Identity and Ownership of Education in Africa Enlightened by Aboriginal Philosophy

Joseph Munyoki Mwinzi[1]

[1]Department of Educational Foundations, University of Nairobi, Kenya

Abstract

The systems of education in the world have adopted many philosophies of education that are either skewed toward change or committed to conservancy. African philosophy and African philosophy of education form an activity and a process which is context-sensitive, whereby the relativity factor defines the peculiarity of thinking about education. However, alien philosophies have permeated the systems of education in Africa. The fulcrum of this treatise is to initiate thought which is necessary to avert this contemporary situation facing education theory, policy, and practice in Africa by interleaving African ontology and epistemology to augment the systems of education. Additionally, this treatise brings to the frontline the essence of African thought in education. This treatise underlines that education that teaches the learner about learning is insufficient, because the focal point of such education is to draw its attention only to the essentials for the longevity of an alienated pedagogy itself as well as to perpetuate the supremacy of foreign influence.

Keywords: aboriginal, philosophy, education, identity, ownership

Author Note

Joseph Munyoki Mwinzi https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1771-219X
I have no known conflict of interest to disclose.
Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to: Joseph Munyoki Mwinzi, Department of Educational Foundations, University of Nairobi, Kenya. Email: joemwinzi@live.com

Identity and Ownership of Education in Africa Enlightened by Aboriginal Philosophy

The difficulties that confront many regions of the world are, critically, caused by a collapse of the systems designed to provide education. The impact of this crisis is more severe in sub-Saharan African countries, where the history of endorsed systems of education shows that most of them (systems of education) do not properly integrate the aspirations of African people. It is obvious that these systems of education are devoid of African ontology and epistemology. Accordingly, aboriginal African ontology and epistemology shape the basis of African philosophical perspectives that are not archaic, but active and ongoing, and inculcating African ontology and epistemology translates to epistemic African aboriginal identity, native epistemological framework, unique African philosophy, proficient knowledge-base, and necessary ideals for African society (Mutekwe, 2015, p. 1298). It is probable that alienated education systems emanate from educational disharmony and societal aspirations which are subsumed under the question of relevance to the people (Mwinzi, 2020, p. 118). Relevance of education is founded on identified regional and philosophical frameworks within the totality of a specified cultural locale, including validated realms of a given society (Mwinzi, 2020, p. 678).

The basis of philosophical implication in these systems of education focuses heavily on what is taught, how it is taught, and why it is taught, leading to the importance of understanding, respecting, and acknowledging aboriginal thought in the systems of education (Lebaka 2019, p. 65). An aboriginal African thought in the systems of education raises the necessity of reviewing the distinct principles endorsed in Africa, defining the place of African thought in the world, binding Africans together, and humanizing Africans (Lebaka 2019, p. 67). Therefore, guided by the third assertion regarding "why it is taught," the necessity for relevance tends to ascend to the front as implied in aboriginal African line of thought. Aboriginal African thought shapes the practicality of definite educational concepts, principles, and values. Similarly, aboriginal African thought in the systems of education introduces the

necessity of defining African philosophy and African philosophy of education. In this case, asking questions about concepts, seeking clarifications and distinctions, and opening up new conceptual space to support claims are means of engaging in philosophy, and any attempted definitions of philosophy tend to emanate from diversity of ideological orientations and backgrounds (Abakare, 2016, p. 5). Accordingly, many definitions point to the complexity of philosophy, while existent reality remains the subject matter of philosophy as immersed in the diversity and complexity of its manifestations (Abakare, 2016, p. 6).

Aspects of diversity and complexity define African ontology and epistemology as action-oriented, which points at enacting an activity of morally worthwhile resolve to realize an impartial feat. It is palpable that the developing an African philosophical perspective in education is an active process that adopts African incisiveness to assess observable and practical pedagogies guided by African metaphysical connectivity (Moyo & Hadebe, 2018, p. 87). Accordingly, aboriginal African philosophy in the systems of education is a strongly notable and riveted action which involves an incessant search for valid reasons. Aboriginal African philosophical thought in the systems of education in Africa identifies how education can provide solutions to some issues challenging the solidarity of the African continent. This explains why aboriginal African line of thought, defined by African ontology and epistemology in terms of ideas, way of life, values, and belief systems, is largely relevant and a fundamental instrument for evaluating education by providing a sense of native direction, self-identity, self-actualisation, the value of an African learner, and the precept of being-and-belonging in the systems of education (Moyo & Hadebe, 2018, p. 82). Integrating aboriginal African philosophical thought in the systems of education draws attention to an investigation of existential and continental problems while determining the educational implications of identified issues.

