

Obafemi Awolowo and Julius Nyerere on Education for Self-reliance and Development

Akinjide Aboluwodi, PhD

Department of Arts Education, Faculty of Education,
Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Nigeria

Abstract:- This paper examines Awolowo and Nyerere's notions of education for self-reliance and draws out the implications for education, economic and political development. The paper examines the challenges in colonial and post-colonial development in Africa that spur the push for self-reliance as explained by Awolowo and Nyerere. It takes a cursory look at the dependency theory which offers a considerable explanation on why leaders in Africa are sometimes subservient to their foreign partners. Nevertheless, it expresses a dismay over the state of education especially in the sub-Saharan region and argues that the call for self-reliance may yield no effect if the existing education does not explore basic needs of the people and give room for skills and competencies in education delivery capable of challenging the existing status quo. It equally calls for a change of mindset and values by African' elite and intellectuals if the notion self-reliance is to make any meaningful impact in Africa.

I. INTRODUCTION

Obafemi Awolowo's disposition to education is informed by the belief that no nation can develop when its citizens remain ignorant, poor and disease-ridden. This disposition underlies Awolowo's entry into the realm of free education policy in Western Nigeria in 1955 and constitutes the spirit behind his view that enlightened citizenry is indispensable to the evolution of sustainable development. Nyerere shares this notion, too; hence his belief that education is required for the individuals to be able to exercise their thinking ability. Both Awolowo and Nyerere rule out the possibility of using the colonial educational system in their societies to achieve national development since the system's primary objective is elitist and imperialistic. It does not provide, as the objective suggests, the needed values required for the individuals to get integrated into the society. Both statesmen's quest for a new social order is informed by their efforts to overcome the problem of exploitation and alienation, a typical social practice which defines social relations in a capitalist society. The discussions of Awolowo and Nyerere's thoughts on self-reliance in this paper is an attempt to see why they think African development does not lie on foreign assistance. Rather, as they contend, development is self-induced, intellectual oriented and is driven by the liberation of individuals from all forms of foreign influence.

II. CONCEPTION OF SELF-RELIANCE

The principle of self-reliance revolves around two basic terms, namely, "self" and "reliance". Having a clear picture of these two terms is indispensable to the understanding of the underlining assumptions of "self-reliance" as a concept. It is an established belief that a person consists of a mind and a body. The body is an extended substance in space and sometimes said to include the brain. The mind on its own has no physical existence though it is claimed to be inside the body. The mind is said to be elusive, that is, it cannot be grasped. It shares this characteristic with the "self" which is also claimed to be elusive. Nothing suggests that both "self" and "mind" are the same, meaning, therefore, that they possess different characteristics. The question then is: if the self does not have the same characteristics as the mind, and neither does it share same with the body; then what is it? It is obvious that it cannot share the same characteristics with the body because whereas one is in space the other is not. Indeed, there is no way a non-spatial object can be materially equivalent to a spatial object. Can we then say it is the same as 'I'? Both "self" and "I" share one thing in common: they are both elusive. Obviously, this attribute of elusiveness may not be a sufficient condition to say that the "self" is "I" which seems to suggest that expressions such "I am hungry" and "The self is hungry" may have different explanations. In other words, these statements may not carry the same meaning; an indication that even when "self" and "I" are claimed to possess a common attribute of elusiveness, their ontological status seems to differ.

Whatever the meaning ascribed to "self", there is no doubt that when conceived as a being the "self" thinks, acts, suffers and so on. Thus, all these acts, namely, thoughts, feelings, sufferings and so on change with age and dispositions. As rightly captured by Burges (2011:288) "selves constitute the particular psychological natures of persons, selves being agents...is what makes persons persons." In this regard, we may expect A to be x at a particular time and y at another time in which case a person may have one self in business and another at home or in the church. If we accept this postulation that self-changes in nature, then self may denote person where person is defined in terms of the personality of an individual. An individual may wear a particular personality at home and exhibit another one in the business place. It thus appears that self is like Leibniz's *monad* which exists in relation to other *monads*, an indication that selves can exist in relation to one another. Seith thinks they recognise themselves as

interacting with other persons and with nature. It is obvious that these "selves" as conceived by Seith, are individuals with desires, feelings, demands, thoughts and beliefs. The problem with this conception is that an abstract term like "self" is defined in terms of "person", that may denote a concrete term such as Olu. Nasongo and Musungu (2009: 113) conceive "self" as a thing, substance or an essence. The problem becomes more complex when we realise that we are dealing with a compound word, self-reliance. Will there be any change in meaning or conception when the use shift to "self-reliance" as opposed to the mere conception of "self"? We intend to examine this question in this paper.

