



Education and Values Orientation in Nigeria: Analytical Approach

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Abstract

The paper took an analytical view of the present value system in Nigeria. It was established that values in all aspects of the people's life in the country are in a precarious situation owing to our interaction with the western culture. It was observed that the intrusion of the foreign culture into the Nigerian way of life mutilated the rich values which not only Nigerians but the entire Africans were known for. Today material needs dictate our values and takes the Centre stage in Nigeria; the rush to get rich quickly characterizes the present situation of life in the country. The above situation has given birth to a high level of corruption in all sectors of the economy. The present predicament is left with no option than to look up to the education sector for solution. The realization of the above dream can easily be accessed when the education system live up to its standard; having all it takes to perform the set goals before it, in line with the country's national objectives. This becomes very essential after all; both education and values are considered as normative concepts and pursues common aim. Good enough in Nigeria, both the National and the educational goals are geared towards enhancing adequate and progressive values for the entire Nigerian society. For this purpose, the writer concluded with a note that, to re-orientate our values and to achieve a better education system in Nigeria, there should be a synergy between the government, concerned individuals, parents, and relevant sectors to revamp the system, making it fit to carry out its assigned goals with the aim of revamping our battered values.

Keywords: Education, values, orientation, analytical approach

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INTRODUCTION

It is no gain saying that the value-scale in Nigeria is at a very low level. This assertion is borne by the daily trends of things in the country. Almost all the sectors of the economy are experiencing moral deficiency, against the assertion of Bararibe, Olufowobi, and Bolaji (2011) who posits that good morals form the foundation on which a society is structured. Which means that the absence of good morals or values in any society put that society in an unbalanced Scale? It also translates that the stability of any given society or a country's level of progress and development is determined by the extent to which the members are immersed with moral laws.

If the above lines of argument is something to go by, then it will not be an over statement to conclude that the slow pace of development in Nigeria is as a result of lack of moral principles among the individuals that has

weakened the values in the Nigerian society. This is not to say that Nigeria has no values at all as there is no society without values, but that our value system has to a great extent been bastardized. Akinpelu (1983) made this point clearer when he stated that the Africans had cherished values of communalism, brotherliness and cooperation, among others, but that these values were eroded with the coming of the colonial masters into Africa. Nduka and Iheoma (1983:33) affirmed the above assertion when they quoted Julius Nyerere as saying that; "of all the crimes of colonialism, there is none worse than the attempt to make us believe that we had no indigenous culture of our own or that what we have was worthless or something of which we should be ashamed, of (being) a source of pride". No doubt, our interaction with the western culture affected us adversely. Those values which we esteem so high as has been eroded on the altar of modernism. Life, chastity,

morality and other values which occupied vital places in our value system in the past, means nothing to most individuals in Nigeria in contemporary times, and the resultant effects is where we find ourselves today. The observation of Akabogu Collins in Irikefe (2013:36) summed it up when he stated that; “in the eyes of the world Nigeria has become a moral backwater, a cesspool of crime and corruption, a distorted reality, a benighted nation of criminals, hustlers and desperados.” The above negative impact according to Akabogu has resulted to a self-inflicted wound of horror and rejection on Nigerians, such that those in Diaspora find it difficult to be associated with the name of the country. It has also caused stigmatization on many and barriers of opportunities. Expanding the existing argument, Ojo (N/D) made it clear that, “the kind of values by a nation greatly determines the level of its development”. He further stated that the inordinate ambition to acquire wealth is one among the factors responsible for the gradual eroding away of most of our cherished values in Nigeria. To that effect, he advised that until we change our mind set from celebrating people for their wealth instead of the good character they portrays, things will continue to go on the negative side. Indeed many Nigerians who cares to know will without hesitation agree that the country, not mincing words is a falling brand not only at home, but also abroad, which must be a concern to all. The daily occurrences in the country will be suitable to accommodate the assertion of Irikefe (2013) when he posits that Nigeria is a theatre of an unfolding drama of crime and chaos. That, we are breeding a lost generation, army of frustrated youths who lack the tools and what it takes for national development. Actually, it is thought-provoking considering the state of our moral decadence and what scholars have commented about it. It therefore becomes pertinent to say that the required strategies should be put in place to establish good values for the Nigerian society.

