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A Struggle of Discourses Attempting to Transform a Peripatetic Mind of a Black African Academic: Is there a Valid Disquiet about Research and Education in Black Africa?

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Abstract
The education Black Africans receive is imported and the research they do is to test and validate foreign understandings that rarely commit to the African Indigenous Knowledge Systems. I have studied subjects that do not appear in my culture, and so had to emigrate to find work suitable to my studies. My mind thus became peripatetic being all along confronted by discourses that challenge my origins. Possibly, other Black Africans have endured similar challenges. So, there seems to be a valid disquiet about research in Black Africa. Some possible spaces to transform discourses to accommodate Black African paradigms are proposed.

Keywords: Discourse; Education; Research; Black Africa; Transformation

Introduction

This paper focuses on the author's experiences of the role of discourses in university education, in Africa and abroad, because it is the ultimate level that prepares professionals, and research for improvement of knowledge.

Forster (2006, 1) observes the idea that scholarly pursuit, insight, and wisdom originates in the West. In concert, Ditton (2007) notes the predominance of Western knowledge systems in epistemology. Africa is in other words inferior in those regards. In Africa, therefore, the question "*Whose Education is It*? (Muwanga-Zake, 2018) is valid. However, it is a conundrum that Black Africans are using Western knowledge systems to identify anomalies in the education systems of Black Africa. Of course, Western knowledge, paradigms, and discourses are useful, but, often, its proponents condescend with their intellectual and academic contempt of anything African, as their interest is, and has been all along, according to Higgs (2003, 11). The primary aim of Western systems is to perfect a Eurocentric philosophical discourse. Western technology and medicine, for example, has improved Black Africans and Asians. So, superfluous re-invention of wheels in Africa is not advocated. However, even the Western innovations require local discourses to be effectively improved upon and be implemented in Black Africa, in ways imaginably similar to how Asia develops from integrating local and Western discourses and philosophies. Thus, now China's and Japanese economies are catching up those of the USA and Europe.

Other continents promote own philosophies and knowledge. According to Philosophybasics.com, there are Indian, Chinese, Korean and Japanese philosophies. For example, Chinese philosophies include Confucianism, Taoism, Legalism, Buddhism and Mohism clearly explained, for example, in the *"I Ching"* (or "Book of Changes") dating to the late 9th Century B.C. Some ancient systems of cosmology and philosophy about the ideas of the dynamic balance of opposites, the evolution of events as a process, and acceptance of the inevitability of change are China-intrinsic. There are Middle East philosophies such as the Greek and Arabian, but these apparently relate closely to Western philosophies (Philosophybasics.com). Another developed block, Russia mostly rely on own knowledge systems. For example, some Russian and Western laws of electricity differ, but Russia was able to launch spacecraft ahead of the USA. Africa is lagging in development but fully tries to adopt Western knowledge systems. So, whatever could be wrong with African education systems must be related to the ways the Western knowledge systems are adopted in Africa.

On the contrary, in Africa, Mataire (2017) makes the following observation about African universities:

> What is the real problem behind *the* maladjustment of universities churning out thousands of "fit for purpose" graduates who fail to productively assimilate into the economy?
>
> Is it just about the broader economic challenges being experienced in most African countries or it's about the nature, form and content of the knowledge that is being imparted to students? Indeed, what is the philosophy of education prevalent in most post-colonial universities in Africa?

Mataire's debate entertains experiences and relates to peripatetic minds, possibly characteristics of a Black African academic struggling to find residence in a discourse.

The parade of qualifications (B.Ed.; BSc. M.Ed.; MSc.; PhD; PGCE; PGDE) against a Black African's name like mine impresses especially those without clues to the exact meaning, what the qualification holder does, and how useful such qualifications are to the African society. Such qualifications are obtained at exorbitant costs often way beyond the financial capacity of an average African and under flimsily funded and inadequately resourced educational institutions. Thus, Black Africans struggle to get qualifications. It is indeed additionally expectedly frustrating, that the social, philosophical and psychological fundamentals of

education are designed to transform one out of the social-ecological environments, to extent of emigrating to work in countries where the education is created and more relevant.

