colonialism's agent, scribe and moral alibi” (Comaroff, J., & Comaroff, J., 2010, p. 32). It was also felt that Christian tenets and doctrines were appropriated tools in the justification of the colonial endeavor. As an example, Falola (2001) points out that “the agenda of colonialism in Africa was similar to that of Christianity.” Citing Jan H. Boer of the Sudan United Mission, Falola wrote: “Colonialism is a form of imperialism based on a divine mandate and designed to bring liberation - spiritual, cultural, economic and political” by “sharing the blessings of the Christ-inspired civilization of the West with a people suffering under satanic oppression, ignorance and disease, effected by a combination of political, economic and religious forces that cooperate under a regime seeking the benefit of both ruler and ruled” (p. 33). With the less than glowing history of Christianity, Meador (2010) asserts that “some Christians have tried to make sense of post-colonial Christianity by renouncing practically everything about the Christianity of the colonizers. They reason that if the colonialists’ understanding of Christianity could be used to justify rape, murder, theft, and empire then their understanding of Christianity is completely wrong” (para 4). To contest this view, Sanneh (1987) provides a counter argument by pointing out that, “[m]uch of the standard Western scholarship on Christian missions proceeds by looking at the motives of individual missionaries and concludes by faulting the entire missionary enterprise as being part of the machinery of Western cultural imperialism” (p. 331). Sanneh argues that “missions in the modern era has been far more, and far less, than the argument about motives customarily portrays” (p. 331). Adding to the discussion on the role of Christianity in colonialism, Wood
(2000) asserts that the colonized peoples were considered inferior and the colonizers view burnished by “centuries of Ethnocentrism, and Christian monotheism, which espoused one truth, one time and version of reality” (p. 20). Although, Islam is also an implanted religion in Nigeria, it however does not receive as much scrutiny in the post-colonial discourses on religion, probably because Christianity was the religion of the British colonizers.

Post-independence, the two dominant religions of Christianity and Islam have a strong presence in the school curriculum as proponents and opponents alike continue to push for religious education. The inter-religious relationship can be said to be at best contentious and characterized by religious fundamentalism, riots and massacres. Unfortunately, the way religion is taught in schools does not help to foster a good relationship between adherents of both faiths. The curriculum and method of teaching seems to be more faith oriented rather than an academic exploration of different religions with a view to guiding students to a better understanding of the fundamentals of different religions. Consequently, students are indoctrinated to be more dogmatic and less inclined to dialogue with other faith groups and co-exist peacefully with others in a plural society. A side effect of the way religious studies is taught is that children are growing up set in their religious ways and ignorant of the commonality with other religions. This has resulted in unpleasant situations that have threatened peaceful coexistence of the two religions. For example, several clashes between Muslim and Christian students have been reported in some secondary schools across the nation precipitated by a disagreement over the wearing of the Islamic veil (hijab). Followers of both religions have blurred the lines between religious practices in their places of worship and the academic study of religion, thus allowing little or no room for mutual respect and inter-religious dialogue.
Incidentally, while the missionaries eventually left the shores of Nigeria, however, the religion they bequeathed to the people have become part of the social milieu in schools from primary to tertiary institutions. Thus, as the metropole increasingly becomes more secular, the former colony has become more religious. It is interesting to note that religion is one legacy of colonialism which the people have been able to localized, infusing it with their own ways of worship and spiritual idiosyncrasies. The faith-based curriculum of the school has given way to religious practices which some critiques argue are to the detriment of critical thinking and intellection and more superstitious beliefs operating side by side with scientific knowledge. Therefore, as the quality of education has dropped and the school infrastructure are in various stages of decay and dilapidation, like an opium, religion has become the soothing balm to heal all wounds: social, economic, political and cultural. Thus, it is not far-fetched to see a student praying to God to “bring light,” (electricity) to enable them power on their computer and conduct research. The presence of religion in the country is ubiquitous. Social gatherings, government meetings and other formal activities are usually started off with prayers.

An attempt to make schools less religious and more secular led to the policy in the 1970s whereby state governments took over religious schools, in this current dispensation, some of the schools are being returned back to the initial missionary owners – because over the years, corruption, and mismanagement left the school in a state of disrepair. It is clear that secularization has not taken hold in Nigeria because Christianity in the south and Islam in the North, maintain a dominant position in the society. Students are commonly provided with space to hold school fellowships. It is also quite common for religious bodies to use school premises on weekends for religious crusades and other church related activities. One Nigerian social critic opines thus:
Nigerian campuses have been turned into religious supermarkets, and Nigerian education has become sectarian. Religious meetings are now conducted virtually everywhere in schools- in libraries, lecture halls, and even in laboratories. A number of lecturers have abandoned teaching and researching to become clerics and evangelists. There is no longer any clear demarcation between religious duties and academic work. (Igwe, 2013, para. 4)

Hyper-religiosity serves to blur the line between science and superstitious beliefs as “religion” becomes “the opium of the masses” violence have broken out on school campuses when Christian and Islamic students jostle for supremacy. This brand of religious fanaticism promotes ignorance over intellectual curiosity and it leads to the kind of religious fundamentalism that is ravaging the Northern part of the country in the form a local terrorist group called Boko Haram, which translates to “Western education is bad.” Boko Haram members are killing thousands of people, including teachers and students all in the name of religion. Hyper-religiosity also fosters an over-reliance on divine intervention at the expense of cultivating habits that would lead to self-sufficiency. Interestingly, this lack of willingness to be proactive in tackling hardships in one’s community is in sharp contrast to the do-it-yourself mentality of the Missionaries in relation to the White, Anglo Saxon Protestant work ethic which follows the biblical dictum that “an idle mind is the devil’s workshop.” In Nigeria, hyper-religiosity has become a pacifier- whereby people wait around for miraculous interventions instead of demanding for accountability. This hyper-religiosity is also fuelled by the increasing level of poverty, infrastructural decay, corruption by government officials and school administrators. In a sense, religion has become a soporific elixir for the masses. Hence, it
becomes a thing of “miracle” for government to renovate schools or provide other standard amenities that should be expected from a functioning government.

**Learning to Unlearn and Relearn the Curriculum**

More than 50 years after gaining independence from Britain, Nigeria continues to struggle to create an indigenous identity for her education system. This struggle is no less apparent in the area of curriculum development. At the primary and secondary school levels, efforts at reforming the basic and secondary education curriculum continues to be met with more reform, so in essence, reform is being reformed in anticipation for future reforms. This vicious circle of reforms has been in existence since the initial set of reforms that took place shortly after independence in the 1960’s. Much of the claimed purpose for education are often driven by outside influences and what is perceived by the Nigerian government and education policy officials as global trends. The curriculum has been borrowed, copied and adapted from different education systems around the world, hence, the continuing crisis of identity and relevance. Even in the determination of how many courses students in primary and junior secondary schools are required to take, the country’s foremost agency charged with curriculum development- the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) had to look outside for directions on best practices. For example, the Executive Secretary of NERDC while explaining the decision to reduce the course load of students provided this rationale:

As a matter of fact, in the United States of America, the maximum number of subjects at this level ranges between five and six. In Kenya, it’s about seven. In Tanzania, it’s six. In neighbouring Ghana, it’s not more than six. In the Asia Pacific countries – Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, India and so on, the number of subjects being
taught to primary school pupils and even the junior secondary school, is at most eight or nine which captures the basic element that lays the basic foundation of knowledge. And so, Nigeria will like to be part of this global development for best practice, and that led to the revision of the BEC [Basic Education Curriculum], from 20 subjects to a maximum of 10 (Adesulu, 2012b, para. 7).

It is possible that Nigerian students have been overloaded with too many courses, however, the rather simplistic rationale been proffered for policy changes are a pointer to the dearth in empirical studies whose conclusions should ideally inform changes in policy directives. This pattern of jumping on global educational band wagons is further exhibited when, in discussing the rationale for the introduction of vocational study and the emphasis on teaching entrepreneurial skills, NERDC’s Executive Secretary continues: “…[y]ou’ll recall that the Asia Pacific countries – China, India and so forth – is based on enterprise spirit and even Britain is now teaching enterprise education. And the impact is all over the world, including neighboring Ghana” (Adesulu, 2012b, para. 9). Again, the rationale provided for curriculum reform reflects global trends instead of prioritizing local needs. In order words, how would enterprise education positively impact students and by extension, the country?

The involvement of the American and French governments in the curriculum implementation process is highlighted by this statement from the NERDC Executive Secretary: “[w]e have even experts from the French embassy who will help us to articulate the element of how to teach French in the primary school” (Adesulu, 2012b, para. 11). And “[s]ome components of the Teachers Guides will be used at a preparatory training for pre-service teachers of English studies and Reading in Colleges of Education. USAID is going to collaborate with
NERDC in that venture. God on our side, we have been able to latch onto the transformation agenda of Mr. President” (Adesulu, 2012b, para. 11).

“The subjects listed in the new curriculum for primaries 1 – 3 are English language, Mathematics, one Nigerian Language, Basic Science and Technology (which includes Physical and Health Education and Computer Studies/ICT), Pre-vocational Studies (comprising Home Economics, Agriculture and Entrepreneurship),” “Religion and Values Education (made up of Social Studies, Civic Education and Security Education), Cultural and Creative Arts and Arabic Language (which is optional). These same subjects are offered by pupils in primary 4 – 6 with the addition of French Language while Business Studies is added to the subject listings for [Junior Secondary] 1- 3” (Adesulu, 2012a, para. 11). The course load is broken down as follows: primary 1-3 pupils will carry a minimum course load of seven subjects and a maximum of 8; students in primaries 4-6 are to take a minimum of eight subjects and maximum of nine; while students in junior secondary school 1- 3 will take a minimum of nine subjects and a maximum of 10 (Adesulu, 2012a, para. 7).

The senior secondary school curriculum is divided into three categories: (i) compulsory and cross-cutting core subjects; (ii) field of specialization and (iii) Elective. The four fields of specializations are: (a) science/mathematics; (b) humanities; (c) business studies and (d) technology. Under the core subjects, students in senior secondary 1- 3 will take the following five subjects: English, mathematics, trade, computer studies and civic education. Students specializing in science/mathematics are offered these course options: biology, chemistry, physics, further math, agriculture, physical education and health education. The course offerings for students in the humanities are: one Nigerian language, literature in English, geography, government, Christian religious studies, Islamic religious studies, history, visual
art, music, French, Arabic and economics. The technology specialization course offerings are: technical drawing, metal work, basic electricity, electronics, auto mechanics, building construction, wood work, home management, food and nutrition and clothing and textile.

The revised secondary school curriculum took effect in 2011 while the old curriculum will be phased out over a period of three years ending in 2014. Students will take all five compulsory subjects; select three or four from their area of specialization and choose one elective subject. The total number of subjects chosen cannot be more than nine.

From the list of course offerings at the secondary school level, it is unfortunate to note that mother tongue is not a required subject while English remains a compulsory course. This glaring omission shows a lack of commitment to the use of mother tongue throughout primary and secondary schooling.

Overall, both the new Basic Education and the Senior Secondary School curriculum look good on paper, the number of courses have been substantially reduced; courses have been stream-lined and overlapping subjects merged. The new thinking in curriculum reform is reflected in how the NERDC Executive Secretary characterized their reform efforts: “[t]he curricula content activities are presented in practical oriented steps and stages that enable the learners to see, touch, handle, and feel.” Thus, “[t]his will enable the pupils to truly learn, internalize what they learn, and use it for problem solving and for living. The curricula encourage learning by doing and use of self-learning strategies” (Adesulu, 2012a, para. 11).

Given the myriad of factors that contribute to the failing quality of public primary and secondary school education in Nigeria such as: mass failure in standardized exams like SSCE and NECO, quality of teachers, size of the teaching corps, inadequate level of commitment to educational excellence, inadequate availability of basic infrastructure like libraries, laboratories,
conducive classrooms and a nurturing environment that caters to the needs of poor students. It is not clear how NERDC factors in these other considerations in its curriculum reform process. Is the process inclusive of all stakeholders or is it “expert” driven from the top-down? So far, NERDC’s curricular interventions are yet to produce the results contained in the lofty promises of each successive round of curriculum tinkering. This is what can be classified as a “successful failure” (Kendall, 2011). As failure rates in standardized exams across the board remains high and in some cases going from bad to worse. It is not certain if the new curricula focus on experiential and constructive learning means that the education system will finally move away from its over-reliance on exams as the determinant of a student’s cognitive ability.

In 2006, the Federal government of Nigeria gave a directive for the National Teachers Institute (NTI) to provide professional development training to approximately 145,000 primary school teachers from across the nation with the aim of improving the quality of the teachers. Many teachers are not qualified to teach and for those who started out qualified, because of little or no continuous professional development opportunities their pedagogical style becomes outdated and at variance with the learner-centered curriculum approach being touted by policy makers. This was buttressed when the result of the Operation Reach All Secondary Schools (ORASS) conducted in 2007 showed that 1/3 of teachers at the secondary school level were unqualified to teach (Kolawole, 2011, p.1).

The process of developing and designing a curriculum needs a holistic approach if it is to be purposeful and goal oriented. Thus, curriculum development should not operate in a silo, it is a process that is social, political and relational (Lewy, 1991). To what extent did stakeholders, particularly, teachers and students contribute meaningfully to the curriculum review process? As the bridge builder between policy makers and students, teachers have a crucial role to play in the
envisioning of a workable curriculum. In this vein, the students, who are the primary consumers of the curriculum equally have valuable insights to contribute. And as far as other stakeholders go, such as parents and employers of labor, they have the industry experience to know the required skills for employment and be able to advice the curriculum design accordingly. While NERDC may be the subject-matter expert, it is a truism that if there is no local buy-in, new curriculum initiatives are bound to fail.

A major oversight in the design and implementation of curriculum in the Nigerian education system is the idea that teachers only need to be brought in at the stage of implementation. This is problematic as most teachers are often unaware or unfamiliar with the purpose and goals of the curricula changes. The process has to begin with the teachers and students. What are their needs and wants; what works and what does not work. Simply copying and borrowing ideas from external sources will not work, no matter how innovative such ideas may be, because at the level of delivery, there is no local buy-in or ownership of the initiative. Teachers should not merely be figure-heads or act like robots and simply deliver the curriculum content; they should be active participants in the curriculum design and development process. Nigeria needs a transformative curriculum that is learner-centered and both challenges and engages students. And the key priorities for such a transformative curriculum are: (a) the school as an inclusive community; (b) a curriculum that is relevant; (c) learning as a holistic process and (d) promotes good character.

Recent changes in the primary and secondary curricula have been designed to address some of the shortcomings of previous curriculum. For example, the new UBE curricula has taken into account the need for vocational education and the importance of exposing students to entrepreneurial skills instead of focusing solely on formal education as was previously the case.
Though the rhetoric is good, there are however still shortcomings. For example, the new UBE curriculum that went into effect in September 2012 comes three years into the new curriculum, a new change has occurred while some schools have reported not having received the old curriculum. Implementation still remains a major bottle-neck. Technical equipments are often distributed to schools to improve quality of education, however, technical support for these equipments are often lacking.

In the “Pedagogy of the Oppressed,” Freire (1970) advances a pedagogical paradigm that is a shift from the rigid and exclusionary traditional paradigm to one which fosters a collaborative relationship between students, teachers and the community. Part of this paradigm shift includes a movement away from the traditional “Banking model” of teaching which valorizes the teacher as the locus of knowledge while the students are seen as essentially empty vessels at the mercy of drawing from the teacher’s fountain of knowledge. This “Banking model” is typical of the Nigeria educational system inherited from the colonial era. Obviously this model needs to be replaced with a learner-centered approach, one which the student is considered partner in the quest for knowledge.

The teachers are expected to be subject-matter experts, even when they do not have adequate training and qualifications to teach. With the over-reliance on rote memorization, critical thinking skill is not fostered. Students learn to the test and teachers teach to the test.

