A CONSTRUCTIVIST APPRAISAL OF PAULO FREIRE'S CRITIQUE OF BANKING SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

Cardinal I.C. Ihejirika Ph.D

Philosophy Department, University of Port Harcourt

ABSTRACT: *Education is considered a prerequisite for all individuals to make meaningful impact in their society. It enlightens the individuals and engrains in them the capacity to develop critical ability that would enable them transform their society in the best way they can. However, the actual teaching method and the structure of the curricula across the tiers of learning seem to have defeated this basic purpose of education. In most cases, education has been designed as an instrument of conservatism, where the learner becomes a passive receptor of certain knowledge. This makes the learner unproductive and sterile so much so that rather than the learner utilizing the knowledge acquired, the learner gives value to the certificate awarded. Paulo Freire considers this method of education as a banking system of education, which for him is a dangerous approach to impacting knowledge. He suggests problem-posing as the alternative model to the banking system of education. This alternative model engrains in the learner the liberty to develop thinking abilities, which aid such person to contribute in the learning process. This model conceives education as a kind of symbiotic method of learning. While we appreciate Freire's alternative model, our work assesses it as inadequate. This paper therefore aims at exposing the limitations and pragmatic bankruptcy of a problem-posing pedagogy as espoused by Freire in contradistinction to a problem-solving type of education, which our paper strongly advocates. Our study also underscores the fact that it is not enough for a learner to participate in the learning process, which only results in posing problem. Adopting the constructivist approach, this paper strongly argues that the most appropriate model that gives the learner that huge independent capacity to transform the society is the problem-solving type. Through this model, the learner develops critical abilities to address societal and contextual problems.*

KEYWORDS: Constructivism, Education, Banking System, Pedagogy, Conscientization.

INTRODUCTION

Aristotle in the opening paragraph of his book titled *Metaphysics*, argues that all men, by nature, desire to know. The search for knowledge is a natural tendency, which cuts across religion, races, gender and political divide. He went further to explain that to seek knowledge is to escape from ignorance. This means that human beings do not just seek knowledge for fun of it; rather knowledge is sought so as to be aware of those ideas or facts, which were not known *ab initio*. In seeking knowledge, one learns some skills that would aid one to address some basic challenges, which may be religious, economic, political, social or cultural. Francis Bacon corroborates this when he averred that a knowledgeable person is a powerful person. "Knowledge designates first of all the experimentally based study and manipulation of the causes and effects of natural phenomena. According to Bacon, the successful development of these manipulative techniques should eventually enable humanity to free itself from the tyranny of physical affliction and necessity" (Garcia 110). Developing knowledge or ideas that would help us manipulate our environment to our own benefit is

something that should be learned through some conscious efforts. This is why education is believed to be the basis upon which knowledge acquisition could be achieved.

The foregoing shows that education is an indispensible phenomenon in every society. No society can exist without education because it is the instrument through which the socio-economic and political condition of the society is defined. This means that when a society has a standard form of education, it would groom citizens that would aid in the transformation of the society. Education guarantees progress in every facet of the society. Ellen White, for instance, emphasizes that education imbues in the learner independent reflective ability and transformation of this reflective ability into action (White 17-18). Every aspect of the human person must be influenced by education. It must be geared towards advancing the corporeal, mental and the spiritual compositions of the human person. Having an educational system is one thing, impacting same is another, which is the reason why every educational system is structured within a set educational model.

No educational system operates on its own. Even if education has the capacity to illumine human mind, making it creative and transformative, it does not operate in isolation. Every educational system conforms to the societal structure sanctioned by the state. It is the state that designs the operational structure of its educational system. That is why, in Nigeria, for instance, we have ministries of education in the Federal and State levels of the governmental structure. These ministries design the curricula and the teaching methods to meet the states' social, economic, legal and political needs. Education, thus is formal and institutionalized and its regulative framework is made in such a way that it tends to capture a comprehensive understanding of the world (Harris 1979,1). Through education, therefore, the society moulds its citizens.

There are certain educational models that reduce the learner to a mere object of knowledge deposit and also stunt the mental development of the learner. A typical example of this sort of educational model is what Paulo Freire calls the Banking system of education. Freire argues that since the banking system of education is a dangerous model that inhibits creative and reflective abilities of the learner, he suggests that the best alternative model is the problem-posing model of education. To what extent is the problem posing model of education the best model? Rather than posing a problem, is it not rather better for education to solve problems? In addressing these questions, this paper wishes to prove that though there is credibility in the Freirean problem posing model, it is inadequate to guarantee a creative and problem solving abilities in the learner. A better alternative is the problem solving model. To prove the basic thesis of this paper, we would briefly access the meaning of education, a detailed explanation of the banking model of education before examining the alternative proposed by Freire. In the final analysis, the problem solving model of education, which this paper argues for would be elucidated.

