

## Coloniality or Cultural Pedagogy? The Hegemony of African Children-Youths in Social Development

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**ABSTRACT** Decoloniality was adopted as a framework to unravel the societal and/or self-inflicted coloniality in a child's development. This study is lensed under the Transformative Paradigm (TP), designed using Participatory Research (PR). Five lecturers and five teachers, who are also parents in a rural location in South Africa, were selected using the snowballing selection method. The participants were interviewed to share their experiences on the danger of culture and its effects on youths/students' development. Socio-thematic Analysis (StA) was used to analyse the data. The findings showed that cultural history, elders' self-righteousness, and stereotyping children as rebels are the challenges facing children's social development. At the same time, the reorientation of students, parents and educators, restructuring teaching and learning strategies are the dimension of the liberation of children's social development. This study recommends that teachers, parents, children and community elders be re-orientated while teachers/lecturers should restructure their teaching and learning process to accommodate children's participatory skills in schools.

### INTRODUCTION

The African culture is eroded with a diversity of various magnitude, and the cognate cord that binds the multifaceted, and sometimes, contrasting diversities are religion, tradition and social interconnectedness. This is not far from Dube's (2020) conclusion that religious indoctrination has shaped the African "ways of doing". Moreover, the culture of "doing" has been contaminated with regional indoctrination, which sometimes dehumanises young ones in the face of development. This further confirms that the African culture is a product of the African experience (Falola 2016). It also confirms Falola's (2018) and Idang's (2015) argument that various compulsory association with Western countries has influenced the African way of life. Since the people and their culture cannot be separated from the way development unfolds, one can assume that culture and the "way of life" correlate with child development. Huang (2018) also confirms that cultural interception between older people and younger ones influence social behaviours. The influence is connected to the fact that parents and elders in the community assume cultural authority over the children cum younger ones and then become the enforcer of authorities,

although they claim such authority is towards ensuring obedience among younger people. Therefore, children and youths' development is inevitably shaped by their immediate socio-cultural context (Mucherah and Mbogori 2019).

Deducing from the above trajectory, schools as agents of change and the home as an inevitable development template have compromised on social development precepts among the young ones. This compromise relates to the supremacy of cultural power over children's freedom towards personal growth, which is the freedom to choose their way of life, ways of doing things, among others. This has been linked to the African general belief that children must listen without objection, respect without clarification, and the most cultural of it is that "children must not question the words and the deeds of elders". This observation is not limited to rurally located people in the African communities and extends to how cultured parents train their children even in the civilised urban environments. This study is focused only on rural communities and the development of their youth. The development is assessed and interpreted based on students' inquisitive, critical thinking, and questioning tendencies. This hegemony has limited students' engagement in critical thinking, questioning, and a crucial quest for knowledge, as observed in

rural universities. Social beliefs, norms, environmental influence, and cultural background have negatively affected children's quest for knowledge, participation and questioning skills (Sivaraman 2015). On the other hand, this may be linked to people's inability to question any constituted authority, even in the face of oppression. Its reflective effect could be felt in the outer communities where youths' inquisitive skills in rurally located communities are silent (Ado 2015; Al-Zoubi and Younes 2015; Pobbi et al. 2018).

The researchers also argue that the perceived culturally inclined background has inculcated the power of culture where respect for elders is synonymous with total adherence to command without questions from the child. This affects such children's lives because it gives room for the westernised epistemology to remain unchallenged and a compulsory devil that rural youths' development system must live with. This identified laxity is not in tandem with the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) blueprint that guarantees a better, productive and sustainable future for all (United Nations n.d). On the other hand, this development also contradicts the child acts of various child development policies in Africa. Such policy is not limited to the National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy of South Africa, Nigerian Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy, among others. To reconstruct the interface between the culture and its misplacement, which otherwise could be seen as self-coloniality, the place of decolonial approach is imminent. This theory helps to unravel the self-coloniality inflicted on the children and/or the young ones by their parents/adults, all in the name of cultural advocacy.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Decoloniality as an emancipatory movement is not only to dismantle the stumbling block orchestrated by colonialism, neo-colonialism, slave trade, imperialism and all forms of Euro and American-centric modernity (Ndlovu-Gasheni 2015) but stationed as a movement to liberate the previously disadvantaged. This is to say that decoloniality does not only mean to display a radical reorientation of the African people but also to

