

Indigenous African Education for Socio-Economic Development: Selected Studies of Western, Eastern and Central African Communities

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Abstract

Education in Africa has been in existence since time immemorial. This study sought to examine the activities of Lantana in Benin on their specialised training, Dogon of Mali in their world view, Futo Toro of Senegal in their various trades, Poro of Sierra Leone in the training of the youth, Takensi of Ghana in their social order and the Akan of Ghana. Also examined are the activities of the Chamba and Yoruba of Nigeria in their adult centred training and forecasting of the future respectively. The Chagga of Tanzania and the Abakwayaare were also examined on their initiative plays and economic activities. The paper also studied the Ndembu of Zambia on the past analysis and the activities of the Mijikenda of Kenya among other Kenyan tribes. The study used the theoretical framework of Emile Durkheim on the social and moral order, while the design of the study was on content analysis of available information and expectations. The study recommends positive approaches in the indigenous

education that can be adapted, mainly for Kenya in its desire to achieve Vision 2030. However, further research should be done on specific values, foods, attitudes and the rule of law, how achieve social, political and economic progress in African nations and especially how the current economic integration blocks have followed the same pattern of the communities and their values.

Introduction and Background

There was no one single indigenous form of education in Africa since societies differed from each other as they do now and developed different systems of education to transmit their own particular knowledge and skills. The education methods have been formal and informal as they go towards socialisation.

The social framework of education in Africa went hand in hand with the political systems. Before the British and other colonialists arrived, there were the kingdom of Ashanti and Dahomey in West Africa, the Zulu under Shaka in South Africa, Tallensi, the Ibo and Yako of West Africa, the Nuer of southern Sudan as well as the Touga of Southern Zambia.

Men lived in close relationship with nature, that is, land, vegetation and animals and because of limited technological development, they were related to each other by extended ties of kinship which bound them to such unlined kinship groups as the lineage and the clan.

For socialisation, instructions were given in the camp on tribal laws and customs especially on do's and don't's of various behaviour as well as on occupational training for instance transmission of skills in handicrafts and the impartation of social skills. Parents, institutions and the age groups participated in the education process. An age group was important as a means of moulding the personality of its members and defining their attitudes to tasks and problems which they were to face in adult-life. The age-group also encouraged and taught respect for elders, solidarity and cooperation. In many African societies, age-groups were part of division of labour for economic, social, cultural and political functions were allocated on the basis of age.

In Senegal, Sierra Leone, Northern Nigeria and Guinea there lived the Kpelle, Gbunde and Loma. Among these people, a young person was ini-

tiated into the Poro after circumcision. Formal entry into the adulthood could not take place before the completion of the Poro education. The length of a term in the Poro School was theoretically four years, but the period a youth had to spend in it varied. Similarly, joining the school was not obligatory. Poro was attended with much funfare and there was much singing and dancing when a group of boys joined it voluntarily. Among the Gbunde, a boy entering the group was stopped and asked all kinds of nonsensical questions to get him confused.

The community also had formal training; apart from the formal training of all adolescents, there was in most societies formal education for a number of functional categories, for instance, herbalists, drummers, blacksmiths and priests. Training for such occupations was organised through a kind of apprenticeship system. In a limited number of societies which developed standing armies, formal training in warfare was imparted through an institutional arrangement by the State. For example, the Ndebele of the Zimbabwe under their great ruler Mzilikazi (1790 – 1868) developed a system of military training often lasting three to four years. At the royal headquarters, young men of around fifteen years of age were given lessons in the use of

weapons and tests of endurance such as long and strenuous marches and bare-handed fights with hyenas.

Formal and informal methods also varied. Knowledge, skills, ideas, attitudes and patterns of behaviour were transmitted through riddles to explain the origin of the tribe and the genesis of man. Similarly, names of trees, plants, animals and insects were imparted with their dangers and uses among others. Boys herded cattle or farmed land with their fathers, while girls helped their mothers in household work. The Tellensi of northern Ghana were good examples, just like the Ganda fathers of Uganda. For the latter, the fathers would, through formal instruction, teach their children appropriate manners and knowledge of genealogical positions of different clansman.

The Tellensi, just like other tribes, had formal and informal methods of knowledge, skills, ideas, attitudes and patterns behaviour. Riddles were used to test children's judgement and myths to explain the origin of the tribe and genesis of man. Names of trees, plants, animals and insects as well as the dangers and uses of each were learnt as boys herded cattle or farmed land with their fa-

thers and girls helped their mothers in household work.