However, many writers have stated their views that the quest for materialism in our society is the cause of the high level of corruption in existence. This chase for material wealth had adversely affected all sectors of the economy; political, economic, social, and even the religious institutions are not exempted from the virus. Making a special report on corruption, *Business in Africa* (June, 1999)-An International Magazine commented that;

“The alarming ramification of corruption in all economic sectors of African society is now starring its politicians, civil servants and businessmen and women in the face; plundering must stop and accountability must begin earnest or donors will pull the rug from under them, investors will start withdrawing their assets or, at the very least, shelve plans for expansion”.

The above observation clearly revealed the extent which corruption has eaten up the fabrics of the people not just in Nigeria, but the entire continent and its

corresponding consequences. This translate that corruption is responsible for the eroding of vital values pertinent to the existence of the Nigeria society in the past, now being usurped by the curiosity imbibed by individuals, getting crazy to get rich-quickly through hook or crook. Many has described that bribery (another vital aspect of corruption) has become parts of doing business in the entire region-African. In as much as one can rightly argue that corruption is not a thing only in the African region, but that will not mean holding brief for the Africans or one condoning with the virus, considering its “inimical to the wellbeing of our economy, as it diverts scarce resources from basic human needs and destroys confidence in the integrity of our institutions” (Al Gore in *Business In Africa*, June, 1999:18). Al Gore, a one-time American vice president addressing a group of African leaders, in a clear term stated that Corruption has diverse negative impact on our social and economic development which regrettably our civil society remains weak to wage war against it. He insist that corruption is not just a legal or a moral issue; but also a business risk as it retardate economic progress and accelerates crime, hurts investment, stalls growth, bleeds the national budget and worst of all – undermines our faith in freedom.

The emphasis on corruption as a dangerous weapon is because; it is seen as the greatest virus that has eroded the value system of the Nigerian society. Ndubuisi in Amaele (2017) started the hierarchies of values as spiritual values, human values, and material values, but contrary to this order. In Nigeria the least, which is material values is being prioritize, above the spiritual and other values. According to Amaele, (2017) these are the reasons many Nigerians do not even value their own lives, that has made them do anything to get quick wealth not minding the consequences. Again, this misplacement of priority has cost us loose the vital values which the Africans were known for and has been living as one people.

No doubt, Corruption has afflicted virtually every post-colonial African nation. In as much as no human culture has remained pure since its creation; free from external influences (Gyeke, 2004), yet it would be appropriate, even imperative to suggest that the African societies must rise to their feet to make positive steps using the ideas, concepts and related institutions that comes from the different cultures. Most importantly according to Gyeke, should be the values and ideas we have received from these other cultural sources, using them to be vitalized and making a viable framework for development of our own societies. It is indubitable that African cultural values were maltreated, debased and degenerated by our colonial rulers; it becomes pertinent that for us to tread on the part of development, we should revive “our atavistic cultural values”, which will translate to a viable framework for a modern life.

The present situation and the state of the nation has attracted individuals especially those who care for the wellbeing of the African nations. However, the question that has been asked is that; “where do we go from here?” The solution, according to some scholars lies in our education. But does the education system in Nigeria have the capacity to revamp our value system? The above scenario has prompted the position of Carl Berenter in Aminigo (1995:53), who asserts that;

We look to education to solve problems by changing people. It does not well and, in general problems of human behavior are better dealt with by changing the incentives according to which people act. There are times when a whole population might need to be change.....such changes however, would require a great deal more than schooling. They would require overhauling virtually every aspect of societal functioning.

No doubt, education has been saddled with different responsibilities of imparting societal norms and values, refining the individuals, making them understand the basic issues of life. According Dewey (1916:20), education guarantees not only direction to life especially in social sphere, but it is growth; “It is responsible not only to transmit and conserve the whole of its existing achievements, but only such as make for a better future society”. While to Immanuel Kant; “It is through good education that all the good in the world arises” (Churton, 1991:15). For this reason, Kant posits that “man is merely what education makes of him”. And like Plato rightly stated, due to the vital position which education occupies in the society, an attempt to toy with its process will mean heading to doom, as it is a source of light to individuals and nations. Consenting to the views of these great thinkers, Gyeke, (2004) conclude that the primary goal of education is grapple with the concrete and existential problems of human society. No doubt it is presumed from the foregoing that the national policy on education, as Aminigo (1995) figured out seems to place premium on moral education so as to reduce the social problems of the Nigerian society. Consequently, to effectively answer the question of the viability of Nigerian education system, it will be pertinent to view the concept of education and the present state of education in Nigeria.

