

Narrative Analysis of Aboriginal Knowledge as A Tool for Learners' Socialisation: Implications for Best Child-Upbringing Practices in Cameroon

Abstract

Aboriginal (Indigenous) knowledge systems are culture specific; they form the basis for a people's livelihood. Folklore and Children's traditional songs and games are one aspect of Indigenous knowledge systems. Through the songs and games children got to know their environment and acquired life skills among other things. This article dwells on the existence and performance of traditional children's songs and games and the use of proverbs and folktales among children. Traditional children's songs and games are no longer as popular as they used to be. In fact, it is possible that they are facing extinction. This paper also establishes that this status quo is as a result of quite a number of factors for example formal education and technological advancement among several others. Therefore, educationists and other key players are called upon to consider coming up with frame works which help advance Indigenous knowledge. Africa has always been an important source of rich information for knowledge production. The paper was anchored on the Eco-Cultural (ontogenesis) Theory of Bame Nsamenang (2015). Nsamenang (2015) explains the eco-cultural theories of development in what is known as social ontogenesis. The study created a theoretical stance known as social ontogenesis, which is grounded on an eco-cultural viewpoint and an indigenous West African idea. Curiosity about Africa has always existed, catering to many interests and imaginations. However, how can we educate and learn about Africa in a way that is influenced by an understanding of the rich cultural knowledge, complexity, and historical struggle of indigenous peoples to forge their own paths and aspirations? One could argue that understanding socialization and education techniques provides some crucial guidance in this quest for indigenous knowledge and epistemology. To educate young people, traditional African education has made use of a range of teaching and pedagogical techniques in addition to manuals and materials.

Keywords: Aboriginal Knowledge, Learners' Socialisation, Child-Upbringing Practices, Traditional children's songs and games

Introduction

"Education in African communities has happened in multiple sites, formal and non-formal. Just as Sub-Saharan African education can benefit from a study of educational delivery in other contexts, Traditional African education is an integral part of the culture and history of a local community, which is stored in various forms and transmitted through various modes/strategies. Such modes include language, music, dance, oral tradition, proverbs, myths, stories, culture and religion. Traditional African education, which is passed from one generation to another, is usually by word of mouth and cultural rituals, and has to some extent been the basis for sustainable development in agriculture, food preparation, health care, conservation and other sectors for many centuries. This mode of education has by and large been used as a way of acquiring lifelong learning" (Lukong, 2016).

The central argument of this paper stems from the submission that colonialism, slave trade and missionary are the platform upon which Western civilization and culture thrive and are sustained in Africa. While insisting that Western civilisation and culture has precariously contaminated the traditional values of Africa, the paper contends that Africa had established, well before the advent of colonialism, a pattern of home-grown political systems, governance

process and generally acceptable institutional rule-making arrangement, such that there was progression in the pace of civilisation of Africa and self-styled tempo of technological development and education. The paper further submits that the dynamism and significance of Africa on the global continuum tends to support the argument that Africa would have evolved and sustained level of development and civilization without the retrogressive contact with imperial forces. The consistent efforts made by African scholars to project indigenous ways/strategies through contextual educational acquisition of cultural values remained a continuum of knowledge generation for this article.

Positioning Aboriginal Socialisation Within African Epistemology

"Globally, there are many societies and every society has a set of peculiar ideas, beliefs, customs and values (aspects of culture) that guide the behaviour and practices of members of that society. Members of every society are also guided by sets of principles which they use to explain what they know and how they know it, what they do, how they do it and why they do it. These principles are called epistemology or theory of knowledge. The societies also have ways and methods by which they teach and pass on to their children their way of life and cultural knowledge in terms of ideas, beliefs, customs and values. This cultural knowledge is transmitted from generation to generation, albeit with some modifications. Africa is a continent of many societies and as such harbours many cultures. However, these societies although distinct, they share some similarities in their traditions, the way they see the world, describe the world and relate to the world in general: these are philosophies, worldviews or theories of world" (Lukong, 2016).

"From this perspective and in this paper, while epistemology in general is defined as dealing with the nature, origin, scope and limits of human knowledge, African Epistemology in particular is defined in terms of African traditions, cultures, philosophies, and theories of the world. Understanding African epistemology therefore would require knowing about how African people derive and make meaning out of what they experience in their cultural environments, and the approaches or methods they use in sharing such experiences with their children and teaching them the benefits and gains from such experiences. It would also require knowing how the African mind thinks about and gives meaning to environmental experiences and how these experiences are fitted into a general worldview" (Lukong, 2016).

Africans combine the physical, the natural, and the spiritual aspects of the universe as well as moral principles to inform and explain what they know, how they know and why they know. This is what is called African theory of knowledge (Anyanwu, 1984) or African epistemology. Nasseem(2009) supported this view by stating that "the classical African philosophy postulates that, "man and nature" are two entities but cannot be separated, and the united entities from which African epistemology is derived embraces the rational, the empirical and the mystical components of knowledge. African epistemology therefore views knowledge as the understanding of the hierarchical nature of forces and their cosmic interactions with possibly a supreme being at the helm of affairs. It might be of interest for the reader or student to compare and contrast this epistemological position with the existing theories of evolution and the religious accounts of human origin, existence and knowledge".

"Another source of knowledge for Africans comes from the combination of experiences from all their senses and reasoning and this makes self-experience to be central to and self-development to be dominant in African epistemology. Due to the fact that African culture is creative and very rich in oral traditions Africans use oral literature as a means of gaining knowledge and as a tool that propels their theory of knowledge. African oral literature in which

the oral traditions are explicitly expressed constitutes the most authentic expression of the creative intelligence and the world view of African peoples" (Akporobaro, 2001).

"Oral traditions have been identified as an important source of knowledge acquisition in African societies. Oral tradition involves the transmission of facts, values and fiction through oral means. It is a tradition because it persists, it endures and it is stable. When used adequately oral literature provides reliable and dependable knowledge about the history and culture of a people, and serves as a medium for cultural continuity" (Gbadegesin, 2009). "The reader or student might be interested in exploring the similarities, if any, between the Western forms of poems, proverbs, and metaphors and indigenous poems, proverbs and wise sayings in his/her local cultural community. The focus of this paper is to present the holistic, well-rounded and all-embracing view of African indigenous approach to educating the child and showcase its rich and complimentary potentials if incorporated into the present western form of teacher education in Africa. The inclusion of its methods and precepts in teacher education curriculum would place education in Africa within cultural and environmental contexts and render the education of African children relevant within and outside their cultural spheres" (Lukong, 2016).

The paradox of Aboriginal Knowledge Systems and Western Knowledge Systems.

"Universally there are two main knowledge systems, Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS) and Western Knowledge Systems (WKS). Indigenous knowledge is also referred to as local, non-formal or traditional knowledge. Greiner (1998) says it is the unique, traditional, local knowledge existing within and developed around the specific conditions of men and women indigenous to a particular geographic area. It can be summed up as a way of life of a people since it refers to knowledge, know-how and practices developed and maintained by people with long histories of close interaction with their natural environment (Soni, 2007). Western knowledge on the other hand is formal knowledge supported by written documents, rules and regulations and technological infrastructure. Apparently Western knowledge systems are made universal through western education while Indigenous knowledge is being suppressed in most parts of the world" (Dewes, 1993).

Indigenous knowledge is transmitted orally from one generation to another (Soni, 2007). Warren (1991) states that "it is the basis for local decision-making in agriculture, health care, food preparation, education, natural resource management and a host of other activities in rural communities. Most indigenous communities have traditional songs, stories, legends, dreams, methods and practices as the various modes of Indigenous knowledge transmission". Sifuna (2008) asserts that Indigenous learning was an education for living which was meant to train the youth for adulthood. They learnt by observation, imitation, practice and listening to stories told by their elders.

It was a way of life and Dei (2002) argues that "it is not disconnected into the universal abstract but grounded in a people and place. Since it is a way of life, it manifests itself through different dimensions, namely, agriculture, medicine, security, botany, zoology, craft skills and linguistics" (Mapara, 2009). Warren (1991) goes on to say that Indigenous knowledge system touches on the socialisation of the young, food production, processing and preservation as well as natural resources management. "This shows a holistic approach to life and a close interaction between the indigenous people and their environment" (Soni, 2007).