I studied science at university to quench my curiosity about phenomena. Poor pedagogy, right from primary school made me inquisitive about the pedagogical methodologies. So, I indulged into education, but this additionally interrogated why I had to be educated. Why an education anyway? This is the origin of my book chapter "*Whose Education is It*?" I found ICT novelties amusing and probable avenues to augment pedagogy and so I developed interest in Learning Technology. Now, my mind is in deeds, peripatetic still seeking knowledge and skills in different professional fields and working in many countries, leaving behind my indigenous knowledge and country. I know fellow Black academics with similar experiences.

Nevertheless, the uneducated also wonder why and how widely the 'educated' have wandered across the globe, continuously seeking academic and religious "truths" from anywhere beyond the African continent, mostly from the former colonisers.

Africans are to date taught how foreigners 'discovered' Africa, and named geographic features in there. This insult to Black Africa is evidence of the dearth of documented knowledge systems in Black Africa. Despite the old civilisations in Zimbabwe, Niger, South Africa and Egypt, neither Europeans, nor Black Africans mention any clear philosophy to date, except being lately amused by Egyptology. Thus, although Mataire (2017) outlines some African philosophy applicable to education, browsing for African philosophies returns minimal depth and breadth; it's almost a dead end. Higgs (2003) and Mataire (2017) limit their discussions to "African Philosophy". There is nothing of substance beyond African Philosophy, except Ubuntu, which some Eurocentrics claim, translates to ethnography. Black Africa has no written accounts of a philosophy to a level, for example, of positivism as a European philosophy. Indeed, Higgs (2003, 8) argues that Africa's colonial legacy confronts African philosophy with the problem of establishing its own unique African order of knowledge.

African philosophy is disputed even within Africa, is mainly linked to language, and at most considered a belief, without clarity of whether it refers to a specifically African theme or context (such as distinctively African perceptions of time, personhood, etc.), or just any philosophising carried out by Africans (or even people of African descent). Unsurprisingly, notable African philosophers such as Hountondji (1996) suggest that African epistemology is a myth, and recommend to Africans to adopt Western knowledge systems and philosophies, arguing that philosophy is academically universal, in a similar way a subject like physics is. Higgs (2003, 6) notes:

> … It would seem that the problem surrounding African philosophy is not the problem of anything meeting the criteria for being both "African" and "philosophical". Rather it is the problem of the extent to which African philosophers have been able to put their intellect in the service of the struggle and destiny of Africans. In other words, the issue is not that of whether a contributor to a debate is African-born or whether the question under consideration is authentically African in the cultural sense. It is not even the issue of whether what they are doing is pure philosophy, applied philosophy, ethno philosophy, social criticism or whatever.

"Central to the issue of philosophy in Africa is the question of relevance and usefulness" (Higgs, 2003. 11). I.e. how much economic and political power Africa has. Power is determined by knowledge production and academic discourses, over which unfortunately Africa has scarce control or in which Africa does not participate adequately or is wrongly represented. Without documented African education systems and philosophies, very few African journals of philosophy survive.

The dearth of African philosophies is consequential in negatively mitigating research and education in Africa. For a start, Black Africans are cursed to always dangle on to the popularised and internationalised paradigms and discourses, which they are hardly able to effectively apply for development. In academia, criticising the recognised discourses is punishable by academic failure and renders one jobless. Anyway, a minority venerate criticisms of Western knowledge systems in Africa. The majority Black Africans are already comfortably resident and employed by the Western knowledge systems.

Black Africans study harder to leave Africa but migration is difficult and untenable. Black African mobility is not really desirable within and beyond Africa. Educated Black Africans can accommodate and allow the immigration of non-African nationals but not fellow Africans from Africa. They have made laws (or introduced laws from their former colonial masters) that allow non-Africans even without visas to immigrate. Compare, for example, the visa requirements for a Black African to enter South Africa and the fact that a USA citizen (uneducated, poor, and without a known parentage) might not need a visa to enter South Africa. The visa requirements between African countries inhibits Anywanyu's (cited in Higgs, 2003, 7) ideology of commonality between Africans. Most of the interviews are conducted in former colonialist languages. Yet, visas relate to the perceived benefit a host country has of the imminent immigrant, and one measure is education. The visa filter permitting mainly desirable competencies assume that the visa applicant is conversant with the knowledge system of the potential host country. But more to that – visa applications request even the names, age and sometimes the tribe of the applicant's parents, spouse, the applicant's income or financial support (this requiring bank statements), etc. Thus, a visa applicant is made to feel inferior, beseeching and dehumanised, right from the time of applying for the visa, to the time of settling in the country. The question of why an immigrant wishes to settle in a country follows the immigrant, to the extent of causing xenophobia. The point though is that the inter-exchange of knowledge and skills and the creation of a common discourse and philosophy will be hard in Black Africa. After all, the boundaries for which visas are needed were created in and by Europe.