CONCEPTUAL ANALYSES

In this section we shall be analyzing not only the concept of Education, but also its relevance to this work. The concept of value will also be viewed. The essence of this according to Aminigo (1999) is to strip them of obscurities and wrong meanings and to make for better comprehension in relation to the topic on ground.

EDUCATION

Scholars in the field of education have enormously agreed that education is a value-loaded concept. R.S Peters for instance revealed that the central mission of education is to deliver acceptable values to any society

that practices it. This he made clear when he stated that Education is a process in which something of value is passed on from teacher to pupil. As a result of this, a desirable state of mind is developed on the pupil (O’Hear,). Peters’ analyses of education as a process that leads to a general improvement and transformation of the educated man by initiating him into subjects and activities which are valuable in themselves, O’Hear asserts. In the same vein, John Dewey view education as something life-long and essentially incomplete on its own. Education according to him as with other scholars centres on “the child as a growing person, how he could find the best expression for that which in him, also lay that which he wanted to do, to say, and to be. How he could develop his own working ideals by which he could go into action, moment by, hour by hour, day by day, and this build within oneself habits of moral behavior and advancing ideals and goals. Wirth added that the educational institution should as a matter of importance integrate the individual as part of the society and not to isolate him; “the school must be a place where individual activity can be social also in character, where the child by working on and in his physical environment can develop his individual powers and at the same time use them in furthering the larger activities of his group” (1966:248)). The foregoing clearly spelt out that morality and good values cannot be devoid of educational processes. For this reason, Wirth advocated that the school curriculum must be well programmed and subjects selected to touch the people’s lives and values; “studies must progressively deeper insights into the nature of human situation-of social life, to provide the criterion for judging the educative value”. (1966:264).

The business of education as far as Dewey was concern is to estimate so far as possible, the unworthy features of the existing environment from influence upon mental habitude.” It establishes a purified medium of action. Selection aims not only at simplifying but at weeding out what is undesirable” (Dewey, 1916:20). The above assertion must have influence the view of Elechi (2015:20) in arriving at the conclusion that “Education must be implicated in character building, morality and character formation constitute an indispensable aim of education.

Indeed, an in-depth study of the ancient educators especially among the Greeks (Plato and Aristotle) revealed that their emphasis/curriculum centred on the development of morals in the individuals. To this extent, J.D. O’Connor in Aminigo (1999:10) listed certain criteria by which the concept education must be known for. He stated that education is “A set of values or ideas embodied and expressed in the purposes for which knowledge, skills and attitude are imparted and so directing the amount and type of training that is given”. The above position no doubt agrees with the opinion of Dewey who did argued that education is the transmission of values for a better society. In like

manner, Akinpelu established the fact that what constitute education is not just merely the experiences that goes on in the school environment and the different subjects that goes with it, but focused centrally of the normative concepts of education which must be interface. Even the traditional (African) society did not deviate from the above. Akinpelu (1981:179) stated this fact, that one is accorded to be educated only when he is well behaved; “Good character is of the utmost importance; a man without it, however otherwise distinguished, is only a carved wooden doll”. Woodrow Wilson affirm to this view when he in Akinpelu stated that, “the educated man is to be discovered by his point of view, by the temper of his mind, by his attitude towards life and his fair way of thinking (1981:179).

From the above narrative it becomes clear that the normative aspect of education is what makes it stand out and cannot be neglected when viewing the concept. Hence to R.S. Peters (1966), to acquire education means that something worthwhile has been intentionally transmitted in a morally acceptable manner. He made a clear case that education is synonymous with something good-“something worthwhile”, that the purpose of education is to reform the individual to be good, and adapt to the society, and in no little measure contribute meaningfully to the development of the society; An argument that Immanuel Kant subscribed to when he postulates that, man is the only being that needs education, that man can become man by education; he is merely what education makes of him. Kant affirmed that education is vital to man as it takes us one step nearer to perfection. ((Churton, 1999). However, Education cannot be associated with one who is versed in a particular discipline as some has misconceived or seen as an area of study not until the learning in that discipline is able to transform the behavior of the individual in question for the better in line with the norms and values of his society. To some scholars “education is a process of preparing for the good life, the acquisition of good habits, strong hands and economic wisdom” (Okoh, 2003:14). While Nduka sees education “as the process of transmitting the people’s culture, at least part of it, from one generation to the next (1964:4). Based on the foregoing, Aminigo made a case that different scholars has different views of education, yet, they all have the same meeting point. He x-rayed different positions of scholars on what education stands for. For instance; Dearden Opines that education is “the process by which people are brought to an understanding and appreciation of what is valuable”. While to G.F. Kneller, education is the process by which society through schools, colleges, universities and other institutions, deliberately transmits knowledge, values, and skills from one generation to another. And Phoenix R posits that; “education is the process whereby persons intentionally direct the growth of other persons” (1999:33).