The question then is: what is self-reliance? Let us provide some illustrations that will assist us to answer this question. Consider the statements: "Ade relies on Bola for financial assistance" and "Nigeria relies on Britain for economic support." In the first statement the tendency is to argue that Ade puts his trust on Bola for financial assistance. The same explanation can be given of the second statement. Indeed, the second statement seems to be saying that Nigeria has confidence in Britain that she (Nigeria) will secure economic support from her. On "reliance", Nasongo and Musungu (2009: 113) contend that it may be defined as a bond of relationship where subject A clings onto subject or phenomenon B for its being. In this regard, A and B embrace in an inter-subjective relationship. How do we explain the issue of "self" in self-reliance? For instance, what does it mean to say "Ade is self-reliant"? or "Nigeria is self-reliant"? Perhaps it may simply be said that "Ade has confidence in himself" and "Nigeria has faith in herself", where himself and herself may connote ability, power, efforts and so on. Thus, Nigeria is self-reliant may mean that Nigeria is proud of her strength, power and ability to order her development. In their conception, Nasongo and Musungu (2009: 114) believe that self-reliance refers to "a situation where the embodied subjectivity, that is, the human person relies upon himself/herself, for his/her being." In this regard, a nation is self-reliant when it takes pride in her cultural values and traditions. Such a nation strives to maintain a balance between the existing cultural values and the traditional values that constitute the edifice of the society in question. Self-reliance, therefore, is measured in terms of how individuals or nations are able to sieve from among the various values in these epochs and turn them to their benefits. Achieving this feat may involve a radical approach which Akinpelu (2005:118) contends is "a crucial appurtenance of any self-reliant person." On the other hand, Kadenyi and Kariuki (2011) see self-reliance in terms of "personal initiative in the ability and effort to identify, harness and manage efficiently and effectively the personal and collective resources, human or natural in the immediate surroundings in order to uplift one's or a people's life quality, standard and condition of existence."

➤ *The Characteristics of Education for Self-Reliance in Tanzanian Society as Explicated by Kassam (2000:3) are;*

- Make a critique of the inadequacies and inappropriateness of colonial education;
- Outline the kind of society the United Republic of Tanzania is trying to build;
- examine some salient features of the education system that existed around 1967 in the light of the newly declared goals and strategy of socialist development; and
- Propose changes designed to transform the education system in order to make it more relevant and appropriate in serving the needs and goals of a socialist society with a predominantly rural economy...

The picture here is that of a society seeking to transform its basic structure through education. First, it declares the inappropriateness of its education system with a proposal to bring about structural changes and second it declares the existing system inappropriate to serve the needs and aspirations of the people. In this regard, the colonial education system that gives birth to this new education system estranges the Tanzanian people from the culture. Nyerere explores the weakness in this education system to declare that Tanzania requires education that will serve the predominantly agrarian people of Tanzania.

Before we take a look at self-reliance in relation to dependency theory let us examine Obafemi Awolowo's and Julius Nyerere's thoughts on self-reliance and development.

III. OBAFEMI AWOLOWO ON EDUCATION FOR SELF-RELIANCE

Obafemi Awolowo's educational ideas derive their inspirations from his philosophical thought, a thought usually connected to such philosophers as Plato, Descartes, Hegel and Marx (Ogunmodede, 1985:43). These are inspirations held to be highly profound especially at the level of meta-ethics. Indeed, Plato, Hegel and Marx provide the needed philosophical antecedent Awolowo requires to be able to announce his socio-political theory, and hence a source for his egalitarian principles (Ogunmodede, 1985: 43). It also informs the basis for his free education policy. At this point there is the need to take a look at Awolowo's position on education for self-reliance. Conceptual clarification of self-reliance (as has earlier been done) is essential in order to get to the basics of Awolowo's idea of education. Let us see how Awolowo defines education. According to Awolowo (1981: 164), "education is the process of physical and mental culture whereby a man's personality is developed to the fullest." Its aim is not to: teach a man to read and write, to acquire a profession, to master a vocation, or to be versed in liberal arts. All these are only means to the end of true education which is to help a man live a full, happy and triumphant life. In other words, any system of education which does not help a man to have a healthy and sound body, an alert brain, and a balanced and disciplined instinctive urge, is both misconceived and dangerous. (Awolowo, 1968: 215-216).

Awolowo raises the issue of development involving the education of the mind, brain and body which are themselves components of a person. In Awolowo's (1981: 166) analysis, if a man's body is developed and his/her brain and mind are not developed, such a man/woman stands to be exploited. Here Awolowo thinks a man may be healthy but lack the intellectual power to coordinate his life, with such an individual acting like a pawn in the hands of his educated counterparts whose mind, body and brain are developed. In the same vein, if the body and brain are developed and the mind is not developed, such an individual may lack what Awolowo classifies as spiritual values (Awolowo, 1981: 163). Here again spiritual values take the form of love, compassion, generosity, forgiveness, contentment, reconciliation and hope. Thus, possession of these spiritual values is a *sine qua non* for social relationship among groups. By Awolowo's claim individuals express their relations to others through showing love and compassion to their fellow human beings. Awolowo's explanation of a complete person is that his mind, brain and body must be fully developed where *to develop* here connotes *to educate*.

