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Towards Decolonial Praxes in Critical Peace Education for Sustainable Futures

Vers des pratiques décoloniales dans l'éducation critique à la paix pour un avenir durable

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Vers des pratiques décoloniales dans l'éducation critique à la paix pour un avenir durable

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Abstract

This paper examines decolonial praxes in critical peace education using philosophical framework of African Conversational School. In the process, it examines: Conversational School of African Philosophy, critical peace education for sustainable futures, the importance of decolonial praxes, conceptual framework for critical peace education for sustainable future, Nigerian educational system and education policies of Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and African Union (AU). The paper theorizes that decolonial praxes in critical peace education should be pursued with a combination of local and global cultures (glocalization) for sustainable futures since both cultures have positive contributions to human life. Therefore, the conclusion and suggestions of this paper are partly based on this theoretical position. Introduction of decolonial critical peace education as a separate subject and as objectives in other subjects is the main suggestion and conclusion made.

Résumé

Cet article examine les pratiques décoloniales dans l'éducation critique à la paix en utilisant le cadre philosophique de l'École conversationnelle africaine. Pour ce faire, il examine : L'École conversationnelle de philosophie africaine, l'éducation critique à la paix pour un avenir durable, l'importance des pratiques décoloniales, le cadre conceptuel de l'éducation critique à la paix pour un avenir durable, le système éducatif nigérien et les politiques éducatives de la République fédérale du Nigéria (FRN – *abréviation anglaise*), de la Communauté économique des États de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (Cédéao) et de l'Union africaine (UA). L'article théorise que les pratiques décoloniales dans l'éducation critique à la paix devraient être poursuivies avec une double approche des cultures locales et globales (glocalisation) pour leur assurer un avenir durable puisque les deux cultures apportent des contributions positives à la vie humaine. Par conséquent, les conclusions et les suggestions de ce document sont en partie basées sur cette position théorique. L'introduction de l'éducation critique à la paix décoloniale en tant que matière distincte et en tant qu'objectifs dans d'autres matières en est la principale suggestion et conclusion.

Keywords: decolonization, critical peace education, ecological sustainability, sustainable futures, glocalization, Conversational School of African Philosophy

Mots clés : décolonisation, éducation critique à la paix, durabilité écologique, avenir durables, glocalisation, École conversationnelle de philosophie africaine

1. Introduction

This study in philosophy of education focuses on how critical peace education (CPE) may contribute towards sustainable futures (within the context of Nigerian education) through decolonial praxes in CPE relevant to Africa/Nigeria. Futures here do not only mean the times to come but also mean possible positive developments that can come with the futures, and these may be ecological, social, or economic. “Sustainable” means being right or worthwhile to be kept in existence. Sustainable futures therefore mean worthy futures. In clearer terms, sustainable futures involve invulnerable security, peaceful coexistence, tolerance, social justice, decolonial emancipation, ecological well-being, to name but a few. Invulnerable security of lives and properties can be achieved when individuals understand the importance of peace and embrace it. This is possible through CPE. CPE also fosters tolerance among people although not to the extent that people should be left to do the evils and unlawful acts as they like. Social justice involves equal treatment to all groups and individuals, and this treatment can foster peace among several people. Furthermore, the critical nature of CPE interrogates and eliminates the colonial constraints in different aspects of the lives of the ex-colonized people. This ensures decolonial emancipation. CPE also promotes ecological sustainability or well-being in which there is harmonious interaction between different organisms in the ecosystem and the physical environment.

The overall study will be grounded in Conversational School of African Philosophy (CSAP). Chimakonam (2015) argued that conversational philosophy is not mere informal dialogue but a philosophical reasoning in which critical and rigorous interrogation creatively unfolds new concepts from existing ones. CSAP (otherwise known as conversationalism) employs critical questioning using African mode of thought especially when African philosophers engage one another in critical debate. In this study, many Western, African (and other) scholars who have expressed their thoughts will be examined. Also, the ideas on peace education, decolonial praxes, sustainable futures (ecological, educational, and national), Nigerian education, and the interconnectedness among all these concepts, will be brought into critical and philosophical conversations. Bringing non-African philosophers into critical conversations with African philosophers to possibly unfold new concepts is reasonable and can still be considered African and within the framework of conversationalism since African philosophical conversations are founded on critical reasoning not just upon uncritical African ethnophilosophy. This had been done by Okoro (2013) where he brought the Japanese concept of *Inochi* by Eastern philosophers into conversation with African philosophers on the African ontology of life.

In line with the foregoing, Chimakonam (2015) opined further that conversationalism does not uncritically apply Western system of thinking in examining African issues, but it employs critical analysis not only to find faults but also to correct the faults by bringing new and adequate concepts from the old thesis. Because of its critical nature, conversationalism is universalizable. “The method called conversationalism aims at employing reason in identifying problems in the study of substantive issues and proffering solutions in the form of new syntheses” (Chimakonam, 2015, p. 24). Vest, as cited in Chimakonam (2015), discussed canons of conversationalism. “Critical conversation” is the first of these canons. The second of them is “transformative indigenization,” which means applying ideas on non-African issues to African context, as exemplified by Okoro (2013) in the Africanization of Japanese concept of *Inochi*. Third is “noetic re-Africanization,” which stipulates that an African who has been influenced by foreign culture should return to African critical philosophy and reconstruct their ideas based on African and non-African thoughts to form what Jahn (1961) called “neo-African culture.” Fourth is moderate decolonization, which means that ideas developed by the colonialists that are useful to Africa

should be harmonized with African decolonial ideas. In this study, the canons of critical conversation, transformative indigenization and moderate decolonization will be used for the exploration of decolonial praxes in CPE for sustainable futures.