The Kipelle, Gbunde, and Loma of Sierra Leone and northern Liberia and borders of Guinea also practised circumcision in their initiation. Among the Poro of Senegal for instance, the stage symbolised formal entry into adulthood (Ukeje, 1960). In some societies, formal training for adolescents was extended to functional or specialist areas say herbalists, drummers, blacksmiths and priests. The training here was organized through apprenticeship system; the Ndebele of Zimbabwe through their leader who developed a system of military training, often lasting three to four years; with lessons extending to use of weapons and tests of endurance like bare-handed fights with hyenas. The method and content also varied from community to community. For instance among the Yoruba of south western Nigeria and Akan of Ghana, practices such as child-weaning which formed part of the 'curriculum' in the indigenous education varied widely in method and perspective.

Jomo Kenyatta's *"Facing Mount Kenya"* describes the Agikuyu age-set system and its formal education. It had succeeding stages of initiation

from status to status. The assumption of each status was accompanied by a sequence of rites which had organised instruction.

Initiation ceremonies and formal training for adulthood have been reported from many other societies of the continent. These include the Sidamo (Ethiopia), Nandi (Kenya), Masaai (Kenya and Tanzania), Luhya of Kenya and Pare and Makonde (Tanzania).

The curriculum depended greatly on the level of stratification and the mode of political and economic organisation of the society itself. In many African countries the whole community is the principal educative and socialising agent. However, some specific organisations and individuals have the task of educating the young, while others specialise in teaching particular disciplines.

Religious institutions were also a major contributor of socialisation in indigenous education. For instance, Koranic schools were set up in or near a mosque. The teacher sat in front of his pupils, controlled their activities and recited to them verses from the holy book which was repeated by the pupils. Older pupils were taught to read and write the Arabic scripts. Therefore, Islamic educa-

tion in pre-colonial Africa was highly formalised, characterised as it was by learning and occurring at a specific place and time, mediated by someone who was specialised as a teacher.

Aims of the Study

This study sought:

- To investigate goals of indigenous education in Africa.
- To understand activities of some communities in Africa.
- To discover some socio-economic and political impacts of indigenous education in Africa.

Theoretical Framework

The content of indigenous education consists of what sociologist Emile Durkheim refers to as moral education. According to Durkheim, 'morality is a system of rules and actions that predetermine conduct'. An essential element of morality, Durkheim maintained, was a spirit of discipline which assumed the existence of organisations and authority.

He noted that to act morally is to act in the light of a collective interest; he added that the domain of moral begins where the domain of the social begins. According to Durkheim, it was society in the sense of a supra individual element in social life beliefs, which gave moral rules and ideals their authority. In Durkheim's view a child needed to be taught morality, and this meant among other things teaching him or her about the nature of family life and in general 'about the nature of the social contexts in which he will be called to live.'

Durkheim's ideas on moral education help us to understand the content and goals of indigenous forms of education. Though indigenous education in its various forms has a many-sided character, it is intimately intertwined with social life. What is taught is related to the social context in which people are called to live (Bray, Clark & Stephens, 1986: 102-103).

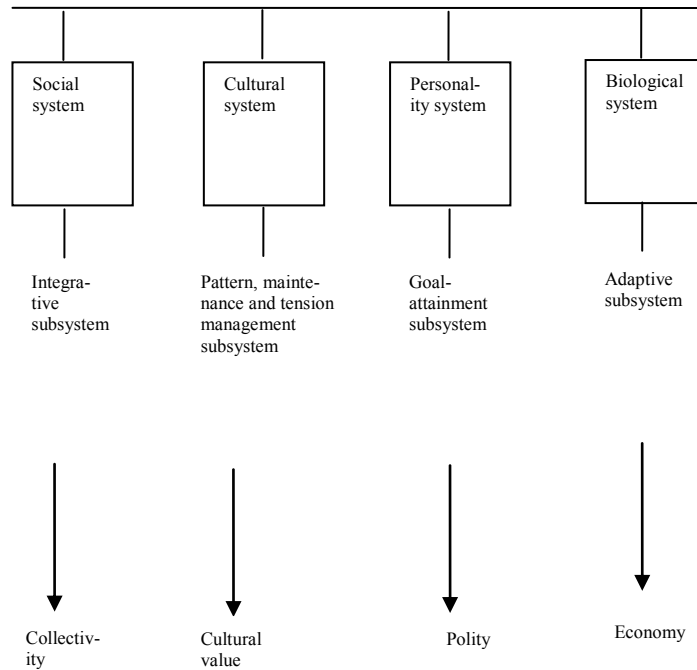
Sociological Theoretical Orientations

Organic societies are much more complex and are organised on the basis of difference rather than similarity. This type of society is increasingly dominant in Africa and is the one which concerns

the national level. In these societies, there is considerable interdependence for specialisation usually, meaning that individuals gain skills in one task at the expense of skills in others. If one group breaks away or dies, the whole society is liable to collapse because it is unable to replace their knowledge and expertise. Education plays a role in maintaining this type of society not only by providing individuals with skills but also by providing them, particularly during childhood, with attitudes which permits the whole society to function. Organic society views were further developed by Talcott Parsons and Karl Marx.

