

## Ubuntu as Humanistic Education: Challenges and Perspectives for Africa?

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### INTRODUCTION

The western model of education, a legacy of colonialism, brought in nearly a couple of centuries ago, has existed side by side with the African traditional form of education that underscores values and philosophies not fully integrated in the formal education curriculum of numerous African countries. One of such philosophy examined in this chapter is Ubuntu and Maaya/Hadama de ya (its sister philosophy in Mali).

When examining the re-visioning education in Arica thematic or Ubuntu as humanistic education discourse, the theme of this book, a number of key questions come to mind. To what extent do Ubuntu and Maaya/Hadama de ya inspire education for humanity? Do traditional African philosophies impact in any way the western model of education? What are the effects of this influence and how does it manifest itself in the education systems of African countries? Does this existence percolate in the formal education curriculum or is it present in other components and processes of the educational systems?

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E. J. Takyi-Amoako, N. T. Assié-Lumumba (eds.),  
*Re-Visioning Education in Africa*,

[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-70043-4\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-70043-4_7)

The main purpose of this chapter is to examine the assumption that Ubuntu may inspire education, and that its educational tenets and principles may, in turn, influence the economic development and growth perspectives of African countries. So how and in what ways can this happen? Naturally, it goes without saying that they are pros and cons to claim or disclaim this assertion and to accept or reject it. In any case, in the current African education discourse, this debate, although in its infancy, is drawing a lot of attention as Ubuntu and other similar philosophies are gaining more and more recognition and impetus. As such, they are inspiring numerous scholars, researchers, and policy makers around the African continent.

This chapter, basically an essay, is based on a qualitative research design that focuses primarily on uncovering secondary data sources such as historical sources, research journal articles, personal experience, and traditional knowledge base to thoroughly examine the topic at hand by comparing and contrasting, analyzing, and synthesizing its major components. To achieve this objective, the chapter comprises two main parts: Part 1 is the introduction including a conceptual and theoretical framework and Part 2 that deals with Ubuntu/Maaya Hadama de ya as humanistic education.

### *Conceptual and Theoretical Framework*

Interestingly, among the wide spectrum of educational philosophies in Africa, Ubuntu which originates in the South African Nguni Bantu ethnic group believes human beings are, by nature, self-developing creatures. It is a theory of humanness whose transformational virtues and power are transcendental. In fact, at this time, Ubuntu as a term overshadows other similar philosophical constructs that are illuminating the lives and daily practices of numerous communities and societies across Africa. These concepts and Ubuntu are similar in many respects, notably in their semantic constitution, conceptual meaning, social and cultural dimensions, as well as the vision and perspectives they project.

The gamut of philosophical concepts similar to Ubuntu in Africa is extremely wide. Its counterpart exists in many African countries. Understandably, the term goes by different labels in different countries and communities around Africa. For example, in the Shona community of Zimbabwe, it is known as “Unhu”. In the Mandingo/Bambara society of Mali and Guinea, the Dioula communities of Côte d’Ivoire and Burkina

Faso, and other West African counties such as the Gambia, Sierra Leone, and Liberia, among others, it is called “Maaya” or “Hadama de ya”. In Malawi, the same philosophy exists and is called “Munthu”. Elsewhere in Africa, the philosophy exists, and like in South Africa, Mali, or Malawi, it constitutes the central pillar around which the communities’ beliefs, ethic values, traditions, and customs have been strongly rooted and articulated for centuries.