The curriculum taught in public schools in Nigeria is the explicit or formal curriculum which includes course objectives, syllabi, tests, exams, textbooks, and the learning agenda is meant to address the official understanding of the purpose of schooling. In a nutshell, the formal curriculum includes all aspects of the everyday operation of a school. The hidden (or implicit) curriculum on the other hand, is that which is not in the curriculum that the student learns as a
result of their engagement with the school environment. Hidden curriculums are a by-product of education because they are “[lessons] which are learned but not openly intended” (Martin, 1983, p. 122). This includes the implicit messages communicated about norms, values, and beliefs conveyed in the classroom and the school environment (Giroux & Penna, 1983). Longstreet & Shane (1993) define the hidden curriculum as “…the kinds of learnings children derive from the very nature and organizational design of the public school, as well as from the behaviors and attitudes of teachers and administrators….”(p. 46). The hidden curriculum encompasses more nuanced cues about social rules, cultural values and acceptable behaviors. It also includes the form of ideology that is passively elevated over others. For example, the hidden curriculum tells students that grade is important-this message is conveyed by the ranking system, pass or fail. Those who fail have to repeat a class. This implicit message then fuels the competition for grades among students. Raising up one’s hand to ask or answer a question, the idea of what constitutes orderliness- standing in line during school assembly, waiting for the bell to ring to signal the end of the school day. The hidden curriculum also shows that respect is important, so when a teacher walks into a classroom, the students know to acknowledge the teacher’s presence by standing up to greet. The hidden curriculum can send both positive and negative messages. The prevalent hidden curriculum in public primary and secondary schools in Nigeria has both positive and negative connotations. For example, the colonial language of instruction sends a message to students that the mother tongue is not as important. Additionally, the dilapidated schools and harsh learning conditions that students face on a regular basis sends the message that they are “less than” and that the education they deserve is in proportion to their parents’ social economic status. The hidden curriculum reinforces class structure and existing social and economic inequalities. This discrepancy in the access to quality education also mirrors the inequitable
distribution of cultural capital in the larger society. In comparison, private schools and Federally funded Unity schools have better learning infrastructure, class size, teacher’s engagement with students, textbooks used, language of instruction, learning activities, extra-curricular activities, audio-visual aids, school architecture, school aesthetics, availability of teaching aids, type of disciplinary measures, parental involvement, access to materials and information, student assessment all occur differently at private and parochial schools than in public schools. These variations in quality promote the class structure so prevalent in the country since “every school is both an expression of a political situation and a teacher of politics” (Great Atlantic, 1972, p. 95).

Education is ritualized from the days of missionary schools, so education occurs at the most inauspicious moments. The null curriculum involves that which is not taught and which sends the message to students that what is left out of the curricula are not important in their educational development or in society for that matter. Schools have great impacts not only by what they teach but also by what they neglect to teach. Thus, what is blurred out of students’ learning experience have potential consequences for their contributions to society and for the self actualization. In defining the null curriculum, Eisner (1985) states: “... the options students are not afforded, the perspectives they may never know about, much less be able to use, the concepts and skills that are not part of their intellectual repertoire (1985, p. 107). Eisner argues further that what is not taught may be just as significant as what is taught: “I argue this position because ignorance is not simply a neutral void; it has important effects on the kinds of options one is able to consider, the alternatives one can examine, and the perspectives from which one can view a situation or problem” (1985, p. 97). Since it is virtually impossible for the school curriculum to cover every subject matter and subject area, it thus becomes relevant how decisions are made on what to make explicit, what to hide and what to completely exclude. Examples of the null
curriculum in Nigeria includes, subject matter that are not taught, those which appear in the curriculum but are electives, subjects like history of Nigeria- for example, do Nigerian students have a firm grasp of colonization, slavery, the Nigerian civil war, pre-colonial African kingdoms and empires. Language- can all students learn their mother tongue in school? As a multicultural society, with communal clashes and religious conflicts, yet, cross-cultural training is conspicuous for its long standing absence and de-prioritization from the curriculum. What is not taught, like what is taught ultimately have an impact on student development.

A critical reflection on how curriculum is designed and implemented is important if Nigeria is to achieve meaningful gains in educational outcomes. Curriculum must foster experiential learning, critical thinking and understanding of self similar to the lived curriculum, or “currere,” developed by Pinar & Grumet (1976). As curriculum takes on a new, more complicated discursive framework of lived experience akin to the holistic tendencies of pre-colonial era indigenous education, the question of what is included in the explicit curriculum and the ideology that guides what is added and excluded becomes an important point of inquiry.

**Under-funding Education to Over-fund Corruption**

Corruption is a hydra-headed monster that has refused to be contained by successive administrations who at best pay lip-service to the fight against corruption. Nigeria consistently ranks high on any global corruption index. According to the 2012 Corruption Perception Index released by Transparency International, on a scale of 0-100 (where zero signifies highly corrupt and 100 means least corrupt), Nigeria scored 27 and was ranked 139 out of 154 countries (Corruption Perception Index, 2012). Unfortunately, the education sector has not been spared the deleterious effects of corruption. The graft and infrastructural decay that is very prominent in the education sector mirror what is happening in society. With the level of corruption in the
sector, the message that is being sent to kids is that integrity is a disposable personal attribute and this is starting to manifest in widespread exam malpractice, truancy and other behavioral problems in schools. Although civics and moral values are part of the school curriculum, however, the more potent hidden curriculum that sends a message to students is that corruption and other social vices are profitable. A critical analysis of the depth of corruption in the education sector shows that:

a) Corruption has led to the curricula and infrastructural decay in the education sector
b) Corruption contributes to the deteriorating academic standards
c) Corruption breeds the non-nurturing and violence prone school environment
d) Corruption has de-professionalize the teaching corps
e) Corruption emboldens students to be truants

Shortly after independence, Nigerians inherited the infrastructures that the British colonial government built, thus, schools were modest buildings with well-manicured lawns and were generally in good shape. Since the 1960’s school buildings have rapidly gone into disrepair to the extent that many public primary and secondary schools are not fit for human habitation. Those tasked with the responsibility of maintaining the school buildings often embezzle the funds or due to nepotism and cronyism hire people who are not qualified to do the work. The same corruptive practices give rise to what is called “ghost workers” these are people on payroll receiving monthly pay when in fact they are not employed at the school. It was reported in 2013 by the Minister of state for finance that an ongoing staff auditing and verification of government agencies had so far uncovered 45,000 ghost workers out of 153,019 government workers that have been audited. This has saved the government approximately N100 billion ($1 billion) (Premium Times, 2013). The problem of ghost workers is a wide spread problem at the state
level also- where various states of the Federation continue to uncover disturbing numbers of phantom names on the State governments’ payroll. In addition to the problem of “ghost workers,” “moonlighting” is another issue of contention. A significant number of teachers either do not show up for work regularly or, they are working at other jobs or running their own businesses, yet, they still collect salaries and benefits for not showing up at work. Chronic teacher absenteeism have also contributed to the successful failure to implement curriculum changes.

Corruption also contributes to falling academic standards due to lack of meritocracy. Often, school personnel, particularly teachers are hired not on the basis of the qualifications but on the basis of who gives them recommendation letters. Hence, people who have what Bourdieu (1970) calls “social capital” are able to secure jobs that they may not necessarily be qualified for. The same applies to students who are admitted into school not based on their woeful academic performance but on the basis of who they know. The wide-spread cheating and exam malpractice aided and abetted by some corrupt teachers who have no problem accepting bribes from students to give them a passing grade have also contributed to the failing academic standards. Ironically, the eroding quality of public education over the years has prompted more middle class and affluent parents to place their children in private schools. With the exit of the children of the affluent from public schools, there is no incentive to fix the schools. The same people are also part of those embezzling school funds for personal enrichment. It is commonplace to find a senior level staffer earning the equivalent of $50,000 per annum being able to pay international student rates of $30,000 or more per child to school abroad.

Corruption started pervading every fiber of the society in the 1980’s this was the beginning of the dismantling of the shaky foundations that the British left behind at the end of
colonial rule. It marked the era when public officials saw the common wealth as their personal entitlement to use as they pleased. The break down in law and order and successive military juntas and weak “democratic” regimes have done very little in the way of eliminating corruption. Often, those caught embezzling or taking bribes are often given a slap on the wrist as punishment. The taskforce setup by the current administration to examine the rot in the oil industry estimated that corruption and mismanagement have cost the country an estimated $35 billion in the last 10 years, which is the equivalent of 10% of Nigeria’s annual budget.

Corruptive practices by school administrators, teachers, parents and students are just as insidious in their deleterious impact as the money embezzled by senior level officials. For example, wide spread exam malpractice is a major problem as this narrative shows:

I raised the issue of “help” during examination with one very dedicated teacher I know. He told me that students now do not read because of this expected “help” from teachers. And if you do not give this kind of “help”, you are considered as wicked, and will be disliked by the students and school authority. He told me that in the last exams three students came to his house in the night. What was it? He asked. “We have gotten the question paper”. They answered. “Is there anything we have not covered in the class?” He asked. “No, only two small sub-questions”, they answered. According to him, he sent them away, because the time they took to come to his house was more than enough to think and get the answers. Again, how could students have the guts to even come to this teacher with a leaked exams questions? I was told that most of the leaked questions are obtained from the teachers! Last week I watched a comedy TV program, in which a whole class fainted during school examination - just because the teacher decided to
change the exam questions in place of the one given to exam officer. I was reliably told
that the drama was a true reflection of the happenings in our schools (Yushau, 2011).

There is a reason why exam malpractice has become so wide-spread. Are students
relying on cheating to pass because they are not taught in class? Who is to blame in this insidious
practice?

The Nigerian public education system suffers from the twin evils of corruption and
under-funding. Due to corruption, the modest allocation to the education sector from the primary
to the tertiary level end up in the pockets of government and school officials. As a result of these
perennial and prevailing issues, Nigeria is considered an educationally disadvantaged country on
track not to meet the Education for All (EFA) 2015 goals. The earliest it’s projected to
potentially make it is 2020. Even this might be an impossibility considering that no
implementable solution seems to be in the pipeline to address the myriad problems of the sector.
And with the high turn-over rate of Ministers of education in the Country; there has been 10 in
the last eleven years, it looks like reform efforts will continue to be a flash-in-the-pan.

Education funding in Nigeria is nowhere near the recommended 26 percent of national
budget espoused by UNESCO. It hovers around 8%, which is a decrease from previous years.
In the 2013 budget, the Federal government allocated N426.53 billion (Naira) for education. The
entire budget proposal for 2013 is N4.92 trillion (which is equivalent to $32 billion). This
budget proposal shows a 5% increase from 2012 (N4.697). When Nigeria embarked on its
present democratic dispensation in 1999, education represented almost 17% of the national
budget, in 2011, the funding fell to a little over 10% which is higher than the proposed funding
level for 2013.
Nigeria ranks low on various Human Development Index (HDI) both among other African countries and globally. For example, the country ranks 26 out of 54 African countries and for the West African sub-region, it does not fair any better ranking 13 out of 16 and 156 out of 187 countries that were surveyed. These rankings are based on four critical macroeconomic variables of education, literacy, life expectancy and standard of living (Daily Independent, 2013). At the State government levels, funding for education are even less impressive. The Federal government is responsible for funding Federal Universities- which with recent proposals for new Universities, each of the 36 states of the Federation will now have a University. They also fund the Unity schools, which are Federal government owned secondary schools across the country. The bulk of funding in the sector both at the Federal and State levels tend to go towards personnel. As funding increases modestly, the quality of education continues to free fall. While Nigeria continues to deteriorate, other smaller and less resource-rich African continues manage to record improvement in their education sector. So much so that in neighboring Ghana, Nigerian students make up the highest percentage of foreign students. In 2012, Nigeria’s Central Bank Governor, Lamido Sanusi Lamido opined that Nigerian parents spend upward of $1 billion dollars a year on tuition for their wards to attend school in Ghana. Majority of these parents are politicians and senior government officials in charge of the education sector. In a nutshell, they are making education policies which do not affect them or their children.

In addition to corruption, mismanagement, fiscal waste and duplication of efforts are other factors contributing to financial woes of the education sector. A lot of money is spent on formulating policies, there are different committees, government parastatal, domestic and foreign consultants involved in the policy formulation process and at the implementation stage, money is also spent on “sensitizing” the stake holders across the country. In the end, there still exists a
gap between policy formulation and policy implementation, never mind how much was expended in the execution of these exercises. A newspaper headline reads: “Nigeria: We Don’t Have UBE Curriculum - Enugu Teachers” The article relates how primary and secondary school teachers in Enugu (one of the states in the south eastern part of the country) were yet to receive copies of the new Basic Education Curriculum two years after its formulation in 2008. Two years later, the teachers were still using textbooks that were not in compliance with the new curriculum (Daily Independent, 2010). Enugu is not the remotest part of Nigeria; it is only a one hour’s flight from Abuja- where the policy makers are based and approximately 300km (186 miles) by road. It was worth noting that students from these schools with the outdated curriculum will take the same standardized national exams as their peers in other parts of the country, whose teachers are using textbooks compliant with the new curriculum. Why the service delivery inefficiency that consistently bedevils government bureaucracy is working to implement the curriculum, new curricula changes were announced to go into effect in 2012. The question to ponder now is that in various parts of the country, which version of the curriculum is in use?

It is not clear whether financial audits are conducted to determine the cost-benefit of some of the grand ideas of the policy makers. A side-effect of inadequate funding, mismanagement and corruption is the abysmal results of from national exams like the Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE), the National Examinations Council (NECO) and Joint Admissions Matriculation Board (JAMB). In the 2012 SSCE results, less than 40% of students passed English and Mathematics and an abysmal 1% passed physics. There is a disparity between the Northern part of the country and the southern part in educational attainment. This can be traced back to colonial-era missionary schools which were established predominantly in the Christian south because the Muslim north was not particularly amenable to Christian
proselytizing. In terms of the abysmal performance in standardized exams, there exists no shortage of blame. The government blames the teachers, the teachers blame the government and everybody blame the students. It was recently reported that the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) had “attributed the consistent poor performance to the deployment of members of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) to teach in schools” (Daily Independent, 2013).

Students who graduate from tertiary institutions in Nigeria are required to participate in NYSC, which is a one year paid volunteer service. The program was initially birthed to promote cross-cultural awareness- as students are required to serve in other states of the country. These students who are themselves products of a failing tertiary education system are sent to primary and secondary schools to teach; even when they are not education majors or have been trained in how to teach. This practice of throwing anybody in the classroom de-professionalizes the teaching profession and shows a gross lack of understanding of the ethos of teaching and learning. The attention of TRCN has been drawn to this practice which the organization described as causing “considerable damage, intellectually to these students and at the end, the pupils fail and everybody starts blaming the examination bodies” (Daily Independent, 2013).

In 2013, a panel setup by the Nigerian government to recommend ways to trim down the federal bureaucracy recommended that some of the examination bodies like: NECO and JAMB be scrapped to save money and eliminate duplication. This however did not go down well with the various stake holders. A common excuse for keeping JAMB was that it saves students money from having to register for separate University-based JAMB exam, however, given the fact that after writing JAMB- which is the University/Polytechnic entrance exam, students still have to write the Post-UME which is individual university based instituted because of rampant exam malpractice and cheating, students got high marks but were not intellectually prepared for
University course work. It is unfortunate that the primary consideration for proposing scrapping these examination bodies is not because of the glaring empirical evidence that the standardized testing is not working as an accurate determinant of student’s academic success, instead, the primary reason is fiscal; to trim down the budget of running these agencies.

In light of the rampaging corruptive practices in the education sector, it was noting that any serious reform efforts must seek to address the causes of corruption.

Indeed, among African and Africanist post-colonial writers, there appears, at some level, to be a consensus about the neo-colonial activities of these countries- manifested in the aid money that is allocated to education; which tends to prioritize the donors’ policy initiatives. In the case of the U.S., HIV/AIDS education is promoted via grant money by USAID, the US government agency in charge of supporting international development in third world countries. In the revised primary and secondary school curriculum, sex education has been added, this is a milestone for a country that is relatively conservative about sex and views coitus as an intensely private endeavor. France on the other hand, seems to have a vested interest in promoting the study of French language, which incidentally became Nigeria’s second official language in the 1990’s after a substantial donation from the French government. The tendency of Nigerian education policy makers to accommodate various bilateral and multilateral donor interests or adopt the latest buzz words in global education reform creates an opportunity for these donor countries to imperialize Nigerian education in such a way that the knowledge taught in schools is now rented from the West.
Education for the Future: Towards a Neo-Indigenous Nigeria-centric System

In a world defined by its diversity of cultures, it is remarkable to note the cultural dominance of the western-style education model that has been universally adopted. To the extent that these educational systems are molded by Eurocentric cultural assumptions, it becomes problematic for the non-westerners whose indigenous cultures are at variance with the predominant western ideal to have meaningful learning outcomes when the indigenous culture is invariably subsumed and marginalized by the hegemony of the western culture. Colonialism is a factor in the global dominance of western-style education; it promoted the notion that education serves a utilitarian purpose, to foster social development which led Prakash & Esteva (1998) to conclude that “wherever education and development travel [side by side] poverty and pollution increase; freedoms and autonomy decrease; monocultures of learning and living destroy the rich pluriverse of the diverse cultures of the social majorities” (p. 24). The resulting westernization and intellectual hegemony of education systems around the globe led to what Masemann (1999) describes as “the increasing homogenization of the culture of education on a worldwide scale, with the accompanying assumption by educators that there is only one valid epistemology” (p. 126).