The Marxist model provides a theory to explain the changing nature of society, economic changes; hence knowledge of these theories is useful because it enables us to understand how individuals and groups relate to each other in a wider context (Bray et al., 1986: 24-25). Further, the systems of action according to Parsons were supposed to be:

Subsystems of Action



Cited in Abraham, (1993:67)

Pre-colonial political systems in Africa included among others, Kingdom of Ashanti and Dahomey in West Africa, Zulu under Shaka in South Africa, Tallensi, Ibo and Yako of West Africa. There was also the Nuer of Southern Sudan and Tonga of

Southern Zambia. It is said that men lived in close relationship with nature, the land, vegetation and animals because of the limited technological development. They were related to each other by extended ties of kinship which bound them to such unilineal kingship groups as the lineage and the clans (Bray et al., 1986).

Features of Traditional Social Systems

Traditional education systems had the following features:

- Limited specialisation and division of labour.
- Technological backwardness together with limited specialisation.
- Little economic surplus due to the absence of a developed productive technique.
- A limited store of knowledge to transmit.
- Greater prevalence of informal, face to face relationship[s] and a low level of scientific knowledge.
- Absence of a written language.

- A well integrated society in which religion and ethics were inextricably bound to with social life.
- Traditions were regarded as sanctified.

Goals of Indigenous Education

Although indigenous education systems varied from one society to another, the goals of these systems were often strikingly similar. They included:

- Normative goals: concerned with instilling the accepted standards and beliefs governing correct behaviour.
- Expressive goals: concerned with creating unity and consensus.

These are the principal objectives of indigenous education. Other instrumental goals included encouraging competitiveness in intellectual and practical matters, but this competitiveness was controlled and subordinated to the normative and expressive aims (Bray et al, 1986:102)

Further, indigenous education was not only concerned with the systematic socialisation of the younger generation into the norms, religious and

moral beliefs, and collective opinions of the wider society. It also put very strong emphasis on learning practical skills. It is not that the idea of art for art's sake or the notion that the acquisition of knowledge and wisdom and the improvement of an individual's intellectual capacities have no place in indigenous education.

Acquisition of knowledge is useful to the individual and society as a whole. However, the specific aims of education in pre-colonial Africa were:

- To preserve the cultural heritage of the extended family, the clan and the tribe.
- To adapt members of the new generation to their physical environment and teach them how to control and use it.
- To explain to them that their own future and that of their community depends on the understanding and perpetuation of the institutions, laws, language and values inherited from the past (Ansu, 1984).

Similarly, in traditional African society everybody was a worker. There was no other way of earning a living for the community hence it was a sense of security and also for universal hospitality.

On education it was meant to re-educate members of the community to regain the former attitude of mind as in the traditional African society. Individuals were just within a community and children were education through informal means; stories by the elders and every adult were a teacher. Tribes were related with other tribes in spirit. There was also customs of sharing items, and initiation was done by some tribes, this was also the purpose of overall information education (Nyerere, 1974).

Some Limitations of Traditional Education Sub-system

However, the traditional educational subsystem also had some limitations.

- There was no separate functional category of teacher.
- Relative absence of specialised instruction.
- There was difficulty in maintaining special service categories (like the hair dresser, accountant, interior decorator, architect, chef, waiter, and more relevantly for our present purposes, the teacher of general education) since such occupational categories can only exist in a society in which there is an economic surplus.

- The system had heavier stress on informal education.
- No separate schooling period set apart.
- Absence of generalisations, that is, a heavier emphasis on relating instruction to specific contexts.
- Education was provided through oral communication.
- Education tended to attach great importance on religious and moral instruction.
- The conservative function of education (at the expense of its innovative function) was underlined with the result that there was hardly any scope for rational experimentation (Ansu, 1984:15).

The Research Design

The design of the study is based on context analysis of available literature on communities in Western and Eastern Africa and Central as the scope of the study. Content analysis and grounded theory go hand in hand since content analysis involves summarising and reporting written data; that is the main content of data and their messages. On the

other hand it explains the grounded theory by explaining what emerges from data rather than the other way round. The consequences and partners to systematic data collection and analysis bring together the patterns and theories that are implicit in the data that is waiting to be discovered (Cohen, Manion & Marrison, 2008). Content analysis also consist of scoring specific information that is required. The advantage of this method is on the revelation of what was initially considered as descriptive study (Isabel, Luis, & Isabel, 2011).

The population here comprised all the communities in western, northern, southern, central and eastern parts of Africa that have been recorded in the economic, social and political activities. However, stratified random sampling on the main socio-economic level of the whole community was used as it captures demographic variables (Best & Kann, 2004).

Validity and Reliability

The study adapted content validity, cultural validity as well as theoretical validity. However, reliability has depended on the contents that have been recorded over time for the communities, mainly socio-economic.