Despite the various definitions of education that seems to be divergent put forward by scholars, the writer agrees with Aminigo that the concept of education crystallize around value impartation and re-orientation. Which indeed, gears towards the development of the individual and the entire society? Dewey made this point clearer when he asserts that the goal of education is to help the individual develop his full powers-in such a way as to support and advance social ends. Its ingredients when firmly imbibed, according to Dewey will inculcate good morals that will make a remarkable difference in the life of the individual and his community. From the foregoing, it has been proved to a greater extent that education is a value-loaded concept. What then is value, and what part does it play in the development of the individual and possibly the entire society.

The concept of Value

Values can be considered as the standards that govern individuals and groups of their behaviors and activities in a society. The term falls within the philosophical branch called axiology. Like Dewey rightly put; “it means the act of cherishing something, holding it dear, and also the act of passing judgment upon the nature and amount of its values as compared with something else”(1916:238). Others see the term as those traits, principles; ideas cherished by a particular society and are seen to very essential for their growth. According to M. Haralambos (2007), value is a belief that something is good and desirable. With the same understanding, R.K. Mukerjee posits in an elaborate terms that value are socially approved desires and goals that are internationalized through the process of the conditioning, learning or socialization and the become subjective preferences, standards and aspirations” (Mondal N/D). To this end Mondal is of the view that a value is a shared idea about how something is ranked in terms of desirability, worth or goodness. Some of the value that may fall into this category of description of the term can be seen as follows; equality, justice fraternity, wealth, uprightness etc. These are considered as very essentials to most societies. To dig further, values has to do with the people’s mind-set; they are built by individuals who speak of them; their standard, and possibly, their peculiarity. Hence people considered values as closely connected to the people’s belief system. Because values have to do with the people’s mindset, it there means that we must break away from poor mindset that will adversely affect our value standard. Looking at value with this spectacle gives an advantage position to posit that it is derived from public conceptions of what sort of society or life would be most satisfactory or worthwhile for members of the society. This includes their behavior patterns or attitudes of individual members of the society for its continuous existence.

From the above therefore it should be mention that every society has their value system that keeps them

moving and guides their living pattern. Nduka consent to this when he stated that; “before the coming of the white man the indigenous people of Nigeria had certain cosmological ideas, which formed the basis of their system of values”. These according to him are in the areas of the metaphysical, axiological, and other spheres of life (1964; 10). He argued that most of the values of the Nigerians were eroded by reason of the coming of the western culture, who considered virtually everything among the natives (culture) as bad.

Heretofore, the quest for material things and get-rich quickly (which characterized the western culture) took the place of the communal living that the Africans were known for. It is obvious that the gradual fading away of the African values and the resultant virus effected mostly the youths of the Nigerian society. Nduka attributed this to the early cultural clash between the indigenous culture and that of the west, as he recounted; “The predicament of the younger generation arose from the fact that while the schools taught them one set of values based on one culture, the home and the environment taught them another” (1964:19). The gold and silver coins that were introduced in the early schools of the white man marked the beginning of the money economy that has now taken the place of the traditional communal lives of the indigenous people. The above situation prompted Aderinwale’s position that, Nigerians have generally slipped away from those cherished core values and embraced a new culture, a new way of life, a new world view. He noticed that, today, the following strange activities/vices have almost completely taken over our most cherished values. What is left with us as he recounted are; excessive pursuit of material acquisition money, warship, fakery, smuggling, oil bunkering, corruption, cultism and ethnic wars” (Bararinde, K.S., Olufowobi, O.O., Bolaji, S.D., 2011:27). The precarious state of our value system is not only noticed by Aderinwale as Julius Nyerere in Nduka and Iheoma did not also find it palatable with the state of our values in the African society, they remarked that, “of all the crime of colonialism, there is none worse than the attempt to make us believe that we had no indigenous culture of our own or that what we have was worthless or something which we should be ashamed, instead of (being) a source of pride (Nduka&Iheoma, 1983:33).