Conversationalism is especially applicable in the discourse of CPE because it involves critical conversation or dialogue, which is also an approach in peacemaking, peace keeping and building. Also, the principle of transformative indigenization is justifiable in CPE discourse because the field encourages the adoption of indigenous ideas and practices that can ensure peace in different cultures. CPE also welcomes the integration of ideas and approaches from both ex-colonialists and the decolonized groups into peacemaking, peace keeping and building. This is moderate decolonization.

Section 1 introduces this study. Section 2 examines CPE for sustainable futures especially in terms of ecological sustainability. Section 3 focuses on the importance of decolonial praxes in Africa as a continent and Nigeria as a country. Section 4 deals with theory building and conceptual framework of decolonial praxes in CPE for sustainable futures. In Section 5, the researcher analyzes and critically interrogates Nigerian educational system in the light of conceptual framework developed in Section 4; relevant educational policies of African Union (AU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and Nigeria's national policy on education will be discussed in the course of analysis. Section 6 features conclusion and suggestions for possible futures through decolonial CPE for sustainable futures. The whole work will then be related to the conversationalism as a method of philosophy of education.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Discussion I: CPE

This section focuses on CPE for sustainable futures by examining the relationships between CPE and ecological sustainability. Before discussing CPE, it is necessary to first look at peace education. UNICEF (as cited in Fountain, 1999) described peace education as:

The process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behavior changes that will enable children, youths and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural, to resolve conflict peacefully; and to create conditions conducive to peace, whether at intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level. (p. 1)

Braham (2006) disclosed that peace education has such themes as anti-nuclearism, international understanding, environmental responsibility, communication skills, nonviolence, conflict resolution techniques, democracy, human right awareness, tolerance of diversity, coexistence, and gender equality. In addition, Murithi (2009) discussed African philosophy of Ubuntu as the ideal purposes of peace education. He described Ubuntu peace education as a process of promoting unity of humanity and resolving human common problems through empathy, sharing, and cooperation. West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) (2012) stated:

The West Africa sub-region continues to grapple with situations of violence that renders hostage entire communities and impedes growth and development across the sub region. While the causes of these acts of violence vary, it is evident that erosion of core social values within communities and a general lack of credible and responsible leaders to both prevent and effectively address these issues have contributed to the culture of violence that pertains ... Peace education seeks to provide young people with the knowledge and skills required to ensure the promotion of positive social life skills and attitudes that will help lead to a culture of non-violence and foster social cohesion. It is an empowering process that seeks to effect change through the development of personal non-violence capacities. It adopts a multicultural approach to changing both people and their communities. (p. 5)

Boko Haram insurgency which has taken place in Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger, and Chad, has mercilessly consumed 51,567 lives, and bombed many places (Adama, 2015). This terrorist act frightened both citizens and noncitizen residents in the affected parts of Africa. It was mostly considered physical while violence is not only physical, as noted by Galtung (1969). In Galtung's (1969) theory, violence is direct, structural, and cultural. Direct violence involves physical and psychological attacks on people; structural violence has to do with injustice in the political and economic structure of the society; while cultural violence is about traditional beliefs that aid direct and structural violence (Galtung, 1969). To eradicate direct and indirect violence, there is a need for peace education.

For peace education to be a tool for enhancing critical thinking about the reality of life in order to build capacity to transform global order, eradicate violence and injustice in the world (Reardon, 2009, 2012; Snauwaert, 2011; Reardon & Snauwaert, 2015), peace scholars have applied ideas and practices of critical pedagogy (Giroux, 2003; McLaren, 2003) and philosophies of social transformation (Hajir & Kester, 2020) to build a theoretical basis for CPE (Bajaj, 2008; Bajaj & Brantmeier, 2011; Trifonas & Wright, 2013; Zembylas & Beckerman, 2013). Primarily, CPE is an attempt to remove asymmetrical or uneven power relationships and analyze their political, economic, social, and historical foundations (Bajaj, 2015). CPE fortifies individuals with deeper insights into the factors that affect their lives, and ability to respond critically at both micro and macro levels (Bajaj, 2008). Other scholars asserted that CPE can only be genuine when it is cosmopolitan and mindful of the other (Wright, 2013; Hajir & Kester, 2020), so there is emphasis on interconnectedness of all life, international and intercultural understanding to tackle inequalities in the world (Brantmeier, 2013; Lum, 2013).