Aboriginal African thought can be inferred as a theoretical and pragmatic framework for human action in Africa and beyond. Aboriginal African framework is a form of human

action focusing on continental magnitude and adopting its pragmatic paradigm to shape the systems of education (Moyo & Hadebe, 2018, p. 88). The paradigm aforementioned by Moyo and Hadebe (2018) is a response to the substance of an African philosophical framework which is applicable in diverse realms of human interaction. This means that aboriginal African philosophy in education is reasonable in its articulations. Furthermore, aboriginal African thought provides a platform of clarifying the purpose of the systems of education in terms of its practicality. This is where aboriginal African philosophy in education demonstrates the facet of moral maturity. Another aspect of the educational paradigm of aboriginal African thought is the necessity of formulating meaningful tactics toward the systems of education guided by fundamental philosophical analysis, suitable themes, subjects, and instructive strategies. The suitability of aboriginal African thought in education ought to be attuned to a continuum where consensual and deliberative dialogue takes precedence.

Aboriginal African thinking in the systems of education is necessary to initiate context-sensitivity where that relativity factor defines the uniqueness of Africa. As part of aboriginal African perspective, education at all levels in Africa remains a central concern and ought to constitute the basis of collective welfare in its diversity. Thus, functional education has to ensue from the environment to resolve the formidable issues in the same milieu. However, it is glaring that the difficulties confronting many regions of the world are caused by a collapse of the systems designed to provide education to those milieus. Often the systems of education tend to exaggerate the zeal for objectivity and reliability instead of relevancy, value, and most importantly, understanding and application (Mwinzi, 2020, p. 118). A system of education which is responsive to the milieu should constitute the totality of the human faculty of that society as a combination of commonly held societal data, experiences, needs, and projections. Hence, what is generally deciphered is that worthwhile education grows out of the environment, and the learning process should be directly related to the pattern of life (Ndille, 2020, p. 33).

The critical cause of divergence is that in an African purview, education is viewed within the precincts of philosophical perspectives endorsed from global magnitude and diversity—not as a set of specializations, but as a collective responsibility. The taxonomy of aboriginal African thought forms a decisive and conceptual base for analyzing and categorizing the paradigm of the systems of education (Mswazie & Mudyahoto, 2013, p. 171). The gist of designing systems of education based on an aboriginal African perspective draws attention to the relevance of education within Africa. This concern occurs because the quest for relevance of the systems of education to be adapted to the realities of Africa has occupied successive generations (Mswazie & Mudyahoto, 2013, p. 170). As a collective responsibility, it implies that education is given everywhere, at any time, by all members of the community, and ought to be closely linked to the environment, directly related to the needs of society, consistent with the productive potential of individuals, and without excessive emphasis on developing acquisition of ideas or applying perceptions, but promoting a sense of being-and-belonging to the community. The implication is that an African-centered system of education should be of necessity, be constructed and time tested, and be guided by undistorted African ontology and epistemology (Mswazie & Mudyahoto, 2013, p. 172). Hence, the process of designing systems of education involves everyone, has a comprehensive character, and preserves societal equilibrium in all aspects of life. Therefore, any slants of the systems of education are grounded in African philosophical perspectives and aligned to the content domains of African purposive ends (Mswazie & Mudyahoto, 2013, p. 175).

In the aboriginal context, the systems of education provide the learner with a sense of security, being-and-belonging, distinctiveness, connectedness, sensitivity, transformative authenticity, and identity processes. In a collective traction, the systems of education devised under aboriginal African ontology and epistemology encompass the values and mores that embody the best of Africa, such that education is not only perceived as a process of preparation, but also a cause of participation in life and work in order to reinvent, reshape, and

regenerate. This is the view that designates interpersonal relationships and the effort to be responsible in terms of unity and the worthwhile cause of communalism of humanity, i.e., unity of purpose (Akoma, 2008, p. 18). Although African education policy, theory, and practice represent a veritable subsystem of foreign systems of education aimed at training aboriginal elites, the essence of examining the impact of reintroducing crucial tenets of African ontology and epistemology in the systems of education in Africa is a practical pursuit (Mutekwe, 2015, p. 1299).