Awolowo's argument is further strengthened by the belief that every system of education should help an individual to develop healthy and sound body, an alert brain and a balanced and disciplined instinctive urge (Awolowo, 1968:216). The implication of this view is that the education a person receives should enable him/her to be able to control his/her emotions, feelings and passions. A person may have a sound brain and a sound body but engages in immoral and destructive acts. Such an individual, Awolowo argues, does not possess a disciplined mind. For Awolowo, (1981) the development of the three organs is a necessary condition for being human, a cultured person.

Awolowo (1977:63) sees man as the most important resource in society. As a resource, man occupies an important position in the development of the society, ensured by man's dynamic nature. For him, human development is an end in itself; though the indispensable prerequisites of this development are education and good health (Awolowo, 1981:54). On self-reliance, Awolowo contends:

[a] man whose personality is fully developed never fears anything; he cringes not, and never feels inferior to anyone; no matter the colour, stature, or strength of such a one; he is self-reliant, and will resist any form of enslavement until the last breath in him is exhausted (1981: 164).

The greatest asset in Awolowo's conception of self-reliance as explained here is self-realisation which is achievable through education.

Awolowo (1981:85-6) distinguishes between growth and development in his quest for self-reliance relating the rising incidence of new factories, new shops, and new highways, plenty of vehicles among others to growth and development in terms of enjoyment of "better health, better education, better living condition and expanded range of

opportunities in work and leisure". Thus, Awolowo links the aim of development to rise in the living standard, basically the people's quality of life. He does not see the need for Government's quest for foreign aid, as it is simply a negation of his ideological position. In other words, Government should be able to create a dynamic, efficient and competitive economy independent of foreign aid. This is done perhaps to avoid what Adekola (2002:23) calls "a slavish commitment to British economic and political ideals and prejudices." Awolowo probably has this in mind when he argues for equity, fairness and justice in resource distributions.

The issue of self-reliance arises out of the need for people to depend entirely on their own efforts in whatever they do (Awolowo: 1961). As Awolowo stresses, a person is self-reliant when he resists any form of enslavement (Awolowo, 1981: 164). In other words, self-reliance is explained in terms of people's trust in their thought and skills, that is, individuals' concern is basically self-confident and courageous. Self-reliance, therefore, is predicated on the development of the mind, body and brain, leading to total liberation of the individuals from all forms of foreign influence. Awolowo's contention, therefore, is to associate the development of the mind, brain and body to individuals' measure of education. The colonial education system Awolowo insists does not provide the much-needed link to this form of education. The system looks elitist and imperialistic in objective, and the content of what is taught remains the same making the system basically colonial, a view that tends to make a mockery of self-reliance as seen by Awolowo. Nyerere, too, decries this form of education whose content cannot transmit African values. Education, as Nyerere sees it, should enable individuals to be able to take a critical examination of their actions and opinions and their implicit assumptions (Nyerere, 1967: 8). For Nyerere, this attribute is lacking in the colonial education which Africans inherited, hence the educational system carries no value that can be tapped for the benefits of Tanzanians, and indeed Africans.

It is assumed that the new social order Awolowo envisages can only be realised if a new form of education is introduced. Awolowo has to take the existing educational system unsuitable for his programme in order realise his political programme. Somehow Awolowo is equally concerned with how to secure education that can assist him to meet the exigency of his time, namely, bridging the gap between the North and South of Nigeria. Obviously Awolowo can't but be concerned with the form of education that meets the needs of his democratic-socialist state given his argument that capitalism in every form is exploitative. The only problem is that we may not be sure this form of education, with socialist orientation, will not transmit some of the values of the capitalist state which Awolowo has tried to reject. One way to do that is to allow private and mission participation in education delivery, leading inevitably to elitist mentality that characterises the existing system. Most private and mission schools are class-oriented and hence elitist in their orientation. One is in doubt if Awolowo indeed envisages a problem of this sort.

Actually, the basic principle behind Awolowo's education policy is accessibility to education by all, namely, that all eligible school-age children should be educated. It is also about the general enlightenment of all illiterate adults and teenagers above school age. However, the extrinsic value in this educational policy is primarily its conception as an intellectual force behind the individuals' economic and political emancipation. This is equally the idea which characterises Nyerere's educational policy.

