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Table of Contents

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Farooq Kperogi's Article on Pantami Professorship Saga ¹EZE, Patricia and ²ABDULLAHI, Hadiza Bello	1-10
Critical Discourse Analysis of the Speech of Former Senate President Ahmed Lawan on Xenophobic Attacks in South Africa Habu YUSUF	11-21
Overview of Systemic Functional Grammar Theory: Language as a Social Semiotic System ¹ABDUL, Mohammed Adem and ²DANJI Sabo	22-31
Tale of a Poor Girl in Need of a Long Lasting Marriage: An Analysis of Hausa Folktale Abubakar MOHAMMED Gombe Ph.D	32-38
A Morphological Study of Compounds in Twitter Posts on the Covid-19 Pandemic Saleh AHMAD Abdullahi	39-51
A Comparative Analysis of English Language and Nyimatli Language Sounds ¹Jamila ABUBAKAR Usman and Hauwa Kulu GEBI	52-58
An Analysis of Westernisation at Crossroad: An Exploration of Contemporary Hausa-Fulani Communities Abubakar MOHAMMED Gombe Ph.D	59-65
An Assessment of Early Grade Reading in Lower Primary Schools in Gombe LGEA, Gombe State ¹SULAIMAN, Jamila, ²DANGA, Luka Amos PhD, and ³IBRAHIM Adamu Mohammed	66-76
Linguistic Construction of Depression: An Appraisal of Personal Narrative ¹OGUNJIMI, Florence Taiye and ²MOHAMMAD Abubakar Musa	77-86
Monophthongisation of Closing Diphthongs in the Spoken English of Undergraduates of Federal University Wukari ¹Olusola Elizabeth OGUNRINDE, ²Kehinde Emmanuel OGUNRINDE and ³Ichonma Frank YAKUBU	87-100
Implicature in Viewers' Comments: A Pragmatic Study of AFCON 2024 Online Viewers' Responses ¹Jaafar Ahmad WAKILI, ²OLADIPO Abiola Mary and ³Auwal ABUBAKAR	101-109
Cohesion in Selected Essays of Final Year Undergraduate Students of English Hauwa K. GEBI Ph.D and Jamila USMAN	110-125
A Formalist Study of Sexual Metaphors in Achebe's <i>Girls at War</i> and Adichie's <i>The Thing Around Your Neck</i> Danjuma Garba MUSA	126-135

"The Play's the Thing": Illusion, Anti-illusion and the Politics of Femi Osofisan in Tegonni: An African Antigone ¹ Fatima INUWA and ² Christopher ANYOKWU, PhD	136-145
A Morphological Analysis of Acronyms in Nigerian English ¹ Sani GALADIMA and ² Kabiru MUSA	146-156
English Language, Literature and National Development ¹ Aishatu BELLO Umar and ² Mohammed Isa OGBOLE	157-164
Exploring the Theme of Ambition in Shakespeare's <i>Macbeth</i> Khadijah SALEH Abdu	165-171
Re-Inscribing African Women in Patriarchal Culture: A Study of Onwueme's <i>The Reign of Wazobia</i> ¹ Murjanatu Muhammad RILWAN and ² Ibrahim Kanti BALA	172-176
Identity Crisis in Abubakar's <i>Season of Crimson Blossom</i> : A Psychoanalytical Study Sani SAIDU Ibrahim	177-183
The Challenges of Teaching and Learning French in North-Eastern Nigeria: ICT as a Panacea ¹ Abdulkarim MUSA Yola and ² Samirah SALIHU Gwani	184-190
'A Sha Ruwa Ba Laihi Bane': The Sound of Cultural Change ¹ Mohammad ABUBAKAR Musa and ² IBRAHIM Ruth Ishaku	191-200
A Critical Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Sexual Harassment in Kunle Afolayan's <i>Anikulapo</i> ¹ Moshood ZAKARIYA and ² Balikis YETUNDE Isiaka	201-214

AN ANALYSIS OF WESTERNISATION AT CROSSROAD: AN EXPLORATION OF CONTEMPORARY HAUSA-FULANI COMMUNITIES

MOHAMMED Abubakar Gombe

Department of English, Gombe State University

Abstract

This study focuses on the westernisation at the crossroad with focus on the analysis of cultural freedom and the western trap in contemporary Hausa-Fulani communities. Westernisation has had different effects and the contact the Hausa-Fulani communities had with the western people is as a result of colonialism. The northern part of Nigeria predominantly occupied by the Hausa-Fulani people who adopted the use of modern tools used in doing house chores and other services. This makes them to have their youth to change their styles of life by means of thinking and feeding. This research at its theoretical thrust used Elite Theory of Power. The methodology considered for the present study is the descriptive techniques thereby using interview as the source of gathering the data. The study revealed that the westernised tools are effective in handling their chores and works. In the traditional Hausa-communities as they unveiled, majority of the people used the modern tools such as borehole instead of well where water is drawn. The borehole generates water in a fastest way than the well.

