

AN ASSESSMENT OF JULIUS NYERERE'S EDUCATION FOR SELF-RELIANCE

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Abstract

Education for self-reliance was the most important educational principle which Julius Nyerere considered as a foundation for Africa's development. For him, it is important that the educational system in Africa should be structured in such a way that it will foster the goals of togetherness and cooperative endeavours for the liberation of the African continent. Education for self-reliance is about gaining self-independence, self-determination and self-valued. He however, made a case that such an educational system would be geared towards the freedom of the African man from the constraints imposed by colonial dependency. To this end, the purpose of this paper therefore, is to assess Nyerere concept of education for African self-reliance. In doing this, a conceptual clarifications and rigorous analytical method would be applied. Finding revealed that our educational system had been westernised which promotes the culture and custom of the western countries. It is also revealed that the western style of education had not meant our societal demands in Africa. This study therefore recommended that an indigenous educational system is necessary for Africa and African to fully liberate itself from western control and dependency. It is also recommended that an Afrocentric educational system is needed at this point in order to promotes our culture and customs for self- fulfillment and self-realization.

Key words: Development, Education, Julius Nyerere, Self-reliance,

1.0 Introduction

Julius Kambarage Nyerere, the former and founding president of the Republic of Tanzania, is known not only as one of the world's most respected statesmen and an articulate spokesman of African liberation and African dignity but also as an educator and an original and creative educational thinker (Kassam, 2002) who believed that education should be considered as a foundation for development and also as a tool for self-reliance. For Nyerere, it is important that the educational system in Africa is structured to foster the goals of togetherness and cooperative endeavours for the common good. In his words:

It has to prepare our young people to play a dynamic and constructive part in the development of a society in which all members share fairly in the good or bad fortune of the group and in which progress is measured in terms of human well-being, prestige buildings, cars or other such things, whether privately or publicly owned. Our education must therefore inculcate a sense of commitment to the total community and help the pupils to accept the values appropriate to our kind of future, not those appropriate to our colonial past. (Nyerere, 1967).

In furthering the argument that education is key to self-reliance, Nyerere made a case for a radical rethinking of the organisation and curriculum of education in Tanzania, and by extension, the whole of Africa.

This recommendation becomes imperative in the light of the major shortcoming of the educational heritage bequeathed by the colonialists. Underlying the colonial system of education was the principle of capitalism. In contrast to the underlying principle of the colonial system of education, Nyerere's ideas on education were influenced by the patriotic, xenophobic ideology that pervaded Africa at the time. From this perspective, the appropriate education for new states must necessarily reflect the sustainable national priorities, aims and aspirations.

These aims and priorities should ultimately translate into curriculum that are focused on addressing Africa's challenges (Njoroge & Bennaars, 1986). Such an education would be geared towards the freedom of the African man from the constraints imposed by colonial dependency. The general purpose of education is to enhance man's physical and mental freedom and to generate the capacity to control self and the environment. Education must enlighten the human mind as well as liberate the body of man. It must enhance our humanity, making increasing aware of our potential as rational thinking beings who can relate intelligently with our neighbours and his environment.

The Man: Julius Nyerere

JULIUS KAMBARAGE NYERERE was one of most imaginative and articulate African post-independence thinkers who advocated socialism. He was born in 1922 near Musoma, Tanzania. After his primary and secondary education, Nyerere proceeded to Makerere college Uganda, where he obtained a diploma in education in 1945, after Makerere, he returned to Tanzania and taught at St. Mary's school until 1949, when he was awarded a scholarship to Edinburgh university from where he graduated with a master of arts degree in 1952. Upon his return, home he began to take an active part in Tanganyika politics. In 1954, he founded TANU (Tanganyika African National Union) and was subsequently

elected member of Parliament during Tanganyika's first election in 1959, he became the first chief minister of the country one year later and was sworn in as prime minister of Tanganyika in May 1961. During the first presidential election in 1962, Nyerere won the elections and became the first African president. He continued to be re-elected as president until mid-1980s when he retired from active politics. He however, continued to actively participate in regional and global issues until his death in a London hospital on October, 14th 1999 (Bennaars, 1984)

Apart from his involvement in politics, Nyerere was an articulate theorist of education for self-reliance in Africa whose views deserve explication and special attention. Hargraves (2013) saw him as the most effective democratic leader in Africa. While Davidson in an emotion-laden assessment avers that Tanzania is unthinkable without Nyerere, Mboya sees him as a hero, a national parent and patriot.

