

Epistemological and Utilitarian Essence of African Folktales

Concept Note

Folktales have contributed immensely to learning and social norms in African societies. These folktales have served African societies in building and maintaining generations with strong African indigenous background and ways of life. The essence of folktales has been eroded by emerging current realities brought about by globalization. While it is believed that it is necessary to situate learning and child development on a globalised platform, it is expedient to look inward and consider local ideologies for African children in order to appeal to the model of “thinking locally and acting globally”. It is on this premise that this workshop is being planned to bring different stakeholders from different areas of study together for proper scrutiny of the themes around African Folktale.

This workshop is planned to be an output of an ongoing research project titled: **Regenerating Non-Formal Learning in Africa: Digitizing Folktales for Animation and Value Education**. During the course of the project, it was observed that a significant percentage of the challenges faced by African societies today might have been addressed by emerging themes of folktales. Since African problems ought to include African solutions, it is expedient that we look inward in order to manipulate available resources to suggest lasting solutions to these challenges. The research project, which targets African children entertainment and moral learning, is an attempt to create an African indigenous platform for the development of the African, European and the children of other continents.

In this workshop, we shall seek to interrogate the topic of folktale, not only among the Yoruba nationality, and also in other African indigenous ethnicities. It is believed that the output of this workshop could be duplicated for other indigenous societies in line with the relationality agenda of the cluster.

This workshop is conceived as part of the efforts to achieve the overarching goal of African Cluster Centre, which is reconfiguring African Studies. From its conception, therefore, to the development of its themes, objectives, and methods, the workshop aligns with the overarching concepts of multiplicity, relationality and reflexivity as its key guiding principles.

Furthermore, in discussing African stories through African eyes, this workshop reflects the value of reflexivity, as Africans look upon themselves, hoping to shape, through self-examination, their

own future actions, points of reference, and modes of examination. Also, decolonizing the African mind, which is one of the objectives of the workshop, will significantly advance the Cluster's goal of reconfiguring African Studies.