



# **The Influence Of Western Culture And Education On The Domestic Training Of Children In Bayelsa State, Nigeria**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study examined the influence of Western culture and education on the domestic training of children in Bayelsa state, Nigeria. To properly carry out the study, three research questions were fielded. Concepts related and relevant to the study were also reviewed, as well as empirical evidence. The study also adopted the social cognitive theory. Furthermore, the study made use of the descriptive research design and used a self-designed questionnaire to collect the data from a sample population of one hundred and eighty (180) parents/guardians. Using the simple random sampling technique, the study distributed one hundred and eighty (180) questionnaires to the respondents. The study asserted that domestic training is becoming more difficult as parents and guidance are career-driven in the modern day. Also, western culture and education, while trying to add African values to its teaching, debunks and disregards it, thus making it have no impact on the students. Finally, the study recommended that domestic training should be done at the home and community level to eliminate Western adulteration. Also, the Ministry of Culture in Bayelsa should carry out orientation, sensitization and promotion programmes on the importance of the domestic training of the Ijaw, Nembe, Ogbia and Epie people of Bayelsa state.

**Keywords:** Western, Culture, Education, Domestic, Training

## **INTRODUCTION**

Societies in Africa are well versed in domestic training, which is now commonly referred to as traditional domestic training of children. This is seen in the social structures in the communities that ensure that domestic training is not left to the parents of a child alone. According to Mosweunyane, (2013), the majority of education in Africa was required to train each member of the society, either individually or in groups, to meet the demands of the entire community. This strategy encouraged community members to work together and cooperate, as well as to polish their knowledge and abilities before passing them on to future generations. Additionally, the main goal of training was to prepare a person for a productive role in society. The village elders and the traditional leadership both stressed and encouraged knowing how to utilise words and gestures to communicate ideas most elegantly.

Furthermore, Africans utilized a diverse array of symbols and themes to convey thoughts throughout the continent. It is significant to note that the learning did not adhere to any extensive and formal curriculum, which typically meant that valuable knowledge and skills were lost when the people who held them passed away or experienced other cognitive impairments, like becoming insane. Domestic training is therefore a fundamental component of African childrearing.

However, it has been duly noted that as in every sector of African societies, western culture and education now play a role in influencing the domestic training of children. This is due to the height at which Western education was placed above the African due to colonial influences. Coupled with the aim of the colonial masters making a perceived barbaric people civilized, western education and culture became supreme. Debunking this, Okpalike (2012) postulated that the education described as Western Education needs to be set apart from education that is African, Oriental, and so on. The implication here is that education is not alien to African culture; rather, it is an integral component of all human civilizations, including African culture. It is evident that Western education arrived with the West.

Based on the foregoing, this study asserts that while Western culture and education have a huge influence on the educational curriculum, system and practice in Nigeria as well as other African countries, it also has influences on pre-formal (informal and domestic) training of children in Nigerian homes. This study focused on the Bayelsa state of Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

This present study opines that Western culture and education have gone further than the known influences on the formal educational system of Nigeria. Its influences can be seen in the first line of child upbringing and training which includes basic family and societal skills: greetings, tidying up, moral etiquette, respect for elders etc. Yet, despite the copious amounts of research and studies done on the influence of Western culture and education on the African and especially Nigerian people, focus on this extra influence has not been made a priority.

Also, scholars and researchers who have written on the Western culture and education influences in Nigeria concerning child development or informal training have not focused on the empirically unique state of Bayelsa state, Nigeria. This presents a gap in educational literature and this study seeks to fill it. This paper, therefore, is a look into the influence of Western culture and education on the domestic training of children in Bayelsa state, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The paper is guided by three research questions:

1. What are some of the domestic trainings of children in Bayelsa state?
2. What are the signs of the influence of Western culture and education on the aforementioned domestic training of children in Bayelsa state?
3. To what extent is the influence of Western culture and education on the domestic training of children in Bayelsa state negative?

### **Scope of the Study**

Geographically, the scope of the study encompasses the state of Bayelsa, Nigeria. Contextually, the scope of the study encompasses the content of the influence of Western culture and education on the domestic training of children in Bayelsa state.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Concept of Western Culture and Education**

Culture is a complex, all-embracing phenomenon. This complex nature of culture makes it difficult to have a single and acceptable definition. Scholars have defined culture as that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, customs and other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society. Going by this definition, western culture simply refers then to the collective European and American societal knowledge, arts, customs etc (Ali, et al., 2018).