Objectives

(i) to interpret the dominant facets of aboriginal African thought

(ii) to assess the disparity challenging aboriginal African thought in the systems of education

(iii) to situate aboriginal African thought in education policy, theory, and practice

Methodology

This paper is routed and pegged on context-based strategy which is a method and technique established on the conviction that social context and milieu are the real causes that define the systems of education. The processes of learning and accessing knowledge, the perspective of deliberating that knowledge, and having a concrete and abstract framework are indispensable factors that shape the systems of education. Accordingly, aboriginal African thought is necessary to validate, generate, test, and apply context-based strategy to shape the systems of education. In all its incongruent formulae, a context-based strategy of learning harmonizes apparently divergent views not by resolving the paradoxes, but by selecting and blending what is useful and feasible for the purpose of attaining the desired ends (Ekanem, 2012, p. 55). In this case, aboriginal African thought injects knowledge within the context of the user (Owuor, 2007, p. 24). As a system of thought, aboriginal African philosophy constantly adapts to the dynamism of both abstract and empirical knowledge, as well as identifies with existential perspectives of changing social values. Therefore, African lived

experiences are essential theoretical entities derived from epistemological and ontological African foundations (Shizha, 2014, p. 1872).

The context-based methodological slant emanates from the conviction that learning is a social process and activity that is served within the milieu of its practice. However, in Africa, systems of education are not shaped by context-based framework, and this discrepancy is caused by ignoring the perspectives of aboriginal African thought, which is holistic and integrative in its paradigm (Ani, 2013, p. 308). In this case, aboriginal African thought serves as a method of inquiry where learning is estimated as a communal activity centered on the interactions between persons with substantial interests and standard structures. Hence, if aboriginal African thought is not used to guide and assess the systems of education, then existing education does not respond to the existential realities, and subsequently it inhibits the success of learning. Increasingly, there is a universal necessity in Africa for a shift toward identifying and considering the role of aboriginal African thought in the systems of education. A unique aspect of aboriginal African thought is the inevitability of diversity in acquisition of knowledge, as defined by the concepts of knowing, learning, instructing, teaching, and training. This tends to utilize, promote, and enhance awareness of aboriginal African philosophy by integrating various purviews as derived ontological and epistemological perspectives. Informed by this approach, this paper argues that aboriginal African thinking ought to permeate the systems of education in Africa.

Contextualizing Existential Standing of the Systems of Education in Africa

In its origin, philosophy emanates from the societal setting, and as such, African philosophy draws attention to contextual settings adhering to the defined African ontology and epistemology as reflected in moral and ethical values to address issues of societal concern (Lebaka 2019, p. 73). In Africa, the systems of education are alien to the aboriginal African philosophy. It is apparent that many African countries are currently experiencing this perilous crisis, and consequently, it has negative impacts on the systems of education in terms of

education theory, policy, and practice. Any attempt of creating identities in most African systems of education divulges intense contradictions, alternatives, trade-offs, and conflicts, whereby such conflicts, uncertainties, and contradictions lead to eccentric outcomes (Ndille, 2020, p. 39). The intensity of the negation of African thought in education escalated because the systems of education adapted tend to reflect diverse foreign influences, such that what is borrowed to shape African systems of education is alien to the aspirations of African people.

As an effort to minimize alienated perspectives from the systems of education in Africa, this treatise strongly avers that aboriginal thinking in education is a necessary undertaking and that it has a dominant role in the provision of education in Africa. The importance of aboriginal knowledge cannot be disputed, especially now that the world is facing a plethora of challenges which cannot all be solved by mainstream science or technology (Khumalo & Baloyi, 2017, p. 1). A corollary is that an aboriginal African philosophy retains a fundamental cause of generating systems of education founded on the ethical benchmark of African ontology and epistemology. Thus, the systems of education in Africa ought to escalate and internalize the actuality and knowledge as depicted in African aboriginal hought, which can contrive the essence of survival and sustenance of global communities (Khumalo & Baloyi, 2017, p. 1). In relation to ontology and epistemology in Africa, education has remained in a dilemma because it is compelled by an exogenously induced and internalized estimation of alienation, insufficiency, devaluation, and annihilation of African creativity, agency, and value system. Thus, aboriginal African thought is rarely considered as a prime benchmark to shape the systems of education in the African continent. It is questionable why most African countries endorse formal education whose content is still based on alien ontology and epistemology (Moyo & Hadebe, 2018, p. 82).