reshape the process of knowing, otherwise called epistemological emancipation against self and institutional coloniality (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013). This is perhaps why Oelofsen (2015) advocated that the minds and intellectual prowess of the previously colonised people need to be decolonised. This is fundamental and would enable the people to disconnect themselves from the leftover of coloniality towards liberation. The systematic and self-inflicted coloniality such as cultural displacement where the supremacy of culture has been placed ahead of a commonsensical act of freedom of life and development on the part of youths must be challenged. This is undoubtedly one of the impacts of coloniality on the indigenous people of Africa, particularly in South Africa (Seroto 2018). This also confirms that the hegemony of coloniality cannot be divulged from power relations within cultural inclinations (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991). To buttress the above arguments, Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986) earlier challenged the systematic oppression hidden under the African culture, shaping how people perceive themselves with the world. In other words, coloniality has destroyed the sociality, literature, indigeneity of the people.

Based on the above, it is quintessential to challenge the perceived self-inflicted coloniality that is obvious among the rurally located people, evidence in the inactiveness of university students and school learners. Part of this inactiveness is that the students/learners are not inquisitive or have swallowed their inquisitiveness because of their cultural backgrounds. Not only that, but their criticalness is also silent. This is also observed in university classrooms where students unnecessarily refuse to ask questions and challenge the knowledge production process. This may not be unconnected to the fact that the students placed too much emphasis on the cultural belief that prohibited questioning elders. Furthermore, this also has its root in the cultural and societal teachings (Ndlovu 2013). This perhaps is why Waghid and Manthalu (2019) recommend that institutions must challenge societal coloniality. All hands must be on deck to unravel the underside of cultural modernity affecting the social development of the children cum youths/students that typify their inquisitive, critical thinking, and questioning

tendencies. Based on this, the study aims to dismantle the cultural pessimism in the development of African children.

### Research Question

To respond to the above lacuna, the following research question was formulated and answered.

- ♦ How can cultural disconnection as an underside of coloniality against the rural child cum youths/students' skill (inquisitive, critical thinking, questioning) development be dismantled?

### Research Objectives

The following are the objectives that will pilot the study:

1. The study identifies the possible disconnections between the culture and social development of young ones in a rurally located school and university.
2. The study explores possible solutions to the challenges of decolonising the young one's cultural hegemony of gaining inquisitive, critical thinking and questioning skill development.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Paradigm

This study was conducted under the principles of a qualitative research approach using the Transformative Paradigm (TP) as a lens to transform the preciousness of culture between the rural societies and its youth skills development. This paradigm is adopted, firstly, because it allows collaborative research (Seyi-Oderinde 2020). Secondly, because the paradigm's ontological stance is concerned with the nature of social and historical reality (Chilisa 2012), which informs the choice of decoloniality as a theory seeking to dismantle the hegemony of cultural reality in social transformation. Epistemologically, the relationships between the researcher and the researched are essential and must be established on trust (Mertens 2010) to enable all-inclusive knowledge generation and ascertain the versions of reality and power issues within the cultural

domain of the researched. This methodological argument informs the choice of research design, which is Participatory Research (PR).

### Research Design

Participatory Research (PR) is a collaborative approach to the research process where all stakeholders (with their expertise) are involved throughout the planning, operation, and solution stage. PR was used as a research design for this study to enable the researcher to examine the nature and level of internal practices, politics, and processes involved (Omodan 2020a) in the assumptions of cultural ingenuity that affected the social development of children cum youth/students. This design is, therefore, appropriate because it enables all the participants, including the researcher, to get together, involve together, learn from individual perspectives and experiences "towards a better understanding of elusive matters (solution) using self-strength (Armstrong 2003). This design enabled the researcher to be the co-producer of knowledge within the purview of emancipation (Maiter et al. 2008; Adebola 2020). The research process will be implemented by bringing all teachers and lecturers together as stakeholders, who are also parents in the selected rural community, to plan, inquire and work toward finding solutions to the problem.