2.0 Conceptual framework

There is a vast array of definitions of "education" in the literature. According to Okeke (1989) 'education is the systematic socialization of the younger generation by which the latter learns religious and moral beliefs, feelings of nationality and collective opinions of all kinds. Also, Durkheim defines 'education as the reconstruction or reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience and increases the ability to direct the course of subsequent experience. Dewey also defines education 'as the process of acculturation by which the individual is assisted to attain the maximum activation of his potentialities according to right reason, and to achieve thereby his self-fulfilment or self-realisation'

Education has also been seen as a process of development by which human beings adapt their environment. It is a socialization and learning process. In Azenabor (2005), articulation of shipman's view, Education is that part of socialization process that is specifically organized to ensure that learning occurs

Education is simply the process by which any society, through schools, colleges, universities and other institutions, deliberately transmits its cultural heritage, that is, its accumulated knowledge, values, skills from one generation to another. Kneller (1964), also defined education as an attempt to make one a cultural member of a society by developing his or her intellectual capacities. To Peters (1980), education is the systematic training and instruction geared towards the development of ability, character, physical and mental powers of the individual through the careful dissemination of knowledge.

Education has also been perceived as the process through which the life of man is not only conveyed to each successive generation but becomes established, modified or even drastically altered in the course of that process (Brameld, 1971)

The various definitions of education show that education can be regarded as a process, as a product, as well as, a discipline. Being a "process" means education is a means of doing something and that it is an instrument to achieving something. This explains why education is usually referred to as a "process of socialization", a "process of acculturation", a process of self-mobilisation or instrument for inculcating discipline and achieving societal goals and objectives.

Types of Education

Education goes beyond what we can conceive within the classroom. Education can either be formal, informal or non-formal. Let's briefly look at these various forms of knowledge acquisition. There are as follows:

Formal Education: Formal education or formal learning usually takes place in the premises of school, where a person may learn basic, academic, or trade skills. young children often attend a nursery or kindergarten, but often formal education begins in elementary school and continues with secondary school. Post-secondary education (or higher education) is usually at a college or university which may grant an academic degree. It is associated with a specific or stage and is provided under the certain set of rules and regulations. The formal education is given by specially qualified teachers they are supposed to be efficient in the art of instruction. It also observes strict discipline. The student and the teacher both are aware of the facts and engage themselves in the process of education. Example includes; Learning in a classroom, School grading/certification, college, and university degrees, planned education of different subjects having a proper syllabus acquired by attending the institution etc.

Informal education: Informal education may be a parent teaching a child how to prepare a meal or ride a bicycle. People can also get an informal education by reading many books from a library or educational websites. Informal education is when you are not studying in a school and do not use any particular learning method. In this type of education, conscious efforts are not involved. It is neither pre-planned nor deliberate. It may be learned at some marketplace, hotel or at home. Unlike formal education, informal education is not imparted by an institution such as school or college. Informal education is not given according to any fixed timetable. There is no set curriculum required. Informal education consists of experiences and actually living in the family or community e.g Teaching the child some basics such as numeric characters, someone learning his/her mother tongue etc.