Subsequently, aboriginal African philosophy and education is shaped and informed by African ontology, epistemology, diversity, identity, connectivity, and adherence to moral standards. These moral standards are analogous to the idea of Lebaka (2019) who asserts that

African thought defines a cultural identity and permeates every facet of human endeavour. African aboriginal thought poses an impact on moral and ethical value systems in order to maintain successful upshots, sustenance, and retention of high standards within the society (Lebaka 2019, p. 74). Ontology and epistemology in Africa are also accompanied by the idea of diversity, but that is correspondingly defined by continuity. In this regard, aboriginal African philosophy is comprised of the uniqueness reserved to African culture and its systematic framework attained through the accumulation of informal and formal experiences and intimate adaption to the cultural setting. This treatise underscores that aboriginal African thought is accumulated and transmitted to individuals over time, owing to societal interaction. Simultaneously, the mode of transmitting aboriginal philosophy is linked to circumstances, experiences, observations, and testing, which might not necessarily apply to the laboratories.

The value and usability of aboriginal philosophy is generated by understanding, continued use, experience, and familiarity (Khumalo & Baloyi, 2017, p. 2). Aboriginal philosophy in the systems of education means that there are many different orientations in Africa, but in a similar thread, Africans persist in striving to continue. An anticipated problem is ameliorated on a holistic view of thought which presupposes a unity of experience, which is in tune with the African state of being founded on the assumption that reality depends on personal experience and the world has meaning, order, and unity by virtue of the lived experience. It is important to note that both the experiencing self, the object of experience, and the cluster of forces intervening in the act of thinking in Africa are governed by the law of causation or the principle of causality, i.e., cause-effect (Amaechi, 2014, p. 113). In this case, the idea of unity in diversity and continuity in variety has a significant basis in aboriginal African philosophy. According to Ezeanya (2015), "the one who pays the piper dictates the tune" and thus, rather than placing the emphasis on African aboriginal thinking in the systems of education, the focus has shifted in favor of the basics of foreign agendas in education theory, policy, and practice (2015, p. 5).

The contemporary systems of education in Africa are underrated and divorced from the centrality of aboriginal African thought as well as the context of Africa. Consequently, it is blatant that contemporary systems of education in Africa are withdrawn and isolated from indigenous knowledge, identity, methods, and content in the realm of sensitive propensity. The fulcrum of this discourse is to dispel this perception from the systems of education through a careful reconstruction and delineation of the meaning and nature of African thought in order to conceptualize and adopt the correct ontological and epistemological implications in education theory, policy, and practice (Amaechi, 2014, p. 108). There is an urgent need to integrate an aboriginal African purview as a model to guide African systems of education in order to generate learners who are properly shaped by native resolve and commitment.

African Diversity and Continuity

Africans are defined by diversity as it is reflected by uniqueness in terms of ethnicity. However, the nature of African existence emanates and culminates at the service of African unity in the sense that peculiar aspects such as are meant to augment communality. Thus, the element of peculiarity is meant to enhance communality which is equally informed by continuity in variety. These components of diversity and continuity of African aboriginal philosophy are identified as systems that serve as versatile and multifaceted means of acquiring knowledge (Ani, 2013, p. 298). Subsequently, diversity and continuity in Africa thought are social constructs determined by powerful and influential thinkers to provide a platform of blended space to support provisions of meaningful education (Ani, 2013, p. 302). In this respect, the stretch of African thinking as defined by diversity and continuity takes on a holistic approach that encompasses experiential, rational, pious, intuitive, symbolic, mythical, and emotional aspects of reality (Ani, 2013, p. 305). A solidity of diversity and continuity in African thought consolidates and propagates African values as a necessity of integrating continental aspirations to the progress and growth of the systems of education in the continent and beyond. All evidence points to a common origin and one destiny of humanity such that

the emotive response of an African is to recognize the subject and object in order to enter into an organic and dynamic relationship which culminates in the conscious apprehension of reality (Amaechi, 2014, p. 110). African thought as expressed in diversity and continuity is not a search for class struggle or fragmentation, but a means of promoting unity toward globalization. Even though Africa is diversely comprised, an African abandons subjective personality to become identified with the other, whereby the other, as per contingent orientation and outlook, attempts to study African epistemic systems, adopting African principles, concepts, and categories (Amaechi, 2014, p. 110). Consequently, that unity, continuity, and diversity cannot be based only on transient and imported systems, but has to include deeper values and norms rooted in ontology, rationality, and African belief systems.