Although, some parts of the world have failed to achieve progressive outcomes from their adaptation of western-style formal education, some others have successfully incorporated indigenous culture with the borrowed western education model. Examples of these can be found in Latin America and East Asia. Countries like Japan and China have been successful at enculturating western-style education instead of assimilating it and initiatives centered on regenerative pedagogies have cropped up in Latin America as signified by the enduring impact of Paulo Freire’s “Pedagogy of the Oppressed.”
The success of the Japanese education system is a pointer to how to adopt or copy educational practices from other countries and successfully implement them while still keeping the local cultural identity intact. From the time of the Meiji restoration in 1868, Japan has looked to adopt best places from around the world in order to advance their development goals. According to Howe (2002), “[t]he Japanese are remarkable in the way they have been able to take good ideas from abroad, perfect and adapt them for their own purposes, while maintaining their culture and traditions” (para. x). In the education sector, Japan successfully adapted western-style education “[b]y learning Western methods of production and adapting the Western model of capitalism to suit their culture, Japan evolved from a feudal state to a modern industrial nation in a short period of time” (para xx). Conversely, in Iran, the government is overhauling its education system in order to rid it of “western influences” and what it calls “fundamentally poisonous” western theories and courses that are not influenced by Islam (Washington Post, 2011). The proposed system which will be implemented at all levels of primary, secondary and tertiary education will privilege Islamic doctrines over western ideals. And the Education Ministry’s plan, titled “The Program for Fundamental Evolution in Education and Training,” envisions schools as “neighborhood cultural bases” where teachers will provide “life guidance, assisted by selected clerics and members of the paramilitary Basij force” (Washington Post, 2011, p. 1). Additionally, the Education Minister stated that “[t]here will be official training and on-site cultural education and an emphasis on sports, reading books and the Koran” (p. 1). Given the Iranian government’s rather contentious relationship with the West, it is thus necessary to question the basis of the proposed overhaul of the education system to determine if such an initiative is driven by political exigencies as opposed to educational theory and practice.
With the advent of formal education in Europe in the 1800s, educators all over have sought to borrow and adapt best practices from other countries (Thomas, 1990). Various European countries have been at the forefront of pioneering educational practices that others could emulate. For example, German-style higher education became a template for others to adopt in Europe and North America. Likewise, American and Japanese primary and secondary school systems evolved out of the British model (Howe, 2011). The history of education around the world shows that while countries seek to borrow educational best practices from others, the most successful ones have been those who have localized knowledge and created knowledge as oppose to those who have tended to rent knowledge from others. As Hall (1985) states “schools are extensions of the societies of which they are a part” (p. 168). In Nigeria, it can be argued that the school is not an extension of the society. And because the educational system has so far failed to incorporate indigenous knowledge and practices in schools, they are failing at the task of educating the citizenry. Hence, in Nigeria, there is public schooling without public education. At this point, it is important to note the distinction between education and schooling: education denotes an active process of learning, of developing the skills and mental acuity required to create knowledge, while schooling connotes the process of being taught. If not done properly, schooling can be a passive method of acquiring knowledge without necessarily developing the ability to create it. The Nigerian education system has not only rented knowledge from the west, it has also borrowed wholesale, educational practices without attempting to dismantle the inherited colonial structures from the British. Consequently, the cultural identity-crisis of Nigerian education is creating major deficiencies in learning and educational outcomes—occasioned by the poor quality of education, gender parity, growing rate of illiteracy and the lack of regional parity in educational attainment between the predominantly Christian south and the
predominantly Muslim north. In the quest for a solution to address the crisis in the Nigerian education sector, the successful incorporation of indigenous practices with the adopted western education model by several countries in East Asia shows that a holistic education system that incorporates both western formal education model and indigenous cultural knowledge can be successful. In the case of Nigeria, the model proposed will not simply infuse indigenous knowledge into a decidedly western curricula, rather, it will be a mix-match, a merger of the best of the indigenous system with the best of the western system to create a new system that is neither predominantly one or the other, but which is purposive in that it is relevant to the needs of the country and people. This system does not go back to the way things were, because that is an impossibility, rather, it looks back (Sankofa) to reach for the future; it becomes what will be known as neo-indigenous as opposed to indigenous, and in the context of my study such a system is called Nigeria-centric.

A Nigeria-centric education system that is neo-indigenous will form a symbiotic relationship with the national development goals of Nigeria because a transformative educational system is crucial to economic, social, cultural and political advancement. This type of re-imagined education will occupy an important space in society as the site for cultural reproduction, transmission and social change. It will be situated at the nexus of a decolonization of the Nigerian mind, which will help to build a cohesive national identity, one where each of the ethnic nations that constitute Nigeria can “see” their patch-work in the mosaic that makes up the country. A Nigeria-centric education recovers memory and helps to map the future. Such an education plays an important role as a catalyst for a truly neo-indigenous ideal, one that aims to successfully reverse the cultural amnesia of the colonial era. Colonial education had no use for indigenous knowledge, had no value for the indigenous way of life, values and customs, a neo-
indigenous pedagogy of identity will help to create a school environment that is present and able to interrogate as well as resist the history of oppression and subjugation.

A Nigeria-centric education captures a Nigerian worldview that is both immanent and transcendent, meaning, it is both bounded and limitless in its associative possibilities. Therefore, a Nigeria-centric education is a living idea that has the possibility of locating itself within an African educational renaissance schema that simultaneously occurs locally, nationally, regionally and globally. The idea of a Nigeria-centric educational system implies a move towards a philosophical, pedagogical, and curricula framework that is emancipatory, regenerative, localized and empowering. It would interrogate, confront and resist the legacy of colonialism, serve as a potent antidote to racial melancholia and eliminate the colonial dependency which continues to plague the country and the continent at large. It re-educates self into being; in a consciousness rising that transcends, seeks to preserve the people’s language, culture and environment. It is about ownership and taking charge. A Nigeria-centric education is at the epicenter of this renaissance, this revival and rebirth.

The question of what is a Nigeria-centric education should really be framed as what is meant by a Nigeria-centric education. In other words, is Nigeria-centric a verb or a noun or is it both? Answering this question will help ground the discussion in this section. A Nigeria-centric education fosters an interconnectivity and complementarity between two systems: Indigenous and Western; which are functionally interdependent but separate and complex. It is a hybrid of the ideal attributes of both systems. The indigenous knowledge system is of the people and it is rooted in the cultures of the Nigerian people while the western education system which is a colonial import helped to massify education and promote reading and writing literacy. Located within the in-between spaces of these complex systems is a treasure trove of educational
attributes that are complementary and which, if appropriated in the right way, can help to improve the quality of primary and secondary school education in Nigeria.

The myriad of issues embedded within the Nigerian education system allows for an interdisciplinary approach that incorporates appropriate theoretical concepts in the attempt to re-imagine what a relevant education system that is Nigeria-centric should be. Several theoretical concepts provide an empirical grounding for the development of this Nigeria-centric education system. Indigenous epistemology creates the possibilities for endogenous and holistic educational experiences and outcomes which provide a regenerative space with limits and possibilities for educational development. It also serves to prevent “epistimicide” a term Nyamnjoh (2011) used to describe the effects of the marginalization of indigenous ways of meaning-making and the elimination of indigenous knowledge and practices from the school which Smith (2008) believes prevents the possibility of students gaining experiential knowledge based on the existing indigenous knowledge. Post-colonial theory allows for the hybridity (Bhabha, 1994; Gilroy, 2000; Hall, 1992; Spivak, 1995 ;) that provides the admixture of the owned (indigenous) and borrowed (western) which is interactional and rhizomatic. Additionally, the Nigeria-centric system draws on the new sciences of chaos and complexity to create a new model that is dynamic, creative, relational and systems oriented (Barnhardt & Kawagly, 200; Doll, 2012; Epstein & Axell, 1996). This system signifies an emergence (Hayes, 2013) of the fusion of the scientific with the contemplative into an imagined system of education that is informed by complexity. Mwadime (1999) provides a good rationale for why a Nigeria-centric model that goes beyond simply adding indigenous practices to existing westernized curricula is a more relevant alternative. According to the author:
Attempts to integrate indigenous banks of knowledge into formal classroom curricula are based on the assumption that these banks of knowledge can be easily identified, extracted from their context, and incorporated into Westernized programs. This is not usually the case. Much of indigenous knowledge is so identified with personal contexts and local environmental factors that it cannot be generalized in some sterile format to be transported into a general curriculum program (p. 264 - 265).

While there has been a growing shift worldwide towards a more accepting policy of incorporating indigenous knowledge and cultural practices in the dominant western-style educational systems, unfortunately, much of the attempt, particularly in the developing world has yielded mixed results. Indigenous ways of knowing, learning, teaching and training is seen by many as key for students, teachers, and a diverse array of people to be able to benefit from the cultural milieu of a “pluriverse” as oppose to a universe dominated by one cultural narrative. The former, more pluralistic worldview enables all stakeholders to gain immensely from a truly holistic and inclusive education that goes beyond the reading, writing and arithmetic staple of western-style education.

**Western Colonial Education System**

Colonial or Western education have attributes that reflect the European culture. They include: Literacy, bureaucratization and professionalism, rational reasoning and individualism, (Purple, 1989). These attributes form the mainstay of a westernized educational system; imported during the colonial era and copied and borrowed post-independence around the globe. This model, while not altogether optimum, seems to be the prevalent global model in use today. As Ramirez (2003) notes: “the triumph of the West in the twentieth century has led to the intensification of the Western emphasis on both universalism and rationalization” (p. 246).
Many countries, for example Nigeria, have adopted the western educational model of knowledge acquisition and meaning-making in a bid to facilitate development and mastery of western advancement in science and technology (Baker & LeTendre, 2005; Rotberg, 2004; Anderson-Levitt, 2003). Thus, western education has an “unprecedented monopoly” (Baker & LeTendre, 2005, p.8) on education and schooling. It has shaped global culture through the lens of a dominant westernized world view. Which means education has become a means of producing “individual empowerment, national development, organizational effectiveness, professional knowledge, and expert advice” (Anderson-Levitt, 2003, p. 242).

**Characteristics of Western Colonial Education System**

The main attribute of the western education system is that it promotes literacy, known in this sense as the ability to read and write. Even in the hyper modern technological age, the use of the mnemonic device (writing) is still very relevant. Literacy in the western education sense is in sharp contrast to the oral traditions of the indigenous people in Nigeria and around the colonized world (Cajete, 1994; Kroeber, 1981; Tafoya, 1982; Ywahoo, 1987). Indigenous and Western education are often divided on this basis of oral versus written modes of learning. Although many indigenous societies did not employ the mnemonic device, they did however incorporate signs and symbols to communicate. While, literacy is used to describe the written traditions of the West, it is important to note that literacy goes beyond simply being able to read and write. As Piquema (2003) states: “[c]onceptions of Western literacy mainly originated from Plato's theory…that society should be based on rational and analytical thinking, and therefore should be free of the influence of poets and artists” (p. 114). This theorizing “marked the rise of the logos in Western society” (p. 114). Accordingly, “in The Republic Plato…argues that poetry is the enemy of the intellect because it is founded on knowing the universe through emotions
rather than cognition. It follows that poetry and oral histories should not be part of the educational system. Thus, literacy, in the western education sense, forms a part of logical reasoning and creates knowledge that can be easily transmitted.

Bureaucratization and professionalism are another attributes of the western education system. As enrollment increased and schools expanded, it became important to develop administrative structures that are more centralized and professional. Standardized testing, grading, evaluation, assessment as well as credentialing (certificates, diplomas and degrees) are all part of this bureaucracy and professionalization of the education sector. Assessment and evaluation of students and more recently, schools, are all part of the efforts to make the delivery of public education more effective and efficient. In Nigeria, the colonial government setup a bureaucratic system to administer education after they took over the oversight of educating Nigerians from the missionaries. Post-independence, a more complex style of bureaucracy has been adopted shaped by the inherited colonial structure. In the new bureaucratic structure, all levels of governance from the Federal, State to the Local Government are responsible for each component of education. Riggs (1996) notes that:

“bureaucracy has been around for thousands of years, but neither in the past nor in modern times, have they ever been democratic. Their purpose has been administrative, and their structure hierarchic. The elaborate bureaucracies of the Chinese, Roman and Ottoman empires, for example, enabled their rulers to administer those under their authority, and protect and expand their domains. The general population had little to do with these bureaucrats (p. 23).

Conversely, “in traditional societies, most people lived on a subsistence basis, producing and consuming what they needed for their own survival with virtually no dependence on public
services. In such an environment, bureaucrats primarily met the needs of ruling elite who, alone, were the victims of administrative failure (Riggs, 1996, p. 23). The bureaucratized education sector in Nigeria is failing the poor and not the rich, because the policy makers are not consumers of the policy they make.

The ontological and epistemological tradition of western education as anchored by rationalism and science was advanced during the Enlightenment period. The belief is that the search for meaning and truth in the universe can only be attained through rational and scientific enquiries. Consequently, rational reasoning through scientific investigation became the only way to the discovery and establishment of truth (Marsden, 1994). Thus, positivistic inquiry promoted by the likes of August Comte (1798-1857) marginalized non-scientific methods of inquiry. And as Marsden (1994) opines, “[o]ne way to describe the current state of affairs, however, is that, in effect, the only points of view that are allowed full academic credence are those that presuppose purely naturalistic worldviews. Advocates of postmodernist viewpoints have, as a rule, been just as committed to exclusively naturalist premises for understanding human belief and behavior as were their turn-of-the-century predecessors who established evolutionary naturalism as normative for academic life (p. 430).” Thus, as the privileging of rationalism continues, science has become the dominant source of seeking truth (Horkheimer, 1974).

Another attribute of western-style education is individualism. The individual is at the locus of the learning process and thus education policies have a tendency to be formulated along the lines of the rights and interests of the individual students rather than on collective impact. What works for the common good stems from first establishing the needs of the individual. The school is organized with the central focus of assisting the individual to develop the mental
acumen that will aid in independent thinking. The individualism of the school reflects the individualistic philosophy of the society, which is predicated on individual rights and freedoms. Consequently, “formal schooling is…aimed at facilitating this naturally programmed process of separate development of each individual, rather than being seen primarily as a process of social formation” (Watt, 1989, p. 118).

A major deficit of western education is its historical association with colonialism. As I have argued throughout this dissertation, the colonial adventure dominated and imposed western culture and institutions such as schools on the colonized peoples. Adoption of western teaching and learning methods to teach non-westerners have proved challenging (Darder, 1991). Hence, despite several reform attempts to better align the Nigerian education system with western practices, the outcomes have not yielded the desired need to latch on to the international economic and technological order. The implication of this westernization attempt is that indigenous knowledge and practices are still been kept out of the school. My attempt to integrate an indigenous Nigerian education with western education can be said to be an attempt at universalizing the hegemonic knowledge system of the western world- which is a system of exclusion into an inclusive one. Nekhwevha (2010) claims that borrowed and westernized curricula with its “strident individualism” (p. 502) have not yielded positive educational outcomes in Africa, instead, high drop-out rates, alienation and unemployment have become part of the common narrative of post-independence education in Africa. For example, the monopoly of the colonial language of English as the language of instruction in schools marginalizes native tongue in the discourses of development, because the language employed in the communication of knowledge, of human civilization and of science and technology is colonial and not indigenous. So far, efforts to integrate indigenous knowledge into school curricula have been
met with little progress due to the colonial dependency fostered by the existing western structure. Thus, the exclusionary model of the school ensures that the community has been excluded from the school, thereby substituting indigenous collectivity with personal individualism. Also, elders, who are the organic intellectuals of the society, are excluded because they lack western-style credentials and also because their knowledge is largely context-specific as oppose to the western way of generalizing knowledge which is seen as more valid because it is scientific and positivistic. This “deficit-driven outlook assumes that indigenous teachers have little or nothing to contribute to improving the knowledge base of the community and that what they know is so localized that it is of no apparent value outside the immediate community” (Semali, 1999, p. 109-110).