Non-formal education: Non-formal education includes adult basic education, adult literacy education or school equivalency preparation. In non-formal education, someone (who is not in school) can learn literacy, other basic skills or job skills. Home education, individualized instruction (such as programmed learning), distance learning and computer-assisted instruction are other possibilities. Non-formal education is imparted consciously and deliberately and systematically implemented. It should be organized for a homogeneous group. Non-formal education should be programmed to serve the needs of the identified group. This will necessitate flexibility in the design of the curriculum and the scheme of evaluation. Such form of education includes: Boy Scouts and Girls Guides develop some sports programme such as swimming comes under the non-formal education, Fitness programs, Community-based adult education courses, Based on the above, it is clear that education is all-round process of human development. A nation cannot develop without investing immensely in her educational system

Self-reliance is defined by (Fonchingong and Fonjong 2003) as a state of mind that regards one's own mental and material resources as the primary stock to draw on in the pursuit of one's objectives, and finds emotional fulfilment not only in achieving the objectives but of having achieved them primarily by using one's own resources (Fonchingong & Fonjong,

2003). According to Bavu (1975) there is no complete independence: It just differs in degree. Alternatively stated, "Countries can be positioned along a spectrum that extends from complete dependence to complete independence, which may translate to complete isolation or disassociation." (Bavu,1975)

Additionally, it is an idea that is linked to autonomy and independence. The Dictionary of Philosophy defines self-determination as "the sorting out by someone or something of its unique issues and destiny, untainted by meddling from without." The liberty of a person or group to choose and accomplish their goals is inherent in this concept (Bavu, 1975). Since Tanzania was founded in 1964, the principle of self-reliance remains at the heart of his development strategies. Particularly, the idea of independence was closely related to the *Ujamaa* (or familyhood) ideal, which, from 1967 to 1975, continued to guide Tanzania's national development initiatives. In more recent times, the idea of independence has become increasingly prominent within policy makers as well as investors in Tanzania and in Africa at large. It however sees more as a guideline for each person's economic behaviour which is distanced from the more general dedication to fostering nationalism and the construction of a welfare state.

Self-reliance may be viewed from a number of angles throughout the *Ujamaa* period. It might be viewed as a developmental tactic or as a developmental result. Its principles might be applied to specific people, families, communities, regions, or the entire country of Tanzania.

To get an informed perspective on Nyerere's ideas on independence, one must understand the 'Self-reliance Doctrine'. The early negative experience Tanzania had with foreign investors served as the foundation for the 'Self-reliance Doctrine'. The first five-year development strategy for Tanzania (1961–1966) was largely unsuccessful, given that plan entailed a deep dependence on foreign investors, many who were only interested in mega profits rather than a mutually beneficial arrangement. Nyerere, however, was not willing to accept just any aid or investment which is not in accord with the vision of development Tanzania was pursuing, Nyerere sought for alternative approaches to fund "*Ujamaa* and self-reliance". For Nyerere if Tanzania must nurture, it must do so on its own terms. (Mohiddin,1971)

From one perspective, the meaning of self-reliance could be construed literally to relate to the effectiveness of each person and that is linked to the success of the country through the various levels of economic activities that is spread across the *Ujamaa* villages. Villages were organised around the structure of TANU. Each individual was part of a household which are combined with another nine other households to form a unit. However, a village was made up of ten-cell units, whereas a group of villages was known as a ward. Each district was made up of several wards, while a region was made up of several municipalities. According to the *Arusha Declaration*:

if every individual is self-reliant the ten-house cell will be self-reliant, if all the cells are self-reliant the whole ward will be self-reliant, and if the wards are self-reliant the District will be self-reliant. If the Districts are self-reliant, then the Region is self-reliant, and if the Regions are self-reliant, then the whole nation is self-reliant and this is our aim (Nyerere 1968f).

Nyerere was very clear in his mind about the implication of self-reliance. According to him, self-reliance was essential "both as a tool and an objective of development." This means that it refers to an intended result rather than just a set of rules to follow in order to achieve the feeling of self-sufficiency at the personal and national levels, which in turn promotes political and economic sovereignty. Hence, having looked at the general views of self-reliance, let take an in-depth look on how education can serve as a strategy for self-reliance in Africa.