The academic system imparts a form of character by which the 'educated' can be identified. Exposure to the Western knowledge system leads to the adoption of some mannerisms some of which are incompatible with Black Africa. So, another casualty is the Black African identity. In this regard, 'research and education' continuously erode and dilute IKS and identity. Some educated Black Africans remain recognisable. Others are not that fortunate having been metamorphosed through intellectual osmosis, and do not wish to be recognised as Black Africans after graduating into Western epistemologies and ontologies. The new Western identity confers acceptance into the international Western social as well as academic community. Admittedly, educated Black Africans are accomplices in the genocide meted against their IKS.

In the abyss of the in-between the cultural alignments, there is a struggle between the Black culture against the foreignness of the academic life or rather foreign paradigms and discourses, which confuses many Black Africans. Expectedly, consequently, education has led Africans into addictions to Western lifestyles such as modernism. Modernism (as defined by Denzin cited in Lincoln and Denzin, 1994, 579) in Africa, fits Breton and Largent's (2000) thoughts about addiction to a paradigm. The addiction has led to manipulations to control social or academic advancement to modernism. The problem is that Black African academia ignore or suppress knowledge of its anomalies, as they comprehensively mutilate IKS (including culture). For example, scientists recommended the introduction of Nile perch (*Lates niloticus*) to Lake Victoria after 1954 up to 1963, but this caused an extinction of an estimated 200 species of *Haplochromis* and other indigenous fauna by the 1980s (Aloo, Njiru, Balirwa & Nyamweya, 2017). Many 'educated' Ugandans feared to oppose that erroneous scientific reasoning, which was politically supported then. Thus, paradigm addiction relate to ideology and politics (Robbotom and Hart 1993, 593).

Notably though, "culture affects us in the way we interact with our environment, influencing both how we construct it, and how we understand it" (Berger and Calabrese cited in Aneas and Sandin, 2009). Culture is a wedge between the African roots and the Western-based knowledge systems, for example in applying Western philosophies to research local contexts, and in agreement to Dodd (1997), cultural contexts explicitly or implicitly impregnate the events, experiences, and attitudes that form the objectives of research. As Vanyoro (2019) protests, "native" communities are researched and somehow their experiences are interpreted as perceived by Western-based academics. Interpreting uniquely Black African responses in Western terminologies is a challenge.

Another cultural challenge in academic discourse is language. Black Africans decipher foreign language codes to make sense of the research processes and literature. Black Africans are compelled to write and think in English. In concord, Tijssen's (2007, 314) notes that:

> It seems reasonable to assume that this performance is partly a cultural heritage from their English-language science systems that help sustain or enhance their visibility in English-language-dominated international research literature.

"Language and mental maps are cultural elements with which the researcher operates in the analysis and the construction of results" (Miguel cited in Aneas and Sandin, 2009). Current academic Western-based discourses iron out much of the Black African voices from the research and publications. Language, thus, impacts on subject formation as well as rationality, to the extent that foreign languages subjugate natives. How can Black Africans be trusted in their rationality (Vanyoror, 2019), if their experiences have to be translated into a foreign language? It is portentous that most of the Black languages are ineligible for epistemic processes.

Academia variously, for example through referencing, perpetuate the status quo. A budding academic must fall in line with the popular thinking, such as that of the academic journal, supervisor or vice chancellor. It is open knowledge that a candidate passes or staff is promoted easily if their dissertations cite the supervisors', VC's or lecturers' research, and the journal easily accepts to publish work that references its earlier articles. The academic system in Africa is closed within Western knowledge systems, which eliminates the most argumentative, sometimes very brilliant, Black African academics and students. The point here is that this kind of elimination is not as common in Western as it is in African education institutions. But then academia can be eccentrically conservative. So, there is an apparent misunderstanding in African institutions which leads to the loss of some valuable Black African academics and students.