**Indigenous Education System**

Indigenous education is centered in a belief system that is holistic and promotes the relationship of person to place as well as connectedness to the universe. The pedagogy employed in the transmission of knowledge is through: mentoring, apprenticeship, rites of passage, communal rituals, storytelling and songs. Knowledge is passed down from one generation to another and the classroom is without walls. In the indigenous system, learning is a constant, while education is differentiated from schooling. Indigenous learning style is contemplative, observational and intuitive. Unlike the written archival system of western education, indigenous traditions are preserved orally. Indigenous education also incorporated nature as a source of knowledge, the environment; plants and animals provided curricula content for the indigenous education (Walker, 2004). The indigenous system of education privileged intuition over science and embraces descriptive concreteness over abstraction. Since the indigenous language is more descriptive and verb-based (action oriented) they are thus not
readily compatible with abstract, science-speak. However, indigenous languages provide a depth and breadth for use in qualitative rather than quantitative reasoning—such as explaining the balance of life in the universe. Indigenous knowledge has a rich store-house of providing coherence and unifying complex and interrelated systems without lending itself to a simplicity that stands the risk of distorting the truth. This is different from the compartmentalization of narratives and linearity that western language is known for. As a result, “[t]he pursuit of knowledge in eastern and indigenous cultures has tended to emphasize the coherence that encompasses incommensurables between domains—even if it is a challenge to comprehension and characterized by uncertainties” (Judge, 2000, p. 34).

**Characteristics of Indigenous Education**

Indigenous education in pre-colonial Nigerian societies was holistic and consisted of a learning process that was lifelong; it went from “womb to tomb.” Essentially, education literally encompassed all aspects of a person’s life and continued nonstop until their death. African indigenous education is defined as a process of transmitting cultural values and knowledge from one generation to another (Mushi, 2009). And because indigenous education was holistic, there was no separation between “town and gown” the community and the school were one and the same. Education had a symbiotic relationship with daily living. The knowledge acquired was for daily living, it was not abstract, but concrete. There were no exams or grading. Students “graduated” once they had mastered the skills required at each level of training. As they progressed in age, they also moved along in the sophistication and difficulty of skills they had to learn. Graduation was a rite of passage.

Although pre-colonial Nigeria had several independent societies, kingdoms and empires, regardless of the ethnic diversity, a common feature in all the indigenous learning systems was
that education was communal and geared towards the overall wellbeing of every member of the community thus making each student a vital part of the system. Learning therefore was for a purpose and designed to address immediate needs as well as train each person to be self-sufficient and contribute productively to the advancement of the community.

The curriculum was concrete, rather than abstract. Students learned about their immediate environment, about plants and animals, about herbs, they learned how to farm, how to hunt, they also learned how to decipher what is edible from what is not, how to treat common ailments and so on. The training process also included the method of raising children by older members of the community who used oral traditions to pass down history, skills, and information from one generation to another. The pedagogical tools employed were oral and practical. Children learned through hands-on experience.

In indigenous education, knowledge was transmitted orally. The instructors were the oldest members of the family and or community, those who have experiential knowledge of the subject matter. Thus, their eidetic memory was sharpened, able to reproduce information with great accuracy and in great detail. Since it was oral, it had to be didactic and concrete. As Nyerere (1975) wrote: “at the didactic level the teaching process took the form of the stories, legends, riddles and songs; while at the practical level individuals enacted what they had learnt didactically, by imitating and watching what their elders performed” (p. xx). For example, among the Yoruba of Southwest Nigeria, Oríkì is a cultural practice of reciting the lineage of a person. It is a form of praise poetry spoken orally that can last for a few minutes or go on for several minutes. The Oríkì was recited at special events and on special occasions such as when a child had brought honor to their parents and family. It was also recited to serenade a person from a prominent family in the community. On the other hand, the Benin of South-south Nigeria have
morning salutations called *Ukhu ne a tue* (family greeting) that were derived from a person’s lineage. The morning salutations like “*Lamogun*” denotes members of the Benin Royal Family, “*Lani*” identifies people whose families were members of the traditional Bronze casting guild. In all, there are 37 distinct family greetings that encompass the Benin population. These greetings have become identity markers deployed in the modern day by the Benin people to determine familial connections.

Since indigenous education was primarily oral form, emphasis was on observational method of learning. The students had to learn by watching, participating and implementing what they observed the adults do. All students were taught basic survival skills to help them become self-sufficient and function well. This learner-centered approach was based on the concept of learning by doing. The concept of learning by doing features prominently in economic theory and has been used by Arrow (1962) in his conceptualization of endogenous growth theory which explains the impact of innovation and technical change on economic growth. Yang and Borland (1991) have also used learning by doing to argue that it is key in the specialization of production. In education, John Dewey was also a proponent of learning-by-doing, believing that the curriculum had to be made relevant to student’s lives.

**The doctrines that frame indigenous education**

Indigenous education in pre-colonial Nigeria was not by happenstance. It was a system developed with its own ontological and epistemological frameworks. The primary attributes of the indigenous education were firmly rooted in the indigenous way of life and meaning-making and guided by the following doctrines:

Indigenous education had to be purposive. It had to have structure and education needed to be an extension of the people and their existentialism. Thus, teaching and learning under this
system ensured that boys and girls were well trained and suited to carry out their respective roles in society. For example, girls were trained to be domesticated while the boys were trained in activities considered masculine and befitting of their future role as heads of household.

Functionalism is another doctrine that guides Indigenous education. Education had to be functional and relevant to the students’ lives. The development of practical skills was crucial for their education and ability to function as productive members of the community. Since education was designed to be purposeful, it became a tool to develop and improve the intuitive, contemplative and observational skills of the students.

The doctrine of collectivism ensured that the acquisition of knowledge under the indigenous education system was a collective endeavor. Everyone was a teacher and took part in training the next generation. Adults took their responsibility very seriously. Hence, the African dictum: “It takes a village to raise a child.” Rewards and discipline occurred when a child misbehaved or acted right. Students were trained to be generalists, to be able to do a little bit of everything: farm, hunt, build and so on.

Life-long learning was another doctrine that informed indigenous education. It formed the basis of the notion that education is from “cradle to grave,” “womb to tomb” and so on. Hence, education began when a person was born and ended when they died. Skills to survive and be self-sufficient were learned throughout this life long process and it was marked by phases and stages as people moved from one age group to another. Young children learned something different than elders. This life-long learning process was useful in helping to preserve the traditions and cultures of the people as knowledge was passed down orally from one generation to the next. This knowledge transfer requires continuity in order to preserve historical memory.
There were numerous advantages of indigenous education. It fostered social and economic self-sufficiency and hence, self actualization. Given the hands-on-learning style, students graduated ready to be productive members of society, there was no lag between what was taught and what was needed or required in society. Indigenous education served as a glue to keep the social, cultural, economic, political and religious fiber of the community intact. Conformity and consensus were promoted over dissent. Students were taught using the same pedagogical methods from successive generations. Further, indigenous education privileged the collective over the individual. It promoted corporate responsibility, cultural assimilation and acculturalization. It imbibed a sense of communal responsibility on each person. Volunteerism and service to the community were important, hence, every individual became their “brother’s keepers.”

While indigenous education had many positive attributes, however, there are disadvantages that need to be highlighted as well. The structure of the indigenous education system was limited to a specific community and was narrowly focused on the limited needs of the people. Also, innovation was not particularly encouraged, as students had to follow strict and guided methods of doing things. And because students learned by observation, they were bound to ape whatever their elders were doing without seeking to expand existing methods of doing things. The knowledge to be transmitted was static and education was meant to fulfill the role of culture transmitter and inculcate these identity-shaping values in the children. Many indigenous societies did not have written forms, although there were exceptions, so knowledge was basically archived in symbols, rituals and other cultural aesthetics, songs and poems. Thus, the repository of memory was limited to the individual carrying in inside their head. For example, Mush (1999) claims that “it was not easy to describe, compare and estimate distance, volume, weight
and size of different objects because figures or letters were unknown to traditional African societies” (p. xi).

Indigenous education privileged concrete over abstract and spiritualism over science, as a result, there was not much room for intellection and mulling over abstract things thus, develop the tendency to explain away the unknown as divine mandate. Indigenous education was not devoid of reasoning; rather, the kind of intellectual curiosity that was fostered was not the type that would promote inventions in science and technology. Learning was teacher-centered. And akin to the Banking-model of western education where the elders were the repository of knowledge and students were a blank slate to be taught. Students had no voice and questioning the wisdom and authority of the elders was disallowed. Consequently, norms were adopted without question and passed down from generations to generations including superstitious beliefs like the practice in Calabar, a southeastern city of Nigeria where twins are classified as a bad omen before the advent of the missionaries. Indigenous education was also gendered; boys and girls followed separate training paths. The girls were mostly trained by their mothers and other female elders while the boys were trained by their fathers and other male elders. The girls had to focus on how to be good wives and the boys on how to be good leaders. In spite of its disadvantages, indigenous education can still add immense value to education today because it serves as the foundation for DIY (Do-it-yourself) learning that has now become a trend in global education. The idea of education as a utility is key to indigenous education, which trained students on how to survive by mastering their environment while colonial education prepared students to survive by earning a living. Finally, indigenous education promotes life-long learning which has also been adapted by the western education system. Likewise, western education has contributed literacy to the indigenous education.
Creating the Nigeria-centric out of the Indigenous and Western

In theory and practice, both the indigenous and western systems of education have positive attributes as have been outlined that can be conjoined to create a Nigeria-centric educational system which straddles the best of two systems. This educational model offers a new alternative for public primary and secondary school education that affirms relevancy and quality education for the millions of young Nigerians been mis-educated by the failing educational system. The Nigeria-centric model has five key characteristics: it is complex, interdependent and interconnected, oral and written, contemplative and scientific, global and functional. This model emphasizes the richness of the human experience and promotes inclusiveness while empowering students to master the skills necessary for them to live productive and self-sufficient lives.

Table 4 provides a visual representation of what the characteristics of the Nigeria-centric system would be as derived from the fusion of the indigenous and western. The Nigeria-centric educational system will provide an education that is culturally, socially and economically relevant. It would be the kind of quality education that the country needs to be able to build a knowledge economy peopled by capable people who have the requisite skills to engage actively with the society and contribute their quota to national development.

Table 4: Positive attributes of Indigenous and Western Education merged together to create Nigeria-centric attributes

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Education that is Complex, Interdependent and Interconnected

Although of slightly different connotations, interconnectedness and interdependence are concepts that elicit a worldview of universal one-ness; meaning, everything has a unifying and underlying source. Conventionally, interconnectedness can be described as a state of been connected in a reciprocal manner, while interdependence is a condition of mutual reliance. In this study, interconnected and interdependence encompass the broad spectrum of relationships and networks that a Nigeria-centric educational system will foster. Operationally, both terms are defined as the sequential relationship between two or more individuals or systems. In other words, the output of one half of the connecting or interdependent relationship becomes the input of the other half. This reciprocity and mutual reliance goes on in a cyclical manner of output and input and eventually creates a web of connectedness and interdependence that produces a complex system of inter and intra relational interactions.

This complex relationship can be likened to a living system in which the educational system is a cell that is made up of molecule parts (students, teachers) and this micro part is itself a part of the macro level interdependence and interconnectedness of the classroom to the rest of the school and the school is in turn a part of the larger society and the society is itself a part of
the global system. Consequently, the relationship of the part to the whole is a nested one in which each whole is made up of a collection of interacting components which are themselves part of a larger more inclusive whole. The notion of “open” and “close” system as expressed by Bertalanffy (1968) provides perspectives to this Nigeria-centric attribute. As Doll (2012) opines: “…in nature both open and closed systems have external relations, are ‘fed’ in one way or another by outside forces, closed systems function toward a pre-set goal, such as in the workings of a thermostat” (p. 19). Thus, “[o]pen systems, in differentiation, function to keep just the right amount of imbalance, so that the systems might maintain a creative dynamism” (p. 19). In contrast to open systems, closed systems “exchange energy but no matter’, open systems ‘exchange both energy and matter’ (Prigogine, 1961, p. 3 quoted in Doll, 2012, p. 19).and thus can transform matter into energy, as in an atomic explosion” (Doll, 2012, p. 19).

In relating the concept of open and close systems to education, a closed educational system simply transfers and transmits knowledge; such as can be found in the simplified direct pedagogical method of instruction whereas, an open system is transformational; such as the more complex inquiry based form of instruction. By virtue of their openness, open systems are regenerative and foster creativity. For a learning process to be complex, interdependent and interconnected there has to be a reciprocal relationship and mutual interdependence.

A teacher can foster interdependent learning in the classroom through the process of peer learning. Peer learning is an educational practice in which students interact with each other to attain educational goals (O’Donnell & King, 1999). This constructivist approach to learning engages students through class activities that encourage students to teach what they know or have learnt to their peers. It is a form of cooperative learning which can also be characterized as “learning for everyone, by everyone, about almost anything” (Brazil, 2011). As Dewey (1916)
wrote, “[e]ducation is not an affair of ‘telling’ and being told, but an active and constructive process.” This means that the science of child development reflects the Deweyian notion that knowledge is experiential and not facilitated from teacher to student through the process of rote memorization. Vygotsky, in his concept of Zone of Proximal Development, was a proponent of constructivist learning in which he argues that students learn better through collaborative rather than independent learning activities. Furthermore, peer to peer learning is reflective of the collaborative way in which students interact with each other at home and in the community. Hence, it is a process that is native to them. Consequently, the teacher does not have to worry about making the unfamiliar familiar. An example of interdependent learning is when a teacher divides students into small groups whereby each student in the group is responsible for guiding the learning of the other members in the group.

As an illustration of interdependence, three students were in an arithmetic study group and each student has a mastery of one area, one is good in multiplication, another in addition and the third in subtraction. In this scenario, each student is responsible for teaching the other two the area of arithmetic that they know. In this process, each student is guiding the learning of the other two and as has been asserted, students learn 95% of what they teach to others. By teaching, they are also engaging in transformative learning. Through this peer-to-peer learning module, each of the students now represent a component in the interdependent relationship in which one student’s output (teaching) becomes another student’s input (learning). An example of how interconnected learning can take place involves seeing the school system as connected to other systems in the society, so that what happens in the economic sector impacts what happens in the education sector. To demonstrate the reciprocal relationship between the school and the community, students could go on a fieldtrip to the marketplace. Many of these students, by
virtue of their low social economic status, are familiar with the terrain of the marketplace and most likely have engaged the space either while running errands for their parents or as child laborers who hawk wares before and after school to augment the incomes of their parents. From their experience, the students are likely to view the marketplace as a site separate from the school, without any linkages or overlap. And depending on each student’s particular family circumstance, the marketplace could also elicit unfavorable feelings, such as it being the location of arduous tasks and long hours of labor without rest.

Within this overarching framework, it is thus plausible that the students will not see the marketplace, which is at the nexus of the economic activity in the community as a conducive site for learning or a place that evokes positive feelings. A visit to the marketplace both educates and prevents a future feeling of alienation that the students may cultivate from their one-dimensional and hard-ship prone encounter with the market. In the marketplace, students can learn about demand and supply (economics); buying and selling (commerce); taxation (government); how the traders raise capital for their business (banking and finance); the various routes that lead to the marketplace (geography) and how to determine profit and loss (accounting). The students will learn about architecture, by taking note of the design and structure of the marketplace, the patterns of organizing the different stalls- for instance, how those selling vegetables are in a separate area from those selling fabrics. This sort of active engagement with the market is a form of place-based learning. It helps students make the connection between theory and practice and more importantly, brings their education in contact with their community in such a way as to eliminate the feeling of displacement and alienation that students currently feel because the school is a separate entity from the rest of their lives. And for those whose parents are traders in the marketplace, it also helps to eliminate the inferiority complex they may have due to classism.
By engaging with the marketplace as learners, the students also have an opportunity to come up with solutions to address infrastructural problems in the market. Such as limited water supply, proper shade from the sun, daycare for infants, sanitation and garbage removal, these can become real life issues that they can go back to the classroom and devise solutions. Such an exercise is a form of action-research. This form of cognitive challenge early on in their education career teaches students to be critical thinkers and problem solvers so that by the time they graduate from the University, they are thinking of ways to devise solutions to solve the problems of underdevelopment in the society.