IV. JULIUS NYERERE ON EDUCATION FOR SELF-RELIANCE

Julius Nyerere is born in 1922 at Butiama, Tanganyika which later becomes an integral part of Tanzania. His elementary school education begins at the age of 12, while he subsequently attends Tabora Government Secondary School for his secondary education. He trains as a teacher at Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda. He teaches for three years before leaving for the University of Edinburgh. While in Edinburgh, he develops his socialist ideology perhaps due to his encounter with the Fabian socialism. On his return to Tanzania, he begins his teaching career and later a politician. He facilitates the formation of TANU (Tanganyika African National Union) and later becomes the President of Tanzania (the union of Tanganyika and Zanzibar), in 1969, a post he holds until 1985.

His socialist orientation is influenced by his desire to change the living conditions of the poor people of Tanzania. He pursues it through the belief that "poor countries should spend more on education than on debt repayment" (Pandor, 2004). According to Pandor, "this belief was part of his philosophy of ujamaa (familyhood or community)." Thus, his education policy is directed to shaping the Tanzania society so that the people can be receptive of his socialist ideology.

Indeed, Julius Nyerere, like Awolowo, is a pragmatic socialist whose experience with the colonial administration inspires his flirtation with the socialist principles. This experience constitutes largely the greatest resource that shapes his educational policy. Nyerere's notion of education for self-reliance begins with an overview of the general aims of education in Tanzania. Both formal and non-formal education share similar aims which Nyerere identifies first, to transmit from one generation to the next the accumulated wisdom and knowledge of the society, second, to prepare the young people for their future membership of the society and third, to prepare the young people to live and serve the society and to transmit the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes of the society to younger generation (Nyerere, 1967: 7). Basically, Nyerere's conception of the aim of education, as earlier explained, is a reflection of his experience with the British colonial policies in Tanzania. From his observation of this system, Nyerere is disappointed with the colonial education whose aims and content are foreign to African culture. For him colonial education aims at inculcating the values of the colonial society in the people, attempting to alienate them from their root. Such education is also designed to train individuals for the

services of the colonial state. Perhaps by the colonial society and colonial state, Nyerere has his eyes on the British society and Britain as the colonial state.

Nyerere's picture of a colonial practice is like a society trying to impose its values on another society whose traditions negate these other values. Young people are being oriented into this society where they need to adopt the values and attitudes of the colonial society. Thus, the whole arrangement is to jettison one value and adopt another. The colonial education's major defect lies, as seen by Nyerere, in the products' attitudes to old people whose knowledge and wisdom are despised. For Nyerere, it appears young people do not believe they should live and work as ordinary as they really are. Colonial education, Nyerere (1967: 10) has indeed argued, encourages attitudes of inequality, intellectual arrogance and intense individualism among the youths. The intellectual arrogance, Nyerere seems to submit, occurs because the young people and government stress book learning and underestimate the traditional knowledge and wisdom of the people (Nyerere, 1967: 11). Solving the problem may involve a change in the content of the curriculum, and the re-arrangement of the schools in such a way that the school entry age is increased. The change in curriculum should combine theoretical teaching with practical activities taking into consideration the need to stress basic skills in arithmetic and literacy. Teaching these basic skills, Nyerere will probably assume, will help the individual as it will excite in them a curiosity about ideas. Really, the argument for age increase is borne out of the fact that the primary school pupils are "too young to become responsible young workers and citizens." (Nyerere, 1967: 16).

One of the things Nyerere's new educational system is designed to achieve is to help to establish the Ujamaa, namely, brotherhood. In his submission, this can only be done, if provision is made for equality and respect for human dignity, sharing of the resources which are produced by our efforts, work by everyone and exploitation by none. The application of this principle is expected to start from the primary school; perhaps that is why Nyerere contends that the education programme needs mature young people to take off. It is possible that the argument to make the entry age for the primary school at seven years may be to help the young people to be able to understand the fundamentals of the socialist doctrines. It follows that if the primary school is to serve as the ground for testing the socialist doctrines and to effect a preparation for the life of young children, the state should take charge of education. One can see clearly that Nyerere's quest for mass education is to prepare a healthy ground for his socialist state. He sees the possibility of individuals achieving self-realised and self-fulfilling goals through this education programme.

Nyerere connects this new education policy to the preparation of the people for their responsibilities as free workers and citizens in a free and democratic society. The new education will prepare the young people to be able to make judgments on all issues affecting them. Above all, the young people should be able to interpret the decisions made

through the democratic institutions of their society (Nyerere, 1967). One of the gains here is that it will help to foster goals of democratic living among the people and prepare the young people to play a greater role in the development of their society.