African Ontology and Epistemology

The contemporary systems of education and inherent curricula are largely a reflection of foreign worldviews, which is a fragmentary disconnect from African realities, including lived experiences and aspirations. However, African realities as identified in experiences and aspirations endorse a distinct African epistemology as a crucial point of contextualizing knowledge and rationality in the systems of education in Africa. Similarly, it is sensible to underline that philosophical ideas and insights arise out of history and ontology, but once the ontological facet is omitted there is a prospect of being scuttled in aligning intellectual views, ideas, and values within education theory, policy, and practice (Amaechi, 2014, p. 114). It is palpable that most of the systems of education in Africa are framed within the hegemony of an alien epistemic canon that attributes knowledge to those foreign perspectives. On the contrary, it is necessary to acknowledge that education which is estranged from the milieu of its provision is not adequate to resolve that milieu's existential issues and thus, an African-oriented epistemology and education system are vital and worthy of academic pursuit. In the contemporary era, African ontological values and systems cannot warrant negotiations but integration into the present global and domestic realities of the continent (Ani, 2013, p. 316).

In an African context, epistemology and knowledge are analogous to wisdom. This means that an African scholar may not only seek solutions from an empirical and pragmatic knowledge-base derived from scientific inquiry, but also from the assimilation of wisdom from multidimensional perspectives, which is a central component in academic pursuit within the systems of education in Africa (Ani, 2013, p. 306). Conversely, integrating value from African ontology and epistemology is still a missing link in the systems of education that continues to create unnecessary partiality about the cause and tenure of universal knowledge.

African Existential Connectivity

African society is a corporeal network of relations comparable to the diversity of the parts of an organism. This existential connectivity of being in Africa creates a conclusive and decipherable reality of being-and-belonging. The essence of being-and-belonging in Africa spells out certain values, experiences, and characteristics which resonates in the uniqueness of African epistemology (Amaechi, 2014, p. 114). An individual in an African society can, however, possess a personal space which is necessary to affirm the state of one's own being, possession of thinking potential, potency to advance subjective proficiencies, originality, or personal propensities, but only within the society, and in union with others. Therefore, this idea of an African communality is propelled by the quest to internalize the uniqueness of African ontology and epistemology (Waghid, 2016, p. 13). In a parallel strain, a sense of commonality remains a central component in aboriginal African epistemology (Higgs, 2010, p. 2415). As derived from aboriginal African epistemology, it is palpable that an African finds full dimension in a community. It is within a community that such values as solidarity, togetherness, strong family ties, and connectivity are displayed. This is an omitted link in the theory, policy, and practice in the systems of education in Africa and it explains why African systems of thought are not present and cannot be made explicit within the framework of their own rationality. A glaring discrepancy is that aboriginal African epistemology has been adversely evaluated and that the processes used relate to theories and strategies whose

constraints, rules, and systems of operation suppose a non-African epistemological locus (Letseka, 2013, p. 5). An idea of being-and-belonging, or connectivity, is inherently a network of relations stretching out in a vertical and horizontal manner and in a hierarchical order. The essence of being-and-belonging concentrates on the values of human dignity and frames human rights in a general application of limited but strong concepts such as permissible, reasonable, justifiable, etc., while ratifying essential content (Letseka, 2013, p. 1). Thus, being-and-belonging is a dynamic merger of existence defined by an aboriginal and analogical African ontology and epistemology. This is a vivifying principle for communal stability, as a philosophy focused on collectiveness and practicality and contingent upon relevance. Aboriginal African ontology and epistemology aims at drawing attention to actuality, potentiality, and becoming, such that an African philosophical view in the systems of education in Africa is foreseen to progress a conception of education that can contribute towards imaginative, deliberative, alignment, and responsibility as per the dynamics of being-and-belonging in Africa (Waghid, 2014, p. 270).

African Moral Sensitivity

The authenticity of being-and-belonging as it resonates in aboriginal African ontology and epistemology is deeply defined further within the precincts of ethical maturity and moral sensitivity. Any conception of an African has the notion of a certain propensity toward ethical maturity, sensitivity, and competence annexed to it. According to African ontology and epistemology, a person in Africa is defined by vibrancy, destiny, and uniqueness. In this case, the enterprise of African ontology and epistemology is to examine and enhance an understanding and acceptance of the basic concepts and values that expand moral sensitivity. The uniqueness of the ethical maturity and moral sensitivity of every African positively augments the totality of communal relativity as it is deduced from exemplary commitment to duty, a sense of responsibility, communal refinement, and stability (Waghid, 2014, p. 8). By extension, moral maturity in African ontology and epistemology is an instructive component

of social fiber. As a filament of social fiber, moral maturity is indispensable in the education of an African. Education consists in initiating others into activities and modes of conduct and thought which have standards written into them, by reference to which it is possible to act, think, and feel with varying degrees of skill, relevance, and taste (Letseka, 2013, p. 25). Therefore, in African ontology and epistemology, an individual learns best within a social context. African ontology and epistemology is often noted for being a communal venture that serves as a platform to enable individuals to look forward in their thinking and backward to thread their thoughts to the wisdom strands of the community. In an African perspective, the uniqueness of ethical maturity and moral sensitivity as expressed in moral duty and responsibility remains the basis of absolute loyalty. African ontology and epistemology emphasizes the necessity of producing versatile individuals, but this is omitted in education theory, policy, and practice. A glaring problem facing the systems of education is to produce individuals in whom reason is properly developed, who care about the theoretical life, who are not side-tracked by subjectivism, who know fully what they want, and who have the strength of character to carry it through (Letseka, 2013, p. 26).