Furthermore, Western Education in its entirety refers to an educational system that is supposedly superior and is made up of various means and steps to teach the learners the ways and customs of the people of the Western world: their culture. It is more often than not, considered a better replacement to the educational system that the colonial masters saw in their advent in Africa. Thus, Okpilike (2012) opined that Western education as practised in Nigeria has gone out of its way to relegate almost all aspects of African cultural values to the background.

Historically, the Portuguese, who founded their trading ports at Benin City in 1472, brought Western education to Nigeria for the first time. To educate the Oba of Benin's children as well as his kingmakers, the first school was founded in his palace in 1515. This is the first instance of the effect on Nigerian communities' cultural lives. Western education was first introduced in Badagry, Lagos, in September 1842 by Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman with assistance from William De Graft. It eventually extended to other regions of Nigeria (Fafunwa, 1995).

### **Concept of Domestic Training of Children**

This training is carried out without any formal aspects involved, and an earlier study by Amaele, (2004) summarized the aims of domestic training of children (which can be tagged as African education) as follows: Maintain the extended family, clan, and tribe's cultural legacy; Teach the next generation to live in harmony with their physical surroundings and to use it responsibly; and Emphasise to them that the institutions, laws, language, and values passed down from previous generations are essential to their future.

Consequently, the domestic training of children involves the complex and total skill sets that are valued in the community. These range from skills and domestic training in terms of physical training where the immediate environment is used. In this environment the child runs, and plays games that are taught by and supervised by adults who train the child in the games and physical outdoor activities. It also encompasses character development which seeks to train children into good, respectable, honest and mentally strong members of society. Respect for oneself, peers and elders is another part of domestic training. In this, the children are taught the value and habit of greeting, obedience and reverence to the people in the community. Also, mental training is a part. As the children grow, they are taught names of legends, heroes, rivers, the geography of their community, proverbs and many things that they would need to thrive as members of the community. Finally, handworks are imparted to the children. From weaving, fishing, and farming to metal works and herbs etc (Achi, 2021).

### **Empirical Evidence**

Onwuatuegwu and Paul-Mgbeafulike, (2023) conducted a study on “African Traditional Educational Framework: Unveiling the Wisdom beyond Western Education”. The study examines the value of traditional African education about Western education, emphasising its philosophical underpinnings, fundamental ideas, and historical development. It looks at how Western education has affected education in Africa, as well as the criticisms and difficulties it has brought to bear on established structures. The piece then explores the distinctive features of traditional African education. Additionally, Jayeola-Omoyeni and Omoyeni (2014) carried out a study in which they examined the effects of amalgamation on the nation's educational growth, talked about how amalgamation led to the acceptance of Western education, which had previously been rejected by the Northern Protectorate, and examined the role played by Western Education in helping to build Nigeria's modernization following World War I.

### **Theoretical Review**

This study adopts the social cognitive theory. It was Albert Bandura who first proposed this. A general theory that emphasises learning from the social environment is called social cognitive theory. Social cognitive theory was first developed to study observational learning through modelling, but it has now broadened to include processes like motivation and self-regulation. The distinctive features of Social Cognitive Theory are rooted in the social reinforcement and influence that arises both internally and outwardly. SCT illustrates the distinctive manner in which every person picks up and sustains behaviour while taking the social context in which the behaviour is performed into account.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The population of this study comprised all adults (parents and guardians) in Bayelsa state. Of the eight local government areas, Yenagoa local government and the Yenagoa metropolitan area were selected which has an adult population of five hundred and twenty-four thousand, four hundred (524, 400). However, a sample of one hundred and eighty (180) adults (parents and guardians) was drawn from the population using simple random sampling techniques. Furthermore, the study adopted the descriptive survey design. The choice of the descriptive design is guided by the fact that it is a systematic method of collecting and analysing

responses gathered from a large sample of respondents that seeks the opinions, feelings, attitudes and perceptions of a targeted population under the topic of investigation.

The instrument for the research is a self-designed 4-point Likert scale questionnaire titled, “Influence of Western Culture and Education on Domestic Training of Children Questionnaire (IWEDTCQ)”. The instrument is made up of twenty-five (25) questions, broken into three (3) parts containing ten (10) questions each and the third one containing five (5). The questionnaire was structured into two sections: A and B. Section A contains parents/guardians bio-data, while section B contains items to which the adults were to respond. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, mean, and standard deviations.

### ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

The results of this study are presented below:

**Table 1: Gender of Parents/Guardians in Yenagoa**

Gender	Male	83	46.1%
	Female	97	53.95
	Total	180	100%

The table above represents the respondents according to gender. It shows that out of the sample size of 180, 83 (46.1%) account for males, while 97 (53.95%) account for females.

#### Research Question One

*What are some of the domestic trainings of children in Bayelsa state?*

**Table 2: Parents/Guardians idea on some of the domestic training of children in Bayelsa state**

S/N	Items	SA (4)	A (3)	SD (2)	D (1)	Total	$\bar{X}$	Decision Rule
1	Teaching children how to sweep is a part of domestic training	68 (272)	51 (153)	41 (82)	20 (20)	180 (527)	2.9	Agreed
2	Teaching children how to tidy up is a part of domestic training	50 (200)	53 (159)	41 (82)	36 (36)	180 (477)	2.6	Agreed
3	Teaching children how to cook native delicacies is a part of domestic training	61 (244)	48 (144)	41 (82)	30 (30)	180 (500)	2.7	Agreed
4	Teaching children how to properly greet is a part of domestic training	82 (328)	15 (45)	32 (64)	51 (51)	180 (488)	2.9	Agreed
5	Teaching children how to observe traditions is a part of domestic training	80 (320)	38 (114)	25 (70)	27 (27)	180 (531)	2.9	Agreed
6	Teaching children how to obey natural and community laws is a part of domestic training	56 (224)	61 (183)	36 (72)	27 (27)	180 (506)	2.8	Agreed
7	Teaching children how to play native games is a part of domestic training	57 (228)	63 (189)	35 (70)	25 (25)	180 (512)	2.8	Agreed
8	Teaching children how to memorize the names of places and things indigenous to their people is a part of domestic training	55 (220)	61 (183)	36 (72)	28 (28)	180 (503)	2.7	Agreed
9	Teaching children how to pray is a part of domestic training	61 (244)	36 (108)	52 (104)	31 (31)	180 (487)	2.7	Agreed
10	Teaching children how to carry out gender-specific roles is a part of domestic training	89 (356)	20 (60)	32 (64)	39 (39)	180 (519)	2.8	Agreed
Grand Mean Response Score							2.8	Agreed

**Source: Field Survey, 2024**

The above table identifies and highlights some of the domestic training of children in Bayelsa state. The respondents agreed with the list as the mean shows 2.8 total agreed. Furthermore, it is above the cut-off

mark of 2.5, thus making it valid and positive. This finding tallies with the study of Achi (2021) who also identifies domestic training and skills that African society's impact on children.

**Research Question Two**

*What are the signs of the influence of Western culture and education on the aforementioned domestic training of children in Bayelsa state?*

**Table 3:** Signs of influence of Western culture and education on domestic training of children

S/N	ITEMS	SA (4)	A (3)	SD (2)	D (1)	TOTAL L	$\bar{X}$	DECISION RULE
11	Almost all parts of domestic training are now left to teachers in schools to impact on the children	67 (268)	48 (144)	38 (76)	27 (27)	180 (511)	2.8	Agreed
12	Certain domestic training is cut off due to Western culture castigation of said training	45 (180)	76 (228)	28 (56)	31 (31)	180 (495)	2.7	Agreed
13	More and more children without domestic training are seen every day in society	50 (200)	61 (183)	34 (68)	35 (35)	180 (486)	2.7	Agreed
14	Most children discard the training citing Western cultural practices of elders greeting younger ones	63 (252)	58 (174)	40 (80)	19 (19)	180 (525)	2.9	Agreed
15	Western-educated people have little to no respect for uneducated elders	85 (340)	29 (87)	38 (76)	28 (28)	180 (531)	2.9	Agreed
16	The consistent rise of doubts in the validity of African cultures	47 (188)	80 (240)	40 (80)	13 (13)	180 507	2.8	Agreed
17	Increase in the number of children unable to speak local dialects	71 (284)	37 (111)	40 (80)	32 (32)	180 (507)	2.7	Agreed
18	Increase in several children who do not know local games and outdoor activities.	53 (212)	52 (156)	45 (90)	30 (30)	180 (488)	2.7	Agreed
19	Increase in the amount of cultural-based programs to promote domestic training	41 (164)	36 (108)	59 (118)	44 (44)	180 (434)	2.4	Disagreed
20	Preferences of people of Western-themed cultural practices over African.	76 (304)	41 (123)	41 (82)	22 (22)	180 (531)	2.9	Agreed
Grand Mean Response Score							2.8	Agreed