They posited two main broad of values; ‘moral and non-moral’ values. To many scholars the spiritual are more vital than the material. Although the pragmatists or the experimentalist are not so much comfortable with this arrangement, because to them the physical counts. Despite the various schools of thought and their stand concerning value placement, the paper rather focused on the impact of education on value, and hope to thread on that path. Consequently, we shall be asking ourselves the above; to what extent can education enhance our value system? This question takes a vital position in this paper.

Education and value system in Nigeria

In the discussion above, we have analyzed the concept of education and that of values. Their present states in the country were discussed. The writer was able to deduce the basic fact that education and value can be described as a two-sided coin. This means that we cannot comfortably discuss education stripping it of values as that will amount to what will be referred to as an “academic still-birth”. From the beginning of age, the business of education has been that of the inculcations of values suitable to transform life to better the individual in his society. No doubt, education has been saddled with different responsibilities of inculcating societal norms and values; refining the individuals and making them to understand basic issues of life. To Dewey (1916:20), education guarantees not only direction to life especially in social aspects of life, but growth; “It is responsible not only to transmit and conserve the whole of its existing achievements, but only such as make for a better future society”. While to Immanuel Kant, “it is through good educational system that all the good in the world arises” (Churton, 1991:15). He made a strong argument that through education human nature will continually be improved, and brought to such a condition as is worthy of the nature of man. It is the nature of man to live peacefully and in harmony with one another, he insists. This made possible by the existing rules and order pertinent to the people’s way of living-values. For this reason, Kant opt for an education system that will develop the entire man’s nature (the cognitive, affective, and psycho motive), and to re-instate his natural gifts. He insist that under the present educational system man is yet to attain fully the object of his being. In the same line of argument, Plato posits that due to the vital position of education in a society, an attempt to toy with its process will means heading to doom, because, according to him education bring light to individuals and to a nation.

From the fore-going, it becomes clear that an effective education system to a great extent enhances values in a society. Values we have discussed earlier are those items or traits we cherished in our society that are worthwhile and keep the society in the right track to rapid development. Regrettably, the educational landscape of Nigeria looks really morose and menacing (Irikefe, 2013). The country has the largest population of out-of-school children, about 10.5 million according to UNESCO (2013). And to the body, the Nigerian educational system is only producing “unemployable illiterates.” Going by this trend, it will be difficult to expect much from the country’s educational system. However, due to the vital position education occupies, consolidating the fact that an effective educational system is a tool to accelerate the societal move to the next level of development. Immanuel Kant, understood this very well when he posits that; “the greatest and most difficult problem to which man can devote himself is the problem of education. For insight depends on education, and education in-turn depends on insight.”

(Churton, 1991:11). An individual or society that lacks insight will surely be robbed of essential things of life.

Plato of the ancient Greece also wrote extensively on the essentials of education as an instrument for enhancing better values not only to an individual but even to the entire society. With education according to him men are oriented in their thoughts around the blurred world of shadows (the Theory of Form). He argued that education is not simply a matter of putting knowledge into a person's soul that does not possess it as some defined it to be, but that it's a matter of conversion, a complete turning around from the world of appearance to the world of reality. (Stumpf, 1977). By this understanding of the concept, Plato is of the view that education guarantee access to better values in man, making him to choose what is right and worthwhile. He stated that; 'the ignorant have no single mark before their eyes at which they must aim in all the conduct of lives.' (Stumpf, 1977:55). No doubt, education brings one to the consciousness of what is good and what is evil. It makes one access to the knowledge of goods conduct and shuns that which is evil, imbibing good values for a meaningful lifestyle. By so doing according to Aristotle happiness is derived. This is achieved as he stated; by the working of the soul in the way of excellence or virtue. Education is paramount for its contribution in making the individual build the necessary values around oneself. To Dewey values are nothing but "the quality of satisfactoriness of an act that one performs in the pursuit of successfully controlling life in his environment." (Stumpf, 1977:413). In whichever way we look at it, it is evident that education in no little way contributes to the enhancement of values in the society. This view is eminent in the various theories of education and values of great educators of both ancient and contemporary times.