### Participants and Selection of Participants

Ten participants were selected for the study: five secondary school teachers and five university lecturers. These participants are parents who are currently living and have lived in rural locations. They were selected without considering gender demography because both men and women are considered, one way or the other, experienced in the problem of the study. The participants were selected using snowballing selection method. This method is suitable to select participants that are not directly known by the research but by referrers. Therefore, the sampled participants with targeted characteristics are not initially known (Naderifar et al. 2017). This is appropriate because the participants are hidden and possess a genuine characteristic in eliciting information towards a solution to the problem of the study.

### Instrumentation and Data Analysis

Data were collected through an online interview, which was conducted using telephonic conversation, e-mail conversation, WhatsApp calls and chats. It was adopted because the COVID-19 pandemic was still very much around in South Africa as of this study. Therefore, there was the need to maintain movement restrictions and social distancing rules imposed by the government via schools and the university. That is, the selected school and university are selective in accommodating visitors. Therefore, the use of online means becomes the feasible way out. The data collected were subjected to Socio-thematic Analysis (StA). StA was propounded by Omodan (2019) to understand participants' sociality and social relationships with their society in themes. This method, according to Omodan (2020b), combined the principle of conversational analysis, which is the social dependency of people (Nordquist 2019), and six steps of doing thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006). This enabled the researchers to interpret the data in themes by responding well to the study's objectives and subjecting the data to a sociality test towards understanding the participant alongside their participation.

### Ethical Consideration

Ethics in research is fundamental; it helps the researcher and the researched be protected from any potential harm (Dube 2016; Omodan 2019). To protect the participants from possible harm, their liberty and freedom to withdraw or

discontinue participating in the research should they feel uncomfortable was ensured. They were adequately informed, and they all agreed to participate. Their names were represented with pseudonyms to protect their identities from being linked to their statements and their inputs during and after the study. Therefore, their identities were protected during and after the study. During the data presentation stage, the participants were given the following pseudonyms. The lecturers were represented with L1, L2, L3, L4 and L5. At the same time, the teachers were represented with T1, T2, T3, T4 and T5.

## RESULTS

### Data Analysis and Presentation of Findings

This session implanted the researchers' methodological process, as explained above. The data collected using the participatory approach under the transformative paradigm were analysed. The analysis of data was done under the principle of social-thematic analysis, which gave the researchers' an insight into understanding the sociality of the *researched*. The data was presented based on the objectives. Objective one, which was to identify the possible disconnections between youths' culture and social development, was analysed under the two following themes: cultural history and elder's automatic righteousness, and stereotyping children as rebels. Objective two, which was to explore possible solutions to the challenges of decolonising the cultural hegemony of the young ones, was analysed under the two following themes:

**Table 1: Socio-thematic representation of data based on the research question and objectives**

**Research Question:** How can cultural misplacement as an underside of coloniality against rural children cum youths/students' skill (inquisitive, critical thinking, questioning) development be dismantled?

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Analysis of Sub-themes</i>
The study identifies the possible disconnections between the culture and social (inquisitive skill, critical thinking skills, questioning tendencies) development of young ones in a rurally located school and university.	1. Cultural history and elders' automatic righteousness. 2. Stereotyping children as rebels.
The study explores possible solutions to the challenges of decolonising the young one's cultural hegemony of gaining inquisitive, critical thinking and questioning skill development.	1. Reorientation of students, parents and educators. 2. Restructuring teaching and learning strategies.

reorientation of students, parents and educators, and restructuring teaching and learning strategies. See Table 1 for more clarity.

### **Objective 1: Possible Disconnections between Culture and Social Development**

To respond to objective number one, the following sub-themes emerged from the data and were analysed accordingly. The themes are cultural history, elders self-righteousness, and stereotyping children as rebels.