However, Indigenous knowledge is susceptible to change owing to a number of factors (Soni, 2007). Urbanisation and technological advancement have seriously impacted on Indigenous

knowledge systems. World Bank notes that much Indigenous knowledge are at risk of becoming extinct because of rapidly changing natural environments, fast pacing economic, political and cultural changes on a global scale. This is where this research comes in because traditional children's games and songs are one form of Indigenous knowledge.

"Indigenous knowledge systems also incorporated the socialization of the youth, it was a form of education though some would like to refer to it as non-formal education. They acquired knowledge and skills on food production, processing and preservation, natural resource management, marriage, relationships, leaders and conflict management among others (Warren, 1991). This article amongst other issues seeks to show that all this has succumbed to Western education and where it is still operational, it is at a very small scale" (Lukong, 2016).

The Nso traditional children's games and songs in Cameroon play a crucial role in the transmission of Aboriginal knowledge in its various forms to the young. Lukong (2015) indicates that "Nso children were taught how to farm, hunt, fish, prepare food, build houses and to run a home through the indigenous games and songs which are contextual tools/strategies for socialising children within their eco-cultural setting". Erny (1981) also stresses that "play was an informal method of instruction where children imitated adult roles". However, the World Bank (1997) points out that "today many Indigenous knowledge systems are at risk of becoming extinct because of rapidly changing natural environments, economically, politically and culturally global wide. The existence of the traditional Nso children's indigenous games and songs, folktales, myths, stories and proverbs have greatly contributed in a holistic development of children through the apprenticeship process, understanding, modelling and reproduction of contextually relevant knowledge system".

Urbanisation through Western Knowledge Systems (WKS) has taken its toll on African indigenous knowledge systems and the same has been done by the Western education system. Soni (2007) says "Indigenous knowledge is at risk of changing because people are highly mobile, they move to new regions and lifestyles tend to change with time. Western knowledge systems have dominated the universe and most children are exposed to formal learning from very tender years during their preschool years. Here they are grounded in English games and rhymes".

Nyota&Mapara (2008) argue that "English games have gained prominence in urban pre-schools. If Indigenous knowledge is to be effectively passed on to younger generations this has to be done during their childhood so that they become socialised in the appropriate norms, values and societal expectations. However, formal education has disrupted the practical everyday life aspects of Indigenous knowledge and ways of learning". Previous studies on indigenous socialization strategies as forms of Indigenous knowledge systems focused on precolonial samples, form and content, functions and purposes (Masuku &Ndawi, 2001, Nyoni& Mika, 2003, Nyota&Mapara, 2008).

Aboriginal Knowledge Systems as a ToolFor Child Socialisation Practices

In this section, we examined some cultural strategies that are used to facilitate the acquisition of social skills within African communities:

Proverbs

Proverbs are momentous media of indigenous communication in African society. They occur informally in day-to-day verbal communication or conversation (Olatunji, 1984). "In fact, according to Ikenga-Metuh (1992), proverbs spring spontaneously from the people. They are *voxpopuli*... in profound sense and consequently, should be accepted as a true index of what

a people regard as true and are interpretative of the principles of life and conduct. Proverbs are therefore, trustworthy witness of the social, political, ethical and religious ideals of the people among whom they originate. In the words of Olatunji, proverbs serve as social characters to praise what the society considers to be virtues such as tolerance, responsibility, dedication, love, discipline, justice etc" (Olatunji, 1984).

In the same way, proverbs are used to condemn what the society considered injustice, intolerance, destruction, jealousy, envy, hatred, sexual immorality among others (Ajibola, 1947). For example, hard work is praised and laziness condemned in the samples of Yoruba proverbs. *Atelewoenikiitannije*. Meaning *One's own palm does not deceive one*. That is, every man must work for his material success for if neighbours are not ready to help one hand does through hard work. This proverb extols the virtue of industry or hard work. On laziness, a Yoruba proverb says: *Iponri ole kiini laari Ojoojumolakitiyannba*. *The lazy man's destiny does not prosper, it is daily that trouble besets it*. This indicates that a lazy man always gets into trouble. From this point, we can argue that while proverb communicates ethical values of society, a person who speaks it becomes an agent of articulating ethical values of society in an informal manner.

Cultural psychologist, Linguistic/socio-cultural anthropologists, have long recognised the imperativeness of proverbs in socializing and understanding human socio-structural arrangements. Proverbs facilitate the contextual learning process of children. They are, according to (Lukong, 2016), "necessities in African societies; without at least a passive knowledge, adults may comprehend very little in African interactional settings. Proverbs introduce children, in their metaphorical contents, to abstract thought and moral stances in a highly naturalistic and integrative fashion. They socialize children into the 'ways of the culture' of the people and emphasise the appropriate role, behaviour, values, ethics, social relations, rules of etiquette, and pragmatics of language with regards to social and religious rituals and language usage".

Furthermore, proverbs, through these, link the living to the dead/ancestors who can punish as well as protect. As such, rules of social order are taught to children through the acquisition of language skills requiring deep thinking. Proverbs as a tool for socialisation, according to Penfield and Duru (1988), attempt to "introduce an unchallengeable description of the world through concrete imagery to the conversational situation or speech context in which they are used and the rules of behaviour specified by cultural tradition. They are conceptual tools for presenting salient cognitive and perceptual features, abstract ideas that cannot easily be explained literally, and experiences perceived through vivid and memorable imagery. Intellectually, they teach such skills subsuming the particular under the general, thus developing reasoning capacity within interactional contexts in which they are used".

In his 'Culture, Communication, and indigenous Education', Lukong, (2016) succinctly argues that "since culture plays a powerful role in human societies, educationists (and 'development experts') should realize their inadequacies in the information, the experience, and the frequently applicable symbol systems in understanding others as well as making their concepts and ideas understandable. Thus, human actions and events are to be seen as: active, dynamic, and developmental movements of a continuously changing reality; having to do with communicative contexts; containing boundaries of knowledge rather than being universal; and embedded in cultures rather than being treated as scientific inquiry, as the pure and unbiased process through which disinterested observers report objective facts of life".

"To study the 'facts of life' therefore requires that the researcher, even as a fully immersed member of a culture, should 'take up the roles of "observer" and "respondent" and to positively and concretely partake in the constructionism, evaluation, and transformation of the social milieu" (Georgoudi and Rosnow, 1985). "In doing this, it becomes inevitable for researchers to understand the indigenous systems. These systems, in relation to communication, especially in African social structures, are located in drama, storytelling, proverbs, poetry, and other such indigenous forms of communication, especially among the predominantly rural populations. They are, as contributors to the Indigenous Communication in Africa showed, through empirical studies, 'structures that are fully integrated into the interactive holistic social systems of the societies concerned (and) ... can serve to meet the communication, social interaction, information, and development and entertainment needs of the people" (Ansu-Kyeremah, 2005). In drama, storytelling, poetry, humour, and so on, proverbs feature prominently.

Even though proverbs are referred to as 'shorter' or 'minor' forms (Okpewho, 1992; Yankah, 1989), Okpewho has argued that because proverbs "are frequently used in normal, everyday speech situations, native speakers of African Languages are far more likely to encounter and to use them than stories and songs" (Okpewho, 1992). They are structurally neat and sharp in poetic appeals. Defined as "a piece of folk wisdom expressed with terseness and charm", proverbs, Okpewho states, are "indeed ... metaphorical statements since they reflect a general truth by reference to a specific phenomenon or experience" (Okpewho, 1992) which are contextually applied by different people. "Sourced through folktales, comments on actual historical experiences, and well-considered observation of various aspects of the natural environment as well as human affairs and conduct, proverbs reflect people's lives and fate in the world. They may be applied: as social control awareness of certain groups and, hence, the maintenance of the status quo; as tools of the ruling class for the propagation of its ideas and interpretations; and for social and intellectual change. Proverbs do not, therefore, always belong to a 'folk' or 'group' but only in an extended sense or 'a spontaneous and necessarily un-self-interested product of the people as a whole" (Finnegan, 1992).