Aboriginal African ontology and epistemology that influences education is not only corroborated by the validity of statements, but by the creativity, procedures, and above all the authenticity emanating from an African mind and heart, which comes from moral sensitivity. Aboriginal African ontological and epistemological discourse has a very strong leaning toward an ethical pursuit of producing balanced individuals as per the obliged interest of the community (Waghid, 2016, p. 14). The veracity and accuracy of the mind and heart substantiate the lucidity and causes required to validate the relevance and stability of the systems of education in Africa. Thus, African ontology and epistemology transcend mere logic but, can equally occur in narratives or experiences found in the existence and proliferation of perceptions and beliefs (Waghid, 2014, p. 7).

African Transformative Cause

African ontology and epistemology in the systems of education should serve as an activity which culminates in initiating functional processes. Accordingly, African ideas are the most fundamental realities which can make sense of the world, of reality, of social life, and of human beings in Africa and for Africans (Letseka, 2013, p. 42). In Africa, aboriginal African thought as revealed in African ontology and epistemology is a medium offering an enactment of constructing and reconstructing possibilities. As a prospect, aboriginal African thought is envisaged to acquaint the systems of education with functional and preparational strands in order to initiate African thought and action in education. Thus, in African philosophical discourse, the authenticity of an ethical life rotates on a transformative cause in order to advance morality and humanity within the continent (Waghid, 2016, p. 15). Aboriginal African ontology and epistemology mislaid in the systems of education in Africa draws attention to a need for change. It is therefore critical that African aboriginal philosophy cannot be dispensed in education theory, policy, and practice in the systems of education in Africa.

African Authenticity and Identity

The notions of authenticity and identity are central to the understanding of self and the relation of that self to the rest of reality. In Africa, the dominant approaches to individual identity previously considered as authoritative can fully satisfy the complexity of what it means to be African (Forster, 2010, p. 2). Aboriginal African ontology and epistemology emphasize the significance of authentic identity. Accordingly, survival in Africa lies in the ability to operate within an African frame of reference based upon a proven value system that incorporates a sense of African responsibility (Shockley & Cleveland, 2011, p. 57). African philosophical discourse highlights the necessity of understanding and identifying with the rhythm of nature rather than manipulating nature. Hence, enlightened by aboriginal African ontology and epistemology, this treatise insists that physical reality is not a number of separate, self-contained static objects, which form the sum of the total of their meaning and

identity, but rather a dynamic whole in a constant state of change which is simply an explication of the undivided continuum that is in a perpetual state of flux (Forster, 2010, p. 2). In a parallel scope, an African identifies with community, but not in isolation, such that a meaningful focus of the African systems of education has to emanate from and assimilate the native ways of knowing and customize creativity and dynamic aspects in relation to the natural environment (Mawere, 2015, p. 59). African ethical observances are fundamental, but though all human beings are supposed to be borrowers, some specific traits of originality, identity, and authenticity tend to suggest that an understanding of the African mode of knowledge should be observed when designing the systems of education to match the background of African ontology and epistemology (Amaechi, 2014, p. 109). In this case, authenticity and veracity of African identity in terms of being, thinking, knowledge, philosophy, education etc. are necessary to inform the systems of education. An authentic reflection of Africa in the systems of education has to integrate the components of intangible heritage acquired from social values to insert alien knowledge within the fundamental facets of existing knowledge and its ways of knowing and practices (Mawere, 2015, p. 60). Therefore, a conscious orientation is central to all Africans who are involved in the task of endorsing and proliferating the uniqueness of African identity. African authenticity and identity support the continuity of sharing diverse ideas, perspectives, and opinions for the sake of harmony, and for the inevitable betterment of humanity. A system of education which is formulated to serve Africa ought to emulate this continuity of sharing rather than competition. Aboriginal African ideologies, conceptual frameworks, and imperatives are the main ingredients of African philosophical perspectives that are required to inform education theory, policy, and practice. In other words, the concepts of authenticity and identity create the background that defines African values, and the adoption and transmission of those values (Shockley & Cleveland, 2011, p. 56). Awareness of African authenticity and identity ought to

be central in the systems of education in Africa, and should inform reforms in education theory, policy, and practice.