#### ***Theme 1: Cultural History and Elder's Automatic Righteousness***

One factor of disconnections between culture and children's social development has been linked to the people's history and how elders in the community see themselves or are seen as righteous beings who are right and powerful over social issues all the time. The participants' statements below confirm the kind of accolades that have been attached with elders, which somehow makes them unquestionable to children's lingering issues;

**T2:** *Children are taught that older adults are never wrong and that their own opinions regarding different issues do not matter because they are young and inexperienced. As a result, learners and students end up being passive in classrooms instead of being active.*

**L5:** *In fact, our indigenous culture teaches children to be submissive and perceive the words and actions of their elders as right.*

**L3:** *I think how our belief systems were constructed have negatively influenced learners' social development. For example, traditionally, learners are treated as passive entities who only receive orders from the elders.*

**L4:** *The root cause is the history, so changing that perspective won't take over a night, but it requires enduring patience.*

From the statement of participant T2 particularly, an indication exists that children are taught that older adults are always right and never wrong, which has made children believe that even teachers in their classroom cannot be questioned or challenged. This view is supported by the statement from L5 that children have been taught by culture to be passive and submissive

with the inclination that their teachers are always right. In a statement by L3, the cultural belief system has negatively influenced children's social development where learners (children) are treated as passive entities who only receive orders from elders. On this basis, the issue is not only the assumed righteousness of elders, but human history shares its own blame. This suffices in a statement by L4 that the root cause of social disconnectedness is the people's history. This is also evidenced in the following participants' statements:

**T1:** *The biggest challenge with the questioning part, I believe, was embedded in the fact that elders received information from their forefathers without getting the reasons behind it. As a result, when new generations came with questions they couldn't answer, they felt exposed and felt children should not question them.*

**L1:** *I honestly feel that our history has colonised the young ones. Learners or students are not well informed about the learner-learning approach whereby they get to be involved in the lessons, and they are still stuck to the teacher-learning approach where they get to the classroom and just listen to the teacher and leave without questioning anything. It is hard for them to adapt to the other approach where they are the centre of the lesson; lack of self-confidence is one issue that makes these students afraid to be active in the classroom.*

**T5:** *Indigenous culture affects students' social development in terms of gaining inquisitive, critical and questioning skills. These young ones are taught not to question elders when they tell them something. It is also taboo in our culture to ask an elder about any topic, be it educational, spiritual or sexual.*

This statement by T1 indicates that the inability of children to question or receive answers to their questions lies in the fact that many of those elders received information from their forefathers as an instruction. This means that the said elders did not question their forefathers to know the reason for the instruction; therefore, they cannot also explain such a question in the present days. However, this cannot be divorced from what could be tagged as an abstract history among African people. This also surfaces in the statement by L1 that history has colonised

the children (learners) because they have been made to believe that they must listen to their elders without questioning them. T5's statement also confirmed that the indigenous culture that regards children's questioning skills as taboo affected students' social development and has debarred them from gaining skills such as inquisitive, critical and questioning skills. When it comes to children who desire to know more about spirituality, sexuality, and education, their questions worsens the situation because they consider it taboo to talk about some of these things.

### **Theme 2: Stereotyping Children as Rebels**

Another challenge that could be referred to as one of the factors of social disconnection between culture and children's social development is that children are stereotyped as rebels when they engage in any transformative or liberation movement towards their "knowing". This argument suffices in these participants' statements:

**T1:** *Culture has empowered stereotyping in the society to say the inquisitive are rebels. But I think this was a self-defence mechanism that ended up infiltrating the culture.*

**T2:** *Children are made to think that they are rebels when they behave to be too inquisitive. Therefore, they rely on their teachers and lecturers to give them information instead of taking the initiative of looking for information themselves. This is problematic because these learners and students cannot think critically; they lack creativity and problem-solving skills. Furthermore, they struggle to present their opinions in the presence of authority figures because they do not have the confidence to do so.*

**T3:** *According to the elders, it is morally wrong when a child questions their beliefs.*

**T4:** *There is stereotyped thinking in our culture where children are brought up to believe that elders are always right. If a child questions an elder, it is considered a sign of disrespect.*

From the above statements, there is an indication that children are tagged as rebellious when they become inquisitive to issues. The statement by T1 reiterates that culture has further encouraged stereotyping children as rebels. This may be connected because the elders believe

that children want to take over the power of knowledge from them, making them look like rebels. According to T2, this has made the children/learners rely on their teachers for information and knowledge, rather than searching for knowledge by themselves. Not only this, but T2 also confirms that such a stereotypical act has rendered children/learners useless in thinking critically, engaging in problem-solving and creative activities independently. The statement by T3 also confirms that children are disallowed to question elders on sensitive issues. This is also connected to the fact that elders are believed to be right; any attempt to question them is disrespectful to such elders. This is shown in the statement by T4 above. To further analyse the participants' statements; the statements speak volumes.