Overall, however, the 'closed' Western academic establishment is not accommodative of critiques and discrepant findings. So, such critiques are rarely made vice-chancellors, and historicals such as Einstein were ultimately excommunicated. It seems that academia can annihilate the freedom of thought, and an open environment as perceived by Doll (1989, 246) and Ferguson (1982) is almost impossible. Robbotom and Hart (1993, 598) observe that although universities state a desire to inculcate freedom of thought and thesis among candidates, the freedom is annihilated by procedures that are instrumentalist in that the interpretation of research-based knowledge is from the academy to the researcher, and then to the researched. Truly, academia is:

> … "the Great Interpreter who has privileged access to meaning" plays the role of adjudicator of what is "really going on", while insisting that the truths uncovered lie outside the sphere of power. Willis (1980, 90) terms this claim of privileged externality, this assumed politically neutral position, a "covert positivism" in its tendencies toward objectification and distanced relationship between subject and object. (Dreyfus and Rainbow's views reported in Lather, 1991, 10)

The "truth" lie outside African paradigms (and Africa pays for it exorbitantly in foreign currencies in form of references, books and consultants). Divergent findings are blamed on unapproved research methodologies such as those in IKS or face paradigm revolutions as perceived by Kuhn (1962), if one is powerful enough, and from the developed countries.

It is not surprising that "normal" research (closed in Western knowledge systems) yields expected findings, and Popper (cited in the Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, 2016) who doesn't see a need to research for expected outcomes would rightly be amused. Findings diverged from prior research when the then unacceptable "*Obuntubulamu or Ubuntu*" was used to research the opinions of Black South Africans about ICTs in schools (Muwanga-Zake, 2017). Respondents exhibited thinking and discourse processes unique and unacceptable to Western knowledge processes. Such findings question the validity and reliability of foreign discourses used in local research. Of course, I have found challenges to get Ubuntu-led research published, as academic journals demand, approved literature on Ubuntu or otherwise a re-interpretation of findings along Western ethnographic paradigms that include statistics. But there was scanty literature on Ubuntu in Western references.

Black African students and academics rarely publish due to some of the challenges above. The implication is that findings are rarely disseminated across African boundaries for implementation. Continental rates of publications indicate that Africa represented 1% of the worldwide publication output in 2013 (Sarica, Ozen & Sayman, 2020; Tijssen, 2007). In 2014, Black academics authored only 18% of research papers in South Africa, despite being a majority population (Wild, 2019). Sub-Saharan Africa's share of global research increased from 0.44% to 0.72% only during 2003 to 2012 (World Bank & Elsevier, 2014). Few fellow Black African staff, students and those I have supervised in Africa publish papers in recognised academic journals, compared to those in the UK and Australia. The rest plagiarise. According to Okoche (2013) plagiarism is a cancer of East African education. Okoche (2013) gives a list of reasons that lead to plagiarism, including ignorance, carelessness and lack of scholarly skills by students and researchers; and laziness and lack of proficiency in English. A good proportion of the dissertations I have marked have to identify knowledge gaps in foreign literature, and so yield solutions mostly applicable beyond Africa or to "international" knowledge systems. Researching leads to transient models, many of them useless to Africa judging from the inapplicability of many innovation ideas in Africa. It is hard to innovate solutions to daily challenges in Africa using theories that were not derived from and for African environments and origins. As African contexts are assumed not to have any philosophy and discourse, Eurocentric ready-made solutions tend to slow down Black Africans from thinking about adoptions of resources from local environments. Of course, part of the problems are related to lack of research facilities. But then unfortunately, research facilities are imported along with 'education' and are expensive in Africa. Hence, many Black Africans almost abhor and misunderstand research. This partly explains why many dissertations of Black Africans are useless to Africans, and are gathering dust in African libraries. Tapfuma & Hoskins (2020:1) note:

> TDs are the most under-utilised resource in Africa as they are left to gather dust on library shelves, or they are held in inaccessible places preventing publications from being extracted from them.