Keywords: Westernisation, Cultural Freedom, Contemporary, Hausa-Fulani

Introduction

The present study examines the westernisation at crossroad with the focus on the cultural freedom which highlights the western trap in the Hausa-Fulani communities of Nigeria. The westernisation is seen as the modernisation brought by the western people. The people of Nigeria especially the major tribes from the northern part of the country Hausa-Fulani have for a long time embraced the western ways of life by discarding the traditional means of life towards using the newly brought so called civilised cultures.

One of the greatest ironies in the history of the collapse of any civilisation must be the initial interaction between Africans and Europeans. The Igbos in the east of Nigeria, for instance, initially saw the Europeans as madmen of strange appearance and ill-formed ideologies. On banking, the Igbos wondered how an adult in his right mind could hand over his possessions for others to keep for him. By the end of the 19th century,

the “madman” had overturned their civilisation, and they had adopted his.

The irony is especially relevant in these times when, given the relative failures of most former western colonies, there have been renewed calls for recolonisation. In September, American professor Bruce Gilley wrote an essay arguing for a recolonisation of some states, replicating colonial governance of the past “as far as possible” and even building new colonies from scratch. If the very foundations of his arguments are flawed, it is because he, like most people today, has come to accept that the only metric for measuring modernity is through the western lens. This is the heart of the problem.

However, the prioritisation of foreign over indigenous, modern over cultural are seen evident in the notion of western trap in Hausa-Fulani communities. Western civilisation and culture began to creep into African socio-cultural milieu, first, with the contact of Europeans with Africa, a consequence of Berlin conference in the quest

for imperial pilfering of African resources and, later, consolidated by the unstoppable wave of globalisation. It is important to stress that colonialism distorted and retarded the pace and tempo of cultural growth and trend of civilisation in Africa. One of the most profound consequences of colonization has been how the political and economic rape of the colonies has also led to what sometimes seem to be an unbridgeable cultural gap between the nations that were the beneficiaries of colonization and those that were the victims of the colonial assault. The era of colonial pillage and plunder led to the relative stagnation and often precipitous decline of traditional cultural pursuits in the colonies.

Conceptualising the cultural freedom in this research refers to the traditional rights that the indigenous people of Hausa-Fulani communities have before the introduction of the western cultures. The implantation of the cultural values that are 'alien' to Hausa-Fulani communities which however through their attentions of most of them were caught made them to embrace the westernisation. Are Hausa-Fulani people westernised? Well, the argument raised in this paper lies in the material tools adopted by these people from the western people. As they are seen simple and easier to be used, the tools are faster and even sometimes cheaper to be used by them, Hausa-Fulani people. In the meantime, besides adopting their tools which they used, Hausa Fulani communities and their people have also adopted their means of life in terms of dressing code and the mode of their lives entirely.

Methodology

The methodology considered by the present study is the descriptive method which aims to accurately and systematically describe a situation or phenomenon in its current state of affairs. The source adopted in collecting the data for this study is the interview method. The methodology helped in asking the questions to the respondents and the focus is

on how the Hausa-Fulani people used the foreign tools for work, their reliability and their durability and how effective are they in comparison with the traditional tools. The obtained information are described hand in hand from the foreign tools to the traditional tools in order to see how worthy or not they are to the human endeavor.

Theoretical Framework

This research at its theoretical thrust used Elite Theory of Power. This theory first gained traction in the 19th century and was then made popular by Gaetano Mosca, Vilfredo Pareto, and Roberto Michels (Elite, 2016). The Elite theory recognises that society is divided into two groups: dominant and dependent. In this sense, Elite theory since it is a thrust that deals with the power under which one is independent and the other is dependent means that, the western culture is the dominant, independent while the Hausa-Fulani communities are the consumers and dependent.

According to this theory, humans must be separated into two groups: the rulers and the governed. In whatever type of governance, the ruling class controls and exercises the majority of power, wealth, and prestige in society. For example, Michels said that the vast majority of people are indifferent, sluggish, and subservient, and that they are fundamentally incapable of independent thought. These attributes are exploited by leaders in order to maintain their positions of power. They use a variety of techniques to deceive them, including oratory, persuasion, and playing on emotions (Elite, 2016).