The Nature and Meaning of Education

The term education is a noun form of the verb 'to educate', whose derivative has two Latin roots, *educare* and *educere*. The verb *educare – educatum* means to bring up, to raise, to mould or to train. From this root meaning, education is viewed as the act of training or moulding a child or a learner in into a valuable or better person. Quoting Baqer Mehdi, Mikkili corroborates this particular idea of education as the act of shaping the personality of a child in such a way that he becomes a better person and learner. This shaping is not limited to knowledge and skills but it includes values and motives, which make the child's behaviour

meaningful (1). The other etymology of education, *educere*, means to lead or draw out. This is related to the English word 'educe', which means to make something latent to come into view. From this etymological definition, education could be viewed as the process through which latent ideas that are in individual's minds are drawn out. This idea of education shows that human beings are born with innate knowledge. This rationalist's epistemic model of education believes that the essence of education is to develop the child's potentials.

The etymological meaning of education, which is to bring out the inherent ideas in the learner's mind and to make sure that these ideas are geared towards moulding the learner into an improved person, ignites other views of education as articulated by some philosophers and educationists. Socrates and Plato, who modeled their philosophical thought on the elenchial or dialogical method of inquiry, viewed education as an act of making an individual aware of the knowledge he possesses. This knowledge is being conscious of the virtuous way to act, and "it must involve … the standards immanent in forms of thought and awareness, as well as the ability to attain them" (Peters 6). Virtue and knowledge, therefore, are one and the same. Aristotle believes that education is the process of acquisition of virtue, which enables one to attain happiness. The goal of all human beings is the attainment of happiness, and happiness the greatest good anybody can seek.

Every educational system must conform to the constitution of a state so that there would be a conformity between the virtue of a citizen and that of the state, because "… the virtue of the part must have regard to the virtue of the whole" (Aristotle 22). Aristotle adds that every educational system must be founded on three basic principles, namely, the mean, the possible and the becoming. According to Jayapalan, "to Aristotle … the mean implies the first balance of faculties mental and physical, the whole disciplined by habit of calm and self control. The 'possible' means of two thing: (1) no man can achieve what is beyond humanity to win, (2) a man's education and ambition should fit his ability. Finally, the 'becoming' is the result of the achievement of the 'mean' and the possible" (94). To be educated, therefore, is to have an attitude of calmness and self control, and an aspiration, which is based on the learner's ability.

Julius Nyerere views education as the improvement of the learner's ability to reflect about things, makes choices and act without inhibitions or coercions. This is to enable the learner be in-charge of himself and his environment. This implies, therefore, that "The ideas imparted by education, or released in the mind through education, should therefore be liberating ideas; the skill acquired by education should be liberating skills" (10). The essence of education must be to make the learner self-reliant, whereby he uses his abilities to develop himself and his society. For Jean Jacque Rousseau, education is a process through which a child acquires the needed knowledge, skills and attitudes to fit into a changing environment. It would be dangerous, thus, for any educational system to be modeled in a way that makes a child to be trained for a particular vocation or for a specific social status.

Babalola Fafunwa defines education from a socio-ethical perspective. For him, education is a process through which the child develops a matured sense of judgment and also acquires skills and knowledge that enables him to meet the needs of the society and to control it. The skills and knowledge transmitted to the child are done in a manner that is morally acceptable by the society (37). For Tunde Alabi, the basic goal of education is to transmit the values and knowledge of a society from a generation to another generation. In Freidrich Froebel's view, the essence of education is to develop the cognitive faculty of a person, whereby the person is led to a deeper understanding of how to relate with other persons. Education must be

modeled in a way that it must conform to the natural development of a person. For Chanchau, education is the shaping of behaviour or modification of an individual for adequate adjustment. Now whatever else education may entail and whatever other ideals it may espouse, it is essentially concerned with the transmission of knowledge (17). Its central concern is that the educand upon leaving school, will know certain things that he did not know on arrival and that in the interim, he did not pick up elsewhere.