**T4:** *Children are often intimidated or feel challenged to question their teachers at schools because of their background. This affects their critical thinking because they cannot question or bring their prior knowledge into class. Even when learners wish to explore their critical thinking by engaging with the teachers, they suppress their opinions and ideas because their indigenous culture articulates that they are not allowed to challenge elders. As a result, this affects the learner's social development. Learner's living in the rurally located communities are mostly affected because, in rural communities, the indigenous cultures are still commended and highly practised.*

**L2:** *Knowing that when you ask something it is not regarded as disrespectful, it is categorised as "Talking too much". This ultimately affects the learner/student's way of thinking; these people's way of thinking becomes dull as their cognitive levels are not developing and their questioning skills become very dull.*

From the statement of T4, one could deduce that children are challenged and whitewashed by culture not to challenge or question authority. According to T4, this affects their critical thinking because they cannot question or bring their prior knowledge in class. T4 further complains that even when learners/children are willing to express their criticalness, they are intimidated by their cultural beliefs and up suppressing their opinions and ideas. This is, however, more critical in rural communities where indige-

nous cultures are still commended and highly practised (T4). In the same vein, the statement by L2 also confirms that children's inquisitiveness is seen as a disrespectful act against authority (elders). In some cases, it is regarded as talking too much, which could be viewed as being bullied. Bullying could lead to demotivation and could create fear in the child. This, according to L2, affects the learner/student's way of thinking and thereby enhance low cognitive development.

### **Objective 2: Possible Solutions to the Challenges of Decolonising the Cultural Hegemony**

To respond to objective number two, the following sub-themes emerged from the data and were analysed accordingly. The themes are the reorientation of students, parents and educators, and restructuring teaching and learning strategies.

#### ***Theme 1: Reorientation of Students, Parents and Educators***

In response to the above challenges associated with self-coloniality, which has hindered children/learners from gaining inquisitive skills, critical thinking skills and questioning tendencies, solutions were sorted from the participants. The participants were asked to proffer possible solutions, and their responses indicate that the students, parents and educators need to be re-orientated to support the 21<sup>st</sup>-century children transformation. The statements below are from the participants.

**T1:** *Schools, especially in the rural context, are subconsciously failing to eradicate this because the same educators are mostly the products of the same culture/society that views questions as disrespectful. So first one needs to cure this from the teachers then it will be easily taught to the children. Also, maybe the word "challenge" its self can be problematic. Children can be taught that there is a way of enquiring from elders without being seen as disrespectful.*

**T5:** *Parents and children should be taught that there is nothing wrong to make a meaningful life that is different from their elders.*

**L3:** *The parents should also be made aware of creating a positive space for young ones to understand the indigenous culture and ask questions to compare today's life to yesterday's life.*

**T2:** *Students should be made to understand that it is not a crime to challenge and question their superiors to gain more knowledge to instil into students that people learn from each other, irrespective of age. To gain knowledge, one has to politely express their opinions and question if one does not understand or need a thorough understanding of a concept.*

This statement by T1 indicates that the teacher's place in eradicating the problem is very imminent because most teachers are brought up in the same culture. It means that the teachers must be liberated from such beliefs first and then impart them to children. In this situation, the student will be made to know that there is a way enquiry could be made from elders without any iota of disrespect. This supports the claim by T5 that parents and children should be taught that asking to know is not a crime or disrespectful. The statement from L3 also recommends that parents be made aware of the importance of creating a positive space for children to understand their culture with the freedom to ask questions and know more. By so doing, they will be able to relate their life and history for the future. Therefore, teachers and parents should be re-orientated and the children/learners/students themselves. This suffices in the statement by T2 that students need to be aware that asking questions is not a crime and enhances knowledge exchange as there is no "island of knowledge" irrespective of age. T2 further confirms that gaining knowledge is significant to expressing opinions and questions if one does not understand or need a thorough understanding of a concept. These statements below further support the need for proper orientation among parents and educators.

