



Black Applied Behavior Analysts

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Discovering the Impact of European Colonization
Throughout the West African Diaspora Through a
Culturo-Behavioral Scientific Lens

Abstract

The colonization of (West) African countries and cultures has yielded horrific consequences on a global scale. Many African indigenous cultural practices, religions, values, and traditions have been white-washed or erased altogether, as a result of European colonization (Ofori-Atta & Ohene, 2014; Somé, 1998). Moreover, attempts to place African indigenous cultural behavioral practices on extinction have resulted in a fragmented and divided diaspora-- a diaspora that has ultimately adopted many of the problematic behaviors and values of the colonizer. Via cultural transmissions (Berry et al. 2010) and interlocking contingencies (Glenn 2004; Mattani & Cihon, 2020) these problematic behaviors have been selected (Skinner, 1953 & 1981) and transferred from culture to culture, generation to generation, and individual to individual. The purpose of this workshop is to trace West African indigenous cultural practices, pre- and post-colonization, across the diaspora, space, and time to identify which indigenous practices have survived (selected), which ones have been appropriated, and which ones have become conditioned punishers through coercive (Sidman, 2001) neocolonial practices. In addition, we will examine how the colonization of West African indigenous cultural practices has shaped our extant overt and covert behaviors across the diaspora, and towards ourselves and others.

Learning Objectives

1. Identify how West African culture and cultural practices have been shaped and selected through colonization, throughout the diaspora
2. Identify the impact of colonization on West African cultural practices
3. Describe the seismic impact that the colonization of West African indigenous culture and cultural practices has had on shaping our current behaviors, values, and cultural practices



Dr. Nasiah Cirincione-Ulezi and
Dr. Paula Danquah Brobby