Consequent to the definitions advanced above, it is pertinent to identify some fundamental goals of education. First, education helps in shaping human cognitive faculty, inculcating creative abilities, and a total transformation of the personalities human beings. It means, therefore, that through education, one's character is refined, his creative ability is advanced in such a way that he makes independent decisions on how to live and interact with his environment. No educational system operates on its own. Even if education has the capacity to illumine human mind, making it creative and transformative, it does not operate in a vacuum. Every educational system conforms to the societal structure sanctioned by the state. It is the state that designs the operational structure of its educational system. That is why, in Nigeria, for instance, we have ministries of education in the Federal and State levels of the governmental structure. It is the state that designs the curriculum and the teaching method to meet its social, economic, legal and political needs. Education, thus is formal and institutionalized and its regulative framework is made in such a way that it tends to capture a comprehensive understanding of the world (Harris 1). Through education, therefore, the society moulds its citizens.

Paulo Freire, in his seminal work titled: *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* explains that although the society uses education to refine human beings, this refinement is mostly constricted in a manner that makes the learner passive and mere receptor of ideas. Freire calls this sort of educational model a Banking System of education, which for him, is a dangerous model that inhibits creative and reflective abilities of the learner. Does education really transform the learner? What sort of educational model aids in this transformation? Why do students graduate without having refined characters? These are some of the questions which this paper would address. Before we address these questions, we would first of all explore the idea of the banking system of education.

Elucidating the Banking System of Education

Paulo Freire views the banking system of education is an educational system that considers teaching as an act of deposition. In this case, the students are the depositories while the teachers are the depositors. This kind of learning process is found in both lower and higher institutions of learning. Students are considered as containers or receptacles to be filled. The more completely, he feels the receptacles, the better a teacher he is. In this system, the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as receiving, filling, and storing deposits and Friere comments that "…in the last analysis, it is men themselves who are filled away through the lack of creativity; transformation and knowledge in this (at best) misguided system" (*Education for Critical Consciousness* 46).

Freire identifies basic shortcomings inherent in the banking system of education, which are as follows: first, the system believes that the sole responsibility of a teacher is to teach or impart knowledge while that of the students is to receive what is being taught. So the relationship that exists between a teacher and the student is that of *the teacher and the taught* relationship; secondly, it is also believed that the teacher is a compendium of knowledge

while the students are stark ignorant. This is like the Lockean experience and a *tabla-rasaic* mind interaction; thirdly, the teacher is a thinking being while the student is the being that is thought about; fourthly, the teacher talks and the students listen-meekly; fifthly, the teacher plays a disciplinary role while the students are the ones that are disciplined. So, while the teacher is viewed as one who cannot go wrong, the students are seen as being intellectually and morally weak, and so, must be corrected accordingly following certain strict measures; the sixth is that the teacher chooses and enforce his choice, and the students comply; again, teacher acts and the students have illusions of acting through the actions of the teacher. That is to say that the students learn how to behave or act based on the actions and behaviors of the teacher; also, the teacher designs the nature and content of the programme content while the students, who were not consulted, adapt to it; the teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his own professional authority, which he sets in opposition to the freedom of the students; and finally, the teacher is the subject of the learning process, while the students mere objects (*Pedagogy of the Oppressed* 46-47). The above distinctions show that the role of teachers is one of putting knowledge or fusing some attitudes into docile and passive objects called students. The teacher acts like a sculptor who picks clay to mould it into what he likes, following certain standards, which suits the society.

Some scholars have argued that every educational system is structured according to whims and caprices of the designers of the educational system. Every society, therefore, creates an educational system that suits their socio-economic and culture needs and aspirations. Gintis corroborates the foregoing when he opines that "the function of education in any society is the socialization of youths into prevailing culture. On the one hand, schooling serves to integrate the youths into society by institutionalizing dominant values, norms, belief system. On the other hand, school provides the individual competencies necessary for adequate performance of social roles. Thus educational systems are fundamental to the stability and functioning of any society" (Cited in Edwards, 123-124).

The above citation shows that the aim of education is to indoctrinate the learner into pre-existing forms of living and prevailing culture. The banking system of education could be traced from the Greek educational system, which also influenced their philosophical doctrines. For instance, the history of the educational system of the Spartan society shows that the sole aim of education was to produce warrior citizens. That is why at the age of seven, the only thing a child is taught is how to fight. Plato in his "Republic" and Aristotle in his *Politics* proposed that education was meant to train citizens to play the part for which they are best fitted. For both of them, the art of education is part of the supreme art of politics (qtd in Harris 34). Education helps to mould the citizens in a manner that would make them fit into the political arena of their society.