Discussion of the main Socio-Economic Activities of African Communities

4.1 Western and North African communities

i) Dogon of Mali

- Here an individual's actions were regarded as being closely interlinked with the way society in general and the world operate. An individual was not one 'self' or 'soul' but rather a multiple entity made up of several 'selves' or 'souls' each one of which reflected a concrete relationship between that individual and the wider world.
- At birth, a person was only potentially a human being; it is the society into which that person was born that provided the individual with a spiritual, sexual, social and intellectual identity. The process happened gradually. The community, during one of their numerous naming ceremonies which the newborn person underwent, like reincarnation; that is upon the child being born both an intelligent soul, that provided the individual with the capacity for acquiring

knowledge and the 'grains' which connected him/her with the laws of the universe.

ii) Yoruba of South-Western Nigeria

Like the Dogon of Mali, though an individual had freedom and responsibility, life was divinely pre-ordained and sociologically conditioned. The Yoruba diviner (babalawo) of South-western Nigeria, by contrast, was concerned with forecasting the future. This does not mean that their functions were essentially dissimilar. However, both provided their clients with authoritative models for the purpose of decision making.

- The Yoruba diviner (babalawo) sought to reveal his clients' destiny and by so doing indicated how the client would improve upon it in this life. Illness, bad medicine, evil spirits, money and family disputes, as well as questions of status, authority and power were also handled. An experienced babalawo knew twice as many 'poems' as the beginner (Bray et al., 1986:102-103).
- Traditionally, the Yoruba lived in a large polygamous extended family with its most

senior male members as the head. Each wife had a separate room or hut to herself where she lived with her minor children. Even in the pre-colonial period, Yoruba land was characterised by many towns with a high density of population. Although rapid urbanisation has created some problems for the corporate functioning of the extended family and the lineage in the urban situation, there is reportedly a high degree of correspondence between compounds and localised lineages in Lagos, Oshogbo, Oyo and other Yoruba towns (Ansun, 1984:65)

iii) Chamba of North-Eastern Nigeria

Here educating the individual to be independent was a much longer process and in one sense the Chamba did not regard the child or even the adolescent as a person or individual before it. The child is not a person; he is his father's property. A young man cannot own what he kills in a hunt without it being given by his father. The father and his brothers have complete control over the children, it was emphasised.

- There existed also a conscious model of the ideal woman, and it is with this ideal in

mind that the children are educated in the second stage of the educational process. The ideal man was to preserve and strengthen the cultural, social and moral features of the society. The ideal woman was a wife and mother who through the bearing of children and in her role as educator assisted her husband in the task of preserving and strengthening the customs and traditions of the group.

- It was said for instance that if the father was a farmer, then the male children are trained as farmers. Likewise, the practical education provided for the female child were determined by her mother's role as wife and mother and her occupation which could well include cooking and possibly dyeing or trading.
- For this community though children were instructed and guided by their parents, there was strong emphasis on the learning process which was by participant observation.

iv) Lantana of Western Nigeria

Just like the Chamba, Lantana people had bead making and also trade in Ilorin was used to train them in their crafts through hereditary occupations where the family handed down, usually to the oldest male child, the techniques and secrets of the trade; especially bead making and blacksmithing. In addition, Lantana bead making craft was rigidly determined by sex. Though the emphasis was on the teaching of family members, anyone could learn the craft. Women assisted the men in the bead making and even made a special type of bead themselves. Women's role, however, was a minor one though this was not necessarily on account of the fact that they were women.

v) Lantana of Benin and their priests

- In the people's Republic of Benin, priests and mediums were taken out of the society for a time and trained in 'seminars' and / or 'converts'. In these isolated institutions, the recruits were transformed into new personalities.

- For instance the recruit's hair was shaven off several times during the course of his training, which lasted about nine months. Learning a new language dialect formed part of the training, and the recruit was also given a new name and trained in a new occupation.
- The whole process aimed to create a new personality that would engage in a new kind of life. Recruits learned both about the spirit world and about more practical matters. For example, they were taught how to make priestly garments and necklaces and such things as mats and baskets which were then sold to ordinary people. The priests were also the traditional doctors and had to learn a great deal about plants, roots and herbs.
- It noteworthy that the introduction of western medicine had by no means put an end to traditional medicine. In many parts of Africa, all groups in the population use both traditional and western medicine constantly.

- The training of a diviner could be a long, highly specialised and complicated process; however, not all diviners were trained for the same role in the society.

vi) Tallensi of Ghana

- Like the Dogon of Mali and the Yoruba, these people recognised that each individual was unique and free but also saw the thoughts or actions of that individual as being inextricably related to his external; social world.
- To some extent these views would appear to imply conflict between the individual adapting his thoughts and actions to the needs and requirements of the world within which one lived. This idea of freedom was compatible with the notion these people had of the ideal social and moral order.

vii) Akan of Ghana

- Here education was a joint enterprise of both the old and young. Children had complete freedom to attend many adult activities. At birth, they were given a symbolic introduction to adult language. A few

weeks later they would begin to eat adult food and at the age of six, they commenced adult work.