In fact, an in-depth analysis of the semantic structure of the “Maaya” concept reveals a striking similarity with Ubuntu. Maaya also means humanness and is composed of the prefix “maa” meaning human and the suffix “ya” meaning ness, which combine to give “Maaya”. As for “Hadama de ya” (the synonym of “Maaya”), it is composed of Hadama, “de” (child), and “ya” (ness) or “Adam ness”. Hadama is a corruption of Adam the way the Mandingo/Bambara people call Adam who, according to biblical and koranic sources, is the father of humanity. He begets Cain and Abel. The terms constitute the solid bedrock on which the philosophical, social, cultural, moral, and educational principles of the Mandingo/Bambara society are profoundly rooted. “Maaya” or “Hadama de ya” further provides the guiding principles, the *modus operandi*, the educational philosophy, the social orientation, the moral direction, the interpersonal, as well as the inter- and intra-social relationships, rules, customs, and traditions that govern the day-to-day running of these communities at various stages of their social and historical development.

Interestingly, the definitions of Ubuntu in South Africa, Unhu in Zimbabwe, Maaya/Hadama de ya in Mali, and Munthu in Malawi are strikingly similar. This makes one think that they all belong to the same African macro culture, despite the fact that there are many different, not always compatible, definitions of what Ubuntu is in South Africa. There is though one core definition on which the different people of South African descent tend to agree according to which Ubuntu asserts that society, not a transcendent being, gives human beings their humanity, an assertion that underscores the fact that human beings are first and foremost a social product that is shaped by society. Numerous African scholars have extensively researched the Ubuntu concept and have come up with interesting findings. According to Onyebuchi Eze (2011), the core of Ubuntu can best be summarized as follows:

“A person is a person through other people” strikes an affirmation of one’s humanity through recognition of an ‘other’ in his or her uniqueness or

difference. It is a demand for a creative intersubjective formation in which the ‘other’ becomes a mirror (but only a mirror) for my subjectivity. This idealism suggests to us that humanity is not embedded in my person solely as an individual; my humanity is co-substantively bestowed upon the other and me. (pp. 190–191)

Viewed from this angle, the Ubuntu philosophy’s basic tenet is the outright positioning of the individual in relation to another individual, a group of individuals, or the community at large. This dimension of the Ubuntu concept is further echoed by many other scholars and philosophers such as Mbiti (2010) in his now classic phrase “I am because we are and since we are therefore I am” (p. 11).

Further, Eze (2011) reveals that, within the contemporary history of South Africa, there are three ways in which Ubuntu has been understood by South Africans. Therefore, before examining the bearings/impact of Ubuntu and other similar African concepts such as “Maaya” on education, it would be interesting to review how the Ubuntu concept is currently understood by the various segments of the South African people and Africans as a whole.

Eze (2011) further posits that first is the assumption that Ubuntu is an anachronistic philosophy produced by African academia. Viewed from this perspective, Ubuntu functions as an alternative narrative to replace the colonial logic. Thus, it constitutes a major paradigm shift in that it shows and highlights all the attributes of a new national philosophy which is increasingly becoming popular and is profoundly being rooted in the post-independence psyche of South Africans.

Second, Ubuntu has the character of an ideology appropriated for political ends at a time when national reconciliation ensuing the dark period of apartheid is a robust political agenda of the post-independence era in South Africa, an era characterized by the difficult interracial dialogue conducted under the leadership of President Mandela.

The third and last way is a vision of history that considers Ubuntu within the historical context in which it emerged in the post-colonial South Africa that, after gaining independence in 1994, engaged in the process of building a non-discriminatory, multiracial, and multicultural rainbow nation based, in theory and ideally, on principles of equality, solidarity, brotherhood/sisterhood, forgiveness, inclusiveness, and tolerance.

These descriptions of, or understandings about, Ubuntu do not, per se, make any specific reference to its practical bearings on the post-apartheid

educational system of South Africa which has been grappling with the challenge facing the resolution of the numerous internal contradictions and shortcomings it is confronted with. The post-apartheid educational system has been, at the same time, struggling to renew itself as an efficient, effective, and non-discriminatory organization geared toward meeting its objectives and fulfilling its cardinal mission in the national period aimed at building a robust human capital base to boost the economic development of South Africa.