According to Yankah (1989), "except in Australia, Papua New Guinea, and among the American Indians, proverbs are used all over the world though the strategies and intensity of use differ from culture to culture. Rather than being fixed, rigid, and formal, as some scholars posit, and thus limiting reasoning, proverbs are re-creative and, often, context-specific". "As such, they are better understood when the dynamics of the proverb, the discourse devices that trigger it, speaker- audience interaction, and the efficacy or otherwise of the proverb in influencing or changing attitude are clearly monitored, since both researcher and discussant cannot predict if, when, and which proverbs will be used in any discourse" (Yankah, 1989). Furthermore, in composing proverbs, it is not only the dead past that is the concern but also a part of a primary on-going process of culture formation within which speakers devise new strategies to deal with old problems, and resort to old strategies to contain new ones. It is not therefore surprising that proverbs are often triggered under conditions of uncertainty, stress, and adversity. They are, however, also used to critique current events, such as politics, and to create drama and humour to explain human behaviour. Nonetheless, even proverbs are also used to criticise through the presentation of the obverse side.

Table 1 highlights some Nso/Cameroon Proverbs and their moral lessons necessary for emotional development.

Table 1: Analysis of Proverbs, English Translations And Moral Lessons

Proverb	English translation	Moral lesson
<i>Mbeyoyiikuysaakitu</i>	The shoulder never grows higher than the head	You have to respect and obey your elders because they are older than you.
<i>Kiwoki loo yokibiy, kibiykiwaayokiwo</i>	When the hand is rubbing the thigh, the thigh should be rubbing the hand	The good done to someone should be reciprocated. One good turn deserves another
<i>A yoyiyofon, a sor wo e nsay</i>	One never feeds the Fon and wipes his hands on the ground	When one does a good thing he expects rewards
<i>Aa soosinwa ji melaa, a yen melaa</i>	If you provoke bees in a hive, you will receive their reactions	If you invite trouble to yourself, it will affect you
<i>Bveynjiyishemwunabvey long badze ye bvervikuhu</i>	If a sheep enters friendship with a goat, then it can eat coco yams	If a good person joins bad company he will be influence by the bad company, thus guard against bad company
<i>Wir bung kitem, la wu yo tse ndev</i>	When you lack a calabash don't dirty the water.	It is selfish to lack a thing and not like another.

Source: Tani E. Lukong. (2012)

Indigenous Games

"The importance of play in the development of intellectual abilities has been emphasized in developmental psychology. Play is more than what children do to pass the time. Instead, play serves an important purpose, helping children to develop socially, cognitively and physically" (Power, 2000). According to Piaget (1962) "play is derived from the child's working out of two fundamental characteristics of his mode of experience and development. These are accommodation and assimilation- the attempts to integrate new experiences into the relatively limited number of motor and cognitive skills available at each age. In **Accommodation**, the child attempts to imitate and interact physically with the environment. In **Assimilation**, the child attempts to integrate externally derived precepts or motor actions in a limited number of schemata. For Piaget children especially at the preoperational and concrete operational stages grow cognitively by observing sequences of play. Piaget considered that children primarily learn through imitation and play as they build up symbolic images through internalized activity".

The pioneering social constructivist developmental psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1978) thought that, "in the preschool years, play is the leading source of development. Through play children learn and practice many basic social skills. They develop a sense of self, learn to interact with other children, how to make friends, how to lie and how to role-play". Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model provides an important framework for considering play as part of a child's development in the midst of various social systems, with the family occupying a central role.

Between the ages of 4 and 11, the child engages in physical play like being able to walk and run, to jump, kick, catch, and skip. Large-muscle skills take over and lay the foundation for even more sophisticated activities, including bicycle riding, roller-skating, wrestling, swinging, swimming, and other sports. Physical play gives a child the chance to practice previously learned motor skills and to develop new ones as he repeatedly challenges himself and gradually pushes back the limits of the ability and endurance.

"Play can be categorised into two. Functional play that involves simple, repetitive activities typical of early childhood and constructive play in which children manipulate objects to produce or build something typical of middle childhood (Feldman, 2003). Furthermore, the social aspects of play reveal that children engage in parallel play in which children at early childhood play with similar toys, in a similar manner, but do not interact with each other. At this stage children also engage in onlooker play where they simply watch others play by looking silently or making comments of encouragement, but do not actually participate themselves. As children grow older into middle childhood, they engage into more sophisticated associative play where two or more children actually interact with one another by sharing or borrowing toys or material, although they do not do the same thing. Later on in life, children engage in cooperative play in which children genuinely interact with one another, taking turns, playing games, or devising contests" (Feldman, 2003).

By participation in social games and play the child is able to develop intellectual behaviours that are both cognitive (numbering, imagination, problem solving, language, understanding, comprehension, attention, etc.) and social (child's ability to; give and receive help from peers, keep friends and playmates, manage conflict, learn future gender roles, manage success and failure, live and work together with others, participate in community tasks, celebrate with others and feel for others in times of worry and distress).

"In African cultures, as the child grows, his/her social world is not as limited as the child from the western culture. His/her general learning is beyond the immediate family circle. At this age period too, particularly if weaning has been instituted, the environment of a child is much less mother-centred. He is brought into the group in the area of play. By the time he is fully weaned, somewhere between two and two and a half years, the African child spends a great deal more time with his or her siblings and/or other children in the total family compound. In this way he is exposed to areas of socialisation and complex social interaction at an early age. During this age period, social gains begin to come into the foreground" (Elam, 1968).

Nyota and Mapara (2008) highlight "two important ways by which the African child interacts with peers and siblings. This is done through African traditional games and play songs. Berger (2000) has remarked: If a child's learning is not aroused by his or her parents, it may be aroused – and powerfully – when the child begins to compare his or her skills with those of other children of the same age". Berger (2000) emphasises "the fact that older African elder children who have mastered the skill or graduated from apprenticeship so to speak normally give the apprentice child guidance. The critical element of these games is guided participation. The older child who has mastered the skill and the learner child interact in order to accomplish a task. As they do so, the mentor is both sensitive and responsive to the needs of the learner. Through these traditional games and play songs, children learn how to handle interpersonal relationships and develop more social and cognitive competences".

African Traditional Medicine

This section describes an ontology for African Traditional Medicine (ATM), which is the basis for a knowledge management system, controlled by a multi-agent system. The interest of this problem, from the point of view of artificial intelligence and software engineering lies on the issues that arise from integration of the requirements of the different stakeholders in such a system and the diverse nature of concepts to be considered in such an ontology. One of these issues is the need to allow the ontology to evolve as far as experts provide more knowledge and the mechanisms for validation of such knowledge.

African Traditional Medicine (ATM) is the result of diverse experience, mixing customs and knowledge about Nature, which has been transmitted by oral tradition along the history. Today, the availability of computers and networks in more and more places around the African continent opens the possibility to consider the support of knowledge systems for new practitioners, who can take benefit of ATM knowledge. Building an ATM knowledge management system requires first a formalisation of ATM concepts and their relationships. From the software engineering point of view, this task implies several challenges: the specification of an ATM ontology, and the development of tools for allowing experts in ATM to build a knowledge base, validate such knowledge, and recover it when needed. This section addresses the problem of defining an ontology for ATM that should be easy to extend as required, and that facilitates structuring and integration of knowledge from different complementary areas, as described below.

Due to the lack of a common and structured vocabulary specifically dedicated to ATM, as it is a particular and sometimes efficient way of many traditional healers in Africa to contribute to health issues of the native population, a well structured computational representation of ATM domain can therefore be used to manage knowledge and information gathered from the field practices. In addition, using the same concepts for the description of this domain in other similar ontologies would facilitate interoperability among them. To address these needs, this section presents an ontology that describes the ATM domain, which can be used by experts of the field and the scientists' community with interests in the development and the expansion of a different way of treatment and cure. The benefit is the protection by the means of new technologies of many centuries of oral transmission knowledge, which is in the way of disappearance. The use of the ATM ontology intends to promote a harmonisation and integration of data from diverse sources.