Brantmeier (2012) stressed that critical peace education has a function of protecting and sustaining ecosystem. Brantmeier stated:

Future generations will suffer if we are not mindful stewards of this beautiful planet. We need to replace our short-term greed with long-term sustainability in mind. Examining power and place for a sustainable future is necessary; the field of peace education, with a focus on understanding and alleviating various forms of violence through educative means, can contribute much to this critical, emancipatory project. Humans, as inseparable from nature, need to deconstruct power dynamics and understand the intricacies of place in order to conserve and to protect ecosystems from which they derive sustenance. We have the power to choose status quo and the power to choose change. (p. 242)

He continued to state that ecological crises (such as unstable nuclear power plant in Japan in 2011 as a result of earthquake and tsunami damage) have been a product of human, technological, and environmental factors. Orr (1994) noted that the determinants of our future health and prosperity are in danger. These determinants include climate stability, the resilience, productivity and beauty of the natural systems, and biological diversity. Cato (2009) put that "sustainability" can be defined from ecological, social and economic dimensions, while Brantmeier (2012) argued that social sustainability (human interrelationships) should be of prime focus. In this regard, he stated:

Human relationships to the land and use of the land are intricately connected to the viability, health, and longevity of natural ecosystems. If we are to reduce various forms of violence, including ecological violence, we need to focus on those who are arguably doing the most damage—human beings. (P. 243)

Ecological sustainability can be described in a narrow sense as the protection of natural ecosystem. In this sense, there can be a need to talk about other forms of sustainability such as economic,

political, social, philosophic, etc. But in the broad sense of ecological sustainability, it encompasses all other forms as they all exist within the environment. In a broad description, ecological sustainability involves:

A means of configuring civilization and human activity so that society, its members and economies are able to meet their needs and express their greatest potential in the present, while preserving biodiversity and natural ecosystems, planning and acting for the ability to maintain these ideals for future generations. (“Sustainability,” 2020)

The submission of the scholars indicates that there is a need for CPE to produce peaceful humans who can promote peaceful and sustainable ecosystem. This is possible because humans are the most educable to the fellow humans, not land, sky, plants, animals, or other elements in the ecosystem. Brantmeier (2012) suggested a curriculum for peace education for ecological sustainability. He called this “Earth connections curriculum unit.” He summarized the focus of this curriculum as follows:

An earth connections curriculum unit would examine power, oppression, and marginalization and how that operates within the ecological places we reside. How we are connected, how we derive our very flesh and bones from the living earth is integral to an earth connections curriculum. An examination of the self in context of a living, breathing earth seems imperative for a shift in the way we live and relate to one another. (p. 252)

In line with this, Okoro (2013) argued that peace education curriculum should focus on the nucleus of existences which is life, referred to as *Inochi* in Japanese philosophy, and *Ndu* in Igbo ontology. He stated:

This idea is anchored on the African ‘Inochi’. ‘Inochi’ is a Japanese word for life and its equivalence is ‘Ndu’ in Igbo ontology. African Inochi embodies the idea of cosmic unity of all things and all beings. It underscores the sacredness of life and does not see life merely as material. The concept projects the idea of human responsibility, protection and care as it underscores the fact that all lives have a mono-origin. (p. 87)

Okoro asserted that the application of the concept of African *Inochi*, which underscores the importance and sacredness of life, in peace education may result in new world order in which peace will increase while conflict, crisis, and fear will diminish. In consonance with Okoro, Ansah (2000) described African philosophy of *Inochi* in his statements, “Africans recognize that all beings that exist are made of forces. The Africans believe that the force of the creator is present in creatures and in all things” (p. 2). Some of the non-African scholars (Cato, Brantmeier, Kester, Orr, etc.) and African philosophers (Okoro and Ansah) are similar in their struggle to end violence and bring peace. However, they differ in that non-Africans hold onto imminent realm of sustaining peace, while Africans transcend the imminent reality to God, cosmic unity of all beings, and mono-origin of all lives. The African position here is speculative. The position of this study here is that combination of both modes of thinking should be harmonized and applied in fostering sustainable peace.

Zembylas (2018) commented that Freirean theory and critical pedagogy on which CPE is built, has been challenged for eurocentrism and modernist ways of thinking which is contrary to decolonial praxes. For CPE to be complemented by decolonial and postcolonial praxes, CPE should recognize decolonization as one of its central themes. Before exploring in detail CPE in relation to decolonial praxes, the latter in the context of Africa/Nigeria will be examined.

3. Literature Review and Theoretical Discussion II: Decolonial Praxes

The importance of decolonial praxes in Africa in general, and in Nigeria in particular, will be put into philosophical conversation in this section. Colonialism is described as conquest and imposition of foreign rules on a geographical location (Brett, 1973). As Hobson (1938) stated, “Colonialism, in its best sense, is a natural overflow of nationality; its test is the power of colonists to transplant the civilization they represent to the new natural and social environment in which they find themselves” (p. 9). This shows that the colonists believed that their civilization should be the ideal way of life anywhere. This thought is fallacious because the colonized Africans have lived for a long time satisfying their local needs through their indigenous education, politics, economic understanding, and socialization. In the process of colonization, the colonizing powers also exploited the colonized people as noted in the definition given by the United States President J. F. Kennedy who stated, “Colonialism means the exploitation and subjugation of the weak by the powerful, of the many by the few, of the governed who have given no consent to be governed” (as cited in Aderemi, 2014, p. 12).