An increase in the number of interactions between students in the classroom, among students in a school, and between students and their surrounding community increases the complexity of the educational system. In the example of the peer-to-peer learning within a small group of students, the teacher introduced a teaching strategy that fosters learning in a cooperative manner. This process is an open system and it is transformative, whereas prior to this the teacher was engaged in a closed system of learning whereby the teacher employed the “banking” model of teaching- which was a uni-directional learning relationship between the teacher and students as indicated in figure one. With the implementation of the new interdependent and interconnected model, the nodes of connections have expanded thusly, the teacher interacts with the students, the students interact with the teacher and the students interact with other students and the students and their teachers interact with the community. This increased interaction or complexity is shown in figure two.

Education should be a complex, adaptive, interdependent and interconnected enterprise which departs from the separate and independent paradigms of the western and the indigenous systems of education. This complex system evolves the educational space into an all
encompassing and interdependent site of social reproduction, cultural and knowledge transmission. Thus, the kind of social reproduction taking place will be contextual and situated firmly within the history, heritage and lifestyle of the people. In a sense, it would be glocal-global/local paradigm that occurs simultaneously at the local level while also connecting students to the global village square. This complex and interconnected system will move away from appropriating the foreign hegemonic ideology that seeks to mentally and cultural displace students while muting the distant memory of the people. Considering the holistic and experiential (indigenous) and compartmentalized (western) attributes that were hybridized to produce a more complex and interdependent attribute for the Nigeria-centric educational system, the question flowing from this fusion invariably becomes what sort of complex and interdependent structures and patterns is the Nigeria-centric system designed to reproduce? To answer this question, one approach of conceptualizing the complex and interdependent characteristics of the Nigerian-centric system is to see the interdependence as fractals reproducing at the individual level while replicating the same overlapping geometric patterns (which are learning objectives and outcomes) that will eventually create what seems like a complex web of layers. This system is desirable as a model to construct a rationale approach that will foster continuity and historical memory that can be useful to the next generation. It also helps shape the school as an extension of the community whereby what is learned at school becomes relevant to what is needed in the society. It creates and perpetuates a pattern of communal life which is desirable for individual and societal development and progress. This complex and interconnected approach has been advocated by educational theorists such as Anton Makarenko, one of the founders of Soviet pedagogy who argued that various spaces in the
community, for example, school, public organizations, clubs, community groups as well as the family should all be integrated (Filonov, 1994).

The new sciences of chaos and complexity help to frame the hybridized Nigeria-centric educational system. This is so because, the study of non linear and dynamic systems has enabled western scientists to see patterns of order in what seemingly looks like chaotic and randomized phenomena. Kawagley & Barnhardt (1998) assert that “[t]hese patterns reveal new sets of relationships which point to the essential balances and diversity that help nature to thrive Indigenous people have long recognized these interdependencies and strive for harmony with all of life” (p. 1). “Western scientists have constructed the holographic image, which lends itself to the Native concept of everything being connected. Just as the whole contains each part of the image, so too does each part contain the makeup of the whole” (p. 1). Thus, the sum of the parts makes the whole. Hence, “[w]ith fractal geometry, holographic images and the sciences of chaos and complexity, the Western thought-world has begun to focus more attention on relationships, as its proponents recognize the interconnectedness in all elements of the world around us (Kawagley and Barnhardt, 1998). This growing recognition of the interconnectedness of two systems that were hitherto taught to be disparate and conflicting provides immense possibilities for re-imagining the Nigerian education system.

A key feature of this complex and interdependent attribute of a Nigeria-centric educational system is what Johnson and Johnson (1975) call “positive interdependence.” When properly established, positive interdependence empowers students and makes them realize their place in relation to the rest of the group. It also shows them that their success is a derivative of the collective success of the members of their group. This structure promotes and demands productive contributions to the collaborative effort. Thus, “[w]hen students perceive that every
member is indispensable to achieving their mutual goals and that they are both dependent on and obligated to their peers, conditions are ripe for collaborative learning” (Frey, Fisher & Everlove, 2009, para. 2).

A complex, interconnected and interdependent system fosters collaboration between the school, family, community and other sites of socialization in the society. At the micro level, within the school and in classrooms this interdependence becomes a form of collaborative learning. There are two types of learning which Hulse-Killacky, Killacky & Donigian (2001) call “Process learning: and “content learning.” Under process learning, students will ask these questions: “Who am I?” “Who am I with? “Who are we together?” For the content questions, the students ask: “what do we have to do?” “What do we need to do to accomplish our goals?” (quoted in Frey, Fisher & Everlove, 2009, para. 4). Content questions are about academic knowledge why process questions are about self and community. It is important that the school provides a conducive learning environment for the process and content learning questions to be asked. In the public school system in Nigeria, learning is very much concentrated on the individual student as there are no provisions made for team work. It is therefore commonplace for students to have gone through 12 years of primary and secondary education schooling without having done any group work in the classroom. This is problematic considering that the culture and community where many of the students come from are very much based on a platform of collaboration and communal living, where there is much sharing and interactions between extended family members and others in the community. When students have not been taught how to collaborate, how to make connections between and among systems and how to work in teams, this has consequences for when they become adults and are active participants in society. Evidence of this lack of team-spiritedness and inability to collaborate can be seen in
politics where politicians are always at loggerheads even within their own party. It can also be seen across the continent with the ubiquity of protracted conflicts and civil wars. Indeed, as Frey, Fisher & Everlove, (2009) opine: “an important outcome of productive group work is that learners gain greater metacognitive awareness - that is, self-knowledge of how and when they learn something new” (para 4). The goal here is for students to be empowered about who they are and their intellectual ability. Conversely, students will not have a “positive picture of themselves as learners if they are not contributors to achieving the group goal. If students realize that they are not full participants, their self-talk is likely to turn negative” Thus in their head, they are likely to think: “I can't do this because I'm too stupid.” Fear of failure and embarrassment then creeps into the learning process and can form an invisible barrier” (para. 5). The disconnect from the learning process due to a lack of “positive interdependence,” is an internalized barrier that the teacher cannot see and which the student is unable to articulate, thus further alienating the student from school and making the school a less than conducive environment for transformative learning. In teaching and learning, there is what is called the “affective filter hypothesis,” citation needed which states that positive and negative emotions can play a significant role in the learning process. For example, negative emotions such as anger and fear can hinder knowledge acquisition while a positive emotion improves the state of learning and the mentally ability to acquire new knowledge.

Education that Facilitates the Acquisition of both Oral and Written Language Skills

Literacy is the hallmark of western civilization just as orality is the cornerstone of indigenous Nigerian cultures. The dichotomy between literacy and orality has often led to the binary of literate versus non-literate with the latter appellation often misapplied to the indigenous education system. The classification of indigenous cultures as non-literate reduces the corpus of
indigenous knowledge especially as it relates to their use of symbols and signs for the purpose of communication. Accordingly, Piquemal (2013) asserts that

“[I]literacy and orality have implications that go beyond the issue of whether a culture uses a writing system. What characterizes a society as having an “orality consciousness” versus a “literacy consciousness” is not whether people write poems and stories or narrate and transmit those poems and stories orally. Rather, such consciousness depends on whether people as exemplified by Plato believe that poetry as a means of transmitting knowledge should be banished from education because it is the enemy of rationality; or whether people consider oral tradition as part of a holistic system, which therefore should be integrated into school curriculum” (pg. 114).

From Piquemal (2013) exposition, it can be asserted that “orality and literacy consciousness have been shaped by two different world views, each with its own specific epistemology and mode of discourse” (pg. 114). By creating a learning environment where students can acquire both orality and literacy consciousness, the Nigeria-centric system would have succeeded in erasing the cultural and political marginalization of oral traditions in schools.

Although humans have been reading and writing for only about 5000 years, the dominant western ideology which equates literacy and civilization to the written word has shaped how society views what is authentic and inauthentic knowledge. McLuhan (1967) opines that the method of communication reflects a society’s cultural frame of reference more than what is being communicated. In other words, information is only secondary to the means of transmission, whether oral or written. According to Logan (1986) “[a] medium of communication is not merely a passive conduit for the transmission of information but rather an active force in creating new social patterns and new perceptual realities” (p. 24) Thus, a literate
person has a differing worldview from one “who receives information exclusively through oral communication. The alphabet, independent of the spoken languages it transcribes or the information it makes available, has its own intrinsic impacts (p. 24).

Language is a human phenomenon and its social dimension makes it dynamic and evolutionary. Since listening and speaking heralded reading and writing, humans talked before they could learn how to read and write. And thus, humans interact with language more frequently in the oral form than they do in its written form. Studies have shown that speaking is used twice as much as the combination of reading and writing Rivers (1981). In the classroom, Brown (1994) discovered that students often utilize listening and speaking as their language tools. Both research and experience from practice have shown that it is impossible for people to learn a language without ample opportunities for them to practice what they have learnt. In a Nigeria-centric educational system, proficiency in both orality and literacy will form the mainstay of teaching and learning. Students need to learn how to speak and write in their mother tongue and at the same time, since English is the official language of the country; they also need to gain proficiency in written and spoken language. There is a link between speaking and writing that if developed properly will aid students’ ability to create an articulate, coherent and a cohesive discourse.

A Nigeria-centric educational system will provide a nurturing learning environment that would enable all students to learn how to read, write, speak and listen. These are important skills required for them to function effectively in a variety of contexts. Writing is a mnemonic device that can be defined as the ability to put words in written form. A mnemonically dependent education system will only utilize one part of the brain that responds to reading and writing which is the left occipital-temporal cortex. People who do not know how to read and write are
often not linear or abstract thinkers, they are more likely to have an excellent eidetic memory and be concrete and intuitive thinkers. Examples are griots; who are the community’s praise singers, historians, poets and storytellers. By virtue of their masterful oral skills and excellent memory, griots are considered among the repositories of historical memory and their unique role makes them function in the role of an advisor to the community or King in a monarchical system. Oliver (1970) asserts that though a griot “has to know many traditional songs without error, he must also have the ability to extemporize on current events, chance incidents and the passing scene. His wit can be devastating and his knowledge of local history formidable.” Although they are primarily “praise singers,” griots may use their oratorical skills to provide satire on political issues and commentary on topical issues of the day.

There are also Aboriginal groups in North Queensland who can recite a song by memory that takes five days to complete (Vygotsky & Luria, 1993, p. 94). In the same sense, Levy-Bruhl found out in his research on “primitive” peoples that herders were able to determine that a single animal is missing without counting the herd and they were also able to know the exact animal that was missing (p. 123). While the literate person depends on the mnemonic device as an archival system, the non-literate depends on the memory and since most people tend to lose the sharpness of their eidetic memory going through formal education, a Nigeria-centric system that combines the training of literacy and oral traditions provides a more balanced opportunity to use all brain cells. For example, a study carried out by cognitive neuroscientist Stanislas Dehaene and his colleagues to determine how the brain is wired by reading and writing found out that study participants who were literate showed more active responses to written words in several areas of the brain that process vision. Based on findings from previous research, Dehaene argues that the area around the left occipital and temporal lobes of the brain is especially
important for reading. Additionally, for people who can read, written words also trigger vigorous brain activity in some areas of the left temporal lobe that is wired to respond to spoken language. This finding suggests that reading “utilizes brain circuits that evolved to support spoken language, a much older innovation in human communication” (Miller, 2010, para 2). The researchers found that in people who learned to read early in life, a smaller region of the left occipital-temporal cortex responded to images of faces than in the illiterate volunteers.

Orality and literacy have become important skills to have and so the system must accommodate both tools by privileging written and oral skills. Having students learn the skill of praise poetry for instance, will help sharpen their memory and inject culture into the curriculum. To maintain this oral tradition, therefore mother tongue will have to become a permanent fixture throughout primary and secondary schooling and it must go beyond proficiency in speaking and must also include proficiency in writing as well. There are native ways of knowing which can prove futile to translate verbatim in English or other adopted languages. Thus, as Iyasere (1975) opines: “the modern African writer is to his indigenous oral tradition as a snail is to its shell. Even in a foreign habitat, a snail never leaves its shell behind” (p. 107).

The linkage between the written tradition of the west and the oral tradition of the indigenous people is manifested mostly in African literature such as the Onitsha market literature and more sophisticated classical literary works like those of Chinua Achebe and Wole Soyinka. Their works and that of many other writers, novelists, poets and playwrights straddle both the indigenous oral tradition and the western written tradition. As Obiechina (1992) has stated, “the embedding of stories in the novels is based upon two main principles of the African oral tradition—authority and association” (p. 201). Relying on this authority and association traditions, “an idea is given validity by being placed side by side with another idea that bears the
stamp of communal approval and by its being linked to the storehouse of collective wisdom” (p. 201). In the same vein, “a story is made to supply illustrative, authoritative support to an idea, a point of view, a perception, or perspective in conversation or oral discourse, and is thus vested with much greater significance than is the case in a non-traditional context” (p. 201). Thus, the use of the proverbs and story in African literary works is possible because of the “common stock of oral tradition and are strongly built into the structures of meaning, feeling, thought, and expression of an oral people” (pg. 201). As a result, the “tendency to validate individual positions by placing them within the objectifying matrices of stories and proverbs has been adopted by African novelists in their attempt to marry creative impulses from their oral tradition with those within the written tradition (pg. 201).

Nigerian writers were able to adopt western influences in literature and localize them by placing them side by side with the indigenous literary devices inherent in storytelling. They did this through the seamless and interwoven narratives of infusing local culture into western acculturation. In the novel Things Fall Apart, Achebe was successful at portraying indigenous Igbo society of Southeastern Nigeria at the advent of colonialism. His narrative was made robust by the copious use of idioms, proverbs and other tools of traditional storytelling. Achebe masterfully utilized storytelling skills to add depth to the narratives of his characters; whom, without the added nuances, of traditional narrative; would have been one dimensional and uninteresting characters. For example, in “The Madman” (1972), Achebe narrates the story of Nwibe, a middle-aged hard-working and respected member of the community who is preparing to take the Ozo title, a most prestigious honorific that is reserved for individuals of esteem in his village. Unfortunately, Nwibe’s aspiration never materializes because of an innocuous decision he made to stop by the stream and take a bath on his way home from the farm. Thus, a simple
act of stopping by the stream on the way home from the farm became the occasion for Nwibe’s ruination. As he is taking a bath in the stream, an unclothed “madman” who was also around the stream area at that time took Nwibe’s loincloth, wrapped it around himself and ran away. And in an attempt to get his loincloth back, Nwibe decides to pursue the madman and the chase led to the marketplace where people naturally assumed, on seeing his nakedness that he, Nwibe was now mad. Balogun (1991) asserts that the ‘involuntary but tragic exchange of identities between a sane person and a madman, an exchange symbolized by clothing provides an appropriate occasion for a didactic lesson about life's “uncertainties” (p. 91). Thus “[t]he situation whereby a sane person is identified and treated as a madman not only underscores the precariousness of the claim of every sane person to sanity within the society, but also pinpoints the basic subjectivity of existence and human judgments. In fact, we cannot be sure of anything... But perhaps what the story has done is to equate extreme anger with insanity” (pg. 99). And as Ogede (2001) notes, “…Nwibe's plight, like Okonkwo’s [in Things Fall Apart], stands as a dazzling metaphor for Africa’s cultural dispossession. The madman’s posture at that significant moment in Nwibe's life and personal/psychic development makes pointedly clear the devious impulse of the attacker (para. 5). Thus, “the stalking, deceitful actions that precede the madman's theft of Nwibe's cloth are reminiscent of the calculating actions of the colonialists who pounced on Africans at their least suspecting and most vulnerable moment to insure the success of the mission of colonial conquest” (para 5).

Achebe uses “digression, rumor or hearsay, summary recapitulation, and authorial commentary, all of which are devices favored in oral storytelling, as they lend liveliness and a sense of immediacy to the events depicted” (Ogede, 2001, para. 5). Underlining the themes of irony and life’s unpredictability in Achebe’s stories is an interrogation of colonialism and its
impact on an indigenous Nigerian society. Story after story revolves around the order and sanity in pre-colonial Igbo society, the struggles and eventual triumph of colonialism over local resistance and the societal decay and rampant corruption of post-independence Nigeria.