Medicine Ontologies

The approach for management an ontology for ATM starts from considering some existing ontologies, part of the modern medicine ontologies, such as plant structure, human disease and disease transmission, could be used in the ATM ontology. In concrete, the following ontologies have been taken into account because they are closed and can be considered also as part of the domain, as medicine issue in general:

- The Plant Ontology (PO) contains many classes, but for ATM the interest is mainly with (*plant structure*> class, and not others such as *<in vitro cultured cell, plant cell and tissue*).
- The Pathogen Transmission Ontology describes the means during which the pathogen is transmitted directly or indirectly from its natural reservoir, a susceptible host or source to a new host. It considers two types of transmission: direct and indirect. The former has three subclasses (congenital, contact and droplet spread) and the later structured in airborne, vector borne and vehicle borne.

- The Human Disease Ontology classifies diseases in five groups: behavioral disease, biological process disease, disease of anatomical entity, disease on environmental origin and syndrome. It also has at the top-level class *<temp holding>* with head, neck, dermatologic disease, etc.
- The Infectious Disease Ontology (IDO) deals with the means during which the pathogen is transmitted directly or indirectly from its natural reservoir, a susceptible host or source to a new host, definitely the process transmission.

African Traditional Medicine (ATM) is a complex system of cure in which diseases considered as a social illness, which is necessary to eradicate from the root. There is intervention of several actors from several domains, which turns complex and diversified exchanges and treated knowledge. This knowledge is passed on with oral way and is not structured. Several actors can be identified in ATM, with specific roles and functions:

- ❖ The *healer* is a well-known and respected person, psychologist, botanist, pharmacologist and doctor. He knows the names of plants, animals and rocks.
- ❖ The *fetishist* predicts important events (misfortune or happiness) and is consulted to find the cause of a disease, to protect against certain misfortunes.
- ❖ The *Soothsayer* predicts and is seen as the intermediary with the divinity. He generally diagnoses but can advise a healer to a patient.
- ❖ The *Magician* throws lots and makes use of black arts. But he is part of the actors as well.

In ATM, it is also necessary to distinguish symptoms from disease. When a patient meets a traditional doctor, he suffers from the evil of which one can attribute a name in human disease of the modern medicine. But for the traditional doctor, this patient is seen as a person who possesses a *symptom*, a sign of a social illness. *Social illness* expresses tensions (hidden or revealed) that could exist in the circle of acquaintances of the patient. Certain anthropologists, such as, introduce the concept of traditional model to express all that is lived in the traditional vision. The body in this model consists of two entities: a visible part and an invisible part. The global step in the traditional model is the following one:

- Interpretation of the cause of the bad physical appearance (sort of diagnosis): the traditional doctor considers that the disease that the patient suffers can result from several sources: death ancestors, who continue to live and who sometimes show their *dissatisfaction*, acting on the alive, witchcraft, incest (the fact of falling under the yoke of the forbidden), twins who possess supernatural powers, destiny which is individual, God who here is a natural cause.
- Phase of divination to know how to treat the patient.
- Prescriptions according to the cause of the disease: remedies with natural base, ritual products and other sacrifices to be done.
- Follow-up of the patient's evolution in the process of cure which sometimes can take years.

From the above description, some relevant concepts can be pointed out, as part of the ontology. Concepts such as:

- 1) **Function** for the actors of this medicine: the healer, the fetishist or the soothsayer.
- 2) **Process** for all the different types of proposed process of treatment.
- 3) **Symptoms** for the role of the symptoms.
- 4) **Disease** as it is considered in this medicine.

Folktales

According to Gyekye (1995), stories (folktales) are “primary ways through which a great deal of African philosophical thought, knowledge and wisdom has been taught. Preliterate African culture was characterised by an oral tradition that found expression in stories, folktales, anecdotes, and parables that provoked a great deal of reflection. Most of the African knowledge, myths, philosophies, liturgies, songs, and sayings have been handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation. Through these oral media preserved, more or less accurately, children are educated on the people’s conduct and moral values”.

“Folktale has been given many definitions by many scholars of different orientations. Its definition depends on its functions in a society and the way the narrator and the audience think of it at the time of performance. For instance, according to Akporobaro (2001) folktale is an imaginative narrative (story) in prose form. The story that constitutes a folktale may have a basis in real life, but generally the story is an imaginative recreation of a memorable experience that is intended essentially to entertain rather than to record history or social experience. A folktale may be believed. Generally, however, they are considered to be untrue stories, and hence not objects of serious belief” (Lukong, 2016). Also, Hagan (1988) provides a comprehensive and critical list of the technical features of a folktale: It has a literary convention expressed in the scheme of formal features: the introductory statements; the body of the tale interspersed with songs; the moral or etiological conclusion; the narrator-audience interaction; the use of language characterised chiefly by repetition and resort to ideophones; the role of songs to punctuate sections of the story and to advance the plot in some cases.

Theoretical Framework

The conceptualisations of this paper were anchored on the Eco-Cultural Theory of Bame Nsamenang (2015). Nsamenang (2015) explains the eco-cultural theories of development in what is known as Social ontogenesis. Nsamenang (1992) developed a theoretical position termed social ontogenesis, based on an indigenous West African conception that is phrased within an eco-cultural perspective. His ideas are inspired by the writings of various Africans trained in philosophy and humanities (Mbiti 1990; Moumouni, 1968) and grounded in a combination of systematic observational research and his own experience of the socialization practices of the rural versus urban Nso communities in Western Cameroon (Nsamenang and Lamb, 1993, 1995). His formulation of social ontogenesis is rooted in a widely shared West African worldview. It posits the growth of social selfhood through a series of phases, each characterized by a distinctive developmental task defined within the framework of the culture’s primarily socio- affective, developmental agenda. The theory of social ontogenesis (Nsamenang, 1992, 2004, 2012) points out how, beginning early in life and through developmental stages.

African children are active in the life of their families and societies as well as in self-care and self-learning. This theory presents human development as partly determined by the social ecology in which the development occurs and by how African children, especially in sibling and peer settings, learn from each other in peer cultures. The seminal concept of this theory is sociogenesis, defined as individual development that is explained more in terms of socially observed markers and culturally perceived tasks but less on biological unfolding, although social ontogenetic thinking does not preclude nature; it assumes that biology underpins social ontogenesis (Nsamenang, 2006). Ngaujah (2003) has interpreted Nsamenang’s theoretical approach as revealing social and affective nature of the environment on the child’s cognitive and social learning. The aspect of Nsamenang’s stages

necessary for this study begin from the third social stage which corresponds to social apprenticeship.

This phase roughly corresponding with childhood, is termed the period of apprenticing in which the principal developmental task is to recognize, cognize, and rehearse social roles that pertain to three hierarchical spheres of life: household, network and the public. Much of the responsibility for stimulation and guidance in this phase of early childhood development is assigned to pre-adolescence and adolescent children in the family and neighbourhood. The delegation of responsibility for care and socialization of younger children from adults to preadolescents and adolescents serves the function of priming the emergence of social responsibility. These priming strategies embed in traditional African childrearing practices have important implications for the design of culturally appropriate forms of intervention to optimize developmental opportunities for children in contemporary Africa (Nsamenang, 2009).

Indeed, in many African communities with a subsistence economy, far from constituting a form of exploitation or abuse, caregiving responsibilities assigned to preadolescents and adolescents are better understood as part of an indigenous educational strategy that keeps children in contact with existential realities and the activities of daily life that represents the participatory component of social integration (Nsamenang, 1992: p. 157). By positioning children as emerging into levels of selfhood, implying the unfolding of biological potentialities and social competencies, Africans tacitly acknowledge that self-concept and agency evolve with a maturing self-consciousness that accords a sense of self-direction and agentic search for or choice of the resources and exposures that increasingly differentiate and polish self-identity and goal directed behaviour toward desired or imagined personal status, either of sovereign individuality or relational individuality (Kagitcibasi, 2007; Nsamenang, 2004). African parents sensitize children from an early age to seek out others from whom to extract local knowledge and situated intelligences (Ogbu, 1992) and in so doing clarify who they are who they are, more so within sibling and peer spaces than with adults. Children extort the social, emotional, practical, cognitive, relational values and other norms ingrained in the activity settings of the home, society, and peer cultures more through their contextual embedment and active participation and less through explicit adult instruction or prodding. This social interaction is made more visible in the relation with peers and adults who initiate the adolescents into traditional medicine, traditional games, proverbs and other cultural aspects.