Enaifoghe (2019) posited that European invasion and slave trade has caused African underdevelopment. Able-bodied young men and women, who were meant to be the manpower for African development, were transported to Europe for slavery. The children of the transported enslaved Africans grew up without the knowledge of true history of their fathers, mothers, and progenitors. These innocent children were later colonized by the same slave masters who taught the African children new history (that is against the pride and honour of Africans). In West Africa, gold was massively stolen from the palace of Oba of Benin Kingdom in Nigeria, inclusive of the carving of the head of Oba during the Benin massacre. In an interview at Nebraska the former president of the United States, Donald Trump, passed a miserable comment that Africa should be recolonized, claiming that there is no shortcut to maturity (AfricaMetro, 2017). But Africans need to be decolonized and not recolonized (Enaifoghe, 2019). Enaifoghe complained that till now Africans are still mentally enslaved, and that this slavery of mind has to be corrected and removed through (authentic and indigenous) African education, civilization, and history. Colonization process is a life-threatening process that needs to be destroyed by a stronger opposing force called decolonization through political leadership, educational orientations, economic affairs, and the like. At the centre of all decolonization processes stands education.

Fanon (1967) defined decolonization as the efforts and processes by which the order of the world is changed, and the colonial influences are challenged. Mackinlay and Barney (2014) asserted that decolonization as a concept has two basic ideas: (i) historical narrative that resists Eurocentric ideas and praxes and acknowledges the contributions of the colonized people; and righting the wrongs of colonialism; and (ii) promotion of social justice to the populations enslaved and disempowered by persistent coloniality. Mignolo (2009) stressed that decolonial praxes imply practice of *epistemic disobedience* (called in this study “epistemic independence”) and avoidance of Eurocentric thoughts and consider the ideas and knowledges of the colonized people that have been marginalized and tagged uncivilized and barbarian. Mignolo (2011) argued that colonization comes with geopolitics of knowledge and specifically Eurocentric thought that regards other people as underdeveloped mentally and economically.

Decolonization is conceptualized as follows:

Addressing past injustices and the marginalisation of those who were colonised; highlighting the local versions of realities; seeing local history from local perspectives and not just from the perspectives of the colonisers and their allies; valuing indigenous languages and culture; and incorporating indigenous language and culture into the curriculum in a more meaningful and systematic manner. (Mampane et al., 2018, p. 4)

Mezirow (1997) suggested the ideal conditions for the success of decolonization. The conditions include availability and accessibility of detailed information to those participating in the decolonization process; freedom from coercion; equal opportunity; critical analysis of assumptions; empathy and openness to others' ways of thinking; synthesis of various views; and ability to make tentative best judgment to guide actions. The importance of decolonization in Africa and Nigeria is to maintain social justice for Africans, promote indigenous knowledge and culture, and facilitate unlimited development for the African continent. Aderemi (2014) submitted that when Nigeria attained membership in the United Nations in 1960 after its independence, the country began African decolonization movement against institutionalized racism that threatened Africa. The inaugural address of the first Nigerian prime minister, Sir Tafawa Balewa, delivered to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on October 7, 1960, captured the African decolonization dream by Nigeria. He stated, "Nigeria hopes to work with other African states for the progress of Africa and to assist in bringing all African territories into the state of responsible independence." To back this statement with action, Nigeria later provided military support to independence fighters in African countries like Guinea Bissau, Angola, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Namibia, Mozambique, Western Sahara, and South Africa. One of the decolonization objectives of Nigerians was to hold leadership position in Africa.

This study employs a principle of conversationalism called "moderate decolonization." The study suggests that African cultures should be harmonized with foreign cultures in the interest of African development and sustainable futures. It does not support extreme decolonization in which all foreign cultures will be avoided. This is because foreign cultures also have useful elements needed for African development. In line with this position, Mampane et al. (2018) argued that glocalization (otherwise known as "neo-African culture" by Jahn, 1961) has to be employed in the decolonization process. Glocalization is a concept formed from "global" and "local." It means the employment of foreign global culture and local culture to satisfy the local needs. Part of the foreign culture is modern technology which is now globally used. Glocalization encourages harmonization of different cultures, not just Western ones at the expense of others. In addition to the literature discussed above, the decolonization aspect of this study draws on the theories like postcolonial theories, critical race theory, Black feminist theory (Zembylas, 2018), and Dewey's theory of education which sees education as "continuous reconstruction or reorganisation of experience which adds to the meaning of experience, and which increases the ability to direct the course of subsequent experience" (Dewey, 1963; Akinpelu, 1984). Colonialism is the previous and undesirable experience which needs to be reconstructed especially through education for decolonization of Africa in general, and Nigeria in particular, so that ability to direct the futures sustainably can be increased. The sustainable futures include presence of peace and absence of direct, structural, cultural, and ecological violence, and this could be attained through *decolonial CPE for sustainable futures*.