Nyerere designs his new educational programme with emphasis on the role of the individuals in the society and complements his position with the view that schools should become "communities" (Nyerere, 1967:16). The community, Nyerere opines, comprises the teacher, the workers and the pupils who in turn constitute a family. Nyerere sees teachers and pupils having the same relationship like that of children and parents. The school is expected to keep up this relationship by supplying all the needs of the family.

In this new educational system, schools do not stress the conduct of examinations, rather as Nyerere (1967:17) says "examinations should be down-graded in government and public esteem." Nyerere's reason for this disposition to examinations is that they do not assess the power to reason, and neither do they have access to character or willingness to serve. His verdict is that examinations only prepare individuals to take up government jobs clearly assisted by schools that prepare the pupils to pass examinations; it must be down-played. It is now clear that if teaching is geared towards passing examinations, teachers' efforts should be made to discourage such a habit. Such efforts should include teaching the pupils what they ought to live by, though Nyerere does not explain who determines the skills and values and how this is done. Certainly, it cannot be the pupils.

The basic principle guiding Nyerere's educational programme is the principle of self-reliance which may be explained in terms of self-realisation and self-fulfilment. Self-reliance is all about individuals' ability to cultivate the attitudes of mind and faith in traditional knowledge and wisdom. It builds a sense of commitment in the people and discourages the attitudes of inequality, intellectual arrogance and intense individualism fostered by colonial education. These are negative traits that negate the principles of egalitarian society. What society needs is to train its primary school graduates to be able to fit into and serve the community from which they come. Each member of the community sees himself/herself as a servant rather than a master; only in this sense will the society build an egalitarian society. Nyerere equally stresses the need for educated members (graduates) to see the old people as partners in the achievement of their goals. Hence, he argues that the habit of despising the old people because they lack book knowledge only demonstrates a clear sense of ignorance.

It is to be noted that Nyerere wants to build a society where the principle of equality and respect for human dignity is demonstrated. He sees the role of the school as crucial but also contends that theoretical teaching is not complete until it is translated to practical activities. In a society where this is done individuals are supposed to take

pride in their efforts. Nasongo and Musungu (2009: 114) believe that "Nyerere's envisaged condition for self-reliance puts society at the apex of concern." Nevertheless, the condition for the development of the society, as declared by Nyerere, is that everyone is supposed to work and no one is exploited. Indeed, this is where Nyerere's education for liberation anchors its relevance.

V. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF AWOLOWO AND NYERERE'S THOUGHTS ON SELF-RELIANCE

Both statesmen are confronted with the experience of colonial administration in their countries. As nationalists, they were involved in the struggle for the independence of their countries, though Awolowo never had the opportunity to lead his country, as it was the case with Nyerere who was at a time the President of Tanzania. In some areas both leaders share similar ideas on how governance should be conducted. Both of them see the need to address the grassroot problems, hence, Awolowo advances democratic socialism, a political ideology that expresses belief in the welfare of the masses while Nyerere advocates Ujamaa, a socialist orientation that explains the primacy of individual welfare. In both cases they uphold the socialist ideology with a clear principle tied to egalitarian philosophy. Awolowo's choice of socialism as a viable political option is predicated on the view that socialism thrives on social justice and equality, a view which is equally shared by Nyerere. Both of them stress the belief that the principles that underlie socialism are opposed to alienation and exploitation which define social relations in capitalism. Awolowo's advocacy for private participation in the state's economy tends to compromise the basic principles of socialism he holds dear to his heart, though to him the promotion of small-scale industries is meant to reduce the concentration of business enterprises in big cities (Awolowo, 1981: 75). Nyerere would probably disagree with Awolowo's submission as it only demonstrates lack of faith in socialism. Awolowo's defence may be to argue that private participation is intended to achieve full employment, though it looks so weak an argument to justify the involvement of individual business men/women in a socialist oriented economy.

While the two statesmen intend to improve their societies using the socialist principles, they differ with respect to the nature of socialism intended for their states. Awolowo advocates democratic socialism while Nyerere talks of African socialism. Awolowo's nature of socialism is a departure from Marx's whose approach has been to confront the bourgeois group with violence. Awolowo's approach is democratic, namely, using the electoral process to establish the state rather than violence. On the other hand, for Nyerere, the essence of socialism is to restore the African traditional values (Major and Mulvihill, 2009: 16). While its process will equally be democratic, its essence is to dig up the values despised by the colonizers. Nyerere's African socialism rests on three principles, namely;

- Work by everyone and exploitation by none,
- Sharing of resources which are produced by our efforts, and
- Equality and respect for human dignity (Nyerere, 1967: 6).
- *On the Other Hand, Awolowo's Democratic Socialism Rests on Four basic Principles:*
 - ✓ Equal Opportunity for all,
 - ✓ Equitable Distribution of the National Products,
 - ✓ The Liberty, Dignity, and
 - ✓ Well-being of the individual, and brotherhood among all mankind (Awolowo, 1961). All these embody social justice, equity and fairness considered to be lacking in the colonial political system inherited (Awolowo: 1961).