 The banking system of education is prominent is a capitalistic society. According to Haralambos, education in such a society is meant to make the workers technically efficient but submissive (88). It implies that the educational systems are subsumed into socio-political and cultural frameworks of every society. That is why the contents of every educational curriculum are tailored towards ideologies of a social milieu. Illich qtd in Kelvin Harris, believes that the reasons why schools are built is to transmit the nature of the society into its citizens. According to him:

> The school system performs three fold functions
> compared to all powerful churches throughout history.
> It is simultaneously the repository of society's myth,

the institutionalization of that myth's contradictions
and the locus of ritual which reproduces and veils the
disparities between mythical realities (163).

So, the task of a school is much vast and tasking than that of the church, even though the church weigh so much religio-political powers. The school in its less powerful structure is like a warehouse that stores the socio-cultural and political ideologies of the society and legends. The school also organizes and harmonizes whatever contradiction that is found in the mythological realities of the society.

Another point about the banking system of education is its political role it assigns to education. Freire reveals that in a class-structured society, education blindfolds the citizens from understanding the social structure in view to break away from its oppressive tendencies. This is because the powerful elites are the ones that the nature and objective of the system of education operational in their society. "It would be supremely naïve to imagine that the elite would in any way promote or accept an education which stimulates the oppressed to discover the raison d'etre of the social structure. The most that could be expected is that the elite might permit talk of such education and occasional experiments which could be immediately; suppressed should the status quo be threatened (*Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy and Civic Courage 140*).

We observe from the foregoing that education is a mechanism for perpetuating existing social relationships. It reinforces the attitudes and beliefs that will help ensure that those social relationships will continue to be accepted. Althusser was therefore right in categorizing education as number one dominant ideological state apparatus of present day (183). This is why most state authorities abhor innovation in educational system, as any attempt is met with aspersion and suppression. Socrates attempted to give a new dimension to the educational system by adopting the system in which it is believed that the learner's task is to consciously discover those hidden ideas in his mind (Udoidem 8). Any educational agenda that stalls research and prohibits innovations has a retrogressive effect on the society. The result is that: "… the society will be filled with people who never had the chance for growth because of stunted educational system" (Ojong 94). This is why the fundamental aim of education should be to develop the total wellbeing of an individual so that such individual would be able to advance its potentials for the advancement of its society. Since the banking system of education cages the individuals, demeans and stifles their capacity of advance their society, thereby reducing the individuals to mere receptors of ideas, Freire sees this sort of system as inimical to societal advancement.

A Critique of the Banking System of Education and the Freirean Educational Model

The problem with undertaking a critique of banking system of education is that our aim which includes to raise enough consciousness necessary for critical reflection could hardly be achieved using the same process that were employed to instill and form the existing system. The problematic question becomes: Can we really escape our ideological frameworks and put ourselves in a position that enables us to see the world in a different way? An attempt to respond to the latest question indicates that we need to employ another pedagogical form but this would entail getting detached. Harris observes that: "detached analysis is a fiction hence, analytic philosophy – Wittgenstein style left everything as it is or rather spurred misty cobwebs over educational discourse but revealed little or nothing about education" (80). Nevertheless, the banking system of education has been found as a veritable tool in the

6

maintenance of the status quo. Through transmission of existing cultural and lived ideologies, the received views which make up the history of any people are kept safe. Banking system of education is therefore history preserving and identity securing. Again, by perpetuating the status quo, revolutions are tactically avoided. Lived ideologies that are beneficial are not just jettisoned for the mere hunger or quest for the novel.

The maintenance of people in a certain range of lived ideological matrices as banking system of education does is an important factor in stabilizing and continuing a given mode of production. Though it may be considered a supportive rhetoric, but history has always proved that people more often than not, fulfill themselves only when there is a strong but just authority structure in society. Without a defined educational curriculum with its methods of impartation of knowledge everything will pass as knowledge hence, it may be increasingly difficult to differentiate sense from nonsense. "This is a respected view which has strong philosophical tradition supporting it and goes back, at least, as far as Hobbes in British circles" (Harris 98).