In so doing, they graduate from one activity setting and participative sector of the peer culture to another, steadily maturing toward adult identity and roles (Nsamenang, 2012a). Zimba (2002) described one instance of self-definition with the Zulu community of South Africa, as nurturing *umuntu umuntu ngabantu*, which literally translates into a person is only a person with other people. 'This relational view of identity development downplays lone individualism, implying that a sense of self cannot be attained or adequately understood without reference to the community of others in which it is embedded. Concepts of place identity and place attachment accentuate the need to incorporate context into theory building and research agendas. The table below represents the various stages according to Bame Nsamenang. Worth noting is the fact that only the stages relevant to the present study are considered.

Table 2: The Various Developmental Stages According to Bame Nsamenang

SerialStage	SocialOntogeneticStage	DevelopmentalTask(S)
4 Thirdsocialstage Childhood	Socialapprenticenotice	Recognize, cognize social roles.Acknowledgeselfin connectedness.Peergroup interactionand _work.'
5 Fourthsocialstage Puberty	Socialentrée	Recognize and adjust to changes. Perform domestic chores/duties.Participatein riteofpassage,if any.
6 Fifthsocialstage Adolescence	Probationand _socialized'inter nship	Visualizeself;complete training.Poisedforadultroles. Junior partner as proto-adult.
7 Sixthsocialstage Adulthood	Adulthood	Marriage.Responsible parenthood.Productivity/social reproduction.

Source:Nsamenang (1992).

The table above illustrates the various ontogenetic stages and the behaviours to be expected at various stages especially the stages relevant to our work. Nsamenang's theory shows clearly what happens at the various stages in the life of the individual within the ecocultural setting and with direct implication of the west Cameroonian people. From the stage theory, it is clear that the adolescent visualizes self, completes training, is poised for adult roles. Some of these include traditional medicine, games and of course the use of proverbs. The training process is a holistic process whereby morality, career orientation, and social life in the community are all wrapped up. The adolescentisintroducedintoeveryaspectofthelifehehastoliveasanadult.

Regarding the main variables of our study, the social apprentice level and the social entrée stages are the moments when the child begins gaining introduction into adult life. The adolescents are gradually introduced to traditional medicine and their processes. Traditional games too become common as the adolescent plays these games with peers and elders and equally the adolescent who is receiving initiation into adult lifeisintroducedtoproverbswhichhe/shehastoattentivelymemorize,understandand reproduce. From these stages the adolescent is ready for adulthood and the life of the adult in the society.

African Social and Cultural Norms as determinants of best child-upbringing practices

Social norms can be described as 'laws', mostly unwritten, that govern the behaviours of any group of people. Although these norms are not necessarily formal laws within society, they still work to promote a great deal of social control. Norms in every culture create conformity that allows for people to become socialized to the culture in which they live. Norms dictate the interactions of people in all social encounters and are used to promote the creation of roles in society. They also allow people of different levels of social class structure to function effectively. As social beings, individuals, including young children learn when and where it is appropriate to act in certain ways, to say certain things, to use certain words, to discuss certain topics or wear certain clothes, and when it is not. Social norms can be enforced formally (e.g., through sanctions) or informally (e.g., through body language and non-verbal communication cues). If people do not follow these norms, then they become labelled as deviants or seen as abnormal and this can lead to them being considered the outcast of society. What is considered "normal" is relative to the location of the culture in which the social interaction is taking place.

Transmission of Social Norms

This takes place within and outside the home. Groups internalise or acquire norms by accepting them as reasonable and proper standards for behaviour within the group. Once firmly established, a norm becomes a social fact, and thus, a part of the group's working structure, and is difficult to change. With that being said, newcomers to a group can change a group's norms. However, it is much more likely that the new individual entering the group will adopt the group's norms, values, and perspectives, rather than the other way around. Also, norms that are counter to the behaviours of the overarching society or culture may be transmitted and maintained within small subgroups of society. Social groups have a big influence on social norms. Social norms have a way of maintaining order and organizing groups.

Social norms demonstrate how an 'ideal' society should be. It is the job of groups in society to carry out these social norms. Norms affect the way one behaves in public. This 'descriptive norm' refers to people's perceptions of what is commonly done or expected in specific situations. An 'injunctive norm' refers to people's perceptions of what is commonly approved or disapproved of within a particular culture. For example, among the Nso people of Cameroon, the youngsters must speak in indigenous language (Lamnso) when conversing with older people in the community even when both of them understand and speak the official language (English). This helps to sustain the content, vitality and essence of indigenous socialization strategies such as proverbs, games, folklores, native stories etc.

Cultural Norms

Although culture is a powerful human tool for survival, it is also fragile because it changes over a period of time and could be easily lost because it exists in the minds of people who practice its norms. Written languages, systems of government, building architectures and artefacts are ways that culture of a people has been expressed. Archaeologists are constantly digging up artefacts of ancient people to uncover the material remains that reflect cultural patterns of those that lived during ancient times. These reflect the creation based on cultural knowledge and skills. They nevertheless, reflect the cultural background of a people, especially that of young citizens that influence their cultural identity, which the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1959) upholds as sacrosanct.

In order for children across the African continent to have equal access to a high quality education, their mother tongue, or indigenous languages, all must be valued and respected, especially by the educational system in each country. Even educators may unknowingly assist in the academic impairment of children from local communities. This may happen when children switch abruptly from home language or mother tongue to foreign language. This is a form of hijacking the mental processing from its natural course.

The consequences are that not only do we lose a huge human resource by impeding the mental growth of millions of the world citizens; many of them are also lost to the entire system of formal education. In actual fact, three foundational educational principles are violated as many children begin institutional schooling. The first principle is that cognitive development and development of a child's mother tongue go hand in hand but this is not promoted in most school systems in Africa. Development of a child's mother tongue should "feed" his or her broad-based academic development, because it lays a solid conceptual foundation for all the skills needed for intellectual growth. Recent research shows that support of one's first language facilitates academic success, even with a second language as medium of instruction (Collier and

Thomas 2004). Jim Cummins' Common Underlying Proficiency model is one attempt to explain this phenomenon of linguistic abilities and understandings which transfer across languages (Cummins, 1986).

The second principle, supported by abundant evidence gathered in the last three decades, is that mother tongue education in the formative years does not retard acquisition of a second (or third) language; it facilitates it (Muskin, 1999; Dutcher, 1995). In many places in Africa there is still a widely held belief that the sooner children begin learning a second language, the better they will master it (Muthwii and Kioko, 2001). On the contrary, Cummins' (1984) suggest that a child's second language competence is partly dependent on the level of competence already achieved in the first language. The more developed the first language, the easier it will be to develop the second language. When the first language is at an early stage developmentally, the challenge of learning a second language is much greater (except for pronunciation).

Third, children bring with them a broad array of skills when they go to school. These should be leveraged. A school system should develop them, rather than setting them aside and introducing a completely different phonology, syntax, semantic framework, and vocabulary with which children must try to learn. The former is facilitation; the latter is hindrance to learning.

Cultural Values

Values exert major influence on the behaviour of an individual and serve as broad guidelines in all situations. In this sense, values can be defined as those things that are important to or cherished by someone. Values are the motivating power of human actions and a necessity of her or his survival, psychologically as well as physically. The concept "value" is not an endpoint or end in itself; it presupposes an answer to the question: of value to whom and for what? It presupposes an entity capable of acting to achieve a goal in the face of an alternative. Where no alternative exists, no goals and no values are possible. "Value" is that which one acts to gain and keep; "virtue" is the action by which one gains and keeps it. It is only an ultimate goal, an end in itself that makes the existence of values possible.