To apply this theory to the context of this work, the Elite Theory of Power is a theory that is suitable to this work and therefore remains relevant to the research. However, the western people who brought their cultures and their modes of dressing as a result of colonialism, made the contemporary Hausa-Fulani speakers to embrace the western ideologies, cultures and the ways of

life. The independent or rulers seen from this research are the westerns while the governed are the western-adopted people who are Hausa-Fulani communities.

Review of Related Literature

This subsection focuses on the review of related literature, where contributions of many scholars on the related area of focus are reviewed.

Concept of Westernisation

Westernisation refers to the act of bringing ideas or ways of life that are typical of Western Europe and North America to other countries. Therefore, western culture connotes the knowledge, belief, morals and way of life of the Western world. Westernisation in its own way affects the peoples' thoughts. Westernisation is a situation whereby societies come under or adapts to the western culture in areas such as industry, technology, law, politics, economics, lifestyle, diet, language, alphabet, religion, philosophy, and values. Westernisation has been an accelerating influence across the cosmos in the last few centuries, with some scholars assuming westernisation to be the equivalent of modernisation, a way of thought that is often debated over the years. The overall process of westernisation is often two-sided in that Western influences and interests themselves are joined with parts of the affected society, at minimum, to change towards a more Westernised society, in the hope of attaining Western life or some aspects of it. To assume this, Western societies are not affected or changed by this process and interaction with non-Western groups is misleading.

Empirical Review

From the beginning Arowole Dare (2010) in his paper entitled: *The effects of western civilisation and culture on Africa* noted that "When people think of culture, they often tend to do so in very simple and more monolithic way. Culture is not only about dancing, it is not limited only to music; it is

not about costume alone. It is beyond pattern of social celebration, rituals pertaining to birth and marriage, cuisine or sport. Beyond that and this is important, culture is about people's total way of life; the way people live, eat, worship, produce, create and recreate. It is the totality of a set of bequeathed ideas, belief system, values and norms, which constitute the common bases of generally agreed social action."

Similarly, Anwar F.Z et al (2018) in their paper titled: *Hausa People of Northern Nigeria and their Development* discussed the issues that hindered the development of the Hausa people in Nigeria. The tribe Hausa being among the dominant tribes which was identified as one of the three (3) major languages in Nigeria alongside with Yoruba and Igbo. The problem that also hindered the Hausa people is the issue of the street urchins commonly referred to as "Almajirai". The phenomenon of "Almajirai" has been affecting the region's development and most especially the language, Hausa. On the other hand, the western people have implanted and culturally infused different means of thinking in them such as leadership, education, style of lives and the rest. Objectively as I argue in this paper, the 'Almajiri phenomenon is the veritable tool for the development. It has been observed that the "Almajirai" are the ones making progress in life especially in the area of commerce and industry.

In another study, examining the effects of western civilisation and culture on Africa, Dare Arowolo (2010) argued that there are various effects of the western civilisations and culture on Africa. The effects the westerners have are changing the style of the people and even the means of their thinking. As a results of contact that the country has with the westerners and the colonialism which serves as the meeting point between them, emerged adaptations of cultures from westerners. The system of governance in Africa has changed ever since when the westerners came onto the continent of Africa.

Westernisation at Crossroad

Fulani has a wise saying which says '*Sori ko Andi Sodu Ko Anda* (Sell What You Know And Buy What You Do Not Know) while the Hausa has '*Cigaban Mai Tonon Rijiya* (progress of a well excavator). It gets darker as he excavate dipper. The Hausa-Fulani are said to be one of the most educated few and with the image of hosting the Almajiri system. Westernisation keeps encroaching with modernity replacing cultural practices.

Experience in life makes the elderly construct statements that guide, educate and warn. Wise saying relates to wisdom and *Sori KO Andi Sodu KO Anda* (Sell What You Know and Buy What You Do Not Know) relates to modernity in this context. *Cigaban Mai Tonon Rijiya* (progress of a well excavator) presents an irony.

The Hausa -Fulani communities are convincing that westernisation remains promising with its modern appliances and products. The general public, for example, abandon their traditional healers and move to hospitals where they are confronted with billing offices. They abandon their traditional means of transportation and are confronted with fuel scarcity. They abandon their traditional sources of light and are confronted with power outage and band categories.

In trying to present westernisation in crossroad, this paper identifies some certain traditional reliable that are abandoned in favour of westernisation that depends on variables. Most of the western products require fuelling or electricity while cultural products do not rely on expensive complements.