This banking system of education embraces the principle that it is better to have knowledge than to be ignorant – that "it is better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a pig satisfied" (Harris 128) This is of course the reason for such maxim as "knowledge is power…" because no matter the weight of any argumentation against this, the fact remains true that it is better to be the adapted man of banking system of education than to be a man in Hobbesian state of nature. The certificate, which banking system of education equips the educand which is only but a means to an end, so the end, which is either honour (as in being a graduate) or sustenance through stipends or salaries that such certificates attract justify the Banking System. Employment is enhanced, honour is bestowed on the educand, who prior to his education, was considered a naive *tabula rasa* – a clean state. Scheffler, writing in defense of Banking System of Education posits that: "In teaching, we do not impose our wills on the student, but introduce him to the many mansions of the heritage in which we are ourselves dedicated" (134).   However, history of educational ideologies reveals that contrary to the ideals of banking system of education "knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless impatient continuing hopeful inquiry men pursue in the world with the world and with each other" (Freire *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* 46). Therefore any situation in which some men prevent others from engaging in the process of inquiry is one of violence. While the means used may not be important, yet to alienate men from their own decision making is to change them into objects.

Since the banking system of education begins with a false consciousness that sees human beings as objects, it cannot promote the development of what Fromm calls *biophily* (love for that which grows) rather, it produces its opposite, *necrophily*. A necrophilous person loves all that does not grow. Freire also points out that: "Banking system of education regards men as adaptable, manageable beings… the more the students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world" (*Pedagogy of the Oppressed* 46).

Harris substantiates Freire's claims by emphasizing that the two major mistakes that have been made within the educational purview are first, the thinking that every teacher or lecturer is always right, and so, whatever he or she says should be accepted. The second mistake is the belief that everything written in books must be treated with sanctity, and must be accepted as right (181). So, instead of allowing the students to critically access and raise arguments on vital issues, the banking system practiced by most societies constrict the

students to only fill their essays with quotations without independently advancing their thoughts. They prefer to adopt quotations from famous authorities because it is believed to be right and perfect instead of holding their own opinions.

Freire observes that the banking system views the students as object of assistance. It does not give the students the opportunity to dialogue with their teachers because teachers are often seen as the transmitters of knowledge, while the students are simply seen as the object in which knowledge is transmitted or deposited into, thereby turning the student into a passive object, which is acted upon by the teacher. It advocates for an indoctrination of a set knowledge, without allowing the learner to critically assess the kind of knowledge being deposited in them. "In the banking education model, knowledge/education is seen as a gift given to the student by the teacher who considers the learner as marginal, ignorant and resource-less. Freire saw this as false generosity from the dominant group (oppressors) and a way of dominating and controlling the people (the oppressed) for their selfish benefits"(Rugut and Osman 24). This, according to Freire, makes the banking system a very dangerous model of education. It only makes the student a tool in the hands of the teacher.

Another precarious effect of the banking system is that it does not allow for dialogue or interaction between the learner and the teacher. it impedes creative abilities, and represses the citizens from attaining their real human nature as both ontological and historic beings. "This model is covertly based on the assumption that there is a polarity between the human and the world. According to this assumption, the human just exists on the world, but is not together with the world or others. This assumption rejects that the human is a conscious being, and it accepts that human has conscious. If education is based on this assumption, it causes alienation rather than humanization" (Durakoğlu 103). It paints a false picture of achieving true knowledge and culture, but in the real, it is a mere façade. This model of education is, therefore, not the best model of learning because every learner ought to be part of the learning process, contributing his experiencing and independent thinking to the learning process.

Based on the dangerous nature of the banking system, Freire believes that the best model is the Problem-Posing Model. In this new model, there is a mutual interaction between the teacher and the learner, in which their experiences are thoroughly discussed and consequently evaluated. "… The teacher is always cognitive. She regards objects as reflecting upon by students and herself and not as her private property. Students are no longer passive listeners, but critical individuals" (Sisimwo, Rop and Osman 25). In other words, they share their mutual feelings and ideas about the existential realities together. Rather than seeing existential situation of the teacher and the learner as something that is fixated, the problem-posing model views human problems as something that could be changed positively. All these are geared towards making the teacher and the students create a condition in which a genuine knowledge is achieved.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that Freire lays much emphasis on critical thinking, which, for him, should be the fulcrum of every educational system. Critical thinking is very important because without it, human beings would be stereotyped into thinking and acting in accordance to the prescribed information received from fellow human beings during interactions rather than responding to their dialectical relationships with the world (*Teachers as Cultural Workers* 517). Through critical thinking, the dialectical interaction between human beings and the world are reacted at and giving thorough analysis. So, the way human

beings think and act must arise from an active response to the relationship between human beings and their existential realities.