- The main purpose of this early introduction to adult life was to free the infant as quickly as possible from dependence upon the parent. It implies therefore that Akan indigenous education was adult rather than child-centred. It was based on the assumption that an individual could participate in community life and benefit from the education the community had to offer at what was relatively at a very early age.
- Therefore, the community here was the strongest educator. Parents played a very important role in the education of their children. There was also a clearly marked division of labour. The mother educated all children in the early years but later the father took over the education of the male children, while the mother remained in control of the females.
- After learning to walk, speak and count, the male child would then go to his father and male elders and begin the training for

manhood. The female child continued to be taught by her mother assisted by the other women in the community; she began to learn how to live and work as a woman in the society.

viii) Poro of Sierra Leone

Two types of indigenous education existed here -that is, the education systems of the Temnes, Mendes, Limba, Lokkos, Konas and other peoples who mostly lived in the interior. Similarly, there were also the education system of the Creole population, which comprises descendants of freed slaves and other settlers who began to arrive in that country in the late eighteenth century and who inhabit what is now the western area. The Poro and Bundu societies played an important role in the all – round education and training of the young. The Creole societies tended to be more ritualistic and ceremonial, for they had education for both boys and girls - the attitudes, beliefs, rituals, work ethics, skills and communal altitudes; which were transmitted from one generation to the next.

ix) Futa Toro of Senegal

- They had some trade, unlike the Lantana. The community had a caste system of Mandinka origin which was rigidly observed. The blacksmiths, jewelers, tanners, tailors and griots (praise singers) were all members of different, exclusive castes.

x) Specific gender based economic duties and activities among Tallensi of Northern Ghana

Boys

3 – 6 years: In the early years there was not much activities; however, there was none at first. Towards end of this period, the boy would begin to assist in pegging out goats, scaring birds from newly sown fields and crops, also accompanying family sowing and harvesting parties, would use the hoe in quasi-play, ground-runs in company of older siblings.

6 - 9 years: Duties here were fully established. The boy helped in house-building by carrying swish. He also assisted in sowing and harvesting and towards the end of the period; the boy would begin to go out with herd – boys and to care for poultry.

9 – 12 years: He was fully responsible in cattle-herding here as well as the care of poultry. He assisted parents in hoeing and care of crops, but without much responsibility. He could also farm and own small plots and ground-nuts, but in quasi-play. However, sons of specialist craftsmen assisted their fathers in subsidiary capacity - 'learning by looking.'

Play

This was mainly exuberant motor and exploratory play. It used mimetic (bow, drum, among others) in egocentric play. Towards the end of the period, there was also social and imaginative play with 'cattle' and 'house building' often in the company of older children of either sex. Recreational games and dancing also took place.

Imaginative 'cattle' and 'house building' plays were common, the latter often reflecting current economic activity of adults. Practice with bow and arrow in marksmanship, competitions and 'hunting' with groups of comrades began. Recreational games and dancing was also established. Modelling clay figures and plaiting started at this time, as well as ritual play. There was also recreational games and dancing which was more skilful. Quasi-play, mainly farming, also happened.

Sexual Dichotomy in Work and Play

12 – 15 years: Duties were as in preceding period but with more responsibility. Boys were also responsible for care of poultry, sometimes owning property. They were leaders of herd-boys. They were also involved in real farming of their own plots in co-operation with older members of the family by end of the period. Sons of specialists experimentally made things. However, imaginative play was later also abandoned. Similarly, dancing was the principal recreation, and ritual play, were later also abandoned. Plaiting for personal decoration was also done. Regular 'sweet-hearting' also commenced here.

Girls

3-6 years: Initial years here there was nothing as a major activity, however towards the end of the period they performed the same duties as small boys but with frequent nursing of infants. The girl accompanied her mother to the water-hole and began to carry tiny water-pots. Also, she helped in simple domestic tasks such as sweeping.

6-9 years: Duties of the previous period were established. Here the girl was responsible and cooper-

ated in water-carrying and other simpler domestic functions. She helped to cook as well as other activities associated with food preparation, such as searching for wild edible herbs. She accompanied family parties in sowing and harvesting and also by giving quasi-play help. The girl carried swish at building operations and assisted women in plastering and floor-beating, but still with a play element.

9 – 12 years: All domestic duties could be entrusted to them by end of this period: water-carrying, cooking, care of infants, etc. She assisted in building and plastering more responsibly. Often, she was sent to the market to buy and sell. In addition, she helped in women's part of the work at sowing and harvest time.

There was also an exuberant motor and exploratory play. The girl at this stage was attached to her older sisters and was drawn into their 'housekeeping' play. Towards the end of this period, the girl began to take an active social part in the latter and started recreational play and dancing. She was often found in mixed sex groups. 'Housekeeping' play was usual while recreational play and dancing was established. She began also to learn plaiting and participated in 'building' play

of boys, mimicking current women's activities, for instance, plastering.