*Relationship Between Education/Ubuntu-Inspired  
and Socioeconomic Development*

The critique from an Ubuntu perspective of the current situation of limited and even detrimental relationship between the received education system and socioeconomic advancement, the exploration of the possibilities of more productive linkage, and impact/implications of a re-visioned education in Africa on socioeconomic and political development are clearly the major issues to be addressed as stipulated in the call to contributors to the book. Furthermore, broader social transformation and the demonstration of how the Ubuntu philosophy in practice will inspire a new type of education are legitimate issues raised in the invitation to be addressed by the chapters' contributors. Furthermore, the call stipulates that the overall analysis will attempt an examination of a credible and sustainable vision of African education, which needs to be rooted in the emerging dynamics of socioeconomic reality and the relevance to the aspirations of the youth.

The assertion that there is a limited and even detrimental relationship between the received education system or simply education and socioeconomic advancements is obviously debatable. In fact, the relationship between education in general and economic growth or development has extensively been researched and documented by scholars/academics and practitioners around the world who tend to agree that this relationship is more between educational investment and economic growth than between the received system or curriculum and socioeconomic development. In reality, it is not yet convincingly established by scholars and recognized by all that Ubuntu positively impacts economic growth and development one way or the other.

Further, the in-depth analysis that ensues attempts to discuss from different perspectives (economic, social, and philosophical) the claim that the impact of education on African socioeconomic development is quite

minimal or even detrimental to this process. To better understand the situation, there is need to define concepts such as received education system, economic growth or socioeconomic advancement, re-visioned education, and social transformation to be covered in the introductory chapter of the book as they relate to Ubuntu.

First, by analyzing the three ways identified by Eze (2011) in which South Africans understand Ubuntu (an anachronistic philosophy produced by African academics, then an ideology appropriated for political ends, and finally a vision of history), one may make a case that Ubuntu at this stage of infancy of its conceptual development has little impact on the socioeconomic development of the continent. In this respect, the values that characterize Ubuntu/Maaya need to be further scrutinized and seriously tested before they are integrated into a standardized curriculum that would contribute to strengthening education and ensure that its contribution to the socioeconomic development or economic growth of the African continent is recognized beyond reasonable doubt.

Thus, despite the prospect of a promising future, Ubuntu still remains an elusive concept far from being adopted continent wide and that still has a long way to go. It may evolve from an academic buzz to a strong educational precept to be reckoned with. Viewed from this perspective and in the long run, Ubuntu/Maaya values should gain recognition, be adopted and integrated into reformed national curricula across the continent as a nexus of the entire education system.

Second, along those lines, the promotion initiative of the Ubuntu concept, its conceptual fine-tuning, and its ultimate integration into the reformed curriculum would be, among others, central to the process of re-visioning the educational systems to make them more responsive to the needs of African societies and to the imperatives of the socioeconomic development or economic growth of Africa. This initiative would be articulated around elements whose contribution is central to improving educational quality such as redefining the relevance of African education as a whole, rethinking the pre-service and in-service teacher training to ensure that no unqualified or untrained person is allowed to teach, revisiting the curriculum to ensure that it meets the international standards and to provide the right quantity and quality of instructional materials for all the types and levels of schooling in Africa. Wilson (1990) defines the received curriculum as “those things that students actually take out of classrooms; those concepts and content that are truly learned and remembered” (p. 5).

Third, in consideration of all the above, there is ample evidence that education, in general, is profitable both to the individual and to society. Further evidence shows that economic growth or socioeconomic development does not occur in a vacuum. Something must propel it and the key question is what and how? So is it the contribution of financial capital or the impact of the quality and/or quantity of human capital or the combination of both? Are there other determining factors of production such as the physical capital (the land) instrumental in boosting economic growth or socioeconomic development or is it the combination of all the above? In this scenario, what is the magnitude of the contribution of education? Is this contribution more significant in other continents than in Africa or is the variable more context- or continent-specific?