Since in the problem-posing model, the teacher is never seen a compendium or a warehouse of knowledge, whose task is only to deposit them into the students, the business of the teacher, it is therefore, "… not the job of the teacher to provide answers to the problems, but to help the learners achieve a form of critical thinking about the situation, Freire called this conscientization" (Rugut and Osman 24). This is a level that is higher than critical thinking. "Conscientization … is a process of being aware of reality and knowledge of the possibility to act up on it for changing it" (Abraham and Pedagogik12).To attain this level of cognition, one must consider oneself as an active subject capable of understanding existential challenges and be able to transform them for human benefits. The knowledge of the world emerges, according to Freire, "… only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other." (*Education for Critical Consciousness* 51).This shows that existential experiences are not fixated or static but subject to a possible transformation.

In other for this problem-posing model to be successful, Freire notes that the oppressed populace must confront their perception about the domineering and oppressive elites. The oppressive elites should never been any longer as complete and perfect set of beings whose thoughts and ideas are uncompromisingly correct, since it is this kind of thinking that constricts the oppressed to behave in accordance to the whims and caprices of the oppressive elites. To break away from this sort of perception, the learner must embark on the process of dis-identification with the oppressive elites and their domineering culture (*Pedagogy of Freedom : Ethics, Democracy and Civic Courage* 43). Through this process, the learner uses his rationality as a tool to create and recreate a new being and new life appropriate for self-transformation.

In the Freirean model, learning is not restricted to or created in the classroom. This idea is what Freire calls '*the culture circle'*. In this sort of situation, education is not a monologue process, where the teacher is the only that talks while the student listens, but education is viewed from the perspective of dialogue. In a dialogical process of education, the teacher and the learner engage in a dialogue, appropriately termed *dialog,* which implies sharing experiences and articulating the nature of world, its problems and the various ways in which it could be changed. "Freire suggests that dialog, the encounter between people, is performed through the world in order to name the world. As dialog is an existential reality, it must be applied to the pedagogy, too. Education means sharing according to Freire, who considers dialog as an element of the pedagogical communication. Therefore, education must be based on dialog, through which relational opportunities are created" (Durakoglu, Bicer and Zabun 529).In this process, there is a mutual respect, where the opinions of the educator and the educand are appreciated and valued. There is no isolation as there are mutual involvements of everyone involved in the learning process. This kind of process quickens individual and societal progressions. This is possible because what is discussed and learned in the school environment are existential themes that have direct impact on the learners and teachers.

Freire's suggestion for a new model of education to topple the banking system is plausible, particular his emphasis that education should be seen as a process of interaction between the learner and the teacher. The learning process should be dialogical, in which the content of learning should be based on sharing experiences resulting from interactions with one's environment, and looking at the possible ways in which unfavourable experiences and

situations could be changed to suit aspirations of both the teacher and the learners. The basic problem with the problem-posing model is that it does not propose any solution, except identifying the problems. Even though it allows the learner to reflect on his existential challenges, there is no actual process of changing these situations, accepts looking at the possibilities of changing them. A possible transformation does not translate to actual transformation. Whatever model of education that should be suggested should be one that does not only identify problems, but one that tackles the problems through one's creative and transformative abilities. Based on this, therefore, there is need to suggest a more appropriate model of education, which has been referred to as the *Problem-Solving Model of Education*. What does this new alternative model entail?

The Constructivist Alternative: The Problem-Solving Model of Education

The greatest undoing of the banking system of education is that it resists change and innovation. It is anti-non-conformism. But it is worthy to note that non-conformism is a process through which human beings are able to understand and master their environments. This is because what the majority accepts as being correct is not always correct in its actual sense. Kelvin Haris confirms this view when he cautions that "the majority viewpoint need not necessarily be the correct one and history has surely warned us many times of the folly of putting consensus up against an unbalanced insane individual. Galileo is probably the most famous example of a non-conformist, who was branded insane in his time, and yet was regarded as sane by later generations" (23). So, there is always a dialectical advancement when individuals are engaged in examining the universe and making alternative suggestions as Copernicus and Socrates, instance, did during their time.

Like problem-posing model, the problem-solving model is a non-conformist model that does not see education as a boxed system, where learning is based on the transfer of knowledge from the teacher to the learner. It is also similar to the problem-posing model because the theme of discussion is based on the existential concerns of the teacher and the learners. Which implies that the subject of learning is based on experiences and challenges that have arisen due to the interactions human beings with their environments. It is also similar to the freirean model based on the fact that every object of knowledge must be approached from a critical stance. Nevertheless, the problem-solving model is one that does not only pose a problem but is geared towards solving such problems.