Integrating Aboriginal African Thought in Education

The nature of a philosophy is the style of its persistent and dominant orientation, an imperative character of philosophy which evaluates extraordinary things using ordinary terms such as "believe" and "knowledge," "cause" and "effect," "explanation" and "substantiation," "space" and "time," "language" and "meaning," "truth" and "perception," "art" and "science," "religion" and "reason," etc. The value of philosophy is to seek, identify, and evaluate the lenses through which experiences are constructed (Stabley, 2010, p. 44). The rationale is that the philosophy of a people always aligns with societal aspirations, and such aspirations must presuppose a certain minimum of organic relationships among their elements. Consequently, integrating philosophy into the events adjacent to human enterprise implies reflecting on the nature of reality as it is radiated from experience (Bhatt, 2011, p. 39). A tradition of philosophy is identifiable in terms of the innermost essence of the intellectual pulse within which it is produced. However, any system detached from its ontological and epistemological framework lacks constitutive relevance of experience, and this is a glaring incongruity in the systems of education in Africa. In a parallel strand, the contingency of aboriginal African philosophy in education is to provide a paradigm of critical engagement with the systems of education in order to initiate a liberating potentiality shaped by situational discourse. An African philosophy has a threefold basis of consideration: mental, spiritual, and reasonable abstraction applied in human action and interaction within the context of African ontology, epistemology and experience introduces incorporeal perspective of African reality (Ekanem, 2012, p. 56). Accordingly, abstract arguments, hilarious rhetoric, and malicious propositions are neither relevant nor compelling in aboriginal African philosophical discourse. A leading aspect of rational discourse or abstract justification that is acceptable in Africa has to be a proposal toward collective results, which ought to be integrated in African systems of

education. Aboriginal African thought that upholds African conventions is a compelling facet to shape the systems of education in Africa. An inclusive trend is that provision and development of knowledge anywhere is naturally cultural and historical. It is determined to a great extent by the social context emanating from interaction informed by the ontology and epistemology of a people (Ekanem, 2012, p. 56). Thus, aboriginal African thought which should inform the systems of education in Africa has to provide the facets of coherence and consistency. This puts knowledge production and sharing at both communal and universal levels in its cultural context by involving the community knowledge holders as producers and users at the core that defines the systems of education (Kaya & Seleti, 2013, p. 41). Accordingly, the systems of education in Africa have failed to embrace the aboriginal African thought. A crucial cause of the missing link of aboriginal African thought in the systems of education is that the learners are only partially prepared to align their education with the existential challenges, and in this case, internalize the holistic nature of African ontological and epistemological underpinnings (Kaya & Seleti, 2013, p. 41). A significant trait of African ontology, and by extension epistemology, is inter-subjectivity, which refers to shared dignity. This transcends a functional relationship to espouse active engagement in horizontal relationships that shapes the true identity of an African. Thus, true identity is not only based on the tasks or roles of the individuals, but communal objectivity. Communal objectivity consists of a resilient relationship of dignity and respect that ratifies human individuality as an ontological fact and an analytic finitude and that ascribes ontological primacy in the African milieu (Forster, 2010, p. 9). Therefore, negation of this connection is the cause of opposing identities and limitations facing the systems of education in Africa. A system of education that lacks ingrained identity cannot serve the societal needs that it purports to address. Accordingly, this paper underlines that the aim of aboriginal African philosophy is so rich in terms of its communalism, functionalism, preparationism, perennialism, and

comprehensiveness, that it should be transmitted to the systems of education which are currently directed by foreign interests and uninterested in supporting an African identity

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is essential to underline that African systems of thought are rational if one understands why they are held and logical if one understands the premises on which they emanate from. It is fundamental to postulate that systems of education designed by alien philosophies do not serve the goals of societal initiatives. In Africa, alien systems of education should be retracted to integrate the richness of diversity and experience of African ontology and epistemology into the African systems of education. A meaningful system of education in Africa has to consider Africans' individual and collective identity which emanates from deeper values and norms rooted in the ontology, epistemology, and belief systems of Africa. Thus, a basic mode of cognition derived from the ontology and epistemology enables learners to know themselves and their world. Aboriginal African thinking in the systems of education is comparable to a corporeal reality which animates and supports the expressions of education theory, policy, and practice in Africa. As derived from aboriginal African ontology and epistemology, the systems of education are reflected throughout African contexts, methods, and expressions. This treatise construes that there is a need for new structures, new foundations, and new realities in the contemporary philosophy of education in Africa. This is the backdrop whose key collective outlook of aboriginal African thought as derived from African ontology and epistemology is a consistent and pragmatic statement about the nature and value of education in Africa. Accordingly, the effectiveness of the systems of education in Africa requires aboriginal relevance in pedagogy so that education will (i) explore existential deficits, (ii) examine learner achievement while maintaining identity, and (iii) assess discrepancies within the systems of education and societal structures (Shockley & Cleveland, 2011, p. 59). Therefore, this article concludes that the systems of education in African cannot thrive devoid of aboriginal African philosophy in