Examples from the successful enculturation of Nigerian literature provides a pathway for infusing orality and literacy into the curriculum. The process of returning to oral traditions is tantamount to what Illich (1972) refers to as “de-schooling.” This is when writers “return to their oral sources for ideas, subject matter, values, forms of thought, and styles in a move that counteracts the narrow conditioning from formal, school education. It assured a return to the idiom of African Languages and the roots of African oral tradition” (Obiechina, 1992, p. 199).

As Obiechina further asserts: “[o]ne major aspect of this interplay of the oral and literary traditions in the African novel is the phenomenon of the-story within-the-story, or the narrative proverb…” (p. 199). This “Reflecting a habit of orality in life and literature, the novelists introduce oral stories—myths, folktales, fairy tales, animal fables, anecdotes, ballads, song-tales, and so on—within the narrative matrices of their works, in the development of their plots and themes, and in the formulation of their artistic and formal principles. These embedded stories are referred to as narrative proverbs because they perform organic and structural functions of proverbs in oral speech and in creative literature (p. 199).

A Nigeria-centric system that includes both oral traditions and western written traditions will lead to what is called “culture education.” As Dasylva (2006) explains:

If “education” is the process of knowledge acquisition, “culture education” emphasizes the peculiar means and methods of instruction by which a society imparts its body of values and mores in the pursuance and attainment of the society’s collective vision, aspirations, and goals. Thus, anyone who demonstrates a degree of knowledge of his or
her societal values and general education is said to be educated. In other words, “culture education,” as intended here, presupposes conscious and refined methods of acquisition and/or dissemination of the knowledge of societal values, philosophy, hermeneutics, and so on. “Culture education” is the means by which skills are developed in such areas as language, oral traditions and customs, music, dance, rituals, festivals, traditional medicine, foodways, and architecture, as well as the internalization and socialization of societal values and skills by individuals in a way that engenders cultural adaptability, flexibility, and societal cohesion. Thus, “culture education” ultimately refers to a people’s pedagogy of cultural values, the teaching methodologies and means of dissemination, the acquisition of culture for the purpose of socialization, and the promotion of an ideal social order (p. 326).

An example of how orality and literacy can be utilized to foster a “culture education” is through storytelling to help students develop advanced language proficiency and journaling, to help students improve the ability to create a coherent and cohesive discourse through writing. Storytelling can play a role in the knowledge acquisition process because as Olson (1977) states, “[Oral language] is the language children bring to school” (p. 278). Thus, regardless of whether literacy is privileged in language acquisition (Chomsky, 1972) or Orality is privileged (Chafe, 1980), it is important that teachers include mastery of oral skills in the literacy package since it is through language that children articulate their worldview.

Through storytelling and journaling, students can develop the critical cognitive skills required for making meaning and for higher order thinking. The ability to incorporate oral devices in the repertoire of knowledge can only serve them well. Besides, by telling stories, the teacher brings the students’ world closer to them. Storytelling also provides an opportunity for
elders in the community to come into the classroom to teach students. Storytelling as an instructional device can be effective in civics, history and social studies because it contains life lessons, morals, and helps the students develop a sense of pride in their culture and traditions.

Since humans developed the spoken language before the written language, and storytelling is at the core of oral tradition, therefore it can be argued that storytelling is the oldest form of education. This is so because all cultures, including western ones have always used folklore, stories, myths to pass down traditions, cultural norms and values as well as history to the younger generation. Stories therefore embody the essence of who we are. Stories are a viable way of memorizing information. Often times, students can forget information read in textbooks, however, they remember stories. Storytelling can be used as a method of assisting students to organize information and incorporate a variety of content. Since students enjoy storytelling, it can be utilized to create an inclusive, nurturing and positive learning environment for students thereby helping them to develop a positive attitude towards learning. Storytelling brings information alive the way that reading may not necessarily achieve. Particularly, the storyteller is able to connect with students through the use of eye contact, gesticulations and body language to help students understand the content better. The difference between telling and reading a story is that the reader only gets to see the text on the page, whereas, the storytellers is able to incorporate a wide array of tools to bring the story alive. Storytelling can also instill a love of language in students and be a motivating factor to acquire superior literacy skills as it stimulates the imagination, because as Einstein is quoted as saying: “imagination is more important than knowledge.” Storytelling teaches moral lessons and is an excellent method of character education. Students also improve on their listening skills through this process. Storytelling can also take the students around the world, open them to other cultures and
worldviews and elevate them beyond their immediate circumstance. By utilizing storytelling as a teaching pedagogy, students are encouraged to develop the skills which will help them become better communicators and they can in turn incorporate the stylistics of telling a story into their own learning. Storytelling is a good teaching strategy because it helps students to store information in their brains. As Wilson (1996) states, “[t]he stories handed down…are rooted in a deep sense of kinship responsibility, a responsibility that relays a culture, an identity, and a sense of belonging essential to my life” (p. 7). Frey (1995) provides a rationale for the importance of oral literature in fostering culture, identity and education. According to him: “In addition to its role in integrating humans and their world, oral literature fills a critical didactic function. Moral lessons and practical information are offered” (p. 173). Storytelling improves students’ ability to think critically and make sense of happenings around them. It fosters learning by inquiry, as Frey (1995) notes: “the telling of a particular story is not typically followed by a specific, Aesoplike, “moralistic-commentary.” The stories are never analysed or talked about in that way. Moral lessons are deeply embedded within the narratives, to be sure, but they are left to be discovered and explored by the listener. The great truths in life are to be actively sought out” (p. 175).

Storytelling is a tradition whose ubiquity spreads beyond Nigeria to other parts of the Africa and indeed, the rest of the world. These stories are usually told at night-time family gatherings. Some are fables or riddles, some are about moral lessons which tend to often feature the tortoise, a trickster animal and its misadventures, there are stories about gender, most often told to advise young girls on the importance of picking the right husband and there are more serious stories about life, cultural traditions, wars, and the origins of the people that inhabit the community. These stories are usually told for the benefit of the younger generation and are
meant to be life lessons. Storytellers in the traditional societies were skilled artisans, although their organic intellectual ability was often called into question by the dominant western view which tended to classify them as “primitive,” and or “illiterate,” it is worth noting that storytelling was a learned skill either acquired through observing other storytellers or through apprenticeship. As Okpewho (2003) notes:

folk tended to suggest that anybody in the village could tell you a story, implying that storytelling did not require any special preparation; as I have indicated somewhere, this would amount to suggesting that anyone on the streets of New York could write a Broadway play! But we know today that to be able to tell stories, there were two different kinds of training: either you formed the habit of hanging around people with proven skills in the art, which would equip you with a modest level of competence, or you underwent a period of training under a professional expert in a specialized form of storytelling…The published texts of these professionals clearly reveal that storytelling at this level is work of intricate artistry that required years of focused and carefully guided training (para 3).

Another class of storytelling is the “dilemma” tale (Okpewho, 200) these tales typically presents a dilemma for the audience to solve. An example of a dilemma tale is one that has a trans-Atlantic significance whereby Trinidian calypso artist, Lord Kitchener made a recording out of it. The tale goes:

A man goes on a boat journey with his mother and his wife, in the course of which a storm arises and topples the boat. While the man can swim, neither his mother nor his wife can; he can only save one of the two women, so, which should he save?
African oral traditions have transcended to the other world as slaves passed down memories of their traditions to their children. Variations of these tales can be found both in different African countries and in North America, Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe.

**Education that is both Contemplative and Scientific**

The current state of learning in the public primary and secondary school education system in Nigeria can be said to be one that cultivates “mindlessness” over “mindfulness,” it is one that promotes the brain over the mind, thereby disconnecting the heart from the head. In addition to this, the school is fast becoming a site that promotes violence; because many of the students are not actively engaged in meaningful learning, they are thus dis-engaged and develop behavioral issues that cause disruptions at school. As students become more stressful about the challenges of procuring a quality public education, the teachers are in a heightened state of weariness as they are increasingly expected to do more with very little in terms of resources. As a result of these growing challenges, it becomes paramount to seek alternative ways of restoring the ecosystem of the school as a safe and conducive environment that nurtures transformative learning. Transforming the classroom into a contemplative place will greatly improve the quality of education and provide the right physical and emotional impetus for students to learn. Moreover, a conducive learning environment is beneficial for students to learn science. The current dilapidated state of schools and the overcrowded classroom and sub-standard instructional materials make it difficult for students to acquire the necessary scientific knowledge.

A Nigeria-centric education incorporates both contemplative and scientific learning into the curricula. It neither favors one form of inquiry over the other, but is more encompassing, inclusive and trans-disciplinary. Contemplative education can be defined as an education that
promotes learning through self awareness. It is an integration of a holistic presence of mind, body and nature into the learning pluriverse. It is about helping students to develop a keen sense of self which would in turn translate into a more engaged and constructive interactions with other students. The idea of being contemplative about learning borrows its roots from the indigenous tradition of knowing and meaning-making, it interrogates the notion that knowledge is somehow static or situational and promotes self to nature in a ying yang manner. A contemplative approach to learning is about mindfulness, awareness, and a literacy that goes beyond reading, writing and arithmetic to one of advanced cognitive skills and the mental flexibility to fathom the known and unknown. As Palmer (1998) asserts:

When teaching, three important paths must be taken - intellectual, emotional and spiritual and none can be ignored. Reduce teaching to intellect, and it becomes a cold abstraction; reduce it to emotions, and it becomes narcissistic; reduce it to the spiritual, and it loses its anchor to the world. Intellect, emotion, and spirit depend on one another for wholeness. They are interwoven in the human self and in education” (p. 4).

Thus, emotions, spirit and intellect are important elements that must be present for teachers to become contemplative practitioners and for students to become contemplative learners. In this vein, contemplation goes beyond teaching methods, strategies and subject matter; it is about the learning network, the community of people who are present in the learning space. This ideal of education reflects the notion of learning as being from womb-tomb, a life-long process of formal and informal education. It is about transforming the individual into a performer and a creator of new knowledge and problem solver. To be transformative, both the teacher and the student have to be fully engaged with the subject, they have to be in a state of mindfulness that allows for them to be the recipients of knowledge. Hahn (2008) defines
mindfulness as: “our ability to be aware of what is going on both inside us and around us. It is the continuous awareness of our bodies, emotions, and thoughts…” (p.6)

Contemplative education occurs when both teachers and students are in a mindful state. Both mindfulness and contemplation go hand in hand. Contemplative education has been critiqued for its religious influence or origins, however, the contemplative attribute in a Nigeria-centric education is not about religion but rather, about a holistic mind, emotion, and intellect approach to learning. It is about thinking critically and being able to observe phenomena as they unfold around us.

A Nigeria-centric system would incorporate contemplative pedagogy which is a teaching method designed to “cultivate deep awareness, concentration and insight.” Contemplation thus compliments the rational scientific approach, in a sense; one can say that the contemplation prepares the mind for productive scientific inquiry or mental ruminations. As Hart (1990) states, “Inviting the contemplative simply includes the natural human capacity for knowing through silence, looking inward, pondering deeply, beholding, witnessing the contents of our consciousness…. These approaches cultivate an inner technology of knowing…. ” This cultivation is the aim of contemplative pedagogy, teaching that includes methods “designed to quiet and shift the habitual chatter of the mind to cultivate a capacity for deepened awareness, concentration, and insight.” Such methods include journals, music, art, poetry, dialogue, questions, and guided meditation.”

In the classroom, these contemplative approaches to learning will not be utilized as religious practices but rather, as teaching strategies for learning through mindfulness. Research has shown that contemplative learning cultivates mindfulness, which in turn serves as an antidote to the constant activity around us that are a form of distraction. For example, a typical classroom
in Nigeria is ethnically, linguistically, geographically and religiously diverse, to practice contemplation, a teacher can ask students to pair up with other students whose religion, language, ethnicity or state of origin is different from theirs, the students engage each other in a one on one discussion using question prompts that the teacher developed. Each person answers all the questions and has at least three minutes for each one. If the speaker uses only one minute of the three, the listener still waits patiently, making eye contact, waiting for any more words the speaker might want to share. Both students spend time as listener and speaker as they go through the questions. This kind of conversation can be awkward and exhausting. It would make students realize how little they actually listen. Usually, in a conversation, instead of listening to the speaker, people tend to distracted by all the thoughts going on inside their head. They are either trying to remember something or planning what they will say next. Students often report that they realize through the experience how little they actually listen. According to Miles (2011), “this new kind of listening is different and differently rewarding. Students are frequently surprised by the depth of intimacy they achieve with another person, how close they feel. And, in some cases, how much a person can love another and still utterly disagree with her worldview and ethics… Refraining from judgment, if only for a few minutes, opened the door to peaceful, honest, and directly spoken disagreements” (p. 34).

The colonially dependent structure of the Nigerian school system dis-empowers more than it empowers students. This is so because students are not trained on how to be self-sustainable. Rather, they spend 12 years in primary and secondary school learning outdated information which are at variance with what is happening in the real world. In addition, they are given academic content without the requisite training on how they can transform the acquired knowledge to create new knowledge that can lead to self-actualization. Instead, they are taught
to fit into the existing colonial structure which trains them to seek hard to find jobs in the public service instead of learning entrepreneurial skill, hence, unemployment rate for Nigerian youths is high. Since the school struggles with impacting the basic knowledge in students, they are even farther disconnected from training these students to be actively engaged in a technological world. In a Nigeria-centric education system that employs both contemplative and scientific approaches to teaching and learning, it would be understood that the world is non-linear, and that answers cannot be arrived solely based on quantitative reasoning which are abstract and scientific. Incorporating a contemplative perspective will remind all that science and technology are all interrelated with the social sciences and humanities. As a result, this system privileges a holistic sense of the universe, whereby, like a diverse ecosystem there is interconnectedness, and it is this interconnectedness between the linear, abstract and the concrete circular that will provide the impetus to create a school environment where learning is meaningful and the skills gained become useful tools for a productive existence.

To successfully teach contemplative approaches side by side with scientific approaches require a multi-disciplinary and multi-sensory methodology, one which helps the student improve upon their endosomatic sense-makers through a multi-dimensional scientific observations and the attendant meaning making of those observations that incorporate the language of numbers (quantitative) with the language of reason (Qualitative). This mixing of the abstract and the concrete therefore situates learning within the local context, to address local needs and teach students to eventually fill local knowledge gaps. All of these components ensure that education is a “lifeway appropriate to place” (Mills, 1990).

Theories in the natural and physical sciences have tended to provide reason and rationale for why things are the way they are in the universe. The interconnectedness of the universe and
life-forms that science touts, aligns with indigenous views of how the world is inter-related. This understanding of the complementarity between the western understanding of science and the indigenous understanding of nature proves the importance of embedding the community within the school and the school within the community. Students can learn science and experiment in the labs while going outside to learn about and understand the real life interactions and in the end they are able to make the link between lab and land. This can encourage self-confidence, intellectual curiosity, creativity, innovation and mastery of the environment. Learning about plants in the classroom is different from actually going into the forest to learn about them in their natural habitat or to learn how they are used in the home or in communal or religious ceremonies and practices. This also teaches students that environmental sustainability is important, all life forms have a role to fulfill and respect for the preservation of the eco-system is key to human advancement.

It is this symbiotic relationship between science and nature that will enable students to have a sense of ownership, to see themselves in the discourse of scientific knowledge and make the unfamiliar familiar. This holistic approach will help develop well-rounded students who have an abiding sense of self that will lead to a more positive outlook towards schooling and entrench them as experts in a world of their own making. Contemplation creates an understanding about learning that makes science more accessible and more familiar to the students; this becomes an immersive experience in which teaching gears students towards learning how to create knowledge. This becomes an effective way to explore scientific phenomena and engage both linguistic and scientific expertise.
Education that is Global

A Nigeria-centric education that is global embraces the fact that students exist in an increasingly globalized world with rapid advancement in technology engendering trans-continental and cross-cultural interactions. It is thus important for the school to provide students with the opportunity and skills that will allow them to meaningful engage with the rest of the world. It is crucial also for students to be able to understand their place in the world and the complex web that makes everyone to be susceptible to social, political, economic, and ecological changes. Gaining global perspective will also help students to critically analyze and unpack the global economic system, interrogate neo-imperialism and neo-colonialism and understand the tensions and dilemmas arising out of globalization.