4. Decolonial Praxes and CPE

This section discusses decolonial praxes in CPE for sustainable futures by building on Section 2 and Section 3. It also provides a conceptual framework of decolonial praxes in CPE for sustainable futures. Zembylas (2018) posited that decolonial approaches have been applied to pedagogy and curriculum at basic, post-basic, and tertiary levels of education. For instance, in prescribing decolonizing pedagogy, Tejeda et al. (2003) stated:

[It] must be guided by a conceptually dynamic worldview and a set of values that make it anticapitalist, antiracist, antisexist, and antihomophobic. It is informed by a theoretical heteroglossia that strategically utilizes theorizations and understandings from various fields and

conceptual frameworks to unmask the logics, workings, and effects of ... colonial domination, oppression, and exploitation in our contemporary contexts. (p. 21)

“Decolonial CPE” or decolonizing pedagogies in peace education refers to knowledge and practices that will force the colonialists to challenge their own coloniality in order to dismantle colonialism. Doing this requires building on decolonizing theories (such as postcolonial studies, critical race theory and Black feminist theory) to accommodate subjugated non-Eurocentric knowledge which includes history and culture of the colonized populations, such as Ubuntu peace education theory (Murithi, 2009). This is an intellectual shift from Eurocentric Freirean theory to decolonization. This will enable the learners to challenge coloniality and work through its unmaking (Zakharia, 2017; Zembylas, 2018). Subedi (2013) suggested three strategies for decolonization: anti-essentialism, contrapuntal reading, and ethical solidarity. Anti-essentialism involves critiquing the notion that European knowledge is the only existing knowledge (e.g., in peace and peace education) while emphasizing the contributions of other cultures and people to the development of knowledge. Contrapuntal reading focuses on the questions of colonialism and imperialism which have been neglected by some approaches in peace education. Decolonizing curriculum gives birth to new paradigm in peace education that historicizes notions of peace in the (post)colonial conditions and their entanglements with power structures. While ethical solidarity focuses on conceptualizing the questions of solidarity and emphasizes the need to engage in collective struggles across differences. All the objectives of peace education such as ecological sustainability, economic development, social progress, freedom, promotion of indigenous culture, nonviolence, conflict resolution, human rights, anti-nuclearism, communication skills, tolerance of diversity, democracy, gender equality (Braham, 2006), protection of life as the core of existence as posited in the African concept of *Inochi* (Okoro, 2013), critical, decolonizing and unbiased thinking, and justice should be pursued in the CPE for decolonization, otherwise called in this study, *decolonial CPE*, shortened to DCPE. This study also theorizes that DCPE should draw on the harmonization of foreign culture with local culture as far as this harmonization serves the interest of local environment such as Africa/Nigeria. There is nothing bad in the adoption of African strategy of peace building in Europe and vice versa as far as peace reigns in both continents.

This study opines that no part of the world should tarnish the epistemological, ontological, and ethical image of another as far as the practice of the people in one part does not threaten its own people nor the foreigners. Decolonization struggle through decolonial CPE (which is beyond Freirean theory-based peace education) should not turn to a situation where the decolonization scholars and activists employ wickedness and injustice in their struggle. If this is the case, the struggle ceases to be decolonization and becomes wicked selfishness. Further, this study argues that colonialism comes with its own benefits such as exposure to foreign culture (social, economic, political, ecological, moral, critical, etc.) which remains useful parts of curriculum for generations, and it serves as basis for a future critical discussion. This study adds that DCPE should continue to be more critical in its discourse by future thinkers as critique is an unending intellectual pursuit as far as there are imbalances in existence. There cannot be “too critical” (in the negative sense) in the intellectual advancement of the world. More, people of Africa and other parts of the world who engage in the decolonization struggle should examine their own indigenous culture and curriculum to destroy the inhumane and uncritical parts of it, and to improve the positive dimensions of it. For example, African culture of sacrificing human lives for ritual purposes, authoritarian style of parenting, poor education system, religious intolerance, dominance of husbands over wives, unjust wars by the powerful against the weak, uncritical and valueless beliefs

and practices, human trafficking which is another form of slavery, political corruption at traditional and modern levels, dangerous power struggle, overreliance on the inauthentic divination, and many more should be discarded. While a beautiful culture that involves cooperation and communitarianism, industriousness, discipline, transmission of useful indigenous knowledge and skills, and more, should be strengthened. This two-sided process is termed in this study “sanctification of decolonization” or “refinement of indigenous culture,” and should be featured in the DCPE if DCPE is for sustainable futures. And, since not only humans constitute the ecosystem, other animals, if possible, should be trained to exhibit peaceful behaviour to the best of their potentials. There is hope that if the arguments, theorizations, conceptualizations, and suggestions of this study and the previous studies in relation to decolonial praxes in CPE for sustainable futures are utilized; ecological, social, economic, political, moral, and philosophical sustainability can be attained in Nigeria, Africa, and other parts of the world.

5. Analysis of Education in Nigeria and Africa

This section features critical interrogation and analysis of Nigerian education in the light of the conceptual framework and theory building in Section 4. In the process, the relevant educational policies of AU, ECOWAS, and Federal Republic of Nigeria (National Policy on Education) will be put into conversation. Also, practice of education in Nigeria will be examined based on relevant previous research findings.