Education to Nyerere should emphasize three things in a learner, namely, an enquiry mind, ability to learn from what others do and reject or adapt to his own needs, and a basic confidence in his own position as a free and equal member of the society, who values others and is valued by them for what he does and not what he obtains (Nyerere, 1967: 9). Nyerere domesticates education to reflect the cultural values of the African societies, reminding us that education goes beyond book learning in African culture. For him, the focus of formal education should be to prepare the young people to live and serve the society and to transmit the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to other members of the society (Nyerere, 1967: 7). In Awolowo's case (1981: 165), formal education needs to focus on the mind, body and brain of the child, so that he can be liberated from ignorance, superstition and disease. Awolowo equally links education to the inculcation of skills, values and attitudes in children who will in turn transmit same to others in the society. Awolowo and Nyerere have divergent view on the entry age to schools which Nyerere puts at seven. Though Nyerere's reason for making the entry age to be seven is ideological, and this is located within the ambit of individuals' ability to grasp the fundamentals of the socialist principles. Awolowo would rather prefer the existing entry age as this does not add any values to the state he envisions.

It is interesting to note that Nyerere's belief that there is a balance between book-learning and experience of life has its epoch in his derision of the graduates who despise the elderly ones who did not attend school. In Awolowo's contention, there is no separation between education and the personality of the individuals. An educated person is one whose mind, body, and brain are developed; having aligned with what Awolowo called the regime of mental magnitude made possible through education (Makinde, 2007: 195). Education of this nature helps the individuals to decide their own affairs and assist them to build an equitable and just society, since the regime of mental magnitude is about self-discipline clearly assisted by reason. Here reason is likened to being rational, a quality which places man above animals. Nyerere and Awolowo are wont to claim that formal education is not the prerogative of any class, hence the elitist nature of colonial education must not be duplicated by any African country desirous of rapid development.

VI. SELF-RELIANCE, DEPENDENCY THEORY AND DEVELOPMENT

The greatest challenge facing the African nations has been captured by Brock-Utne (2000) as reported by Itibari (2006). Brock-Utne is said to have observed that (1) there is an intellectual re-colonization present among many African nations south of Sahara, (2) not only has Africa become dependent upon Western aid, but also on Western curricula, culture and languages, (3) Western donors and part of the Western educated African elite are involved in a re-colonization process that benefits themselves to the detriment of the African masses... (p.42).

Brock-Utne identifies two forms of dependency syndrome among African nations, namely, intellectual re-colonisation of the African nations and Africa's dependence on foreign aid. The greatest challenge today is the intellectual re-colonisation of the African nations, the manifestation that can be felt in the Africa's education system. The history of dependency theory has been traced to late 1950s. According to Ferraro, "Prebisch and his colleagues were troubled by the fact that economic growth in the advanced industrialized countries did not necessarily lead to growth in the poorer countries" (1996). Prebisch and his colleagues must have observed the working of imperialism to be able to conclude that there is an economic disequilibrium between the core and the periphery countries. For Galtung (1971), there is "one way in which the Centre nation has power over the Periphery nation, so as to bring about a condition of disharmony of interest between them." Disharmony of interest occurs if the two parties, C and P, are coupled together in such a way that the living condition gap between them is increasing (Galtung, 1971:82). Here living condition refers to such indicators as income, standard of living in the usual materialistic sense (quality of life) and autonomy (Galtung, 1971:82). Nwanosike and Onyije (2011: 624) express the view that "colonialism has assisted in the distortion of thus depriving our African economies to fit in with the demands of the world market, thus depriving our economies of the capacities for a self-sustaining growth which is a pre-condition to development." For Petras and Veltmeyer (n.d), this distortion is assisted by those collaborator regimes - politicians, military officials, business elite - who open their countries to plunder, to transfer wealth to the imperial financial centres and to repress any popular opposition. Invariably many countries in Africa have to depend on aid, which to Nyatoro (2013), "obstructs or limits the possibility for change and autonomous in the developing countries." Ferraro (1996) is of the view that "the elites in a dependent state are consciously betraying the interests of their poor; the elites sincerely believe that the key to economic development lies in following the prescriptions of liberal economic doctrine." The irony of the whole problem is that these prescriptions are applied religiously and the pains they generated are often damned as there are always assurances that the pains would disappear with time. King's own prescription is that poor countries should only endorse interactions on terms that promise to improve the social and economic welfare of the larger citizenry.