2.1 Review of Literature

Nyerere vehemently emphasised the necessity for a comprehensive rethinking within the based and subject matter of Tanzanian education. To buttress this position, Nyerere began with a diagnosis of the major shortcomings the colonial powers' legacy in terms of the academy system. According to him, fundamentally inherent within the tenet of capitalism was learning under colonialism. For this reason, colonial education was characterised by a number of negative features. Firstly, colonial education tends to bifurcate society into classes, and such promotes inequality and elitism. Secondly, participants of colonial education are separated from society, making it to provide unwavering dedication to the neighbourhood. Thirdly, it is overly formal, emphasising reading a book while undervaluing local and unofficial information.

The impact of Nyerere's kind of education is that its purpose is to serve society's welfare in the fight against sickness, starvation, poverty, and ignorance. Students need to comprehend that the community is investing in them so they can become important assets to society.

Plato stated that "a thoroughly educated individual contains not only knowledge but intelligence also, and that he will recognise the ethical value of devoting his intellect and understanding of all that exists towards the aid of his community where he lives." Nyerere's preparation for serving the public is consistent with this statement. The basic philosophy expressed here is the responsibility of the educated to the society.

The Russian educational policy, which states that educating a member of the Soviet society entails educating that person to comprehend the concerns of the Russian society and to be committed to protecting those objectives beyond personal interests (Curtis,1965), has numerous striking parallels with Nyerere's point about the importance of pertinent education to the setting of the learner's society.

3.0. Methodology

Information from relevant materials as they relate to Nyerere's education for self-reliance are collected, consulted, studied and analysed. The methodology used in this work includes conceptual clarification and rigorous analysis.

Conceptual analysis in philosophy means the exposition of the scope and meaning of the concept used. This becomes necessary because of the senses in which concepts fail to bring out the intended meaning. A thorough understanding of meaning of the concepts is necessary for the understanding of this work.

By rigorous analysis we mean a philosophical tradition through which issues are formulated, evaluated and analysed with the view to widening our horizon in this research. Rigorous analysis enables one to examine critically and rationally the issues under review

with the aim of comprehensive evaluation. This means that all sides to it will be examined. This method entails that all former biases, prejudices and preoccupations about the issues involved shall be put aside for a sound and uninfluenced result.

4.0 Nyerere's Perception of Education

Nyerere vehemently emphasised the necessity for a comprehensive rethinking within the based and subject matter of Tanzanian education. To buttress this position, Nyerere began with a diagnosis of the major shortcomings the colonial powers' legacy in terms of the academy system. According to Nyerere: fundamentally inherent within the tenet of capitalism was learning under colonialism. For this reason, colonial education was characterised by a number of negative features. Firstly, colonial education tends to bifurcate society into classes, and such promotes inequality and elitism. Secondly, participants of colonial education are separated from society, making it to provide unwavering dedication to the neighbourhood. Thirdly, it is overly formal, emphasising reading a book while undervaluing local and unofficial information.

Finally, it frequently lacked productivity, deterring students and kids from putting forth their best effort. Given an awareness of some of these shortcomings, Nyerere presents a blueprint for effective and pragmatic education for the general transformation of African traditional society, which is the policy section of the *Arusha* Declaration.

The Declaration's call for academic independence was purposefully created to set up an educational system that aimed to conquer the drawbacks of colonial education, i.e., an education that would be adequate and pertinent to Tanzanian requirements. The Nyerere's administration acknowledged the importance of education as the key to adopting fresh ideas programmes in Tanzania. Thus, it made an effort to fundamentally change how education will proceed in Tanzania with the Declaration (Nicholson, 2012). In this policy paper (*Arusha* Declaration statement), the following objectives were outlined: To equip learners with knowledge, skills and attitudes for tackling societal problems; to prepare the youth for work in Tanzania's predominantly agricultural society; and to enable learners know, appreciate and develop a culture of Tanzania that preserves the national tradition, individual freedom, responsibility, tolerance and respect (Tanzania Ministry of Education, 1982). Thus, education for self-reliance aimed at developing in each citizen an inquiring open mind; ability to learn from others; basic confidence in one's own position and ability to learn and contribute to the society. The education encompassed *Ujamaa* or socialist outlook, which entail a sense of individual and collective responsibility in all areas of activity and a willingness to co-operate and share on equal terms and an ability to appreciate and develop national culture (Tanzania Ministry of Education, 1982).