Foreign knowledge has been legitimised and marketed as a pre-requisite to develop Africa but Africans (e.g., the citizenry) through educational institutions, selfishly refuse to pass on the skills relevant to the development of Africa and its institutions. For example, foreign religions are meant to improve Black African morality (otherwise one is labelled a satanic rebel) but keep the brethren believers in overnight prayer instead of working. Most Black cultures practiced the Ten Commandments before the Biblical scriptures came. Of course, deliberately, Whites were made to appear as though they brought morality to Black Africans, as if

Black Africans were immoral. Evidently, Satan is Black. Blacks now fear their own indigenous religions. To date, Christian sermons in Africa condemn and demonise local belief systems.

Black Africans have suffered the inferiority assigned to everybody that does not comply with the criteria of knowledge established by white, European, Christian and secular men (Vanyoro, 2019). Many failed to earn academic credentials and employment because they did not comply with the criteria. Such Eurocentric-African tensions in discourses have created academic wars, blind obedience, inner deadness, injustices, process addictions, economic exploitation, cynicism, chronic stress, and unhappiness, especially among Black Africans in academia.

Mphahlele (1996), in agreement with Robbotom and Hart (1993, 598) articulate some of the reasons why academic freedom is a myth and rule-bound, and yet allows research. They argue that procedures control and delimit research discourse, in a way meant to preserve its integrity and survival, and through discourses, endorse certain paradigms, of which, by the way, significantly few are African-based. According to Mphahlele (1996, 239), discourse is revealed by the academia's desire to be unrestricted and the university's rules and regulations for control, such as the recommendations of methods of research. Mphahlele's interpretation of Foucault is that the production of discourse is selected, controlled, organised and redistributed by a number of procedures.

Hence, discourse acts as the medium of power learning institutions use to convey rules and regulations to define what knowledge is, and how and by whom knowledge must be produced and controlled. For example, universities structure proposals and theses, and in effect structure patterns of thinking. Weedon (in Pinkus, 1996) sums up Foucault's views thus "… Power is exercised within discourses in the ways in which they constitute and govern individual subjects". African approaches. Pinkus (1996) believes that alternative discourses and paradigms have hitherto been marginalized and subjugated by the powers that control discourses. By controlling the research discourse, the university, and proponents of the popular and dominant paradigms are the main beneficiaries because research is in its current form mostly a testing and validating ground for those paradigms, rather than a contribution towards developing

According to Pinkus (1996), discourse is related to, or is a function of, historically specific contexts, and I think is a function of specific epistemological and ontological systems, such that discourse would change with social contexts. This view could be the basis of Pinkus's (1996) worry about discourses that have acquired "international" status, dominating the world, shaping and creating meaning systems that have the status and currency of "truth". I.e., How could a discourse be specific to a particular context and yet lead to universal truths and paradigms? How are the universal paradigms valid, and reliably applicable in Africa?

But these are arguments within Western philosophies. Thought in Black Africa is still captive of Eurocentric discourses. Even the adoption of Foucault's concept of a subversive genealogy is challenging because the strategies to restrain popular discourses are inhibited by the dominant "systems of discourse (economic, political, scientific narrative)" entrenched in the African mental fabrics. Blacks have to implacably investigate the reasons for our preference of foreign paradigms to Black traditions. However, it seems, Black Africans preference to foreign paradigms is related to the fear of isolation and a need for international marketability. Brenton and Largent (2000) laments about control that if someone, some authority or power over us does not control us, society will fall into chaos.

Can Africa, for example, use own Black African vernacular to argue such contentions? African exchange of ideas is via translation to and from colonial languages, and in the process some fundamental social-cultural and philosophical explanations are undermined. The colonialists grabbed natural resources and land, but also abrogated the Black African Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Neo-colonialism enhanced by African dictatorial regimes, as they did in the past, use developed countries (for weapons and finance) to submerge potentials to

innovate and develop in opposition to democracy. Black Africans continue to emigrate out of Africa, and ultimately to use foreign systems. Two fundamental questions arise out of the above: Can then a Black academic curb such addictive excesses? and; How can Black Africa emancipate itself from such legacies? Discourse could however offer space to struggle against control through reasonable opposition.