The Problem-solving system realizes that it is not enough to pose or clarify the nature of a problem (though, it is the first step to its solution) but to fashion out solution to problems so identified. This model is based on the assumption that the degree of any knowledge (whether gained empirically, rationally or otherwise and within any educational programme) is directly proportional to its social services. The knowledge gained as a result of existential relations between human beings and their environment is only valuable to the extent in which they are put to use in solving existential challenges. This is because, like William James, ideas are worthless except they make practical impact or bring about actual transformation in experience.

The basic features of the problem-solving model are interactiveness, themes are based on existential situations, advocates for critical thinking and promotes creativity and transformation, and finally it advocates for solutions to problems in place of merely posing the problems. The first feature holds that a viable model of education must be one that encourages interaction between the learners and the teacher. Both the teacher and the learners

must learn to share ideas and have mutual respect for opinions advanced and conclusions reached. The theme of discussion must be based on existential situation. In other words, whatever that must form the theme of learning or curriculum must be based on issues that concern the teacher and learners and that also affect them in real life situation. Again, this model advocates for critical thinking. Critical thinking here implies that both the learners and the teacher must be unbias in access issues. They must evaluate issues comprehensively, without limiting themselves to make- beliefs and some regimented knowledge based on public opinions and unverified cultural mythologies and fantasies. The basic tools to achieve this are reflective abilities, logical assessment and open-mindeness to issues being assessed.

Furthermore, the problem-solving model of education advocates for creativity and transformation. In other words, the teacher and the learners must develop abilities that would promote innovations and creations of new knowledge and these new knowledge must have a transformative capacity. They must be able to help in changing problems to benefits. Whatever knowledge one has must be solution based. Every knowledge would not just be based on raising problems or identifying problems that confront humanity, but whatever knowledge one possesses must be one that advances practical solutions in solving problems in concrete and actual state of affairs.

The change that the problem-solving model canvasses for is one that advocates for critical recognition that something is wrong, followed by a long process of demystification and a praxis of combined reflection of the teacher and student directed towards an unfolding that takes both the rich and poor along in a quest for solution to societal problems. The new paradigm must recognize and respect individual, tribal and cultural differences but less of class differences. Problem-solving system of education has at its heart, the interest of all men both the recipients and the educator for it begins with posing problems from the actual existential realities and contexts of the people. The people here co-intents with each other (both the educator and student), to bring their experiences to bear on the problems that are being scrutinized. When that happens, both parties become learners and teachers simultaneously. Consequent upon this, the creative faculties of both parties are rekindled and their consciousness elevated to a lofty height. The consciousness implied here is a situation of psychological responsiveness in which the teachers and the learners have a mutual exploration of their various problems and also identify practical ways of addressing them using the necessary mental and non-mental tools. (Harris 175). The result of this eclecticism of experiences will be a solution or remedy which neither comes from the teacher nor student alone but from both of them.

While Problem-solving system of education identifies with *Progressivist Movement* in education which calls for the replacement of time honoured education based on social change and findings of cultural studies and behavioural sciences. It contrasts with the Perennialists who maintain allegiance to absolute principles. The world for this system is no longer something to be described into being. Rather, it becomes the object of that transforming action by men. Problem-solving system promotes dialogue and inventions, stimulates true reflection without boundaries except that which our faculties of reasoning are not capable of. It considers men as authentic beings, who should not be used as mere means to other ends but are ends in themselves. By this feature, the Problem-solving system of education restores men's ontological and historical vocation of becoming fully human. It recognizes Laing's notion that "certain forms of insanity' are really sane reactions to an insane world and should if nothing else, demand that we seriously reconsider the idea of human action as reaction to a

perceived world" (Laing 168). In conclusion, therefore, this paper strongly maintains that if education must serve as a liberating tool which draws men out of ignorance, it must not pursue this agenda through verbalism nor abstracted activism, not even with rhetorical and circular critical analysis – which offers no solutions. Rather, it must adopt a praxis with reflection and action directed at the very structure to be changed or transformed. Education must be for pragmatic ends. It is solutions to the socio-economic and political problems of society that justifies the end of education else, the oratorical overemphasis, which also features in Freire's problem-posing type of education, will at best, terminate in mere certification. On the contrary, a problem-solving educational strategy defines itself ihto relevance by its ready-in-hand services.