**L5:** *As time changes, so do the way people live, play and interact change. Older adults should also be taught that research studies are based on scientific study rather than on the narration. Therefore, at some point, they should allow their children to change how they perceive the world around them.*

**T4:** *Support from teachers count a lot only if we as teachers could be there for them, train*

*them, train their brains to think out of the box, and all would be well, but if we don't show them that we believe that they can do this and they are probably in the right track they'll also start believing in their minds and start participating actively so.*

**L2:** *Learning is a three-way route between the teacher, parent and the learner /student. Parents at home have to orientate their children in terms of the aspects mentioned above. They should help their children develop healthy self-esteem from a very young age. Teach their children to be independent and stand for what they believe in (with relevant facts, of course). From an early age, children should be taught the difference between being inquisitive and being disrespectful.*

In line with the participants' recommendations above, the statement from L5 also indicates that elders need to be orientated and taught the various research reports for children regarding their freedom and liberation quest. This, according to L5, will make them know that they should allow their children to "change how they perceive the world around them". In the same vein, T4 also showed that teachers' readiness is very fundamental in this regard. This could be done by leading by example and by making children believe in themselves and their abilities. Teachers and parents also have a responsibility to make sure that children are taught and orientated towards developing healthy self-esteem from a tender age. They will be independent and rely on no one to create an enabling environment and social belief for themselves. These statement by L2 also shows that it is good to let children, at a younger age, know the difference between being inquisitive and being disrespectful.

### ***Theme 2: Restructuring Teaching and Learning Strategies***

To unravel the challenges associated with the disconnection of culture and the social development of children, there is a need to restructure the pedagogical process in schools. That is, there is a need to locate a teaching-learning strategy that would accommodate students' unique participation and inclusivity towards criticalness. The participants recommended this solution as one of the veritable tools towards

children's liberation from self-coloniality. The statements below explain more:

**T2:** *I think learners/students should be given more tasks which requires them to present their opinions and views on matters instead of searching for information on the internet.*

**T3:** *Learners should also participate in activities such as debates where they are required to take sides and defend those sides with their ideas and perceptions. Also, lecturers/teachers should not enforce their ideas on these learners/students as that would make them more passive.*

**T4:** *I can share my effective solution/strategy that I use to build my learners' confidence by asking questions... it is a questioning game. Everyone gets a chance to ask a question throughout the week... I have five rows in my classroom; therefore, each row has its day of asking questions while other rows provide the answers. Each learner has to ask a question or ask for clarification. There is progress in their questioning skills, and they are now assertive.*

To demonstrate the need for a pedagogical strategy, the statement from T2 recommends that students be given tasks requiring them to present their opinions on issues. S3's statement recommends that children should be engaged in a participatory classroom in the form of debate where their opinion will be required and that the instructor should not enforce his/her idea on the children. This kind of activity will inbuild the children with the belief that they have right and power over their ideas and opinions on issues. This does not mean that children/learners must not be corrected, but knowledge could be constructed within the principate of participation. T4 also shares with the researchers the kind of strategy adopted in her classroom, which is the questioning method among learners. The statements below also support the above argument.

**L4:** *Teachers should educate learners to understand that it is okay to engage, question or interact with elders (teachers). This can be implemented by creating a safe and friendly classroom environment. For example, initiate interactive lessons such as a group led by a teacher and learner vs teacher discussion. Where learners will be allowed to be inquisitive in a way they feel free to ask questions on controversial/debatable topics in the classroom.*



*L2: At the school level, teachers should give the students/learners the confidence to ask questions in the classroom by constantly uttering positive comments, telling them it is okay to be wrong/ to be corrected.*

To support the above, L4 reiterated that children should be exposed to critical engagement among themselves. According to the participant, this could be implemented by “*creating a safe and friendly classroom environment. Initiate interactive lessons such as group led by a teacher & learner vs teacher discussion*”. In our understanding, this is still because a conducive strategy is needed in the classroom to ensure that student children are liberated by allowing their inquisitiveness and freedom to ask questions. The statement by L2 also urged that teachers should ensure that learners have the confidence to ask questions in the classroom by constantly uttering positive comments. It means that positive comments regarding the children could stand as a positive motivation for them. These statements ensure that classroom activities with children need a situational strategy that will enhance their knowledge of self-reliance and willingness to engage in critical questioning and learning.