Black Africans have a case to sort out, of designing discourses that support an education and research, which truly represent Black African philosophy and discourses. The execution of African philosophies and discourses in education is bluntly an African problem to surmount. Africans should front discourses that are grounded in sound philosophies and that contribute towards the betterment of Africa. There must be reasons why this or that paradigm. In concord, Higgs (2003) advises that African philosophy should be pragmatic to render services towards the amelioration of the human condition. Anywanyu's (cited in Higgs, 2003, 7) invitation to Africans to take a stand on the African issue of reality as experienced to give sense of commonality in an enunciation of an indigenous knowledge system, is in concert. In further supplementary agreement, Mataire (2017) writes that

> 'Most academics and scholars are agreed that the major malaise affecting African universities is failure to evolve from a Western pedagogical framework of acquiring knowledge to an African philosophy based education, not only responsive to people's needs, but also in tune with their cultural, social, political and economic sensibilities'.

Thinking outside the established academic rules and regulations require transforming academia towards questioning the pervasive mind-set of control and domination permeating other cultural institutions (Breton and Largent, 2000). Quotes from Breton and Largent (2000) will suffice to start a rather sensitive debate on the motivation for transformation towards local research philosophies and discourses:

> Is our consensus philosophy shaping our institutions to serve us, or are we becoming servants to systems that warp our minds ….? When more and more of us find ourselves asking such core questions, it's time to start rethinking things from the ground up. It is time to reclaim our powers.
>
> …when anomalies or inconsistencies arise and present problems that we are unable to solve within a given paradigm, our view of reality must change, as must the way we perceive, think, and value the world. We must take on new assumptions and expectations that will transform our theories, traditions, rules, and standards of practice. We must create a new paradigm in which we are able to solve the unsolvable problems of the old paradigm.

Maybe Black Africans should adopt Mphahlele's (1996) belief in thinking outside rules and regulations.

Trudging philosophical treatises for emancipation, there is Serequeberhan's (1994) rather radical position of adopting a hermeneutical perspective on African philosophy. This outlook proposes evading the past enslavements that are preoccupied with universalist abstractions and ethnological considerations, to focus on real power relations in African education. In re-emphasising the liberation of Africans, Serequeberhan (1994, 43) advises that:

> The discourse of African philosophy is indirectly and historically linked to the demise of European hegemony (colonialism and neo-colonialism) and is aimed at fulfilling/ completing this demise. It is a reflective and critical effort to rethink the indigenised African situation beyond the confines of Eurocentric concepts and categories.

The struggles in transforming a peripatetic mind of a Black Academic (and ultimately of the African Renaissance) is about creating and validating African IKS relevant to Africa's needs. A supporting view by Higgs (2003) is that African philosophy can provide useful philosophical frameworks that can empower

Africans to construct their own educational development. Realistic and useful findings can be enabled by locally evolved approaches, possibly through indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) rather than imported paradigms (Muwanga-Zake, 2007). Proponents of transformation include Doll (1989) who observes that currently recognised knowledge systems should open up to accommodate alternative discourses, to rhyme with the natural inclination of an African research candidate.

Hence, Higg's (2003) advice about transformation is important. Educational discourse in Africa requires a philosophical framework that respects diversity, acknowledges lived experiences and challenges the hegemony of Western forms of universal. Transformation in research requires but simultaneously should lead to an "open system" where discourses that acknowledge and accommodate the idiographic social contexts in Black communities are respected. Open systems imply institutions adopting an open agenda that can re-examine their research discourses and regulations. One item on the agenda ought to be the development of Black paradigms and accepting as valid data the diverse professional experiences of educationists and students. Black Africans could adopt post-modernism to interact with European academics, and then find ways that embrace the varied discourses. Thus, in Muwanga-Zake (2009), retaining the current discourses and paradigms is recommended, along with the recognition of a need for transformation towards approaches or paradigms that are contextual, and take cognisance of local belief systems, as well as participants' experiences as valid data. Muwanga-Zake (2018a) and Muwanga-Zake (2018b) propose some bridging paradigms in two papers. The proposals oblige drifting inadvertently into open systems to interact with academic environments, free of Eurocentric straight-jacket-dressing. Open systems interrogate information and allows the adaptation of knowledge for use liberally.