Later on, activities like 'housekeeping' and play continued, gradually it would fade out at the end of the period. Dancing became a principal recreation. Plaiting both for decoration and use was established. The girl began to have 'sweet-hearts' but not with serious intent.

12 – 15 years: Here she played a responsible part in all domestic duties of everyday life and of those associated with ceremonies or occasions. She would then go for firewood and collect shea-fruits in the bush and help to prepare shea butter. Marriage was a very near prospect. Imaginative play was abandoned. Dancing was the main recreation. Courtship and hetero-sexual interests occupied a great deal of time and attention. The girl actively participated in the social side of funeral ceremonies, among others, in the role of marriageable girls.

***Central and Eastern African Communities
Ndembu of North – Western Zambia***

Here the diviner's training was a highly specialised and complicated process. Not all diviners were trained for the same role in the society.

The diviner, in addition to being a doctor was concerned with analysing the past. The diviner's task was not to reveal the unknown but to give coherence, unity and meaning to all the known facts in a particular case. On this basis, he worked towards a specific, moral judgement concerning the matters and having achieved this he prescribed a resolution for the problem.

For both the Ndembu and Yoruba, the diviner was 'chosen' though in different ways, for his profession. Among the Ndembu, a man becomes a diviner after experiencing the afflictions and suffering of the spirit, *Kayongu*. Also, a person became a *babalawo* by inheriting the ability from his father or grandfather, or by being specially 'chosen' by Orumila, the god of diviners.

The training for the *babalawo* was long and intensive, beginning sometime between the ages of seven and twelve. The trainee lived with a master

babalawo for about ten years, and would learn a great deal of technical and oral knowledge.

By the time he was ready to practice as a divider for the first time, the *babalawo* would have learnt over one thousand 'poems' relating to the problems, anxieties, hopes and aspirations common in Yoruba society.

Similarly for Ndembu, the doctor's task of treating pregnant women was among other things to cut bark chips from numerous species of the same tree, the *Kapwipi* tree. This tree was used because its wood is hard, and hardness represented the health and strength desired for the patient. In addition, all these trees share the same ritually important property, namely the bark string could not be taken from them, 'for this' would 'tie up' the fertility of the patient. In this sense, they were said to counter *Mwengi's* medicines. *Mwengi* is a 'masked being' who wore a costume made of many strings from bark cloth. The bark strings were believed to be deadly to women's procreation.

The Tonga of Zambia

The Tonga believed, like most other peoples, that growing up was not a simple process of matu-

ration but involved a thorough preparation for the role to be played in an adult life. The training for the future started almost immediately after birth, and reached a dramatic climax (at least for girls), at the time of puberty rites. Further, even at an early stage of development, a baby was also taught by older family members.

Dinka of Southern Sudan

Here, the concept *ceing* meant both 'morality' and 'living in harmony'; the product of *ceing* was well being. The Dinka strove to maintain unity and harmony between himself and the external world. This was best achieved by adapting the individual's desires and requests to those of the rest of the society.

Therefore, some knowledge of indigenous ideas concerning the relationship between individual freedom and society and of how people acquired social identities was essential for an understanding of the goals of indigenous education.

Chagga of Tanzania

The Chagga had a 'course' for children in what is called 'imitative play'. It consisted of representations of scenes from adult life by means of which the young were made familiar with the norms and ideals expected from full, responsible members of the society (Bray et al, 1986:103)

Ex-chief Marealle wrote that the traditional society of his people comprised a system whereby everybody belonged to everybody else and in which praise and blame was not an individual affair but affected a whole group of people. The Kenya Education Commission Report of 1964 had criticized the western idea of individuality and quoted with the approval Jomo Kenyatta's words: "*To the Europeans, individuality is the ideal of life, to the Africans, the ideal is the right regulations with, and behaviour to other people*". Julius Nyerere described society as "*one vast cooperative*" (Cameron, 1970).

The Chagga of Northern Tanzania in the words of Nyerere were as prosperous and as educationally conscious a people as would be found anywhere in East Africa; *'Which came first, the prosperity or the education? Blessed with fertile land and the right climatic conditions, they first pros-*

pered with virtually no western education. Prosperity, once achieved was used to buy and to extend education. “More income causes more education, rather than more education causes more income”, Nyerere would emphasize (Cameron, 1970:120).

Abakwaye community in Musoma Tanzania

This community lives in urban and rural areas of modern Musoma Tanzania. They kept livestock mainly cattle, sheep, goats and poultry. Their economic activities have been subsistence agriculture in cassava, maize, groundnuts, beans, finger millet, green grams, sorghum, sweet potatoes, rice and bananas. Some horticultural activities included; paw paws, oranges, citrus fruits and tangerines. The Makaya people had a traditional system of earning livelihoods based on their settlements (Makaya) which were historical.