In the present Nigerian education system policies are formulated based on good values. Consequently the present National Policy on Education being enforced is geared towards achieving the following goals;

- a) The development of the individual into morally sound patriotic and effective citizen;
- b) Total integration of the individual into the immediate community, the Nigerian society and the world;
- c) Provision of equal access to qualitative educational opportunities for all citizens at all levels of education, within and outside the formal system;
- d) The inculcation of national consciousness values and national unity; and
- e) The development of appropriate skills, mental, physical and social abilities and competencies to empower the individual to live in and contribute positively to the society. (FRN. 2014:2).

A critical look at the goals of education in Nigeria in clear terms speaks that the education has been entrusted the roles of redeeming our battered values in the country. The question that one will asked at this juncture is that; can the Nigerian education be able to restore the values that Nigerian society has been known for? How viable is our educational system presently to carry out these afore-mentioned roles?

To help us in this direction, Osokoya, (2008:95) submit that, "Nigeria's education has failed to usher in the desired expansion of available facilities and resources both qualitatively and quantitatively so as to produce a better and greater nation". The failure of the education in Nigeria according to Osokoya manifest in different areas ranging from; inappropriate and irrelevant curriculum, existence of cultism, examination malpractice, and insufficient classrooms that has resulted to a declining quality of the educational products. Such "serious cracks" noticed in the sector is capable of hampering its full achievements of the set goals in the country. In a clear term; Nigerian education need to be overhauled. Many scholars and writers are of the view that the system have not done well in carrying out the challenges before it. To Amaele (2017) it is a pathetic situation that after more than three decades of the formulation of the so-called National Policy on Education, the nation's education system is still turning out job seekers in their numbers. He described the Nigerian education system as a factory which is only good in producing sub-standard human power. The reason for this as he posits is due to the poor instruments of teaching and learning, and out of fashion methodologies in our present school system. The way forward as suggested by Amaele is for a concerted effort of the government, the teachers, the pupil, the parents, the media, and all other concerned organizations to rise up to the challenge of revitalizing the decaying system of education in the country. He is of the opinion that such synergy will uplift the standard of education and course it to perform optimally.

Due to the close relationship between education and values in a society, the wake-up-call made above becomes pertinent as an adequate reinstatement of the education sector in a proper perspective will mean addressing our value system in the right direction. After-all, education has been considered as a veritable instrument to liberating the mind from sentiments, biases, abuses and self-centeredness. It sharpens the individual's mind to think reasonably and take the best decisions in putting the human society in a better shape (Amaele, 2017). This view confirmed the suggestion of Ben Carson, the renowned American neuron-surgeon who posits that there should be a conscious decision to incorporate values and character education into our academic programs with the goal of teaching, developing, and strengthening the character of our students (Carson, 2015).

THE WAY-FORWARD TOWARDS BUILDING A BETTER EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM THAT WILL GUARANTEE GOOD AND ACCEPTABLE VALUES.

Much has been said concerning the cord binding education and values in any given society which Nigeria is not an exception. Regrettably the Nigerian education system has been found wanting in different ways which has adversely affected the value system in the society. The question as Nduka and Iheoma would ask; how do we tackle the situation? By way of answering this question, it will be worthwhile to start by looking inward into the education system since it has been proven that our values system hinges on the education sector. Following this track will lead to another vital question; what is the philosophy in which our education system stand? Scholars are at the view that the failure of the British colonial administration to provide a functional and adequate education philosophy marked the starting point of our educational problems which fused into other areas of life in the Nigerian society. The British educational program was accused of being too academic, theoretical and unsuitable for providing an overall development for the Nigerian youth (Osokoya, 2008). However, even when it seemed that batten has changed hands (after political independence) yet the education system seems not to have improved. This situation has generated some doubts in the minds of many who has continue to ask whether the indigenous Nigerian had a philosophy or philosophy of education before the infiltration of foreign culture in the Nigerian system. It should be argued that a viable philosophy that must bind a good educational system should take cognizance of the basic philosophical tentacles of meta-physic, epistemology and axiology, being the pillars on which any philosophical issues will rest upon. A critical look at the conference which gave birth to the present Nigerian philosophy of education is another area to make complain. Scholars find it difficult to accept an important conference of such nature to be adequately discussed within short period (8th September to 12th September 1969) of five days to yield a productive outcome. The argument concocted is that the time frame is rather too short to draw out the metaphysical, epistemological and the axiological bases on which the system will work upon. These and many others that has informed Nduka (1972), Okoh (1989) and Amaele (2017) to conclude that; Nigeria is yet to have a philosophy on education. According to Nduka, what we presently have as a philosophy for Nigerian education is a non-starter in the philosophical stake. And to Okoh (1989), “what we have does not reflect, neither is it grounded on the, metaphysical, epistemological, and axiological assumption of the Nigerian people” (Amaele, 2017: 288).