Although the term "transformation" has become a buzzword for academic and political correctness, the process and the results expected of transformation are not explicit. The Oxford Dictionary defines transformation as a change. The term "transformation" seems to be preferred instead of the term "change" when referring to fundamental shifts in paradigms. On the other hand, the description of transformation by Miller and Seller (1985, 8) as a meta-orientation goes beyond the personal and focuses upon social change as well. Sohne (1985) includes the holistic opening up and change of heart and mind – a change ultimately directed at new cosmic, human, and religious relations. According to Ferguson (1982) and Sohne (1985), such transformations are mutual between interacting individuals.

The transformation agenda includes funding and enabling research about Black cultural belief systems and methods. A social subject like education cannot be researched fairly without a clear understanding of the culture and belief systems of participants and of the potential beneficiaries of the findings. In fact intended beneficiaries must participate in the research process and the interpretations of the results.

Transformationists should heed advice from Vanyoro (2019) to decolonise research. This requires a reinvention of "academic citizenship" and introspect of the understanding of coloniality. Decolonisation 'entails addressing colonial categories of migration, governance, language and epistemologies through the dismantling of the very "systems of knowing" that sustain them'. Vanyoro claims that calls for decolonization are on the increase.

Transformation suits the postmodern paradigm. The post-modern world is shaped by, inter alia, pluralism, democracy, religious freedom, mobility, and increasing access to new environments. Postmodernism is a contemporary era marked by the de-legitimation of the grand narratives of Western civilisation (such as, a loss of faith in the power of reason, enlightenment, traditional Western epistemology), and a shattering of traditional religious orthodoxies, knowledge socially constructed (Kincheloe and McLaren, 1994, 138-143). There is no absolute truth in postmodernism. Therefore, postmodernism questions underlying assumptions of concepts and garners democratic principles, as well as demand contextualisation of understanding of human behaviour. Postmodernism tends towards accepting many beliefs, multiple realities and interpretations, and

an exhilarating but daunting profusion of world views (O'Hara and Anderson, 1991). Postmodernism accepts elaboration, eclecticism, ornamentation, and inclusiveness and dismisses the existence of an absolute reality. It is deeply suspicious of the concept of human progress as perceived by capitalists and modernists.

The interpretative approach is comfortable in post-modernism as it could accommodate culturally sensitive paradigms, which allow varied conclusions from experiences. This is because interpretivism embraces subjectivity and qualitative procedures that are often incompatible with positivism (i.e. objectivity and quantitativity) (Howe, 1992). Subjectivity also implies that transformation may mean different things to different cultures, races, etc. Therefore, subjectivity makes qualifications such as "bad", "good", "quick", or "irrelevant" incompatible with transformation because each category of people may have different beliefs and evaluation systems, and hence different discourses and paradigms. Hence, transformation and readiness to transformation is hard document being haunted by so many subjectivities. It is thus difficult to imagine objectivity in such transformations.

Objectivities would arrest Doll's open system and contradict abstract and subjective processes such as critical thinking. Critical thinking is subjective and interpretive because what is critical to me to think about might well be a non-issue to you, in time and space, unless thinking is done for a common problem. Consequently, there may not be objective criteria of classifying or identifying transformation. Yet, in the absence of objective classifications, evaluating the diverse Black African discourses across Africa is challenging in terms of getting to a consensus. For example, interpretive transformation questions the position of the examiner and supervisor in relation to the experiences and belief systems of the researched and the research candidate.

In conclusion, discourses could play a major role in the struggles Black Africans face as the discourses attempt to transform Black academics towards "isms". So, the disquiet among Black African academics is valid and has to be attended to. Rather than a "Paradigm Shift", education and research in Black Africa has to be transformed to replace paradigms handed down to Africa. Black Africans have to resist "being told" what paradigms have to be used in Africa. Black Africa has to develop own discourses, through the Black Renaissance, to enable the African Renaissance. Efforts in research also require co-operation between Black countries to avoid duplication and to synergise efforts. This engenders open African systems that allow free flows of information and people. This requires reducing the regulations at the artificial physical and mental borders in Africa created in Europe. I dream of freedom of research across Africa, which will be a natural integral part of a candidate's work, professional development and culture.

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