In order for education to serve as foundation for self-reliance, Nyerere made a number of recommendations which include: that education should be pertinent to societal demands, that education should shape a person to fulfil societal needs, and that education should be resolving issues and career focused. In Nyerere's assertion, the followings will be discussed:

The society should benefit from education:

Nyerere emphasised the notion that education must be pertinent to the learner's community in order for it to be useful. Thus, it is encouraged for students to reside in a hamlet where they can provide amenities and assist in its growth. Value-driven and educational convergence should take the place of the colonial stance on education, it excludes educated individuals from society (Nyerere, 1968). Here is how Nyerere's describes education for self-reliance:

Education must encourage social values such as working together to attain shared goals. It must encourage the participation of youngsters in the development of a society where all contributes equitably to the common good and where progress is gauged by how well people are doing rather by the possession of cars, opulent buildings, or other items of the same nature, whether managed privately or publicly. In order to assist society embrace norms fit for a brighter future rather than those acceptable for the colonial past, our education must impart a sense of devotion to the larger community (Nyerere, 1968).

Tanzania's educational system need to be useful to the community and should place the interest of the country above personal interests and willingly make their contribution to society. Nyerere's was convinced that with right kind of teachers such an objective is achievable. In his words, "the teacher's power is the power to decide whether "service" or "self" shall be dominant motive in Tanzania of 1990 and thereafter" (Nyerere, 1967).

In his book *Education for Self-Reliance*, Nyerere (1967) emphasised the necessity of all physically capable people, even minds, working. He states:

For the truth is that many of the people in Tanzania regards education as meaning that an educated man is too precious for the uneven and devastating life which the society still live... even during the holidays we believe that young people and women should be protected from uneven work; neither they nor the society expect them to spend their time on stiff physical labour or on jobs which are not comfortable and are not pleasant...it is a reflection of the attitude we have all adopted (Nyerere, 1967)

Nyerere consequently advocated or a teaching strategy that emphasises activities and doing. The term "practical method" obviously does not indicate actual labour, but rather to the concept of learning as a whole that is beneficial, constructive, or creative in over time and advances society. Nyerere argued that the educational system is solely focused, noting that: How many of our students devote their holidays doing a job which could recover people's lives without money; jobs similar to digging a drainage channel for a village, or representing the construction and explaining the importance of deep-pit latrines? Few have done such work in the National Youth Camps or through nation building schemes, organised by schools but they are the exception rather than the rule (Nyerere, 1968).

Nyerere makes a complaint to the educated to use their knowledge for the good of society and so contribute to lessening hardship. The idea behind education is similar to Freire's thesis in his book "On Liberating Education through the Method of Critical Dialogical Encounter". It's interesting to note that the release of Freire's book and Nyerere's argument in favour of education for independence line up. "The Pedagogy of the Oppressed", Freire's second major work, was released in 1972. The concept of solving issues education, which he called "liberating education," is also put forth in this work. However, it is hard to say with certainty that Freire's writings had an impact on Nyerere's programme of education for independence. Nyerere seems to be recommending a difficult balance between the

necessity to gain broad expertise and the requirement that knowledge must be beneficial in specific circumstances when he emphasises the importance of education.

Educated individual must serve the Society

Given that education systems are the arrangements of society, educated individuals. must acknowledge the debt they owe their respective society. Nyerere makes a suggestion about the mutual connections that should exist between the educated person and society in a speech he gave at the University of Liberia in 1968:

We are spending large and disproportionate sums of money on a number of people so that in the future, they should make a disproportionate return to the society. Just the same way as we invest in our tractor, we are investing in a man's brain: and just we expect the tractor to do much work for us which is many times as a hand-hoe, so we expect the student we have trained to make many times as great contribution to our well-being as the man who has not had this good fortune. We are giving to the student while he is at University, so that we may receive more from him afterwards. There is nothing altruistic about it; poor people cannot afford financial altruism. We have the right to expect the things from university graduates and others who are professionals of any kind; we do not just have a hope, but expectation (Nyerere, 1974).