By reason of the above negative expressions and the poor outcome from the Nigerian education system one reserve no option but to advise that we need to go back

to the “drawing board”. Coincidentally some scholars have keyed into this view that our present national philosophy of education should be looked into. Osokoya (2008) is one among others who have advised that that our national philosophy should be revisited with the aim of touching the values of the people for an optimum enhancement of life and national development.

Again, since education is majorly driven by the government, and recognizing that, “who pays the piper dictate the tone”, the government has much work to do in terms of revamping the education sector. They should exhibit high level of sincerity in dealing with education matters. An act of the government trivializing issues concerning education should be totally condemned. For the fact that truth and sincerity are considered as essential values accepted by all human societies, an act of the government of the day not abiding to these values does not speak well of them. Most time the individual looked unto them in their daily activities, and in most cases their actions reflects the peoples’ conducts in that society. It will not be an over statement to say that having an insincere and a government that will not keep to their words means having a valueless society. To a large extent, this has been our predicament in Nigeria. To get it right, and to reinstate good values in our society, the government must take the leading role to live right for the followers to emulate. Again, the government of the day as a matter of importance must make proactive steps, for without positive government initiative and standing by their words as an act of instituting good morals cum values, much will not be achieve. The educational system in the country can be enhanced and our values more tangible when the government on their part, live by example rather than precepts.

Again, to re-instate our battered values, many have suggested that moral education will be the panacea to the moral decadence experienced presently in the Nigerian society. Even though this may sound convincing, yet the extent and the manner which the moral education will be conducted is another issue that should be focused. However, it will be worthwhile to opine what moral education means and its relevance in the society. Some has described moral education as the act of developing the pupils, inculcating in them the sense of moral responsibility and a belief that moral behavior is worthwhile. (Chukunta, 1983). Moral in this context, simply means the knowledge, consciousness of good and evil. It translate that the essence of moral education is to make the individual have a desire in accessing better knowledge and understanding of that which will aid him in making right choices, informed by critical thinking of issues paramount to his well-being. Moral education in no small measure when appropriately planned will enhance the learner’s sense of right values and develop the appropriate skill and judgments to cope with the different moral choices

before them in the society. The question still boils down, on the sincerity of our government to do the needful by reinstating a viable and proactive moral education that is all-inclusive, and targeted towards achieving greater values in the society. Nduka (1983) have rightly stated that it is only when the best is done that the goals of our education can be achieved. Hence he suggested that moral education should be a joint venture to be undertaken by the home, the community, the religious institutions as well as the school, with each playing a unique role in the life of the child.

Even though it is said that the implementation of a viable moral education is a synergy of different agencies as suggested above, yet the school should be seen as the major agent in this regard. For this purpose Nduka(1983) promptly advised that for the school to equitably discharge this role, its curriculum should be tailored towards achieving the goals of moral education. The school curriculum should be planned in a manner for free flow of the inculcation of certain types of knowledge and the development of certain intellectual skills and dispositions, which includes procedural knowledge of “the rational moral judgments” The school environment been a social organization, must reflect those values and practices associated with democratic setting. Again its organizational climate (the school), must promote discipline that should be reflected among the stake holders. Subjects and programs in the school should as a matter of priority gear towards the inculcation of good values that will uplift the standard of living in the Nigerian society. Be as important as it is, some have argued as earlier mentioned that moral education or the inculcation of morality is not the sole business of the school. Kosemani in Aminigo (1995) affirmed these backing his position that, most vital principles which produce morally upright person are not taught in the formal school system. Ryle G. who fell into this school of thought was cited, as stating that; “no one can set morality for home work. Our values must shine through our actions”. A critical examination of the above revealed to a great extent, that morality runs in consonance with our traditional system which everybody is a teacher. And in subsequent passages Ryle made it clearer when he stated that:

Though we do indeed learn our standards of conduct, we do not have to learn them in any set lessons conducted by any appointed pundits; we learn them from every-man in the home, in the street, in the playground and in the market place. (1995:50).