King (2004), gives a pathetic picture of how countries in sub-Saharan Africa tie their budget to external aid in which according to him, "external aid is running at between 40 and 50 per cent of the government's entire budget". The result is that many of these countries become subservient to the core countries, leading to their crawling economic policies. For Lewis (2006: 110) "US aid to Nigeria is another obvious channel of influence", and Tabb (1996) "the cause of the low levels of development in less economically developed countries (LEDC's) is caused by their reliance and dependence on more economically developed countries (MEDC's)." How many of the elite in the LEDC's countries are ready to accept this view as most of them benefit immensely from the largesse? The more the aid trickles in the stronger the arguments advanced by our elite for more of such aid.

While these scholars focus on the economic dimension of dependency theory, it appears the greatest challenge facing the African countries today is captured by Noah and Eckstein (1988) in their contention that "the contemporary scene is characterized by the retreat of classical colonialism and its replacement by a more sophisticated and insidious colonization- that of the mind and the will." In this regard, as they claim, "the oppressed peoples have merely exchanged physical for mental domination." Mekoa et al (2006:14) think the problem has permeated the academic community, noting that: one of the most significant obstacles to revolutionary fundamental changes in Africa is mental colonialism, conservative, reactionary and dependent thinking of the African intellectuals or so-called educated class. Trained by colonial masters, African intellectuals are mere students ready to carry out orders of their former masters.

Their intellectual training has bred a dependency syndrome in them and left them with pride of Cambridge, Oxford, London Universities where they have been trained to be better colonial agent.

Most of these intellectuals, having been colonised mentally, withdraw to their cocoon to propagate "foreign ideologies and value systems (which they) embraced in the name of progress, modernization and even globalization."

The collaboration between African intellectuals and their core intellectuals is expected to continue as long as the former cannot determine what is appropriate for their own societies (Noah and Eckstein, 1988). The problem is said to have infested the curriculum in schools. This *foreign root* of school curriculum is succinctly addressed by Olawale, (2010) who contends that, "somebody woke up and brought over 9-3-4 from a foreign land without considering why and how it will or not work for Nigeria." Perhaps structuring of curriculum to reflect foreign roots is one way by which Nigeria thinks it can seek foreign acceptance of its education system. On the other hand, Alatas (2003:602), observes that "if in the colonial past, academic imperialism was maintained via colonial power, today academic neo-colonialism IS maintained via the condition of academic dependency." This academic dependency is explained in

terms of the periphery countries' "dependent on institutions and ideas of western thought such that research agendas, the definition of problem areas, methods of research and standards of excellence are determined by or borrowed from the West."

For Nyerere, academic dependency is an aberration as "education cannot be considered apart from society. The formal school system cannot educate a child in isolation from the social and economic system in which it operates...; the truth is that education is unavoidably part of society" quoted in Kadenyi and Kaikuri (2011) from (Hinzen and Hundsdorfer, 1979:5). Some private schools in cities like Lagos and Abuja, offer Cambridge secondary school curriculum content and in most of these schools it is forbidden to speak any other language other than English Language. This practice seems to confirm the view of Eckstein and Noah (1985:214) that "[t]he languages of the former colonial masters continue to provide vehicles of instruction, communications and administration." Yoloye (1985:240) confesses a link between the core and the periphery in the area of curriculum claiming that "the main point, however, is the fact that the colonial territories now had to look up to the metropolitan model of education in terms of content, structure, and processes." This amount to what Alatas (2003:603) called a "shared sense of intellectual inferiority against the West." Thus, no idea is important in African mind except the white man confirms it is genuine.

The notion of self-reliance, according to Akinpelu (2005: 1 18), and shared by Awolowo and Nyerere is that of "producer rather than a passive consumer of other people's ideas, theories and knowledge." Most intellectuals in Africa build their research activities round ideas they acquire from the West which are sometimes alien to the society for which the activities are directed. Somehow, intellectuals who indulge in this practice, that is, the practice of depending on other ideas and values often end up alienating themselves from their social environment. The same is with any society, which constructs its curriculum on foreign template in order to conform to universal practice. Nigeria provides a typical example of country that uses a foreign template to build its education system. Nigeria starts with the colonial education structure of six years of primary school, five years of secondary, two years of higher school certificate education and three years of university education (6.5.2.3) and moves to six years of primary school, three years of junior secondary school, three years of senior secondary school and four years of university education (6.3.3.4). Even though this post-colonial education structure is foreign to the country's social environment, there is no attempt to explore the needs of the society.