AU—Continental Level of Education in Africa

In the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA, 2016–2025), AU (2016) disclosed:

Africa is ushering into an era that most observers and pundits are predicting will determine its destiny as the continent of the future. But to fulfill this promised bright future, the continent has to come to terms with its education and training systems that are yet to fully shed the weight of its colonial legacy and its own tribulations as a relatively new political and economic entity and player in the world arena. In the bid to “create” a new African citizen who will be an effective change agent for the continent’s sustainable development as envisioned by the AU and its 2063 Agenda, the African Union Commission has developed an African comprehensive ten-year continental education strategy (CES). This strategy is driven by the desire to set up a “qualitative system of education and training to provide the African continent with efficient human resources adapted to African core values and therefore capable of achieving the vision and ambitions of the African Union. Those responsible for its implementation will be assigned to “reorient Africa’s education and training systems to meet the knowledge, competencies, skills, innovation and creativity required to nurture African core values and promote sustainable development at the national, sub-regional and continental levels. (p. 7)

Relating this AU’s view of Africa to decolonial praxes in CPE for sustainable futures, it can be seen that AU supports decolonization and embraces African core values to be promoted in African qualitative education for sustainable development in the continent. By implication, this can increase Africa’s self-reliance. Self-reliance as an African value and policy has been elucidated by Nyerere (1967), as he explained that self-reliance is not only about political and economic independence but also about the ability of people to develop themselves doing the right thing. For them to do this, they have to rely on their own intelligence, honesty, hard work, and dedicated leadership. Self-reliance is not a complete independence in which no aid will be received from the foreigners, but one in which national policies will not be bent. His philosophy of self-reliance is also applied to education.

AU (2016) stated the principles that guide the CESA 2016–2025 as follows:

1. Knowledge societies called for by Agenda 2063 are driven by skilled human capital; 2. Holistic, inclusive and equitable education with good conditions for lifelong learning is sine qua non for sustainable development; 3. Good governance, leadership and accountability in education management are paramount; 4. Harmonized education and training systems are essential for the realization of intra-Africa mobility and academic integration through regional cooperation; 5. Quality and relevant education, training and research are core for scientific and technological innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship; and 6. A healthy mind in a healthy body-physically and socio-psychologically fit and well fed learners. (p. 7)

Based on the above, knowledge, skills, equity, and access to inclusive education, science and technology, creativity, entrepreneurship, intellectual soundness (healthy mind), physical health and sustainable development are all values consistent with objectives of peace education. Good governance, leadership and accountability in education management which are to address structural violence (Galtung, 1969) in education are still consistent with the foci of CPE. The key issues in the 12 strategic objectives of the CESA stated by AU (2016) include revitalization of teaching profession; development of educational infrastructure and conducive learning environment to expand access to quality education; harnessing the capacity of ICT for proper managerial and training systems; improved completion rates at all levels of education; gender equity; eradication of illiteracy; promotion of scientific culture in the African society; improved technical and vocational education; restrengthening tertiary education, research and innovation; coalition of all education stakeholders for effective implementation in education. Among these objectives, AU also stated its commitment to peace education and conflict prevention at all levels of education and for all age groups as a means of reconstruction in Africa. The union stated that CESA is to:

- a. formulate national policies for peace education involving relevant ministries as well as representatives of civil societies and groups grounded in African values and mechanisms of conflict prevention and resolution;
- b. train teachers, social workers, security forces, representatives of religious organizations and civil societies as peace actors and mediators;
- c. develop and disseminate teaching and learning materials on peace education and organize periodic training sessions at schools, training institutions, universities and adult learning centers;
- d. capitalize on ongoing innovative peace building experiences in various African countries and networks and disseminate lessons learned; and
- e. reinforce the initiatives and activities of the Inter-country quality node on peace education which is a community of practice and a platform for policy dialogue and exchange of experiences. (p. 26)

Looking at the CESA objectives for peace, conflict prevention, and peace education, it is clear that AU supports peace education, sustainable development, and decolonization through indigenization or Africanization of peace education and peace movement. Moreover, CESA, by AU (2016), shows that peace education activities and other aspects of CESA are to address challenges facing Africa and African education in terms of limited access to education, poor management, lack of coherent curriculum and linkages, poor funding, poorly trained teachers, inadequate materials, inequalities, the present use of foreign language even at the pre-primary level, poor remuneration to teachers and other stakeholders, and so forth. If decolonial praxes in CPE are to enhance sustainable futures, it is necessary that the educational objectives spelt out in CESA be pursued in the decolonial CPE.

ECOWAS—Regional Level of Education in West Africa

To complement the efforts of AU at the continental level, education ministers of regional economic communities, such as ECOWAS in West Africa, will coordinate and cooperate in the implementation and evaluation of the CESA at the regional level. For example, in ECOWAS Protocol A/P3/1/03 on Education and Training, ECOWAS (n.d.) stated principles and objectives of education in West Africa which are not contrary to the AU's objectives. The principles are as follows: recognition of equality of all Member States; equitable participation, even distribution and mutual benefit from the proceeds of regional cooperation; optimal utilization of available expertise, institutions and other educational and training resources in the region for the purposes of ensuring sustained cooperation among the Member States; rejection of unproductive measures which only serve to undermine the effects of education and training policies at all levels; creation and promotion of specialized centres and centres of excellence in the region to provide high quality education and training and conduct research; promotion of the teaching and study of national and cross-border languages; and many others. These principles indicate equality, quality education and training, and promotion of African languages in education. All these resonate with decolonization for sustainable development through peace education. ECOWAS objectives of education and training include exchange of information among Member States on the present and projected education and training needs of West Africa; provision of resources for educational and regional development; implementation of comparable education and training policies, strategies and systems appropriate to the needs of the Member States; formulation of policies and strategies that allow participation of private sector and nongovernmental organizations in education and training; promotion of science and technology education; computer education; research and development; removal of obstacles to access to quality education in the Member States; and girl education at all levels—basic, post-basic, and tertiary. To comment on the above objectives, they are for sustainable futures through education. They are also to aid decolonial praxes since quality education exposes and liberates the mind to embrace useful parts of both indigenous and foreign cultures for sustainable development. This is adoption of moderate decolonization principle of conversationalism; it is also application of the concept of glocalization.