The submission of Ryle that the inculcation of morality which translates to good societal values is not an exclusive role of the school, but can be handled by other relevant agents as mentioned earlier. It is only on the achievement of the above that we can affirm the realistic nature of Nduka’s call, saying that; “we must make a determined effort, now or never, to lift up the back of this nation, so that it may rise up and go”

(1983:29) becomes necessary since good values accelerates the development of a society.

CONCLUSION

To a great extent, the paper has made a good explanation that the central concern of an educational enterprise is attached to the promotion of good values in any giving society. To that effect, the educational institution being a vital instrument in this regard must be properly serviced to deliver the expected values that will move the society to a higher level. If education is the machinery for all-round development which to a greater extent it has been argued for, then every aspect of the system must be harnessed for maximum productivity in the society. In like manner, our values in Nigeria should be prioritize; all hands must be on deck to uplift our rich values that African society has been known for. And as it was rightly pointed out, instituting a viable educational system will be a step in the right direction towards achieving this essential target.

Assessing moral education was also argued as a move towards recovering our battered values in Nigeria and at the same time promote moral autonomy, maturity and reasoning among our teaming youths. This as expected would guarantee rational morality as firmly enunciated by the Nigerian Policy on Education 1977 (revised 1981). Despite the blessings expected to derive from moral education, scholars has put forward the problems of having viable moral education in Nigeria. Firstly, out perception of morality is not what it should be. In Nigerian society our understanding of morality has been infused with religious coloration. This has posed a serious challenge in a nation of plurality of religious practices. This translates that, the different morality must be infected by different tribes, languages, and other influences. And in no small measure the situation has continued to pose a challenge to establishing an effective moral education in the country (Nigeria). For this reason the writer is left with no option than to join voice with the schools of thought that insist on working out a sound pedagogical framework on which to base secular moral education in the country that will give birth to a rational moral education devoid of religious or different ethnic indoctrination. The essence is to achieve a well-disciplined society stripped of corruption and such immoral acts capable of dehumanizing not only the individual but the pride that has kept us as a nation.

The foregoing argument no doubt is in favor of the fact that a functional and proactive moral education is capable of reinstating our values. However, the question that has remained un-answered is; “what shape should the moral education in such a pluralistic society (differs religion, tribes, languages, and cultures) like Nigeria?”Kosemani in Aminigo (1995) did argued that the present moral education practiced in our schools does not worth it, as it is religious based. He insist that the pluralistic and complexnature of Nigeria cannot go

well with such kind of moral education. To him, the present moral decadence that has beclouded Nigerian cannot be curbed with a religious-based education, as that will amount to 'neo-colonialism', a system that has led us lose faith in ourselves and our culture. He stated that; "in traditional society, morality is not derived from religion.....hence, religion should be placed in its traditional position...it should be treated as a private social institution" (Aminigo, 1995:45).Moral education as Kosemani did argued, should be stripped of any religious coloration, as doing that will not offer adequate solution to our moral problems. Supporting this view, Nduka in (Aminigo, 1995) made a categorical statement that; "the claims which religious organizations and their supporters are making, and the hopes they are raising, it must be pointed out that neither scientific research nor historical evidence gives much grounds for unalloyed optimism". Consequently, Nduka withdrew his support for religious-based moral education in a country like Nigeria. Besides, the two paramount religions (Islam and Christianity) that has existed for donkey years in Nigeria are yet to show better light of hope capable of instituting that kind of morality that will enhance positive values in the Nigerian society, not even among the adherers have we notice much difference in their attitude and leadership styles, Nduka observed. Based on the above it becomes understanding that another form of moral education should be adopted for Nigerian society.Aminigo (1995) citing Thomas Adeyanju proffers the use of relevance literature as the vehicle of human values. The essential of this is for its long term objectives in the formation of a civilized character that will give birth to thinking intelligently, naturally, and responsibly. And he rightly pointed; "literature provides for much cognitive and affective development which enables one fit into various contexts and situations of civilized living" (1995:73). By the above argument, it stands clear that our African literatures will be an important instrument when applied into our moral education, instill positive values in the people's lives.

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