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

The above table reveals that Western culture and education have indeed influenced the domestic training of children in Bayelsa state. The table has a 2.8 grand mean response score, which is above the 2.5 cut-off mark, thus making it positive and valid. This finding tallies with the study of Okpilike, (2012) who opines that Western Education comes with the consequences of neglecting the domestic training of children

**Research Question 3**

*To what extent is the influence of Western culture and education on the domestic training of children in Bayelsa state negative?*

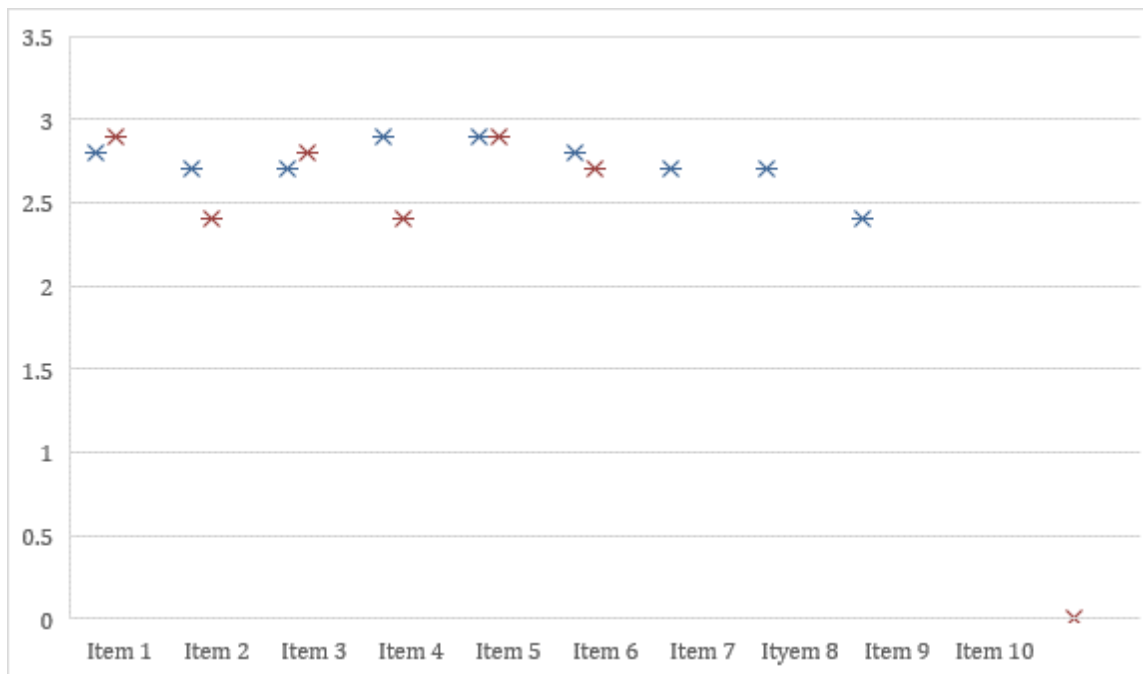
**Table 4:** The extent to which the influence of Western culture and education on the domestic training of children is negative

S/N	ITEMS	SA (4)	A (3)	SD (2)	D (1)	TOT AL	$\bar{X}$	DECISION RULE
21	The constant dominance of Western culture and education on domestic training will erode African values and traditions	64 (256)	62 (186)	29 (58)	25 (25)	180 (55)	<b>2.9</b>	<b>Agreed</b>
22	A dystopian African state will come about due to a lack of basic knowledge of what it means to be African	21 (84)	61 (183)	68 (136)	30 (30)	180 (433)	<b>2.4</b>	<b>Disagreed</b>
23	Western-styled educational institutions would be unable to teach domestic skills to children at all levels	59 (236)	53 (159)	38 (76)	30 (30)	180 (501)	<b>2.8</b>	<b>Agreed</b>
24	Languages, games, and festivals, names of legends and objects will be lost to time	30 (120)	69 (207)	24 (48)	57 (57)	180 (432)	<b>2.4</b>	<b>Disagreed</b>
25	Proper etiquette passed down from generations will degrade	82 (328)	27 (81)	40 (80)	31 (31)	180 (520)	<b>2.9</b>	<b>Agreed</b>
Grand Mean Response Score							<b>2.7</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

