

Review of: "Between Avoidance and the Need to Learn: Emerging Dynamics in the First Weeks of Classes in Higher Education in Angola"

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Higher education in sub-Saharan Africa has endured a significant transformation in recent years. The study titled by Sónia Pereira Dinis, António Manuel Águas Borralho, and Nuno Miranda e Silva, provides a deep understanding of this development, particularly in Angola.

The research investigates the socio-pedagogical dynamics that emerge when curricula, structures, and knowledge influence higher education without cultural adaptation. The study employs the Grounded Theory methodology to examine the perspectives of current and former students in the Benguela province. The results are both illuminating and alarming. Students frequently believe that their education lacks substance and relevance, causing them to develop patterns of absence and memorization by rote. This has a negative domino effect on teaching and learning processes.

The education system of Angola has historically been a blending pot of influences. From its colonial past, distinguished by discriminatory educational practises, to its post-independence era, characterised by the nationalisation of education and following the civil war, Angola's voyage in defining its educational framework has been turbulent. The current system, a combination of public and private institutions, significantly relies on international knowledge, frequently neglecting Angola's complex cultural and historical context.

The initial phases of higher education play a crucial role in moulding the academic journey of a student. The study emphasises the significance of nurturing positive teacher-student relationships during these phases. Drawing from the Meaningful Learning Theory, the research emphasises the significance of intertwining students' prior knowledge with new academic content, ensuring a holistic learning experience.

However, as illuminating as this study is, it also paves the way for several future research avenues:

- **Cultural Integration in Curriculum:** How can Angola's rich cultural heritage be incorporated into the existing educational system? The development of a curriculum that is both globally relevant and locally relevant can be the subject of study.
- **Teacher Training and Development:** Adequate teacher training programmes that emphasise cultural sensitivity and local context must be studied, considering the support of imported knowledge.
- **Student Engagement Strategies:** As students feel disengaged from their education, research can delve into innovative engagement strategies adapted to the Angolan context.

- Impact of Technology: In the era of digitalization, how can technology be utilised to improve the learning experience in Angola's higher education system?
- Long-Term Outcomes: A longitudinal study can be conducted to evaluate the long-term effects of the current education system on the career paths and overall life satisfaction of students.

In conclusion, while Dinis, Borralho, and Silva's study provide invaluable insights into the current state of higher education in Angola, it also paves the way for an abundance of future research possibilities. As Angola advances, it is essential that its educational system reflects its illustrious past and prepares for a prosperous future.

The article could be accepted in its present form.