

ABSTRACT

This study has as its main purpose, shedding light on an important issue of educational concern. The issue is the relationship between education and development. Our interest will mainly be focused on a philosophical search for an education that brings about more development in the African situation considering that the continent is largely considered underdeveloped. Underdevelopment as a concept refers to the lack of adequate productive capacity coupled with external domination and exploitation that are the characteristic feature of African economies. African economies are largely characterized by anti-rural policies that neglect the majority of people, sharpening class contradictions and relegation to the production of primary produce in the world economy. In this philosophical search, we shall concentrate on the Metaphysical as well as epistemological issues that we believe should form the basis for a relevant education for African development. Our argument is echoed in the idea that the current education in Africa is a victim of Western metaphysical and epistemological export that puts undue emphasis on science as ideology and hegemony. It is our thesis that there is need to shape education in Africa not according to western metaphysical and epistemological underpinnings as is currently the case, but domesticate it in order to capture the Africa value system, agency and creativity. There is need for the African people to preserve indigenous cultural values. Africans should be proud of their excellent social and cultural traditions in housing, clothes and food; in self help, corporation and solidarity. It is however important to note that in championing for a return to positive traditional values our thesis does not entail a nostalgic view of the past, nor an attempt to return to it. On the contrary, it means catering for real human needs using local materials, tools and manpower. It is self reliance and corporation versus consumerism and imported luxury (Suliman, 1990). In our view it is important that an education relevant to African development is that which incorporates a process of cultural restitution and indigenization. That for Africa to attain authentic development, as it were, then it should do so on its own terms with the interest and concern of ordinary Africans as a guiding principle in shaping her education based on an authentic African world view metaphysically and epistemologically. In subsequent chapters, we shall attempt a justification of whether such a view actually exists. Because our focus is on the relevant education for African development, a question of primary importance at this juncture would be the conception of education that we are going to adopt in this study. And for all reasons we shall make known later, we adopt Paulo Freires conception in which education is viewed as the inter subjective process of becoming critically aware of one's reality in a manner that leads to effective action upon it, _It is our position that this view of education would be most relevant when undertaking a study of education in Africa. In chapter one of this proposal we look at the metaphysical and Epistemological dimensions that this study will adopt in the philosophical search for the relevant education for African development. In terms of methodology, we have settled upon phenomenology and the critical approach. These two, we believe are the most relevant with regard to the conception of education that we have adopted. We shall attempt to justify this choice.