educational enterprises, which are necessary to establish the existential values and consistency that are unattainable from alien structures.

References

Abakare, C. O. & Okeke, V. C. (2016). Philosophy in contemporary time: Relevance versus public perception. *Mgbakoigba, Journal of African Studies*, *6*(1), 1-14.

Akoma, E. (2008). *African centered curriculum and teacher efficacy: Contributors to African American student achievement.* [Unpublished Doctoral Thesis]. Georgia State University.

Amaechi, U. (2014). The rationale for an African epistemology: A critical examination of the Igbo views on knowledge, belief, and justification. *Canadian Social Science*, *10*(3), 108-117.

Ani, N. (2013). Appraisal of African epistemology in the global system. *Alternation*, *20*(1), 295-320.

Chika, E. (2019). *Indigenous Knowledge and Education in Africa*. Springer Singapore.

Ekanem, F. (2012). On the ontology of African philosophy. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, *1*(1), 54-58.

Forster, D. (2010). A generous ontology: Identity as a process of intersubjective discovery – An African theological contribution. *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies*, *66*(1), 1-12.

Higgs, P. (2010). Towards an indigenous African epistemology of community in education research. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *2*(1), 2414-2421.

Kaya, H. & Seleti, Y. (2013). African indigenous knowledge systems and relevance of higher education in South Africa. *The International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives*, *12*(1), 30-44.

Khumalo, N. B. & Baloyi, C. (2017). African indigenous knowledge: An underutilised and neglected resource for development. *Library Philosophy and Practice*, 1-15.

Lebaka, M. (2019). The societal value of art and music in the Bapedi culture and the implications for music in healing as a cultural phenomenon. *European Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*, *4*(3), 64-76.

Letseka, M. (2013). Understanding of African philosophy through philosophy for children (P4C). *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, *4*(14), 745-753.

Mawere, M. (2015), Indigenous knowledge and public education in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Africa Spectrum*, *50*(2), 57-71.

Moyo, L., & Hadebe, L. (2018). Inclusion of African philosophy in contemporary African education systems as a key philosophical orientation in teacher training and educational ideology. *European Journal of Education Studies*, *4*(1), 81-94.

Mswazie, J., & Mudyahoto, T. (2013). Africanizing the curriculum: An adaptive framework for reforming African education systems. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies*, *4*(1), 170-177.

Mutekwe, E. (2015). Towards an Africa philosophy of education for indigenous knowledge systems in Africa. *Creative Education*, (6), 1294-1305.

Mwinzi, J. (2020). Injecting new perspective, meaning and relevance into the philosophy of education. *International Dialogues on Education: Past and Present*, *7*(2), 117-129.

Ndille, R. (2020). Reflecting on a 'waltz-time' project: efforts, contentions and new challenges in the Africanization of education. *Developing Country Studies*, *10*(4), 32-44.

Owuor, J. (2007). Integrating African indigenous knowledge in Kenya's formal education system: The potential for sustainable development. *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Education*, *2*(2), 21-37.

Shizha, E. (2014). Rethinking contemporary Sub-Saharan African school knowledge: Restoring the indigenous African cultures. *International Journal for Cross-Disciplinary Subjects in Education*, *4*(1), 1870-1878.

Shockley, G., & Cleveland, D. (2011). Culture, power, and education: The philosophies and

pedagogy of African centered educators. *International Journal of Critical Pedagogy,*

3(3), 54-75.

Stabley, V. (2010). Philosophy as a Method of Inquiry. In Visions of Research in Music

Education, 16(3), pp. 44-54.

Waghid, Y. (2014). African philosophy of education as a response to human rights

violations: Cultivating *Ubuntu* as a virtue in religious education. *Journal for the Study*

of Religion, *27*(1), 267-282.

Waghid, Y. (2016). Knowledge(s), culture and African philosophy: An introduction.

Knowledge Cultures, 4(4), 11-17.