At policy and practice levels in West Africa and the entire Africa, there is no doubt that efforts are being made to enhance quality education, peaceful coexistence, decolonization through indigenous education, and sustainable futures. This is evident in the presence of schools, graduates, manpower, researchers, teachers, authors, pedagogical interactions, and many more. However, the expected level of educational productivity in terms of peaceful environment, practice of African culture, science and technological development, ecological sustainability, etc. is yet to be attained. Wars, dominant practice of foreign culture, overreliance on the scientific and technological expertise of the foreign nations, destruction of the environment, direct and indirect violence, etc.—all these are the proofs that education in Africa is not productive enough and fails to assure sustainable futures to Africans. So, there is a need to re-strategize for more decolonization, peace and sustainable futures through education. Having been through regional education in West Africa, the next step is to explore, question, and analyze Nigerian education.

Education at the National Level—Policy, Practice, and Product of Nigerian Education

Education ministers of the Member States are tasked with the responsibility of ensuring ownership, domestication, and implementation of CESA 2016–2025 according to their national strategies in education (AU, 2016). This is to ensure complementarity on the continental, regional, and national levels of education in Africa. Nigeria documents its national education strategy in its national

policy on education. In this section, critical interrogation and analysis of Nigerian education at policy, practice, and product levels in relation to *decolonial praxes in CPE for sustainable futures* will be the focus. The most important of the key themes in *decolonial praxes in CPE for sustainable futures*, which were discussed in Section 4 (theory building) will be examined in Nigerian education interrogatively and critically. The themes include decolonization, indigenization, peace, justice, equality, critical thinking and pedagogy, education, human rights, anti-capitalism, anti-racism, anti-sexism, sustainable futures (such as ecological sustainability) and development, communication skills, human rights, glocalization, reconstruction of local culture, training of animals for peaceful behaviour, etc. Nigerian education will also be examined by putting all the themes together to have decolonial praxes in CPE for sustainable futures. Questions that will direct the analysis include: Does Nigerian education feature decolonization at the policy, practice, and product (outcome) levels? Does Nigerian education feature peace at policy, practice, and product levels? Does Nigerian education promote sustainable futures at policy, practice, and product levels? Does Nigerian education promote critical thinking and critical pedagogy at policy, practice, and product levels? What are the challenges facing Nigerian education in realizing sustainable futures? These questions contain the themes outlined above.

In Nigeria's national policy on education, Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2013) stated that overall philosophy of Nigeria is to: "(a) live in harmony as one indivisible, indissoluble, democratic and sovereign nation founded on the principles of freedom, equality and justice; and (b) promote inter-African solidarity, and world peace through understanding." (p. 1) Democracy, sovereignty, freedom, equality, justice, and African solidarity are among constituents of decolonial praxes. Global peace through understanding is consistent with the aim of decolonial CPE that is beyond Freirean critical pedagogy criticized for eurocentrism. However, at practice and product levels, all these exist to some extent, but the country still experiences injustice, inequality, disunity among various groups (religious, ethnic, etc.) and violence of direct and indirect types in terms of unemployment, corruption, to name but a few. This is part of failure of Nigerian education. This shows that policy, practice, and product of Nigerian education are not fully integrated.

FRN (2013) also highlights the five main national goals of Nigeria, which have been endorsed as the necessary foundation for the National Policy on Education as the building of: "(a) a free and democratic society; (b) a just and egalitarian society; (c) a united, strong and self-reliant nation; (d) a great and dynamic economy; and (e) a land full of bright opportunities for all citizens" (p. 1). Self-reliance, dynamic economy, and bright opportunities for citizens are all parts of sustainable development, which can be attained through development-based peace education and decolonizing pedagogy. Unfortunately, Nigeria still *heavily* relies on other nations in terms of education, science and technology. The opportunities for citizens in terms of employment, free education (Eliasu, 2017), free healthcare, etc. are still very limited. This indicates gaps among policy, practice, and product of Nigerian education.

In addition, FRN (2013) outlined philosophy of education for Nigeria as follows:

- a. Education is an instrument for national development and social change; b. education is vital for the promotion of a progressive and united Nigeria; c. education maximizes the creative potentials and skills of the individual and self-fulfillment and general development of the society; d. education is compulsory and a right of every Nigerian irrespective of gender, social status, religion, ethnic background and any peculiar individual challenges; and e. education is to be qualitative, comprehensive, functional and relevant to the needs of the society. (p. 1)

In this educational philosophy, maximization of creativity and skills acquisition, compulsory education, equal educational opportunities for all, and qualitative need-based education are

promoted. All these are to facilitate sustainable futures. Looking at real situations in Nigeria, attainment of societal needs such as peace, justice, moral soundness, and sustainable development, is still limited. This shows that Nigerian education is yet to produce the outcomes desired in the policy.