**Source: Field Survey, 2024**

The above table presents the extent to which the influence of Western culture and education on the domestic training of children is negative. This study asserts that the influence is at the average level, this is because not all hope is lost for the people of Bayelsa. This conclusion was arrived at through the 2.7 threshold, which is above the 2.5 cut-off mark. This finding tallies with the study of Qureshi, et al (2021) who in their study point out the negative effect of Western culture and education.

Figure 1: Comparison of mean value of signs of the influence of Western culture and education on the aforementioned domestic training of children and influence of Western culture and education on the domestic training of children in Bayelsa state



Data obtained from figure 1 revealed the variation of mean values ranging from 2.4 to 2.9 across the table. This reveals that western education had a significant effect on domestic upbringing of children in Bayelsa State.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

### Domestic Training of Children in Bayelsa State

Based on the findings made in the study, the domestic training of children in Bayelsa State involves life and practical societal skills. These skills are what entrenches a child within the Izon, Epie, Ogbia and Nembe (of Bayelsa) society. At this level of growth, the child is taught how to weep, tidy up and even cook. These are personal hygienic and survivable skills that improve and sustain the child. Also, the child is taught how to greet, which is a mainstay of the customs within Bayelsa. Observance of tradition, obedience, knowledge and gender specific roles are readily taught to the children to prepare them to become certified members of their communities. This finding tallies with the work done by Mosweunyane, (2013), who asserted the historical idea that parents and members of the communities are expected to train the children in all of the aforementioned skills.

### Signs of the Influence of Western Culture and Education on Domestic Training of Children in Bayelsa

Based on the study's analysis, it is clear that there are numerous signs that western culture and education has negatively influenced domestic training of children in Bayelsa. The influence is clear as certain signs such as the fact domestic training is now mostly in the hands of western based schools. Furthermore, domestic training in the state is limited as certain parts of it is removed or shunned as western culture frowns on them. Other signs include, the rate of children not entrenched in their society, as well as doubting their cultures and not being able to speak their language. Finally, another sign of this is the push by government agencies and NGOs to revitalize the culture, this wouldn't be necessary without negative influence of western culture and education. This finding is in line with the finding of Sibani (2018), who noted that the impact of western culture is negative towards African traditional society.

### The Negative Extent of the Influence of Western Culture and Education on Domestic Training of Children in Bayelsa

Based on the study, it shows that to a very large extent, the influence of Western culture and education has been negative. This is due to the fact that it has eaten deep in the fabrics of Bayelsa's in the State. This extent is calculated by the dominant stance and position of the Western culture and education over the Bayelsan. It



also evident in the degradation of mannerisms, accents, etiquettes, and culture. This finding tallies with the study of Arowolo (2010) who postulated the extent of Western cultural effect in Africa.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the analysis of the study, the following are the recommendations made:

- i. Domestic training should be done at the home and community level to eliminate Western adulteration.
- ii. Ministry of Culture in Bayelsa should carry out orientation, sensitization and promotion programmes on the importance of the domestic training of the Ijaw, Nembe, Ogbia and Epie people of Bayelsa state

### **Implications of the Study**

The following are the implications of the study:

- i. Domestic training is becoming more difficult as parents and guidance are career-driven in the modern day.
- ii. Western culture and education while trying to add African values to its teaching, debunks and disregards it, thus making it have no impact on the students.

### **CONCLUSION**

Western culture and education are an all-encompassing term for the perceived superior ways that Africans should aim to attain. Beginning with the colonial masters trying to civilize the local population, to the modern-day African trying his/her best to attain it purposefully. This study asserts that due to its position in the educational and foundational system of Nigeria, including Bayelsa state, it has heavily and more often than not, negatively influenced the domestic training of children. This is evident in the fact that most parents no longer even know how to domestically train their children and leave everything up to formal schools that would put western culture and educational values first.

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