Their contemporary economic activities include subsistence fishing, livestock rearing, quarrying, sand harvesting in arable land, charcoal burning, trade in fuel wood, art and trade in burnt bricks. Their ecologies have been the source of water, farm produce, building materials and stone and burnt bricks (Nyaga, 2008).

Mijikenda of Kenya

Just like the Abakwaya of Musoma in Tanzania, the Mijikenda of Kenya also had historical means of earning livelihood apart from social and political systems. The Mijikenda live on the coastal town of Mombasa Kenya and comprised of nine (9) tribes or 'miji' which were based on settlement or towns comprising Giriama, Rabai, Chonyi, Jibana, Kauma, Kambe, Ribe, Duruma and Digo. Mijikenda were formerly known as Wanyika (the bush people) and currently live in rural parts of Kilifi and Kwale districts.

Economic activities of the Mijikenda included hunting, shifting cultivation, crop rotation, mixed farming, controlled rearing of livestock, trade in surplus foodstuff, and horticultural crops like tomatoes, kales, cabbages, unions, paw paws, among others. They had frequent problems of drought, pests and diseases (Nyaga, 2008).

Discussion of the Main Findings

Social Economic and Political Impacts of Indigenous Education in Africa

Social education in the modern sense was used in 1944 as mass education by the Phelps – Stokes Report in East Africa. In 1947, UNESCO used the term to mean fundamental education. In Kenya, in 1964 the Kenya Education Commission used the term community development. Similarly, UNESCO later adopted community development, a term that was used in Britain.

In 1952, the Cambridge conference added to the confusion by using the word informal education. However, in 1962, the Second Commonwealth Education Conference held in New Delhi had used the word social education. Similarly, the third conference in Ottawa Canada in 1964 continued with the term social education (Cameron, 1970:116).

Economic Returns on Education

Modern economic returns to education are related to the social functions of education. In Africa, mainly in Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda and Zambia, the major characteristic has been that the higher the educational attainment, usually the higher the starting salary. Additionally, all earnings irrespective of the amount of education attained increase with age up to a maximum point, somewhere after

the age of forty. Similarly, the higher the educational attainment, the steeper the curve of earnings in the early phases of working life, while the favourable differential of better educated people over less educated ones persists throughout (Ansu, 1984:36).

However, functional as well as dysfunctional aspects of the society's dominant culture, innovation, functions, political function as well as economic functions were other determinants in investing in education. Dr. Ludwig Krapf, an early German missionary on the East African Coast, noted that the first pupils at Rabai Mpya near Mombasa, Kenya wished to be paid by the missionaries for attending school. However, it was not long before the advantages of modern education were clear to most people.

Most African parents perceive the value of their children's education in similar terms. In North Mara District in Tanzania, both affluent and poor parents wanted their children to complete secondary schooling for better occupational opportunities. In Uganda, a majority of the Baganda said education was an investment that would help their sons obtain good jobs and daughters fetch a high bride wealth.

For the Lunda – Ndembu boy in Zambia, the purpose of education was for the interactive job of the clerk while for the Gusii of Kenya, there were various material benefits of education to them education was passed into the realm of mythology. It was said that ‘mushrooms’, that is, white people, would later come into the land; the young were therefore encouraged to learn (be educated) and earn many shillings or white mushrooms.

On the whole, the expectations of parents from their children’s education were realistic and were confirmed by various studies in Africa seeking to correlate the amount of education and personal earnings otherwise referred to as age-earnings profile. The countries surveyed were Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The major characteristics of investing in education were that:

- The higher the educational attainment usually the higher the starting salary.
- All earnings, irrespective of the amount of education attained increase with age up to a maximum point, somewhere after the age of forty.
- The higher the educational attainment, the steeper the curve of earnings in the early phases of working life.

- The favourable differential of better educated people over less educated ones persists throughout.

For instance in modern Zambia (North Rhodesia), private returns to education were as shown below.

Table VII: Private Returns in Northern Rhodesia in 1960s

Education	Monthly wage in shillings
Below standard 1	162
Standard I	168
Standard II	171
Standard III	174
Standard IV	188
Standard V	204
Standard VI	230
Above standard VII	316

Source: Jolly, 1969

In Kenya in the 1960s, factors that widened the difference in the private returns to investment in various levels of education were:

- Relatively larger increases of salaries allowed to university graduates as compared

to the rise granted to persons with lower educational attainment.

- The emergence of unemployment among secondary school leavers.
- The reduction in the average annual cost of all types of higher education as a consequence of a rapid expansion of enrollments.

The average private rate of returns to higher education in Kenya under the full subsidy system in 1971 showed that the private rate of returns for Form Four (IV) education was around 1.7 percent in contrast with about 30 percent which was the corresponding figure for university education. Private rate of returns to education in Kenya were very high compared to rates earned in the United Kingdom (UK) and United States of America (USA) among other countries.