The impact of Nyerere's kind of education is that its purpose is to serve society's welfare in the fight against sickness, starvation, poverty, and ignorance. Students need to comprehend that the community is investing in them so they can become important assets to society. Plato stated that "a thoroughly educated individual contains not only knowledge but intelligence also, and that he will recognise the ethical value of devoting his intellect and understanding of all that exists towards the aid of his community where he lives." Nyerere's preparation for serving the public is consistent with this statement. The basic philosophy expressed here is the responsibility of the educated to the society.

Education must be problem solving

As a result, the method of learning must incorporate not only training in specific skills and procedures using a style of fieldwork aimed towards solving issues, as well as the teaching of those behaviours that define the individual as virtues. Dedicated individuals won't be able to help those in needs or solve society's problems until that time. He or she will become dedicated, brave, polite, honest, good-natured, and similar traits as a result of these characteristics. He or she will be better to plan ahead and manage personal matters with this kind of schooling. Internal satisfaction and the ability to bring about to the overall happiness of society are the anticipated results (Kingsley, 1962).

Education must be work oriented

As Nyerere has already stated, the purpose of community service should include education as it should be work-centered. In his opinion, education should be service-oriented in order to lower the rate of illiteracy and ignorance, increase health standards and life expectancy, and possibly most importantly enable citizens to explore and utilise their nation's natural

resources for the benefit of Tanzania's workforce. According to Peter R. (1966), who shared Nyerere's viewpoint on education for self-reliance, "education must prepare a relatively smaller number of experts in fields such as medicine, geology, hydrology, agriculture, fisheries, engineering, and textile engineering" is how he defines the significance of specialised education.

The education provided must be vocational in orientation as opposed to the platonic culture of elitist education for its own sake. Socrates approved the training of men and women who would be engaged in specific jobs to solve the problems of ignorance, poverty and disease in society. Socrates however warns that specialisation must go with efficiency or high performance. Only through a combined approach to the problems of society can there be a payoff which ultimately benefits each individual in the society (Nyerere, 1967).

In contrast to what Plato believes, Nyerere's prescription for the educated person to support society does not diminish the value of the individual for the community. Like Aristotle, Nyerere believed that a person might find satisfaction in society not only because they are logical beings but also because they are social and political beings who have always existed in some form of society (Curtis, 1965). Being a part of society is essential to an individual's fundamental welfare. The importance of specialisation in various sectors for the purpose of advancing society as a whole is revealed by this regard. Every individual in society has a unique talent, and these talents correspond to specific job pathways. However, all these talents should be channeled towards building the society. Vocational training has become essential to society. Due to this vision, Nyerere's independence training system of education has several goals rooted in various stages of education.

These education-for-self-reliance programmes were promoted in viewpoint a society's historical, social, political, philosophical, and economic factors. It was part of the reform in the *Arusha* declaration that addressed inequality in education and the social sphere in Tanzania and in African traditional society.

5.0 Conclusion

From the foregoing, it is quite clear that Nyerere has a clear conception of education for self-reliance which is essential for Africa's independence and freedom from the western world. He however, believed that a self-reliance educational system that infuses learners with a patriotic and nationalistic views should become the basis for future development.

Self-reliant education is to stimulate reflections on how countries on the continent of Africa use their indigenous technologies to locally manufacture goods which will then break their dependence on the erstwhile colonial powers. Nyerere proposed an educational system that is aimed at the emancipation of the mind. This paper also revealed that education in Africa needs to be revitalised in line with the African traditional educational system that promotes indigenous Africa's culture.

5.1 Recommendations

This study recommends the following:

(i) It is recommended that for education to serve as a tool for self-reliance, such education be pertinent to societal demands, that education should shape a person to fulfil societal needs.

- (ii) Our educational curriculum must encourage social values such as working together to attain shared goals and promotion of cultural values.
- (iii) It is also recommended that vocational system of education must be strongly encouraged in order to instill the spirit of ‘do it yourself’ mentality.

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