The philosophy of education that provides the aims of education and goals derived from the philosophy, according to FRN (2013), include: “a. Development of the individual into a morally sound, patriotic and effective citizen; b. total integration of the individual into the immediate community, the Nigerian society and the world; c. provision of equal access to qualitative educational opportunities for all citizens at all levels of education, within and outside the formal school system; d. inculcation of national consciousness, values and national unity; and e. development of appropriate skills, mental, physical and social abilities and competencies to empower the individual to live in and contribute positively to the society.” (pp. 1–2) These goals emphasize patriotism, moral soundness, and active participation of citizens in enhancing sustainable progress of the nation. Corruption, which is prevalent in Nigeria, is sharply in contrast with patriotism. In other words, patriotic citizens do not engage in the corruption that will hinder sustainable futures of their own nation. In his research on perennialism in Nigerian education, Eliasu (2017) reported that moral development is promoted in Nigerian education to a little extent. However, there may be some patriotic citizens who stand as evidence of effectiveness of Nigerian education at policy, practice, and product levels.

FRN (2013) also stated that “in order to fully realize the goals of education in Nigeria and gain from its contribution to the national economy, government shall take necessary measure to ensure that: a. Educational activities shall be learner-centred for maximum self-development and self-fulfillment; b. teaching shall be practical, activity-based, experiential and IT supported; c. education shall be related to overall community needs; d. all tiers of government shall promote the establishment and support of Reading Clubs in schools, Community Libraries and other such resources that will enhance effective learning; e. special provisions and incentives shall be made for the study of sciences at each level of education system; f. continuing education shall be part and parcel of the education system; and g. every child shall be taught in the mother tongue or language of the immediate community for the first four years of Basic education. In addition, it is expected that every child shall learn one Nigerian language.” (p. 2) Relating education to the needs of the local community shows that Nigerian education is decolonized, not like colonial education that addresses the needs of the colonial masters. The use of mother tongue and learning of another local language in Nigerian education are also parts of indigenization. However, restricting the use of mother tongue to the first 4 years of basic education is not culturally good enough. In addition, Odeluyi (2017) reported that the use of mother tongue in Nigerian schools is discouraged to a large extent.

FRN (2013) also stated that “the quality of instruction at all levels of education shall be oriented towards inculcating the following values: a. Respect for the worth and dignity of the individual; b. faith in man’s ability to make rational decisions; c. moral and spiritual principles in interpersonal and human relations; d. shared responsibility for the common good of society; e. promotion of the physical, emotional and psychological development of all children; and f. acquisition of functional skills and competencies necessary for self-reliance.” (pp. 2–3) Respect for the worth of man is antithetical to colonialism but consistent with decolonization. Human’s ability to be rational means that man can use critical thinking which could be the product of critical pedagogy or basis for critical pedagogy. Eliasu (2017) reported that Nigerian education promotes rational thinking through the teaching and learning of rational subjects like mathematics and

philosophy. However, the position of this study is that the best evidence for nationally relevant critical thinking and pedagogy in the country's educational system is sustainable futures and developments of the nation. But Nigeria is still underdeveloped.

Succinct answers to the questions raised above are that decolonization, peace, critical thinking and pedagogy, and sustainable futures are promoted to a large extent in policy, but little extent on practice and product levels; the use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction for decolonization and indigenization is promoted to a little extent considering policy, practice, and product; and challenges that hinder sustainable development include corruption, lack of moral soundness, violence, etc. Having explored, interrogated, and analyzed Nigerian education in the light of *decolonial praxes in CPE for sustainable futures* to see its strengths and weaknesses, the next section is to make some suggestions for the correction of the weaknesses for sustainable futures.

6. Conclusions and Suggestions

The identified challenges in Nigerian education and society which include violence (including ecological violence), underdevelopment, moral decadence, insufficient decolonization, corruption, overreliance on the foreign expertise in the areas of education, science and technology; disunity; injustice, inequality, unproductive critical thinking, unemployment, lack of quality and sufficiently free education; absence of patriotism; unproductive education considering the unachieved society's needs; limited use of mother tongue, etc. may not facilitate sustainable futures for Nigerian education and society. In order to enhance sustainable futures, it is suggested that Nigerian education promotes of decolonial CPE as objectives and topics in various subjects, and also as a separate subject at all levels of education. Decolonial CPE as an independent discipline should be offered at the tertiary institutions. Several well-planned decolonial CPE seminars and conferences should be organized for teachers, students, counsellors, policymakers, parents, administrators, etc., using a variety of media to disseminate detailed information about violence and peace so that objectives of peace education can be achieved for sustainable futures in terms of ecological sustainability, protection of human rights, justice, equal opportunities to all citizens, free education, patriotism, decolonization, indigenization (including use of mother tongue with official language for communication among different ethnic groups, at all levels of education), critical thinking and pedagogy that lead to realization of the society's needs, economic development, moral competence, political probity, national self-reliance in education, science and technology, etc. It is suggested for the future researchers to conduct more intense and detailed research on DCPE with particular interests on African and other postcolonial countries.

This study in educational philosophy has been grounded in conversationalism. Throughout all sections, various conversations from various thinkers (including the researcher) and schools of Western, African, and other origins have been in operation. Conversationalist canons of critical conversation, transformative indigenization, and moderate decolonization have been employed. The whole study is an educational philosophy that argues for pursuit and possibility of sustainable futures through decolonial CPE. Therefore, the study concludes that decolonial CPE be promoted in Nigerian education for sustainable futures.

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