In any case, the body of evidence and literature available shows that, in general, economic growth increases as primary school enrolment increases. UNESCO posits that a country needs to achieve a threshold of 75% of primary education gross enrolment ratio (GER) to create conditions conducive for economic takeoff. Furthermore, primary education completion rates are also said to be a key factor boosting economic growth especially in Africa. The higher the rates, the more likely the probability for a country to achieve rapidly economic growth. The quality of these different rates and ratios is good and robust indicators of the quality of education whose impact on economic growth is well proven according to Cohn and Geske (1990), Psacharopoulos (1984), and Miller (1967).

Fourth, it is further established that education fosters economic growth and that there is a positive relation between education and economic growth in general. In the specific context of Africa, would Ubuntu-inspired education impact on economic growth? So how would Ubuntu-inspired education affect economic growth and what would be the magnitude of the effect? Research evidence to back up this claim is scanty for the simple reason that countries are far from embracing the Ubuntu-inspired education. However what is proven by research is that all the levels and types of education (primary, secondary, technical, and vocational, non-formal but more specifically higher education) contribute one way or the other to socioeconomic development and economic growth. For example, regarding primary education a strong case is made for the impact of higher gross enrolment ratio (GER) and grade completion rates. Regarding non-formal education, the more literate the adult population becomes, the more significant its contribution to economic development. Finally, the impact of higher education as the key contributor to the development of

human capital that imparts technical and managerial skills, competences, as well as research skills and others is even more compelling (Cohn and Geske 1990 and Diarra 1997).

Fifth, what is economic growth or socioeconomic development? According to Denison (1962) “economic growth refers to the increase in the national product measured in constant dollars” (p. 3). Alternatively, other scholars, namely, Cohn and Geske (1990), reveal that “economic growth” may be defined as the rate at which per capita national product in constant dollars grows over a given period of time (p. 135). Other definitions given by economists on the concept refer to other variables, namely, social indicators such as the rate of fertility of educated women and the level of productivity of educated farmers, among others.

Finally, more evidence underscores the contribution of education to economic growth. In Africa where the traditions still weigh a lot, education makes people abandon outdated traditions and embrace new ones. Traditions then appear to be an impediment to economic growth and can even be detrimental in numerous ways to the process. This assertion is strongly put in perspective by Miller (1967) in Cohn and Geske (1990) who cautions that “not just any kind of education will promote economic growth” (p. 143). He further points out that “Education is a source of economic growth only if it is anti-traditional to the extent that it liberates and stimulates as well as informs the individual and teaches him/her how and why to make demands upon himself/herself” (p. 143). He further posits that “accordingly, a proper educational strategy would manifest itself in four growth producing strategies” (p. 143) not directly or indirectly linked to any Ubuntu-inspired education. They are as follows:

The first is the development of an environment that is conducive to economic growth and favorable to economic progress. For example, this implies an expansion of literacy among the general populace necessary for improved communication, the ability to take care of the basic paperwork including “record keeping and deposit banking” (p. 281).

The second capacity emphasizes the development of “complimentary resources for factors which are relatively plentiful and substitutes for comparatively scarce factors” (p. 281). For example, the use of natural resources is augmented by education, because it provides managerial skills that can exploit resources more effectively.

The third capacity underscores the durability of educational investment. Miller (1967) further argues that education has “greater durability than most forms of non-human reproducible capital” (p. 281).



Finally, “education is an alternative to consumption” (p. 281). Any investment in education is, in the long run, productive and growth inducing.