The Maastricht global education declaration of 2002 provides a definition of global education as:

Global education is education that opens people’s eyes and minds to the realities of the globalised world and awakens them to bring about a world of greater justice, equity and Human Rights for all. Global education is understood to encompass Development Education, Human Rights Education, Education for Sustainability, Education for Peace and Conflict Prevention and Intercultural Education; being the global dimension of Education for Citizenship.

A global education will foster an understanding that shifts the relationship of dominance between the center and periphery to one of collaboration derived from dialogue and mutually beneficial cooperation. The present Nigeria education system does not actively engage students in ways that build consciousness on the part of the students about global issues. Right now, their participation in the global village square is through pop culture and social media: music, movies and American reality shows, Facebook, twitter and instagram. This means they are merely
passive consumers of technology and pop culture emanating from the West, this, coupled with the pre-existing lack of self awareness and identity fostered by the Eurocentric curriculum, ensures that students are further alienated from their own country, feel inferior about their nationality and see the developed countries in North America and Europe as paradise which they seek to escape to by all means. When students are provided with opportunities and tools to engage the world more meaningfully, they will start to draw parallels between happenings in other parts of the world and what is going on locally. They may start to borrow best practices from others in terms of social activism and civic engagement. This heightened state of mindfulness will enable them to lend their voices to the calls for a more equitable distribution of resources to eliminate economic domination.

The western-style education system widely adopted around the world by virtue of its compartmentalization of knowledge privileges one form of knowing (western) over others (indigenous) and promotes one cultural hegemony over others. This pattern of organization is reflected in the way and manner the school is structured to compartmentalize; valuing some subjects more than others does not foster the mindset required to connect and collaborate with people from around the world. Students currently know the world at a very superficial level, a global curricula perspective will bring about the awareness required to shift the paradigm towards one of a trans-cultural relationship that is reciprocal and mutually beneficial.

Global education can foster transformative learning because it “involves a deep, structural shift in the basic premises of thoughts, feelings and actions. It is an education for the mind as well as for the heart. This implies a radical change towards interconnectedness and creates possibilities for achieving more equality, social justice, understanding and cooperation amongst peoples.” Transformative learning is strongly linked to global education as it teaches
students how to analyze the present world situation; provide a vision of what alternatives to the
dominant models might look like and foster a process of change towards responsible global
citizenship. As a transformative learning process, global education adopts a participatory
decision-making process to foster knowing and collective awareness. Using the tenets of
cooperation and a common humanity, the dominant structure of the world system will be
replaced by one that is more inclusive. Thus, “global education challenges greed, inequality and
egocentrism through cooperation and also builds citizenship and civic commitment teaches
students how to be change makers take responsibilities for making their community better
without necessarily waiting for the government or their school for that matter (Miles, 2012, p. 15).

A Nigeria-centric education fosters holistic learning that lead to the kind of global
comprehensive look at the growing global activist group independent of each other and all
“working toward ecological sustainability and social justice.” The uniqueness of this movement
is that it is worldwide, from billion dollar organizations to what the author refers to as small “dot
cause” groups. This decentralized network made up of diverse groups of global citizens represent
the largest political movement in the history of the planet and is not driven by ideological
dogma, rather, the movement is organic and spontaneously arose out of the understanding that
the environment is important to human existence and as a result, environment sustainability
issues are equally social justice issues. Hawken likens this collective of independent change-
agents and group as mimicking the human immune system. They are antibodies rallying together
to fight off the pathogens of environmental degradation, corporate greed, and oppression to
defend earth’s life form. A global education perspective in the curriculum will provide the
launch pad for Nigerian students to become responsible global citizens and get involved in the movement to make the world a much better place. They have a role to play also at the local level in the quest for a more responsible use of the earth and towards sustainable development.

In “Empire,” Hardt & Negri (2000) describe globalization as an ambiguous “deterritorialization,” of a system of global capitalism which pushes into every pore of our social lives and into the most intimate of spheres, and installs an ever present dynamic, which no longer is based on patriarchal or other hierarchic structures of dominance. Instead, it causes a flowing, hybrid identity. On the other hand, this fundamental corrosion of all important social connections lets the genie out of the bottle: it sets free the potentially centrifugal forces that the capitalist system is no longer able fully to control. It is exactly because its global triumph that the capitalist system is more vulnerable than ever. Hardt and Negri describe this process as the transition from the nation-state to global Empire, a transnational entity comparable to ancient Rome, in which hybrid masses of scattered identities developed.

Appadurai (1998) in ”Modernity at Large,” outlines an idea that was first propounded in Empire, which is that of the multitude as possible locus of a democratic movement of global proportions. Appadurai’s work offers a very critical and deep analysis of modernity and globalization. He considers globalization as both cultural homogenization and, at the same time, cultural heterogenization (p. 32). He urges us to think of the new global cultural economy in terms of complexity, overlap, and disorder. Moreover, he is unsure if existing center-periphery models can address such complexity and irregularity. Nor is he convinced that traditional models, such as the pull push migration model or surpluses and deficits, can explain the global cultural economy. “Therefore, he proposes a new framework for understanding the new global cultural economy's complexity and messiness. This consists of five dimensions of global cultural
flows: ethnoscapes, mediascapes, techno-scapes, financescapes, and ideocapes (p. 33). He uses the suffix -scape to point out the fluid and irregular shapes of landscapes. These deeply perspectival constructs are inflected by nation-states, multinationals, diasporic communities, as well as religious, political, and economic groupings and movements confronting such groups as neighborhoods and families.

As the world changes, it is time for the Nigerian education system to change its curricula to reflect this shifting global definitions of nationality, citizenship and identity. As countries increasingly become what Anderson (2000) refers to as “imagined communities,” it is important that the students feel that they are at the center of these changes instead of at the periphery. Teachers can begin this transformative learning process by bringing the world into the classroom.

A Nigeria-centric education provides the nucleus for a learning process that is collaborative and global. Technology provides an accessible platform to arrest decades of decline in civic engagement at both the local and global levels. Before the advent of the internet, there were ‘pen-pals,’ a program which enabled students from all over the world both rich and poor to write to friends in far flung places. Technology has now provided a more accessible platform that brings everyone closer together thus, people thousands of miles away can be reached virtually with just a click of the mouse. Hence, online social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest provide the spaces for youths to connect with other youths and become involved in local and global causes. The popularity of petition sites which can easily garner thousands of signatures within the twinkle of an eye is a prime example. For teachers, a good grasp of technology provides infinite possibilities of linking the classroom, textbook, assignments to the global learning community. In a country with poor infrastructure,
technology can serve to bridge this gap. For example, through technology, students can get a virtual tour of Africa and the rest of the world.

These local-global connections create engaging learning experiences, it allows students to become co-creators of their learning, it also helps the teachers to become more innovative and utilize the many resources out there for their own classroom practices. For example, in a reciting a popular song designed to help primary school children remember the numbers of rivers in Africa, providing virtual images of what the rivers look like and where they are located via photographs, video streams would have been more effective. Doing this allows for the integration of the local and global enhances, which in turn enhances the development of skills such as systems thinking—which helps make connections across multiple platforms, leadership, whereby students play an active role in their own learning and it also fosters experiential learning as students are able to bring what is in the community into the classroom. Doing this allows for the integration of the local and global enhances, which in turn enhances the development of skills such as systems thinking—which helps make connections across multiple platforms, leadership, whereby students play an active role in their own learning and it also fosters experiential learning as students are able to bring what is in the community into the classroom.

Technology aids the ability to be collaborative and go global. And it also allows for the mastery of another kind of literacy which is called “digital literacy” these are electronic footprints that students can leave online such as creating profiles, blogs and using message boards to communicate with fellow classmates and virtual friends. The internet can also help in bringing students closer to their own identities- as they learn about other people and cultures. Programs like the online model UN can provide youths with the opportunity to be a part of the world, develop their own activist voices and become familiar with the workings of the UN and
other global organizations. This sort of collaborative effort teaches students how to work in a
team and enhances their critical thinking and problem solving skills. Currently, many Nigerian
youths, regardless of their parents’ socio-economic status are able to log online through their
blackberry and other electronic devices, a cursory look at their electronic footprints will show
that they mostly log online to engage in social interactions that lean more favorably towards pop
culture aesthetics. With a little creativity, it is possible to appropriate their existing presence
online as a tool of enhancing their educational experience in the classroom. Technology helps
flatten the walls of the classrooms and makes it possible for schools to collaborate with other
schools using Web 2.0 tools such as wikis, blogs and podcasts.

**Education that is Functional**

Poverty and illiteracy are interrelated and intrinsically linked. Illiteracy breeds poverty
and poverty can lead to illiteracy. Poverty in Nigeria remains high despite its relatively high
economic growth rate, averaging 7.4% annually over the last 10 years (World Bank, 2011).
However, even with this growth rate, 63% of the population lives on below $1 a day (DFID,
2012). Various poverty alleviation programs have been launched post-independence to address
the widening gap between the rich and the poor and the situation remains unchanged. The latest
of these poverty alleviation initiatives was launched in 2001 and it is called the National Poverty
Eradication Programme (NAPEP). Over the last decade, Nigeria has struggled to reduce
poverty, but with its growing population and the mediocre spending in the education sector, the
country is still lagging to meet its Education For All universal basic education goals. A
functional education is one of the most effective ways of eradicating poverty and illiteracy; by
empowering the poor to become literate and self-sufficient, they are able to break the circle of poverty.

Functional education is defined in the Nigeria-centric sense as an education that provides knowledge that is both concrete and usable that will help students develop skills that are not typically taught. This process is meant to augment the abstract and theoretical knowledge that form the bulk of curricula content. Equating education with learning means that a functional education requires the incorporation of both formal and informal education. The concept of non-formal education has become a buzzword in the global education practice since it was mainstreamed by Coombs (1974) in his research on the global crisis in the education sector. With the rising poverty levels in many developing countries, coupled with the attendant overproduction of un-skilled school leavers, the push is now on for the inclusion of vocational education that will help improve the capacity of graduates to be self-sustaining. This growing interest in non-formal education as has its backdrop the criticism of formal education by various theorists and educators Illich (1970), Reimer (1971), Dore (1976), and Freire (1972, 1974, 1976, 1985). The overriding criticism of mass education centered on its failure to equip students with the skills required for them to lead productive lives. Productive in the sense that it is holistic and prepares students adequately to be vital members of their community.

A functional education is about quality education. It will equip the students with the requisite skills needed for them to graduate into productive members of society who are able to create wealth and generate income for themselves and others. Students will be exposed to “functional literacy,” which is more vocational training oriented. In a sense, an education that is functional goes beyond the classroom and makes learning a continuous process.
A Nigeria-centric education that is functional is supported by the educational theory of functional context education. According to Sticht (1997) research in contemporary cognitive science provides an “empirical base for functional context education, an approach to education in which the teaching of basic language, intellectual and cognitive skills and the subject matter of schools, including education and training programs for out of-school youth and adults, are integrated into the functional contexts that engage people in the world outside the schoolroom, including the world of work” (p. 47). Thus, “from this perspective, both learning for and in the world of work is best accomplished following functional context principles” (p. 47).

A functional education ensures that students are in a position to utilize what they learned in the classroom in other spheres outside of the school. This is called a “performance orientation” approach. In contrast, what is practiced in public schools in Nigeria is the “topic orientation” approach in which the goal of education is the acquisition of academic credentials such as the school leaving certificate and the focus is not on mastery of skills that will facilitate an ability to be productive outside of the school system.

The main focus of primary and secondary school curricula is that students learn the compulsory subjects. A consequence of this topic-oriented approach is the disjuncture between theory and practice. In other words, what is learned in the classroom is incompatible with what is required for them to thrive in society. As a result of the over emphasis on abstract and theoretical learning, students are unable to apply what they learn in the classroom to the workplace. Therefore the de-contextualized knowledge they acquire leads to a “separation between the schools where ‘booklearning’ takes place and the rest of society where “real” learning takes place” (Sticht, 1997). Students may be unmotivated to learn because they do not
see the relevance of what is being taught in the classroom. They see the knowledge as only being useful for passing tests and exams.

Functional education is supported by Sen (1980) capability approach, which is about developing human capacities. In a country with a high poverty rate like Nigeria, education can play two crucial roles: enhance individual capability, create opportunities for the acquisition of more skills and secondly, equip individuals with the ability to appropriately utilize their capability. Functional education equals learning by doing. Examples of how learning can be made more functional and interrelated with the real world include field trips, show and tell and experimentation. For example, in an agricultural science class, instead of teaching farming methods abstractly, a teacher could start a school garden whereby students get to practice and learn farming techniques as well as experience the farming process from planting to harvesting.

**Rationale for a Nigeria-centric Educational System**

With the changing cultural, social, economic, geographical, religious and political dynamics in Nigeria, the educational enterprise is in a state of transformative stasis, unable to change with the times or more importantly evolve to meet the shifting paradigms of nationhood, trans-national identity and global changes occasioned by the new socio-economic demands of a rapidly hyper-modern world. The discontinuities occasioned by the linear and fragmented pedagogical and paradoxical ethos of the education system are producing outcomes that invite a renewed colonial gaze while maintaining the “lingering colonial smile.” Indeed, when it comes to public primary and secondary education in the country, the question to be asked is, education
for whom and for what purpose? Essentially, the system is broken and has actively become a degenerative, instead of a regenerative site of identity formation, cultural transmission and knowledge construction. Thus, output from a fundamentally broken system is not producing the type of intellectuals that is at the bedrock of any advancement in society. And the human capability to evolve into a knowledge economy has not materialized due to the failing educational system.

In Nigeria, as a result of what is missing in the curriculum, students begin school with a strong sense of their Nigerian-ness and they graduate 12 years later from secondary school with an identity crisis that has been occasioned by racial melancholia. Consequently, they become alienated from their community. As the data presented in this study show, the current inherited education system from the colonial era is failing to achieve transformational learning outcomes that are key to producing the requisite skilled hands to aid in sustainable economic development in Nigeria. After 12 years in primary and secondary school, students graduate out of a system that has essentially isolated them from the real world, from their community and disconnected them from their country. This is so because the present structure of the school does not foster any connection between what is taught in the classroom and what is needed in the real world.

In essence, the school should be re-imagined as a site of complex, interdependent and interrelated connections which are firmly lodged at the nexus of Nigerian socio-economic renaissance that is cultural, social, economic and political. There is a need to develop the educational system that will produce the ideal citizenry for a 21 century world. Learners can be placed in this re-imagined that connects them from their textbook to their community and the world at large.
The Nigeria-centric model is a response to the defragmented schooling that currently exists. Every aspect of the system is intended to re-imagine education as a site that is multi-dimensional, bridging the classroom, community and the world. The fundamentals of a Nigeria-centric model of transformative education are framed by the hybridization of the most desirable elements of two systems: indigenous and western. It also lends itself to empirically supported practices in progressive education such as learning-by-doing, place-based learning, mindfulness and experiential learning.

What differentiates the Nigeria-centric model from other alternative approaches to progressive education is that it represents situatedness of learning; it is a symbiotic process that allows for different learning approaches to be funneled into a decidedly Nigeria-centric melting pot. Consequently, the Nigeria-centric model is trans-disciplinary and the liminality of the hybrid system makes it an integrative, dynamic and organic relationship between theory and praxis which helps to educate students who are knowledge creators as oppose to ones who merely rent or consume knowledge from the West.

Implementing the Nigeria-centric model requires a multi-pronged method, one that involves bottom-up and top-down approaches. It is an innovative idea that is both transformational and practical. A Nigeria-centric educational system will provide the roadmap for a societal renaissance in Nigeria one that will lead to the much sort after economic development and progress. In essence, this proposed Nigeria-centric educational system is, simply put, education for the people, by the people and of the people.
CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

We Learn

10% of what we READ
20% of what we HEAR
30% of what we SEE
50% of what we SEE and HEAR
70% of what we DISCUSS
80% of what we EXPERIENCE
95% of what we TEACH TO OTHERS

-William Glasser

Summary

As the Nigerian education system suffers from the twin crisis of identity and relevance and continuous to be bedeviled by poor educational outcomes such as the extraordinary failure rates in standardized exams and the abysmally low literacy rate, it can be gleaned from the discursive texts that frame the discourses on Nigerian education from the pre-colonial through the post-independence era, that Nigerian education still occupies a colonized site, one in which the school, as an ideological apparatus of the state, remains the space for the transmission of western
cultural hegemony. Consequently, the system continues to function on the inherited colonial structure from the British colonialists.