## DISCUSSION

The following findings emerged from the analysis and were presented in chronological order below:

### **Cultural History and Elder’s Self-righteousness**

Based on the above analysis, it was found out that cultural history and elder’s automatic righteousness is one of the challenges hindering children from acquiring inquisitive skills, critical thinking skills, questioning tendencies that could be regarded as African self-inflicted coloniality. This further confirms that leftover coloniality cannot be divulged from power relations within cultural inclinations (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991). Ngugi wa Thiong’o (1986) argument also confirms that there is systematic oppression hidden under African culture. This is perhaps why Oelofsen (2015) advocated that the minds and intellectual prowess of the previous-

ly colonised people need to be decolonised. This finding aligns with Huang (2018) that cultural interception between older people and younger ones influences social behaviours.

### **Stereotyping Children as Rebels**

Based on the above analysis, it was discovered that one of the factors of social disconnection between culture and children’s social development is that children are stereotyped as rebellious. This has been confirmed as one reason why children/learners/students lack inquisitive skills, critical thinking skills, and questioning tendencies which are the characteristics of social development. This finding is in line with the argument that people’s inability to question any constituted authority has a reflective effect which could be felt in the outer communities where youths’ inquisitive skills in rurally located communities are silent (Pobbi et al. 2018; Ado 2015; Al-Zoubi and Younes 2015). This finding also supports Sivaraman’s (2015) findings that social beliefs, norms, environmental influence, including cultural background, have a negative effect on children’s quest for knowledge and their participatory and questioning skills (Sivaraman 2015).

### **Reorientation of Students, Parents and Educators**

The above analysis revealed that one of the solutions to the above disconnections associated with self-coloniality, which has hindered children/learners from gaining inquisitive skills, critical thinking skills, and questioning tendencies, is the reorientation of teachers, parents and children. The finding showed that all the stakeholders in children’s development, such as teachers, lecturers, parents, and community elders, need a new orientation about culture and its propositions. It agrees with Waghid and Manthalu’s (2019) views that institutions must challenge societal coloniality. This means that stakeholders must join hands together to challenge the self-coloniality perpetrated against children and unravel the underside of cultural modernity affecting the social development of the children. This also endorses Oelofsen (2015), and Omodan’s (2020a) recommendations that people’s minds need to be decolonised.

## Restructuring Teaching and Learning Strategies

Based on this, it was revealed that there is a need for a situational strategy that could restructure the pedagogical process in schools towards eradicating the misplacement of culture in children's development. That is to say that the place of the school as an agent of change is imminent. The solution to the problem also lies in the teacher's ability to use appropriate classroom strategy tools to ensure that children are engaged and equipped with inquisitive knowledge that could help them navigate between culture and personal-social development. This aligns with Polirstok (2017) that effective teaching strategies increase students' persistence in building a growth mindset.

### CONCLUSION

The researchers explored the available knowledge generation process to dismantle cultural pessimism in the development of African children using a transformative research process. This study has established that there is a misplacement of culture that constitutes self-coloniality on African children. Based on this, the researchers hereby conclude that cultural history and elders' self-righteousness and stereotyping children as rebels are the challenges facing children's social development. The researchers also conclude that students, parents and educators' reorientation of teaching and learning strategies are the dimensions to liberate the social development of children towards gaining inquisitive, critical thinking and questioning skills from their tender age.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The researchers recommend that teachers, parents, children and community elders be reorientated towards knowledge and the goodness embedded in the freedom of children towards knowledge. The researchers also recommend that teachers/lecturers restructure their teaching and learning process to accommodate children's participatory skills in schools.

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