It is also established that education sharpens cognitive, communication, technical, and relational skills that all boost economic growth. Training on the job is also a very important factor that boosts economic growth. Furthermore, other scholars/academics/practitioners such as Psacharopoulos (1984) identified a number of factors that boost economic growth one way or the other. His findings are complemented with those of other economists and scholars who extensively researched the topic. They are as follows:

- Education, according to Griliches (1969), Psacharopoulos (1973), Fallon and Fayard (1975), may be complementary to physical capital.
- Lau (1979) reveals that education has a direct impact on farmers’ productivity in a number of countries including African. Two additional years of primary education can significantly boost farmers’ productivity by 5%.
- Psacharopoulos (1984) posits that education enhances the adoption and efficient use of new inputs. He further reveals that “schooling acts as a catalyst in behavioral change conducive to growth” (p. 144).
- Finally, according to Cochrane (1979) more highly educated women are more likely to have lower fertility rates.

### *Ubuntu-Inspired Education Benefits on Education Sub-sectors*

Bold education sector reforms were undertaken by the overwhelming majority of sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries at the beginning of the millennium through the systemic or sector-wide approach. They were aimed at reinventing or revisiting the systems as a whole by designing policies and strategies through ten-year development plans whose main objectives were basically threefold: (i) improve educational access, (ii) enhance quality, and (iii) strengthen management. These reform initiatives encompassed numerous components including but not limited to curriculum reform to ensure it meets the needs of the learners.

The reform process started at a time when Ubuntu-inspired education was in its infancy, as it was not even recognized as an element to be integrated

in any sub-sectors' curriculum in any country, let alone South Africa. Ubuntu-inspired education being a vector of revitalizing African values and cultures, each sub-sector could eventually benefit from it by integrating its key elements in its programs of study. This process is an enduring one and is forcibly bound to take time for its accomplishment.

*The African Renaissance/Ubuntu-Inspired Education  
and Educational Initiatives*

Initiated and developed by the Senegalese philosopher and thinker Cheikh Anta Diop, the African Renaissance is the concept calling upon African people and nations to overcome the current challenges confronting the continent and achieve cultural, scientific, and economic renewal. Education, especially the one aimed at revitalizing African values and endogenous knowledge such as Ubuntu, is an integral part of this revival movement. Interesting educational initiatives, not necessarily linked to Ubuntu/Maaya, sprung up at both the country and continental levels. These ideas concern the promotion of African values and cultures by integrating into the national curriculum, notably at the local level, elements of local history, geography, and society in countries like Mali, Burkina Faso, and Senegal. The use of some national languages as medium of instruction or subject matters in these countries is an integral part of the initiatives which constitute a giant step forward toward attaining the objectives of the African Renaissance.

At the continental level, the design and implementation of the Pan African Conference on Teacher Education and Development (PACTED) as a complement of the Second Decade of Education for Africa Plan of Action is an interesting initiative aimed at curbing the endemic teacher shortage issue. This plan of action (2006–2015) underscores “the African Union (AU) vision of an integrated, peaceful, prosperous Africa, driven by its own people, predicated on the development of Africa’s human resources, education being the key vehicle for preparing its citizenry” (p. 1).

Unfortunately, none of the eight objectives of the plan or any of the six goals of the Education for All (EFA) was attained by any African country at the end of their lifespan (2015). This is why the AU launched the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 2016–2025) to overcome the considerable education deficit confronting the continent.

## UBUNTU AS HUMANISTIC EDUCATION: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES

Africa entered the new millennium bewildered with a myriad of educational issues such as the poor quality of teaching and learning, the chronic shortage of teachers, the obsolescence of educational infrastructures, and the poor quality and very limited quantity of instructional materials. Of course there are other issues linked to the rigid nature of the national curricula that are far from meeting the international norms and standards. It is doubtful that an Ubuntu-inspired education could bring solutions to these complex issues that have been with the African educational systems for years.

Like many other African philosophies, ideologies, concepts, and constructs, Ubuntu, Unhu, and Maaya have not sufficiently been researched, studied, and documented by scholars/academics/practitioners in the continent or from the diaspora. In this respect, there is need to undertake more in-depth investigation to better understand their theoretical underpinnings, their epistemological foundations, as well as their constitutive essence.

It should be pointed out that their integration into the official curriculum of many African educational systems has not, so far, been a priority for the overwhelming majority of African countries.