Additionally, the policy makers have adopted the practice of borrowing and copying wholesale; educational practices from the West to the detriment of developing home-grown educational approaches that would enhance learning outcomes for students. Moreover, the neo-colonial incursions into the educational space in the form of funding aid from western countries and other bilateral and multilateral donor agencies have, to some extent, hindered reform attempts because donor aid comes with prioritized education policy thrusts which may not necessarily be the priority that will suit local needs.

At the administrative level, rampant corruption and mismanagement have served to render any attempts at educational progress redundant. In light of the foregoing, it becomes clear that any education reform agenda in the country must take into account the re-imagining of a future educational system that is truly Nigeria-centric and which can be envisioned through the postcolonial concept of hybridity; encapsulated by merging both the Indigenous and Western systems of education to create a more purpose-driven Nigeria-centric educational system.

This concluding chapter summarizes findings from the analysis that was carried out in the preceding chapters and in what follows, findings from data presented in chapters three, four, and five in response to the research questions will be summarized. The rest of this chapter consists of implications of the study, conclusion and recommendation for future research.
Findings

The three broad themes that emerged from this study were: Identity, Curriculum and Funding. The first theme of Identity discussed in chapter five highlights the impact of colonial education on identity formation. The theme was further broken down into three sub-themes: culture, language and religion. The findings reveal that Nigerian education is a victim of a colonial and colonizing epistemology and thus, the western hegemonic foundations of the school system de-culturalizes students thereby alienating them from their community. This in turn leads to the devaluation of the student’s creativity, agency and value systems which subsequently contributes to a state of racial melancholia.

Colonial education not only fosters cultural amnesia, it also alienates individuals from their heritage. One of the ways, this occurs is through the fetishization of indigenous cultural practices and beliefs. Students are constantly receiving the message that certain local practices are barbaric or primitive. Examples include the use of tribal marks and the preference for colonial names over native ones.

An additional finding from the theme of identity shows that the education system incorporates a pedagogy that is epistemologically violent in the sense of de-historicizing Nigerian indigenous history and erasing the footprints of the cultural heritage of the students. The type of subconscious subordination that began in the missionary and colonial era education still lingers today. From the Eurocentric culture of the school, students are getting the message to accept the superiority of western cultures over indigenous Nigerian cultures and taught to aspire to be like the colonizers in the adoption of names, language, mode of dressing and other
socio-cultural aesthetics of whiteness. For example, the adoption of western-style school uniforms across the school system; without regard to their suitability to local weather conditions and more importantly, without thought to the identity reinforcing impact of having students wear uniforms made out of durable traditional fabrics. Consequently, new breeds of westernized Nigerians are emerging out of this “epistemicide” (Njamjoh, 2011) who are Nigerian in appearance but western in terms of outlook. One of the outcomes of this borrowed westernization is the continuing colonial dependency and eroding lack of social, cultural and economic self-sufficiency.

Another finding is that the school, as an ideological apparatus of the state fosters a process which Obanya (2011) calls “Kutiwa Kasumba,” a Kiswahili phrase that means brain-washing. In essence, during the colonial era and now, students are still being brain-washed to discount indigenous knowledge and accept borrowed and imported cultures while rejecting local ones. Textbooks and curricular contents continue to privilege the West over the Indigenous. Such that, failure to develop indigenous knowledge leads to renting knowledge from the west, using borrowed textbook content. This marginalization of indigenous knowledge can lead to a loss of historical memory with the subsequent implication of a loss of identity. Furthermore, the ideology of colonial supremacy and native inferiority was entrenched as a result of the discursive frameworks of visual and textual narratives that were generated about and for the colonized Nigerian peoples. Not only the images but the language used in portraying these messages is a signifier of white supremacy orthodoxy.

In terms of language, the study show that the bequeathed colonial language of instruction –English is still the dominant language spoken at school. Post-independence, French has been
adopted as the second official language of the country. Even though there are over 500 indigenous languages and dialects spoken in Nigeria, the country has remained unsuccessful at elevating any one of the three national languages of Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo into the primary language of instruction. As a result of the dis-use of many indigenous languages and dialects, there are 29 Nigerian languages on UNESCO’s list of endangered languages (Moseley, 2010). Thus, proficiency in English or French is privileged as the signifiers of intelligence, intellect and sound education. As a result, it is now commonplace for people to be proficient in either or both English and French and be unable to speak, read, or write in their mother tongue.

In a nutshell, Nigeria continues to struggle with fostering national unity and identity and as a result, no one indigenous language has been elevated to the status of official language. Ironically, the colonial language represents the unifying and “culturally-neutral” means of communication as Woolman (2001) notes: “the alien European languages provide continuity with colonial political foundations and a basis for essential contact with the outside world” (p. 38). Nigeria’s complex and diverse language terrain presents a serious challenge for the adoption of mother tongue as language of instruction in schools. The common refrain for the inability to incorporate mother tongue as a language of instruction continues to be the difficulty and the politics of which language to pick over others in a country of competing ethno-lingua interests. This impasse is unfortunate because language is critical to identity formation, cultural preservation and Nigeria nationalism.

Evidence from data collected shows that early Christian missionary schools made an effort to promote reading and writing in indigenous language. For example, the bible was translated into several local languages. Unfortunately, post-independence, education language
policy has reflected the disconnect between the rhetoric of using mother tongue as a language of instruction and the privileging of the colonial language - English as the primary language of instruction. Findings show that the excuse often given for the gap between language policy formulation and implementation is that the infrastructure does not exist for the wholesale adoption of mother tongue as a medium of instruction because of a dearth in qualified teachers, the scarcity of textbooks written in native languages as well as the availability of other educational materials. Lastly, competing ethno-political interests also add to the complexity of effectively instituting mother tongue as the language of instruction. As it is now, many of the ethnic nationalities outside of the WAZOBIA tripod seems ready to kick-against any attempt to impose Yoruba, Hausa, or Igbo on them as a required national language.

Findings from the sub-theme of religion show that Christianity and Islam are the two religious groups that dominate the educational landscape of Nigeria. Statistics show that 80% of Nigerians are evenly divided between Christianity and Islam while the remaining 20% are animists. The two religions also have dominant presence in schools and in the curriculum. Bible Knowledge and Arabic (Islam) are subjects taught in schools and also available in standardized exams. Unfortunately, the way religion is taught in schools does not help to foster a good relationship between adherents of both faiths. The curriculum and method of teaching seems to be more faith oriented than an academic exploration of different religions with a view to guiding students to a better understanding of the fundamental moral and ethical codes of these religions. Consequently, students are indoctrinated to be more dogmatic and less inclined to dialogue with other faith groups and co-exist peacefully with others in a plural society. Children now grow up set in their religious ways and ignorant about the fundamentals of other religions. This has resulted in unpleasant situations that have threatened the peaceful coexistence of followers of
both religions. The faith-based curriculum of the school has given way to religious practices which some critics argue are detrimental to critical thinking and intellect. Subsequently, as the quality of education continues to drop and the school infrastructure in various stages of decay and dilapidation, like opium, religion has become the soothing balm to heal all wounds: social, economic, political and cultural.

Additionally, hyper-religiosity serves to blur the line between science and superstitious beliefs as “religion” becomes “the opium of the masses.” Violence has broken out on school campuses when Christian and Islamists jostle for religious supremacy. This brand of religious fanaticism promotes ignorance over intellectual curiosity. In Nigeria, hyper-religiosity has become a pacifier- whereby people wait around for miraculous interventions instead of being proactive about holding government accountable for lack of good governance. This hyper-religiosity is also fuelled by the increasing levels of poverty, infrastructural decay, corruption by government officials and school administrators.

The second theme of Curriculum covers the sub-themes of: pedagogy, hidden curriculum and null curriculum. The findings of the analysis of the educational curriculum shows that outside influences play a significant role in curriculum reform and that the process is largely driven by what is perceived to be global trends in education delivery and not necessarily what the local needs in Nigeria are. This lack of customization is reflected in the continuing practice of borrowing, copying and adopting curricular ideas from different parts of the world. For example, in determining how many courses primary and junior secondary school students are required to take, the decision was influenced by course load requirements in countries like the U.S., Kenya, Ghana, Tanzania, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore. For example, donor
countries were involved when it comes to implementing curricula changes. The French government provided both funding and experts to help train teachers on how to teach French in the primary schools. And the U.S., through its agency for international development, USAID, collaborates with NERDC to develop teachers’ guides for pre-service teachers of English and reading.

The process of reforming the curriculum seems to be top-down with little or no involvement from stakeholders in the education sector. It is not clear to what role if any, the teachers, students, parents, industry and other interested parties played in the process that birthed the new curriculum changes. The process seems to have been guided by consultants, experts and policy makers who drew up a curriculum driven by exigencies in the realm of abstraction as opposed to changes that are evidence-based. As a result, it is envisioned that the new curriculum changes, like previous ones will exist in name only and not in practice. So far, NERDC’s curricular interventions are yet to produce the results contained in the lofty promises of each successive round of curriculum tinkering. Many teachers are not qualified to teach and for those who started out qualified, because of little or no professional development opportunities their pedagogical style become outdated

Recent changes in the primary and secondary curricula have been designed to address some of the shortcomings of previous ones. For example, the new UBE curriculum has taken into account the need for vocational education and the importance of exposing students to entrepreneurial skills instead of focusing solely on formal education as was previously the case. Though the rhetoric is good, there are however still shortcomings. For example, the new UBE curriculum that went into effect in September 2012 is taking place while some schools have
reported that they are yet to receive the old curriculum. Implementation still remains a major bottle-neck. For example, technical equipment are usually distributed to schools to improve the quality of instruction, however, technical support for these equipment are often lacking. Hence, once the equipment malfunctions they are abandoned until new equipment are delivered.

Findings show that there are three curriculum types in the school system: the explicit or formal curriculum, the hidden curriculum and the null curriculum. The official curriculum taught in schools is the explicit and formal. This includes, stated course objectives, syllabi, texts, exams, textbooks and teaching. All aspects of the daily running of the school fall within the explicit or formal curriculum. Whereas the hidden or implicit curriculum is what is not included in the formal curriculum but which the students however learn due to the fact of their engagement with the school. The prevalent hidden curriculum in public primary and secondary schools in Nigeria has attributes that can be negative and positive, for example, the privileging of English as a prestige language over indigenous languages. Additionally, the dilapidated schools and harsh learning conditions that students face on a regular basis sends the message that they are “less than” and that the education they deserve is in proportion to their parents’ social economic status. The hidden curriculum reinforces class structure and existing social and economic disparities.

The null curriculum involves that which is not taught and which sends the message to students that what is left out of the curriculum is not important in their educational development or in society for that matter. Examples of the null curriculum in Nigeria include subject matter that is not taught, those which appear in the curriculum but are electives and subjects like the history of Nigeria. The null curriculum raises questions such as: do Nigerian students have a
good understanding of colonization, slavery, the Nigerian civil war, pre-colonial African kingdoms and empires? Can all students learn/speak their mother tongue in school?

Nigeria is a multicultural society with frequent communal clashes and religious conflicts, yet, cross-cultural training is conspicuous for its long standing absence and de-prioritization from the curriculum. What is not taught, like what is taught ultimately have an impact on student development.

The final theme from the data analysis is Funding. Under funding were sub-themes like corruption, mismanagement and dependency on foreign aid. An analysis of the corruption theme led to these findings: (a) corruption has led to the curricula and infrastructural decay in the education sector; (b) corruption contributes to the deteriorating academic standards; (c) corruption breeds the non-nurturing and violence prone school environment; (d) corruption has de-professionalize the teaching corps and (e) corruption emboldens students to be truants.

Findings from data show that Nigeria consistently ranks high on any global corruption index. Unfortunately, the education sector has not been spared the deleterious effects of corruption. The graft and infrastructural decay that is very prominent in the education sector mirror what is happening in society. With the level of corruption in the sector, the message that is being sent to kids is that integrity is a disposable personal attribute and this is starting to manifest in widespread exam malpractice, truancy and other behavioral problems in schools. Although civics and moral values are part of the school curriculum, however, the more potent hidden curriculum that sends a message to students is that corruption and other social vices are profitable.
An additional finding is that, due to corruption, the modest allocations to the education sector from the primary to the tertiary level end up in the pockets of government and school officials. As a result of these perennial and prevailing issues, Nigeria is considered an educationally disadvantaged country on track not to meet the Education for All (EFA) 2015 goals. The earliest it is projected to potentially make it is 2020. Even this might be an impossibility considering that no implementable solution seems to be in the pipeline to address the myriad problems of the sector. And with the high turn-over rate of Ministers of education in the country; there has been 10 in the last eleven years, it looks like reform efforts will continue to be a flash-in-the-pan.

In addition to corruption, mismanagement, fiscal waste and duplication of efforts are other factors contributing to the financial woes of the education sector. A lot of money is spent on formulating policies; a myriad of committees, government agencies, domestic and foreign consultants are involved in the policy formulation process and at the implementation stage; money is also spent on “sensitizing” the stake holders across the country. In the end, there still exists a gap between policy formulation and policy implementation, never mind how much was expended in the execution of these processes.

All of these findings provide a strong rationale for the adoption and implementation of a Nigeria-centric educational system, one which is culturally, socially, economically and politically relevant. As well as provide a quality education for students to enable them develop the requisite skills needed to function productively in a 21st century globalized world.
Implications of the Study

This study has shown that it is possible to merge desirable elements of Western and Indigenous education systems to create a hybrid Nigeria-centric model that provides a regenerative space for Nigerian students to learn and grow. One of the major implications of this study is that the Nigeria-centric model can serve as a useful framework from which further studies on progressive and transformative education can take place. This study moves the extant research on Nigerian education towards a more innovative educational approach that seeks to break new grounds instead of relying solely on outdated models from the colonial era.

This dissertation utilized a methodology of discourse analysis and an expansive menu of theoretical concepts to examine and analyze the Nigerian education system in a bid to lay the groundwork for an imagined educational approach that is equipped to address prevailing educational shortcomings. The trans-disciplinary approach adopted in this research further strengthens the Nigeria-centric model as a viable system for educational advancement in Nigeria. Although the methodological and theoretical concepts used in this study are not new, however, the trans-disciplinary framework used to filter data through these methodological and theoretical tropes provided added value to the analysis in ways that had not been done previously. The Critical discourse method of analyzing the discursive texts framing Nigerian education also contributed to the strength of this research findings.

Another implication of this study is that the Nigeria-centric model can be easily compared and contrasted with existing educational approaches that have been adopted in the Country to determine where necessary gaps can be filled. Further, the model developed in this study can be proven to be quite effective at decolonizing the Nigerian mind and fostering a
holistic approach to learning- which goes beyond the ability to read and write and instead, focuses on the overall cognitive development of students which in turn, fosters the ability to produce knowledge and create new spaces for the development of organic intellectuals.

Although this study, while looking at the broad-based educational problems on the African continent, focused narrowly on the Nigerian education system, the Nigeria-centric model can nonetheless be adapted to other educational systems in Africa. Overall, the findings about indigenous, colonial and post-independence education that were unveiled in this study are consistent with the major findings from the literature (Nsamenang, 2005; Nyamnjoh, 2012; Obanya, 2011; Semali, 1999; Uchendu, 1979). In addition, the prevailing problems of colonial education in Nigeria that are identified in this study are similar to the problems highlighted in previous studies that examined different African contexts (Kanu, 2007; Nsamenang & Tchombe, 2011).

**Conclusion**

This study has shown that Nigerian education suffers from the twin crisis of identity and relevance; and its continual reliance on outdated models of colonial education will further stunt national growth and development. Hence, education in Nigeria must embrace a forward thinking model that is Nigeria-centric and helps to foster the kind of social, cultural, economic and political growth that the country needs in order to become more developed and better positioned to take care of the needs of its citizenry. While this study represents a good beginning in Nigerian education research, it is hoped that it is only a springboard for further research that will lead to the development of innovative educational models to improve the quality of education in Nigeria. Recommendations for future research include: a quantitative and qualitative analyses of
the processes of developing and implementing a Nigeria-centric educational model as well as longitudinal studies of the impact of different educational approaches.
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