CONCLUSION

This Study has to an appreciable length exposed the shortcomings of an educational system that stops at problem-posing. Rather, its novelty lies in our observation that any educational ideology that fails to fashion solutions to the contextual problems of its practitioners must necessarily lead to mere certification. Mere certification does not rub off on any development agenda of the society which promotes such. A casual look at the number of certified persons in Nigeria, who theoretically dissect any given topic during interactive sessions on the media, yet cannot proffer a practical solution to the minutest socio-economic and political problem of the polity, underscores the irrelevance to practical social living of mere problem-posing educational strategy. Consequently, our work exposed both the critique and nature of banking system of education, which Freire Considers retrogressive and sterile. Hence he prefers the problem-posing pedagogy. This preference for the problem-posing alternative hinged on the fact that it enables teacher and learners to make their respective personal inputs toward the clarification of identified problems. In this Freirean system, the learner and the teacher both co-intents on challenging realities of their milieu at the end of which, their joint participation gives birth to a better understanding of the problems posed.

However, our paper goes beyond problem-posing to suggest a problem-solving educational model. This lattest suggestion is based on the belief that any meaningful educational system ought to be pragmatically relevant to the organization, transformation and development of the society in which it obtains. Now, having identified the shortcomings of some Freirean critics, we concluded that the much sought after paradigmatic vent out of any existential problem, which rightly defines and constitutes the relevance of educational systems must be a function of the cultivation and impartation of critical abilities in the learner. When such abilities are ingrained or achieved, a symbiotic relationship of ideological interchange occurs between the teacher and student. That way, transformation of the society is expedited, development, enhanced instead of a mere sterile banking educational agenda.

REFERENCES

Abraham, G. Y. and Pedagogik, L. "Re-inventing" Freire for the 21st Century", *KAPET Karlstads Universitets Pedagogiska Tidskrift,* No. 1, 2013, 8-17

Althusser, L. *Lenin and Philosophy,* London: New Left Books. 1971.

Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, Kitchener: Batoche Books, 1999

Chanchau, S. S. *Advanced Education Psychology.* New Delhi: Vikas. 1992

Durakoğlu, A. "Paulo Freire's Perception Of Dialogue Based Education", *International Journal on New Trends in Education and Their Implications*, July 2013 Vol. 4, Issue: 3, 102-107

Durakoglu, A, Bicer, B. and Zabun B. "Paulo Freire's Alternative Education Model", *Anthropologist*, 16(3): 523-530 (2013)

Edwards, R.C. (ed.), *The Capitalist System,* Englewood Cliffs: N.J. Prentice Hall.1972

Fafunwa, B. *Education And Morality,* Ibandan: A.B.C. Publication. 1989.

Freire, P. *Education for Critical Consciousness*. New York: Seabury, 1973.

Freire, P. *Teachers as Cultural Workers*, Westview Press, 1998

Friere, P. Pedagogy *of Freedom : Ethics, Democracy and Civic Courage*. USA : Rowman Littlefield Publishers,INC. 1998

Garcia, J. M. R. "Knowledge Is Power: Francis Bacon To Michel Foucault", *Neohelicon*, Vol 28, Number 1, January 2001, Pp. 109-121

Haralambos, M. (ed.). *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives.* Slough: UTP.1980

Harris, K. *Education and Knowledge,* London Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd. 1979.

Jayapalan N., Comprehensive Study of Aristotle, New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2002

Laing, R.D. *The Divided Self,* London: Travistock. 1960

Mikkili, N. R. "Value Education and Human Values: Analytical Views" *Educationia Confab*, Vol. 3, No. 7, July 2014, 1-9

Nyerere, J.K. *The Arusha Declaration Teach-in*, Dar Es Salaam: The Information Services. 1975

Ojong, K. "Some Significant Issues Affecting Philosophy of Education in Nigeria" in *African Journal of Religion, Culture and Society (Vol. 2, No. 1.)* Calabar: University of Calabar Press. 2008.

Peter R. S. (ed.), *The Concept of Education*, New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 2010

Rugut, E.J. and Osman, A. A, "Reflection on Paulo Freire and Classroom Relevance" in *American International Journal of Social Science*, Vol. 2 No. 2; March 2013, pp. 23-28

Scheffler R. "Philosophical Models of Teaching" in R. S. Peters (editor). *The Concept of Education.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1969

Sisimwo, J.S, Rop, C.J, and Osman A.A, "A Reflection on the Works of Paulo Freire and its Relevance to Classroom Teaching" in *Middle Eastern & African Journal of Educational Research*, Issue 13 Year 2014, pp. 21-26

Udoidem, S. I. *Why should a Human Being be Moral? A Commentary on the Trial and Death of Socrates.* Lagos: African Heritage Research and Publications. 2001

White, E. G. *Education*. Boise: Pacific Press Publishing Association. 1903