Based on the specificities of the South African Ubuntu construct and the tenets of other similar concepts prevailing in other parts of the continent, especially the “Maaya/Hadama de ya” philosophy in Mali and Guinea, and Unhu in Zimbabwe, an attempt is made to identify, examine, and highlight some of the key functions of these various African philosophies including their educational and other aspects. For obvious reasons, the Maaya/Hadama de ya philosophy to which I have been exposed since childhood and with which I am pretty much familiar and knowledgeable about constitutes the main thread of the chapter discourse and is therefore put into more perspective than any other.

Bearing this principle in mind and in order to achieve the intended objective, five major functions that are inextricably linked to the Maaya or Hadama de ya philosophy and crucial for its understanding are identified, presented, and discussed. They shed light on the major characteristics of the concept and help better appreciate their various dimensions and inter-relatedness. They are not exhaustive and are as follows:

### *Ubuntu/Maaya as Philosophy*

Maaya is a comprehensive and life-shaping philosophy that goes back as far as the origin of the Mandingo/Bambara societies. Its major fundamentals are values such as honesty, ethics, moral, compassion, rectitude, goodness, tolerance, and solidarity, among others. It is a philosophy based on the postulate that the individual is an integral part of a community which he/she must serve and whose rules, principles, regulations, and *modus operandi* he/she complies with. He/she must also ensure that the other members of the community especially the youth comply with them. Maaya/Hadama de ya, therefore, is a philosophy that has practical implications for the day-to-day running of the Mandingo/Bambara communities for centuries.

### *Ubuntu/Maaya as Social Constitution*

In essence, “Maaya”, being a body of principles governing and guiding the functioning of the Mandingo/Bambara society, is comparable, in many respects, to the constitution of a state defined by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary as “a body of fundamental principles or established precedents according to which a state or other organization is acknowledged to be governed”. These principles concern, among others, the formal and organizational structure of the family, the tribe, the clan, and the community at large.

It is clear that this constitution is a code that regulates the relationships between the individual and the group, between parents and children in the extended African family, and other forms of social organizations. The Maaya compels the members of the community to be present in all the social events such as name-giving ceremonies, weddings, and burials, thus magnifying and glorifying the all-time Bambara adage that stipulates that “one comes in the hands of people and departs from this world in the hands of people”. In essence this adage is very similar to the Ubuntu statement “I am because you are”.

### *Ubuntu/Maaya as a Code of Conduct*

Along those lines, these philosophies function based on an unwritten code of conduct, a set of rules outlining the social norms, rules, and responsibilities of, or proper practices for, an individual, an ethnic group, a clan, a

community, or an organization. Furthermore, a code of conduct is a “body of principles, values, standards, or rules of behavior that guide the decisions, procedures, and systems of an organization or community in a way that contributes to the welfare of its key stakeholders” (CFA Institute 2014). The code of conduct is defined by the elders who are also its major custodians. It applies to all the members of the community.

### *Ubuntu/Maaya as an Initiation Guide*

The third function of this prominent philosophy is its role as a guide for social initiation and orientation. In fact, Maaya plays a major role in the organization and implementation of numerous social events especially the five key African initiation rites (birth, adulthood, marriage, eldership, and ancestorship) which are fundamental to human development and social cohesion. These rites impart the individual or the group with values, principles, attitudes, and behavior consistent with the social morals and destined to facilitate his/her integration in society.

In essence, the rites of passage shape the character of the youth and help make them well-rounded members of the community who are ready to take their rightful position in the society in which they live and serve it with compassion, respect, dignity, pride, and responsibility at all levels with a view of guaranteeing the total satisfaction of all its members. A case in point is the circumcision of 18-year-old adolescents (an adulthood rite) which fundamentally marks their admission into the circle of adults. Thus they work their way up the social ladder as they come of age.