Cultural and Modern Products

Fulfulde	Hausa	English	What it needs to operate	Modern replacement	What it need to be operated
Lamu	Sarauta	Kingship	Loyalty	Democracy	Votes
Vundu	Rijiya	Well	Rope and container	Borehole	Fueling/ electricity
Nnordube undugal	Turmi da Tabarya	Mortar and Pestle	Human energy	Grinding engine	Electricity
Namarde	DutsinNika	Grinding stone	Human energy	Grinder	Electricity
Bu'edabbaje	Kashindabbobi	Manure	Conveyance to farm land on donkeys	Fertilizer	Purchasing money and conveyance to farm land on vehicle
Haireguga	Dutsengugangauwayi	Charcoal	Charchoal	Electric iron	Electricity

Londe	Randa	Clay pot	Cool location	Refrigerator	Electricity
Naifuda	Shanunhuda			Tractor	Fueling and servicing
	Asusu			Bank	
Mbaba	Jaki			Vehicles	Fueling

Reversion to Cultural Practices

Western products, human and materials become suspicious by the day as people find them unreliably expensive. Legislators become unreliably expensive, so also electrical appliances; these make communities revert to cultural practices. People find Emirs and other traditional rulers more reliable than politicians. This makes the Emirate system more reliable than democracy.

Many societies that adopted borehole are now using abandoned well as source of water. Borehole requires electricity or generating set which also requires fuelling. Well only needs rope and container to draw out water. The poverty level imposed on communities by recent policies poses people to abandon modernity components in favour of cultural system.

Pestle and mortar have since resurface in addition to charcoal pressing stone which are easy to operate and cheaper to access. In villages grinding stones regain their celebration. Farmers have since reverted to manure as fertilizer becomes unaffordable and expensive.

Clay pot price is on the increase as refrigerator power supply and fueling become alarming. Banking, physical and mobile are maintained as child of necessity. Distance and network failure frustrate customers.

On transportation, even politicians encourage reverting to traditional means of

transportation as they give donkeys on loan and as gift during political campaign.

Policies that Relegate Westernisation

Westernisation presents promises and products including elites who champion the political affairs of Hausa communities as against the cultural practices of traditional leadership headed by Islamic scholars, the Modibbo whose lineage produces Emirs that are relegated politically. The elite form the heart of democratic system and politically decide in favour of boarder closure, subsidy removal and electricity uncertainty.

Boarder Closure

The elites believe boarder closure can help their people and therefore imposed it. This brought about food price hike and scarcity of food which is complemented by the fear of insurgents and bandits to visit farmlands. Boarder closure presents political class as insensitive to human feelings and situations. To prove politicians insensitivity to human suffering, fuel subsidy was removed.

Subsidy Removal

Transportation, home appliances and businesses rely on fuel. The political class decided that it will be good for the country and its citizen to experience fuel subsidy removal. This forces small businesses to close down, home appliances to become out of service, transportation fares to multiply and rendered it not affordable. This directly affects prices of goods and services. With subsidy removal on fuel, attention was directed at electricity. The political class attention was also directed at electricity.

Banding was introduced and prices of unit consumption increased.

Electricity Banding

With the elites' focus on electricity, those with metre cry while those without meter shed tears. Then come what the distributors called sabotage. Locations like Maiduguri had been without electricity supply and locations like Gombe joined the dark zone following the act of sabotage. The absence of electricity flung houses, companies, small and medium businesses fall apart. Men lose their source of livelihood while women lose their marriages. Institutions and religious centres opted for solar energy. City communities revert to traditional products for daily essentials. This is seen in ironing dresses.

Study Contributions

Majority of the respondents have revealed that the westernised tools are effective in handling their chores and works. In the traditional Hausa-communities as they unveiled, majority of the people used the modern tools such as borehole instead of well where water is drawn. The borehole generates water in a fastest way than the well. The respondents have concurred that the tools they adopted from the western people as a result of modernisation and innovation, led them to always be buying them. The western trap here is that the embracing of the tools imported to the country especially using them as the fastest means of doing their works because of their reliability and durability, the moral conduct of their contemporary youth are affected. Majority of the youth in Hausa-Fulani setting are now preferred to dress as like 'western' people, meaning they are westernised. Westernisation affects Hausa-Fulani communities especially the youth in the areas such as dressing, feeding, relationship, orientation, hair cutting-up among others. This implies the western trap which adopting the tools led them adopting their lives in which the effects of adopting the lives would

remain relevant to their lives and the generations yet unborn.

Conclusion

This paper concludes that westernisations have pervaded the atmospheric conditions of the Hausa-Fulani communities which are seen in their lives. The Hausa-Fulani people have adopted the use of various modern instruments and tools while discarded the use of the old, traditional tools that these people used for their benefits. As I argue, the importations and subsequent adaptations of the tools brought by the westerners have affected the thoughts of people in various ways. The contemporary Hausa-Fulani youth have now chased and admired the modern lives adhering to the dressing and the ways in which they feed themselves.

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