Hard work, which is carried out with a good sense of responsibility and work ethic are taught from an early to children at home. They learn these by examples given by the adult members or senior siblings of the household. Vices such as stealing, cheating, lying, fighting in the public place was considered as anti-social behaviours and publicly redressed. Children still need to be taught the ethics of dignity in labour and that hard work carried out with a good sense of responsibility pays. Politeness and courtesy in speech and behaviour is communicated to children through the use of different idiomatic expressions of different African languages. Training begins at home, hence the foundation of good behaviour and sign of good upbringing including being polite and showing courtesy to everybody requires a direct engagement of all stakeholders from parents of children and the community. While there are no direct costs attached to teaching these virtues, they bring great rewards and opens valuable doors and opportunities for peaceful living throughout life. Strong moral values are being successfully enforced because the tasks of enforcing or inculcating these are not limited to the immediate parents but all other members of the family and community are involved. Therefore, children are being guided and supervised in and out of the home at all times.

Values are related to the norms of a culture, but they are more global and abstract than norms. Norms are rules for behaviour in specific situations, while values identify what should be judged as good or evil. Flying the national flag on a holiday is a norm, but it reflects the value of patriotism. The colour of the clothing worn and the manner of appearance are normative

behaviours dictated by the occasion such as weddings, funerals, formal meetings, relaxation or while engaging in commercial activities. In certain Different cultures reflect different values.

Respect for Elders

This is highly valued in Africa such that children are taught to have a great deal of respect for their elders, whether or not they are related to them. It is the cornerstone of our culture. In some languages, the way elders are addressed differs as they are loaded with words that connote honour and reverence. For instance, elders are rarely addressed by their first names. Appellations such as uncle, aunty, brother, sister, mother (mammy, mummy or mama), father (baba, papa or daddy), his highness, queen or king etc are used with the appropriate actions that match the words being used. These include a bow, genuflection, prostration, smile, soft tone, and the like. It is generally considered unspeakable and unimaginable for children to call their parents by their first names. That is considered a taboo in communities where these norms are practiced. This culture of respect for elders fosters an atmosphere of conflict resolution and order in the society where it is practiced.

The Concept of Extended Family

Unlike in most developed countries, the concept of the extended family operates as the built-in social security system. In principle, the African is his or her brothers' or sisters' keeper, although this mutually helpful practice is gradually eroding. It is customary in some African communities to take up the responsibility of educating and training their siblings, relatives and children not related to them through school up to High School and College. Unrelated dependents are provided for in terms of food, clothing and shelter depending on the ability of the provider. Whenever there are unresolved conflicts at home with spouses or at work, there is always an uncle, aunt, nephew, niece or cousin who will listen sympathetically and offer useful advice while maintaining confidentiality and ensuring lasting stability in our relationships. It was system that helped to ensure that irreconcilable differences were rare.

Mother Tongue, Local Language or Home Language

Obanya (2004) noted that education on the African continent is failing the majority of its learners. This was evidenced by the high drop-out and repeater rates, low learner participation and poor academic results. This is especially so in sub-Saharan African countries where education is delivered in the language of the former colonial masters. The low learning outcomes were attributed to the underutilization of learners' home or first languages as a medium of instruction Obanya (2004). In other words, the first language is the language transmitted by the family as members (the mother tongue or native language); the non-mother tongue but most widely used language in the immediate environment of the learner; the widely spoken language in a community in which the learner is growing up, but which is not necessarily the language of his or her parents or immediate family; the languages learnt and regularly used by an individual; or the most frequently used, the most perfectly mastered which might not necessarily be the first in the chronological order of acquisition by the individual.

It is therefore necessary to examine the use of the terms- mother tongue, local language or home language and how they impact on learning outcomes. Research has proven that using the learners' mother tongue or home language which refers to the language or languages spoken at home by children is crucial to effective learning. This will be useful when teachers and caregivers are also native speakers of the children's mother tongue or home language as it makes it easier for teachers and caregivers to communicate knowledge in a manner that facilitates assimilation. There are a number of theories that explain cultural ways of socializing

children into acceptable societal norms, for the purpose of this book we examine the ethno-cultural model of child socialization and intelligence (Lukong, 2012)

Methodology:

Research Design

This study used the Convergent Parallel Mixed method also termed concurrent triangulation design to gather data with the aim of finding out the influence of African indigenous practices on learner's socialization patterns. The schematic description of the convergent parallel mixed method design is presented in the figure below:

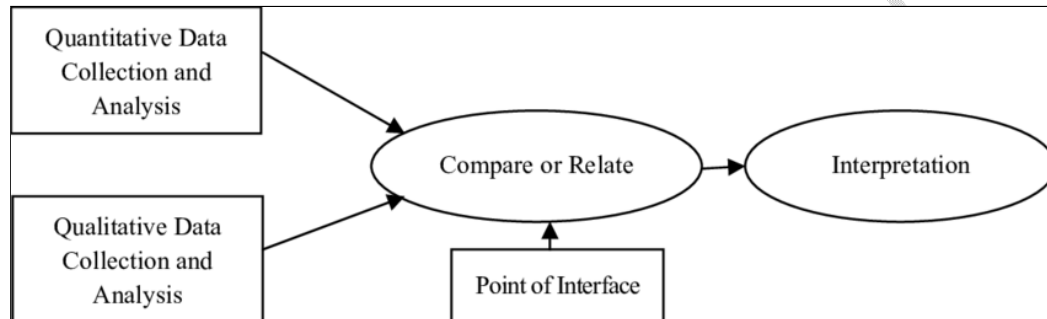


Figure1: The Convergent Parallel Mixed Method Design

Source: Cresswell (2014)

The convergent mixed method approach is probably the most familiar of the basic and advanced mixed methods strategies. In this approach, both quantitative and qualitative data, analyses them separately, and then compares the results to see if the findings confirm or disconfirm each other. The key assumption of this approach is that both qualitative and quantitative data provide different types of information often detailed views of participants qualitatively and scores on instruments quantitatively and together they yield results that should be the same. It builds off the historic concept of the multi- method, multi-trait idea from Campbell and Fiske (1959), who felt that a psychological trait could best be understood by gathering different forms of data.

Population of the Study

Sample size and Sampling Techniques

A minimum of 15% of the villages was sampled for the study, which aligns with the standard for clustered sampling (Nana, 2018). From the 6 villages considered, a total of 165 participants were sampled. 150 for the questionnaire and 15 for the interviews. The snow ball technique was equally employed to get those to interview especially with the herbalists. With regard to the questionnaire, the purposive and convenient sampling techniques were used for adolescents who are between 16-22 years old. The stratification of the sample consisted mainly in including both male and female members of the community. The participants from the sampled villages are presented in the table below.

Table 3: Distribution of Sampled Participants

	Participants	Number chosen	Instrument used
1	Herbalists	5	Interview
2	Elders (Women)	5	Interview
3	Elders (Men)	5	Interview

Herbalists and Elders**Table 4: Characteristics of Herbalists and Elders**

SN	Occupation	Gender	Age	Village of origin	Highest level of school attained	Age from which one has been living in the village	Duration of stay in the village
1.	Clergy	Male	60	Manchok	Tertiary/ University	20	40
2.	Teacher	Female	60	Simonkoh	Tertiary	24	36
3.	Farmer	Male	76	Jikijem	FSLC	1	76
4.	Herbalist	Male	38	Manchok	Never went to school	1	38
5.	Farmer	Female	43	Jikijem	Ordinary level	1	43
6.	Teacher	Female	60	Lui	Tertiary	24	36
7.	Farmer	Female	40	Elak	FSLC	8	28
8.	Farmer	Female	57	Manchok	FSLC	1	57
9.	Clergy	Male	60	Jikijem	Tertiary	1	40
10.	herbalist	Male	45	Simonkoh	Never went to school	1	45
11.	Technician	Male	55	Lui	FSLC	25	30
12.	Herbalist	Male	65	Elak	O/L	30	35
13.	Farmer	Female	60	Keyon	A/L	20	40
14.	Cook	Female	50	Lui	Tertiary	5	45
15.	Herbalist	Male	45	Keyon	O/L	10	35

The herbalists and elders were diversified in their occupation, ranging from teacher, farmer, herbalist, cook and clergy. Both male and female were sampled. Their ages ranged from 40 to 76 and this seniority was an indicator of knowledge and experience. Their villages of origin were Manchok; Simonkoh, Jikijem, Lui, Elak, Keyon. Their highest level of school attained ranged from never been to school to tertiary. These diversifications were good for the validity of the sample. Up to half of them have been living in the village for 20 years or more, and their duration of stay in the village ranged from 30 to 76 years, which is good for the validity of the data.