### *Ubuntu/Maaya as an Educational Precept*

The width and breadth of the various subjects or topics covered by Ubuntu and Maaya are just impressive. They include but are not limited to social treaties and precepts such as child upbringing (care and education), moral conduct, and good behavior that make the individual a well-rounded member of the community as well as a prominent role model, a source of inspiration for the entire clan, tribe, or community.

The Ubuntu/Maaya educational precept further relates, basically, to a robust knowledge base constituted by the Bambaras/Mandingos on a wide range of disciplines such as Astrology, Philosophy, Cosmogony, Cosmology, Sociology, Anthropology, Ethnology, History, Geography, Mathematics (Geometry and Algebra), Metaphysics, Agriculture,

Husbandry, Pharmacology, Meteorology, Occult Sciences, and Economics, among others. Interestingly, among all these disciplines, more focus is placed on those related to Humanities and Social Sciences. Thus the key challenge facing African educational systems today is how to integrate all this wealth of fragmented and endogenous knowledge base into a coherent and cohesive curriculum at the national, regional, and local level that is responsive to the learning needs of students at all levels of schooling.

Ubuntu/Maaya, genuine African philosophies, comprise compassion, good moral conduct, and ethic, African values to capitalize on and that need to be promoted by further researching them. However this preliminary academic work is in its infancy, and very few national curricula have integrated Ubuntu or Maaya as intrinsic values to be internalized and taught at all levels of the system. As such their impact on socioeconomic development or economic growth still remains to be demonstrated. Therefore one may present the following key arguments to back up this claim:

1. Both concepts are new and, as such, have not extensively been researched and documented to date. This situation presents drawbacks and real limitations for their immediate integration into the educational systems' curricula around the continent.
2. The rhythm, scope, and implementation of the integration strategy will depend, to a large extent, on the ability of each individual country to recognize, adopt, and willingly promote the strategy, thus showing interest in and commitment for the renaissance of African endogenous knowledge.
3. African societies have, for centuries, predominantly been guided by orality. In this respect, many of these disciplines have insufficiently been researched, codified, and extensively tested. Nonetheless, there is potential as they are an integral part of the rich African endogenous knowledge system.
4. A strong political will needs to emerge and studies are to be undertaken to determine the feasibility of the integration with specific emphasis on the pedagogical and methodological aspects of it.

## CONCLUSION

Ubuntu-inspired education still has a long way to go. There is need to rethink the mission of African educational systems and redesign their curricula so as to integrate in them a satisfactory dose of African cultures,

values, and endogenous knowledge to counterbalance their content that is basically Eurocentric. Ubuntu is an African concept with values that may guide and inspire education across the continent if integrated in the curriculum. However, at this stage of its evolutionary process and before it is endorsed by the majority of Africans, there is need to further fine-tune the concept of Ubuntu in its birthplace, Africa, and test it against established norms and standards before integrating it into the educational curricula and starting to gauge its impact on socioeconomic development and economic growth.

It should be reminded that the Ubuntu perspective is entered around the outright positioning of the individual in relation to another individual, a group of individuals, or the community at large. It emphasizes values such as compassion, solidarity, ethic, tolerance, exemplary moral conduct, as well as sharing and caring. These strong and invaluable attributes make Ubuntu a humanistic philosophy and education whose objectives are somewhat convergent and underscore the transcendence of the individual as a productive member of the clan, the tribe, and the community at large. It may be concluded that education and training are major contributors to the formation of human capital that enhances the skills, competences, knowledge, and know-how of the labor force which increases their level of productivity whether on the farm, in an office, or in a plant whether in Africa, Europe, Asia, or America. For this to happen, it is vital to create all the necessary conditions conducive to boosting economic growth. Further, education if well-conceived cannot be detrimental to socioeconomic advancement for the simple reason that we all know that education exists for this purpose. It may be that in the application of the process there are loopholes that need to be bridged for educational effects or spill-overs to be more sustainable.

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