Education and Nation Building

The theories of social organisation mainly by Emile Durkheim, a French sociologist, distinguished between societies of mechanical and

'organic' type. The former meant simple and undifferentiated and their members had similar attitudes, skills and lifestyles. A small nomadic group of hunters with very little specialisation of labour was an example of this type of society. Here each person mastered the same basic skills of hunting and the society survived because no single member was indispensable.

Summary of Key Socio-economic Activities

Curriculum in the indigenous education system depended on the mode of political and economic organisation of the society. In Benin, among the Lantana community, bead making was common among individuals while priests and other mediums were trained separately.

However, in Senegal among the Futo Toro, there was a caste system among the Mandinka people, with trades in blacksmiths, jewellers, tanners, tailors and griots or praise singers.

For the Chagga of Tanzania, initiative play was a major aspect of the community, while the Chamba of North Eastern Nigeria and the Akan of Ghana emphasised adult-centred learning. The

Chamba also had a conscious model of the ideal man and ideal woman.

The priests on the other hand, had a major role to play and some communities had doctors, and specialists in plants, roots and herbs. Among the Ndembu of North West Zambia, a doctor was the one who analysed the tasks. For the Yoruba people of North-West Nigeria a diviner or *babalawo* was supposed to forecast the future. The Poro people of Sierra Leone had magical secrecy which was said to merge the indigenous education and western education especially boys education. Therefore, the overall aim of indigenous education to them and other was to preserve culture, adapt the new generation to the future and that of the community (Ansu, 1984).

Similarly, economic activities among the Tlensi of Northern Ghana were organized on the basis of gender. For instance, boys had economic duties and related activities. In Nigeria, the Yoruba were more urbanised while the Fulani were pastoral. For the Dinka of Southern Sudan, morality and well-being were highly emphasised while in Mali the Dogon had a strong concern for the world view. Among the Ganda people of Uganda, the fa-

thers would teach their children appropriate manners and the knowledge of genealogical positions of different clansmanship through formal instruction.

Conclusion

Traditional African society had strong social homogeneity in that its members largely belonged to the same ethnic group and did not demonstrate much difference in wealth, privilege and power. Unlike modern industrial society, there was little room for social tension and conflict. Consequently, the educational system was little pressured by demands of contending strata and groups. Under such circumstances, the social structure shaped the pattern of education over a long period. The social pressure on education was thus latent and less fragmented.

The traditional society attached considerable importance to the sanctity of traditions. The culture transmitted in such a society remained largely unchanged and consequently the education system tended to be conservative (Ansu, 1984) Similarly, African indigenous education was supposed to be of reverence, self – control and silence and taken with courage, diligence in work and community (Mosha, 2000).

Kenya's Vision 2030 has three pillars: economic, social and political. The economic vision or pillar deals with five main areas, namely tourism promotion (mainly increasing resort sites and better marketing), increasing value in agriculture through good policy, fertilizer cost reduction and improving value gain, and land accessibility as well as its registration.

Further, the economic pillar envisions better and inclusive wholesale and retail trade and investment, infrastructure, training and wider global markets besides improvements in manufacturing for the regional market through niche products, for instance organic foods and beverages, by increasing local industries and raising the market share in the regional market.

On the other hand, business processing offshoring (BPO) in the Kenya's vision 2013 is also to be enhanced, just like traditional or indigenous crops as well as preserving of historical sites has been enshrined in it as a way to enhance the economic pillar. The African traditional heritage is also enhanced by tapping the resources in their traditional settlements and various forms of education.

The social pillar is also a major resource mainly in seven areas, including education and training, the health sector, water and sanitation, improving the environment, housing and urbanisation concerns, gender, youth and the vulnerable as well as equity and poverty elimination. Indigenous education emphasised all these as evidenced by the Mijikenda in the earlier discussion.

Finally, the political pillar has eight key areas. These include constitutional supremacy, sovereignty of the people, equality of citizens, national values, goals and ideology, viable political party system, public participation in governance, separation of powers and decentralisation. Among the guiding concerns are the rule of law, electoral and political processes, democracy and public service delivery, transparency and accountability as well as security, peace-building and conflict management.

In nut shell, the emphasis should be to encourage people to understand their cultural roots by rediscovering their positive traditional cultures and practices so as to take on what was good or rightful to enhance the rule of law since the law had a place for the aged, orphans, youth, widows and widowers of both genders. Further, planning

education for African development should be that supposed to enhance economic and overall manpower in all its perspectives (Jolly, 1969).

Kenya's Vision 2030 should be embraced through training in the entire economic, social and political pillar through traditional values. There is need for further research on specific values, foods, altitudes and other cultural dimensions as well as the rule of law and how these shape economic, social and political development in Kenya and other parts of Africa, other African nations and especially how the current economic integration blocks have followed the same pattern of the communities and their values.

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