Research Instruments

The instruments used for data collection in this study were an interview guide for the qualitative process and a questionnaire for the quantitative process. The interview guide and the questionnaire were designed by the researcher, scrutinized and approved by the research supervisor. The main objective of the interview guide and the questionnaire was to find out the influence of African indigenous practices on the development of socialization skills of late adolescents. The interview guide was divided into four sections of A, B, C and D. Section A, handled the demographic information relating to the sex, age range and the village of the respondent. The rest of the sections handled questions relating to the research questions. Section B was a section to be answered by herbalists only. It treated issues relating to the various herbs used in treating some common illnesses, the methods of transmitting knowledge to adolescents and an appreciation of the adolescents with regard to their relation with traditional medicine.

Section C concentrated on traditional games. This section targeted adults and elders who transmit knowledge to the adolescents. The items focussed on identifying traditional games, the learning and practice of these games, values fostered through the practice of these games and how cognitive skills are developed through the practice of the games. Section D on indigenous proverbs dealt with the relevance of proverbs among the Oku people. The mode of transmission of the proverbs and the impact of proverbs on the adolescents. Each of the sections carried five items apart from section A with seven items. A total of twenty-two items were found on the interview guide. All of these items addressed issues of decision making, problem solving and social competence concomitantly.

The questionnaire had four sections. Section A handled the demographic issues while sections B, C and D dealt with the objectives of the study. They were structured questions following the Likert scale where respondents were expected to tick where they SD (Strongly disagree), D (Disagree), A (agree) or SA (Strongly agree) with the items.

Section B of the questionnaire contained 10 items dealing with Traditional medicine and cognitive development. This section sought to appreciate issues related to cognitive skills and traditional medicine. The cognitive issues concerned here included identification, discrimination, memory, understanding and reproduction. Section C dealt with indigenous games and cognitive development. The intention here was to find out the relationship between the games and cognitive processes with regard to calculations, estimation, kinesthetic abilities, etc.

Section D dealt with proverbs in their relation to Cognitive development. Some of the issues involved were on language development, expression of concepts, socialization, etc. sections B, C and D contained 30 items. In all the questionnaire contained 35 items. Section A had 7 items and sections B, C, and D made up of 30 items distributed equally.

Validity of the Instruments

The instruments for data collection were subjected to face and content validity. To ensure face validity of the instrument, the researcher gave the interview guide and questionnaire to some classmates for peer review and some anthropologists to read through and make possible corrections and suggestions. The interview guide was critically evaluated in terms of its appropriateness to the research questions and clarity of the items. They were then presented to the supervisor of the study who scrutinized the items, checking appropriateness of the language and clarity. The content validity of the instruments was obtained by checking the items to make sure that they tie with the objectives of the study to measure, what they were supposed to measure accurately.

Reliability of the Instruments

To test and ensure high reliability of the instruments, samples of the interview guide and questionnaire were administered on 10 persons in Bow village, with the same characteristics as the villages used for the study in Oku. The result of the pilot study revealed that the items were understood as intended thereby making the instruments good enough to be used in the research.

Administration of the Instrument

The interview guides were administered within the space of two months. The researcher personally carried out the administration of some of the interviews. Some of the questionnaires and interviews were administered through an aid. The researcher had to travel

to Oku Subdivision and visit various villages to be able to collect the necessary data. Most of the interviews were done at the convenience of the interviewees. With some interviewees, the exercise took between 40 minutes-2 hours, because the researcher avoided putting the interviewees under pressure.

The researcher used a tape recorder to save the data during the interview session. Most of the interviewees were very happy and cooperated with the researcher by giving him all the information needed. For sanitary reasons especially within the Coronavirus pandemic in which the interview was carried out, the researcher had to go about with a facemask and hand sanitizer. Equally, those to be interviewed were offered facemasks and hand sanitizers to assure their safety and equally that they were protected. This made them feel safe and readily collaborated.

The administration of the questionnaire was done in a similar manner. The youths were met in various environments being the church, the market, and at home. They were handed copies of the questionnaire and in some cases, they were assisted in the process of ticking the right answers.

Results and Discussion:

Case Study of a Nso (Cameroon) Folktale for Emotional Regulation and socialisation Patterns: *Dzela wan wo jungwuna Kila, wan wo bi* (*Dzela*, the good daughter and *Kila* the bad daughter)

Once upon a time there lived a family that had two very beautiful daughters. These daughters were old enough and ripe for marriage. But it was the custom of the people of that tribe that women must apply some tattoos on their face before they are accepted in marriage by their husbands. Unfortunately, for the two daughters the expert that could cover their faces with tattoos lived far away in another country.

The elder sister named *Dzela* fetched a calabash of water, carried it on her head and went out in search of the expert to tattoo her face. On her way she met one very old man who could not keep his surroundings clean. The old man begged her to help clean his surroundings. She joyfully accepted and kept the environment of the old man very clean. On her request, the old man showed her the road leading to where the tattoo expert stayed.

Dzela travelled for some days and came across one old woman who had no firewood. That old woman like the first old man she encountered asked her for a favour to fetch fire wood. She gratefully accepted and even stayed a night with her. In the morning the old woman was very happy and showed her the way leading to the tattoo expert. Her third encounter on her way was with one old herdsman who was very thirsty. He begged her for some water in her calabash to drink. She hurriedly gave him some water to drink. The old herdsman in turn showed her the road leading to the tattoo expert. *Dzela* finally travelled safely and reached the country where the tattoo expert lived. She obeyed all the instructions and her face was covered with very beautiful tattoos. *Dzela* came back and got married to her husband. They became husband and wife and God blessed them with children, food and land.

When the younger sister called *Kila* saw that her elder sister was happily married with a beautifully tattooed face, she equally decided to go out on the same expedition to find the expert tattoo master. She equally carried a calabash of water and left for the far-off country. On

her way she met the same old man who requested her to help clean his surroundings. She refused to help the old man claiming that she was in a hurry. Nevertheless, the old man directed him to a tattoo master.

When *Kila* met the old woman, who demanded for fire wood, she refused to help because it was too late in the evening and she never wanted to stay the night with an old woman. Nonetheless, the old woman showed her the direction to a tattoo master. On her encounter with the old thirsty herdsman, *Kila* refused to give him water because the water was just enough for her. The herdsman equally showed her the direction to a tattoo master. When she finally arrived the tattoo master, her face was covered with poor and ugly tattoos. When she returned home, she was so ugly that no man got married to her.

It turned out to be that there were two tattoo masters. One was an expert and the other was not good at all. Thus, the degree of your kindness and help to the people they met on their way to the tattoo master determined the tattoo master they were directed to. Because *Dzela* was kind and helpful, she was directed to the skilled tattoo master and *Kila* because of her selfishness and arrogance was directed to the unskilled tattoo master. The moral lesson behind this story is that respect, kindness and obedience to old persons always bring favourable rewards. The elder daughter behaved well and she was rewarded favourably while the younger daughter, who behaved disrespectfully, was not.

Narrative Analysis of Folktale

Using Propp's (1968) approach to narrative analysis we can categorize the above folktale showing the elements, functions, character quality and rewards gained. The following table shows a summary of the analysis.

Table 5: Narrative analysis of folktale (*Dzela and Kila*)

Element	Function	Character Qualities	Rewards
Dzela	Elder Daughter	Respectful, Compassionate, Patient, Perseverance, Unselfish, Kind.	Happiness, Acceptance, Beauty.
Kila	Younger Daughter	Disrespectful, Selfish, Unconcerned, Impatient, Not Persevering, Intolerant.	Sadness, Rejection, Ugliness.