This practice of constructing education system on foreign ideas, values and knowledge must have spurred Nyerere and Awolowo to seek for education that is relevant to African development. Nyerere (1967:9) identifies three things that can assist in an individual to develop himself or herself and the nation, namely, "develop an enquiry mind, ability to learn from what others do and reject or adapt it to his own needs, and a basic confidence in his own position as

a free and equal member of the society who values others and valued by them for what he does and not for what he obtains." Awolowo has a similar view on individual development which he traces to the paradigm of underdevelopment. Awolowo (1981: 86) identifies three senses of underdevelopment, namely, those of the mind, body and state. Underdevelopment of the mind arises from ignorance, and illiteracy; and that of the body comes from disease, calorie deficiency, bad water, bad housing, meagre clothing and filthy environment. Full development is achieved when the mind and body are developed and this in effect leads to the development of the state. He relates the development of the state to the development of the mind achievable through education. Awolowo attaches two conditions for this education that guarantee development. First, such education must be designed to make the pupils think and second, it must develop the mind, body and brain of the learners. In either of the views expressed by Awolowo and Nyerere, education is imperative for national development. Perhaps that is why Sica and Prechel as quoted in (Noah and Eckstein, 1988), contend that "...education is an important element of development and that its retardation is itself a guarantee of endless dependency."

VII. AWOLOWO AND NYERERE ON EDUCATION FOR SELF-RELIANCE

What the African nations need is that form of education that will lift the people above intellectual servitude. Awolowo stresses the need for education that focuses on the mind, body and brain. Such education, Awolowo contends, will liberate individuals from ignorance, superstition and diseases. Since for him, an ignorant person is a pawn in the hands of his fellow countrymen/women. On the other hands, Nyerere stresses the need to evolve an education system that emphasises in learner an enquiry mind, ability to learn from what others do and reject or adapt to one's own needs and to have a basic confidence in one's position as a free and equal member of the society. These notions seem to be a serious departure from the culture of dependent thinking that is typical of African intellectuals. African countries may wish to be guided by these ideas as development in the contemporary society requires learners with enquiry mind typical of knowledge-based economy.

Awolowo and Nyerere's education for self-reliance policy begins with universal education and rural integration. The notion of universal access to education is informed by the belief that "poor countries should spend more on primary education than on debt repayment." Given this belief Awolowo commits himself to universal primary education and adult literacy and Nyerere too advocates universal access to education and adult literacy. Awolowo and Nyerere's policy is predicated on the notion that a nation desirous of optimal development requires basic education. Unfortunately, African nations depend on donor agencies to be able to finance the universal basic education programme in their societies. Meanwhile, according to King, "the over-riding priority of main donor agencies at Jomtien was with

basic education defined narrowly as primary schooling." Ironically, African nations raise no question as to the viability of this policy since defining basic education narrowly as primary education enables them to evade commitment to other clienteles such as out-of-school children, marginalised groups etc.

Both Awolowo and Nyerere are also committed to integrated rural development as a route to self-reliance. In this respect, Awolowo sees the need for nations to focus on education especially at the elementary level in order to arrest the drift from rural areas to urban centres. He advocates social and economic transformation of the rural areas to facilitate social human development. In order to meet this task, Awolowo establishes schools, builds health centres and constructs roads in order to achieve sustainable development projects in Western Nigeria. It is necessary to argue that Nyerere's socialist orientation is targeted at the rural environment. Since Tanzania is an agrarian society, rural transformation remains the main option to open up the rural communities. Kassam (2000) attests to this fact when he says that "the focus of development was realistically put on the rural areas since 90% of the people live there and the majority of them depend on subsistence agriculture." Nyerere is emphatic on the need to open up the rural areas which to him requires "a new road extends a man's freedom only if he travels upon it." Awolowo and Nyerere's efforts will therefore complement UNHCR's conception of self-reliance "as the social and economic ability of an individual, a household or a community to meet essential needs (including protection, food, water, shelter, personal safety, health and education in a sustainable manner and with dignity."

The lessons Awolowo and Nyerere want African elite and intellectuals to imbibe range from the need for African elite and intellectuals to embrace a new set of attitudes and values, change their mindset to commitment to education which is required for individuals to accept the values appropriate to the African environment. The development of Africa will never come through foreign aid or assistance. It has to start with a serious commitment to education which must be universal, free, compulsory. The current basic education programme with a string of conditions from the donor agencies negates Awolowo and Nyerere's notion of education for self-reliance. Any education provided must focus on the development of skills and competencies among the learners. Only in this respect will the principle of self-help apply in African communities.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The greatest challenge African nations are facing today is their inability to traverse their social and economic environment. This problem arises from addiction to foreign aid, which to many African elite is required for African growth. This is a notion built on a false belief that growth and development can come from outside. The idea of self-reliance which Awolowo and Nyerere sell to the world requires a serious commitment to education, which remains one of the tools to move African nations away from

dependency syndrome. In this regard, the elite who believe that Africa's development lies in following the prescriptions of liberal economic need to cultivate a new thought and change their mindset so that Africa can make a meaningful impact in the global economy.

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