Source: Tani E. Lukong, (2012)

From the above table, this folktale teaches children that respect, compassion, patience, perseverance and kindness always leads to happiness and acceptance while disrespect, selfishness, impatience and intolerance will lead to sadness and rejection.

Peer Mentoring

In Cameroon just like in other African societies, child-to-child practice is an inherent cultural virtue where older siblings help in the upbringing of the younger ones. In other words, the older siblings contribute in raising the younger ones within the culture in child-to-child play activities, helpfulness and stimulation Lukong, (2015). For example, the older children assist in providing custodial care for younger ones while the parents are away in the farm or to the market. The younger children could be from the same parents or other parents of the same extended family or in families in the same compound. Among the Nso of Cameroon, this type

of setting is called “kiresiywony” (a group of houses, which is made up of housing units where family members reside). While the younger ones are with the older children, the older children use the opportunity to organize activities that help in developing the physical skills of the younger ones by engaging them in sand play, hide and seek, competitive games, sing song and rhymes to which the children dance.

According to Uka (1966), the older children engage the younger ones in activities that develop their intellectual and language skills. For instance, they tell stories which they hear from their parents or other adult members of their extended families to the younger ones. These stories are usually about great hunters, fighters, animals, towns and cities. The younger ones are asked to mention moral values or lessons learned from the same stories. The younger ones may be asked to retell the story or tell their own stories in turn. This corroborates the African saying that “a child who has siblings to play with, has a great opportunity to learn to speak”. In addition, the older children assist in making the younger ones develop positive social skills, moral values and cooperative spirit. During play activities, the older children gather other children and organize dramatic plays in which adult roles are imitated. The younger ones are made to gather materials which they share among themselves to facilitate their play. Character and acceptable behaviours of the cultural setting are encouraged.

Psychosocial Reconnaissance

Psychosocial reconnaissance is one of the African child upbringing practices. Adults within a family or community closely observe children to monitor and ensure acceptable interactions with others and encourage positive behaviours of the children. For example, it involves a situation whereby adults in the environment of children serve as carers, facilitators, teachers and parents in all respects. Whenever any adult has the opportunity to be with children, the adult will use the opportunity to teach the children one skill or the other, correct children's wrong doings and tell them stories about their ancestors, riddles and jokes that help to promote logical and critical thinking of children (Akinbote, 2006). Psychosocial scrutiny is important because it serves as a vital means of transmitting indigenous knowledge and values to children. However, as Africa becomes increasingly urbanised and internet connection and global communication becomes more and more accessible, there would be the impact of increasingly additional prevailing philosophies. Western philosophies that might not be acceptable to Africans will require adults' close supervision and monitoring to curb African children from imbibing them.

The Ontology of Masquerades, (Ancestral Spirits) And Community sanctuary

Masquerades inhabit a central position in the cosmic structure of Nso people. They are organic to their myth of creation. In this way, they function as the major stabiliser of people's destiny. As far as the people are concerned, they are ancestral spirits who periodically visit their living forebears in masquerade forms. Their visits are regarded as spiritual interventions to the world of the living and as a result are highly venerated. They are symbolic resurrections of the ancestors. Thus, the masquerade in Nso society (just like in other African communities) is the process of man's attempt to give being to those very significant aspects in the depth of thought in his universe.

“The African understanding of space and time underscores the important position of the masquerade tradition in this universe. In this understanding, the invidious gradation between the physical and the spiritual have a mutual existence. This is the world of the living and that of the ancestors. The masquerade's appearance is then an intervention process between the two

worlds. It provides a link for the needed continuum between them. This is done in order to vitalize regenerate and value the essence of living and the issues of survival."

Generally, it is very difficult to clutch in a single word or sentence what particular spirit masquerade are because of its metaphysics, which is highly secretive and never talked about even among the initiated male folks. Male parents must not freely discuss with their children; initiated members must only hierarchically advance to discover for themselves the aura and other rituals. It is also a taboo to mention or discuss masquerade among women. This has to do with the fact that masquerades are the spirits of the departed ancestors who partook in and controlled the life and destiny of the living. By their nature and connection with the ancestors and by their mystical and proven prophetic powers, they acted as constraints to acts that would otherwise be detrimental to security, stability and peace. These spirits (masquerades) therefore impacted greatly on traditional societies as they performed both legislative and executive functions in conjunction with members of specific Age grade groups. Working hand in hand and with the blessings of elders, they execute administrative and judicial duties. It is for these, especially the sensitivity of the role of the masquerade in society; admission into the youth age grade is tied to very stringent measures (including initiation education and ceremony), which were only meant for those considered matured in mind and spirit.

The universality of the importance of the ancestral spirits and the common features associated with them in traditional African society is seen in the name it associated with the masquerade. While in Esan, people call masquerade "Elimin", among the Igbo, it is Mmonwon, Yoruba Egungun, Igala and IgbiraEgwu, which literally means spirit. Specifically, Egungun (masquerades) in Yoruba are considered people risen from the dead – bones (skeleton) made alive, hence the assumption they are heavenly beings. The peculiarity of this to African society and the sacredness attached to this, is expressed by D. Duerdon thus:

"There is a particular kind of art in Africa, which is unique to the continent and can be found nowhere else in the world. It is an art, which is especially exemplified by the mask, and the masquerade in which the mask is used."

Sages have contended that an understanding of the importance of the masquerade in the people's traditional security system can be better understood when seen in the light of the origin and importance the people attach to the spirits of their ancestors, whom the spirit represents. As far as the groups understudy are concerned, the ancestors are disembodied spirits of people who lived upright lives here on earth, died 'good and natural deaths that is at a ripe old age, and received the acknowledged funerary rites. They could be men or women. Under this philosophy, not all who die become ancestors, but there are conditions which must be fulfilled while the person is alive. Pointing out both the origin and importance, A. Adebari, noted thus:

"Traditionally they hold the ancestors as the closest link between the physical and spirit worlds. 'The living-dead are bilingual; they speak the language of men, with whom they lived until 'recently, and they speak the language of the spirits and of God. They are the spirits with which African peoples are most concerned: it is through the living dead that the spirit world becomes personal to men. They are still part of their human families, and people have personal memories of them Africans believe that the ancestors are essentially benevolent spirits. They return to their human families from time to time and share meals with them, however,

symbolically. They know and have interest in what is going on in their families. These ancestors are seen as guardians to the family often reincarnating through new born babies. So, it is sufficed to say that for the most part, African traditional religion depends very much on the spirit world."

Generally, the above outlook occupies an important place in the understanding of the role of these spirits and their masked representatives in the people's traditional security and welfare system in inculcating the ideals of culture and religion.

Conclusion:

The African is a community-based individual especially with the socialism which is the main way of living in African. According to Tchombe and Tani (2016), the term Indigenous describes specific groups of people who are grouped under the criteria of ancestral territory, collective cultural configurations, and historical location. Through socialization they gain knowledge peculiar to their culture or society. The knowledge gained from this kind of socialization is the basis for local-level decision making in agriculture, healthcare, food preparation, education, natural resource management, and a host of other activities in the rural community (Warren 1999). Worthy of note is the fact that in the process of generating indigenous knowledge, indigenous people take into account their cosmos, spirituality, ontological realities, land, socio-cultural environment and historical contexts. African indigenous practices therefore refer to the beliefs, customs, cultural activities, and things considered traditional to the people.

Jose (2011), on indigenous peoples says Indigenous communities, peoples, and nations are those that, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop, and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems.' Indigenous practices are therefore, those engaged in by the indigenous peoples who are the aborigines or first peoples of a particular region.

The paper analyses the epistemological foundations of indigenous socialization strategies in Africa, with particular lessons from the Nso clan. The article discussed aboriginal socialisation strategies within the concept of Africentric epistemologies. A firm distinction between African Indigenous Systems and Western Knowledge System has been highlighted. It stresses on the necessity and value of cultural ways of socialising children by identifying some socialization strategies, with practical examples and empirical evidence that are used with African cultures in regulating the emotional behaviours of children and adolescents.

Disclaimer (Artificial intelligence):

Authors hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc) and text-to-image generators have been used during the writing of or editing of this manuscript.

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