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# RE-ENGINEERING THE TEACHING OF MORAL EDUCATION FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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By

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## **Abstract**

*The teaching of moral education is what we as a nation need, because of the security concerns, particularly when our lives are always centered on how to improve our welfare as a people. When morals are taught at all levels of our educational sector, it will create an awareness among the youths that what should come to mind first is how much we can give to in terms of national development. That is to say the state of well being or progress of the people is a function of human efforts. It therefore, means that the real wealth of a nation and its potential for social, economic, and political growth stem from the power to develop and effectively utilize the innate capacities of its people. This paper therefore attempts to discuss how the teaching of moral education can revolutionize employment and self productivity in Nigeria.*

Education, can be seen as a programme design whereby individuals can continually learn, and pass on the knowledge which they have learnt from generation to generation. Every society, sees schooling as essential since it enables its citizens to learn skills, and the norms of the society. The society equally functions much better economically, socially, and politically when there is an effective learning in schools.

Nations, and different cultures recognize moral education to be essential for raising young adults who will respect life, property and the rights of other people. For a nation to develop and grow its economy, security should be the top priority, as observed by Olaoye,(2012) who stated that,

“Let the political and cultural leaders speak upon the side of Nigeria. Perhaps it is time we set aside our favourite past time of beating each other up. It’s about time our politicians spoke like statesmen instead of as glorified tribal champions. Time, too, for religious leaders to highlight the brotherhood building tenants of their faith.

It must be noted that merely teaching about morality is not sufficient. Education needs to call for the development of character, or the willful performance of that which is deemed good by a society. So moral education should consists of both the teaching of

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positive morality and the training which our youths deserves in order to achieve moral behaviour. In support of this Audu, (2011;52-53) stressed that,

Humans are rational beings and their minds need to be developed. So, cultivation of the intellect is the highest priority in a worth while education.....training students to read, write, speak and compute clearly and logically.

Presently, Nigerian education is in a serious trouble and the indicators are telling, can the government policy of providing education for all in 2015 be possible? Achieving this target is not possible in view of the many challenges such as poverty, mismanagement, lack of basic infrastructure, shortage of qualified teachers. In a time of rapid social change it is necessary that apart from schools, children should receive moral training from their parents. Haselbarth, (1976:95) observed that one area that needs urgent re-thinking is education in the family. Education receives so much attention in the life of Africa nations that for many it has become almost a “fetish”. Majority of families, have aspired that their children should benefit from the educational system, due to its aims and purposes.

- It makes them to think rationally so that they may become intelligent, contributing members of the society.
- It enabled individuals to reach their full potentials as human beings individually and as members of a society.
- To have a good moral behaviour, comprising of a “bag of virtues”, such as honesty, kindness, patience, and strength. Education, should be seen as an ingredient which gives quality of life, and be made compulsory for all.
- The educational system and its challenges.

The Universal Primary Education (UPE) 1976, was launched by the Obasanjo’s administration, it took off but not long it collapsed on account of poor planning, faulty statistics, and inadequate funding. The major problem that the programme faced was the economy recession, since it was proposed during the days of Nigeria’s “oil boom”. As a result of this the programme collapsed. The low quality of teachers recruited to man the programme also led to the collapse. In support of this, Kayode (2010) stated that,

As a beleaguered industry over the years’ the challenges – poor leadership, inadequate funding, lack of focus, ineptitude and official corruption among others in the education industry have been attributed to the current sorry state of the essential sector.

What we need as a people, is a functional education, and not people who are just parading the place with degrees, but the most important thing is that they should have the skills. Proliferating the whole place with institutions is not the case but to have a university that is functional. So stakeholders in the education sector, and purpose driven government leaders must improve funding, engage in training and re-training of

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teachers and instructors, stock more libraries with relevant and up to date books so as to minimize the obvious brain drain in the system. The education system in the country is not meeting up as a fundamental tool for socio-economic transformation in any human community, but the case is different in the country. Kayoed, (2010) further stated that,

Among other reasons adduced for the dismal performance of the education industry in Nigeria overtime include lack of needed teaching, research and learning facilities, shortage of trained teachers and frequent strikes largely instigated by unpaid staff salaries and allowances as well as unsatisfactory conditions of service.

Today, the scenario is different for us as a people to have a sustainable development, education should be given attention. According to Orabuchi, (2010). He stressed that,

Education is one of the most important factors that not only sustain the culture, including the democratic principles, but also it empowers an individual and determines his/her worth in a competitive economy.

For education to revolutionize employment and self productivity in the country, the education sector should be well funded in support of this Akpan, (2011) stated that,

The education sector in order to reclaim, restore and sustain the quality of education in Nigeria so that the sector can play its part in the success of vision 20-20-20... planned reform would include improved funding of education and total overhaul of the ministry.

For now, the initial high hopes of a brighter future for education in Nigeria is fast giving way to despair. Despite the avalanche of academics in government, education in Nigeria does not seem to have any direction. What should come to mind is that no nation can develop at a reasonable pace if it lacks people who can provide a leadership vibrant enough to motivate its people. Education should be seen as a tool for development. Our educational system needs reforms.

### **Moral Education Key to Corruption Free Society**

If any society really wants to reduce corruption to the barest minimum the right step to take is to make sound moral education a top priority in the basic schools, giving it the same prominence like mathematics and English language. We as a people should not downplay moral education in our school curriculum. So moral education should be designed for all levels of education in the country. When moral education is taught, it can lead to a significant reduction in the incidence of corruption, a social canker worm that is widely believed to have engulfed the nation and is responsible for the country's development. Stagnation is due to loss of huge scarce resources meant for the public good to private individuals and groups. (in support of this, Achimugu, (2012) stated that,

“Ibora tricked his way into public office, he had tricked the Nigerian authorities and the Nigerian voters....“The scale can only be described as huge. He laundered vast sums of money, which were used to fund his lavish lifestyle.

Corruption is caused by weak institutions, poverty, poor ethical standards, lack of transparency and accountability systems, and the breakdown in social moral fabric, which has given way to wealth drunk ambitions and aspirations, luxurious life styles, and disrespect for modesty. The only pragmatic step to scrap corruption from its base is a national moral education campaign. This should be implemented at all levels of education both formal and informal as a core course at the basic, secondary and tertiary levels as well as at the non-formal sector. Again, family is rapidly losing grip of its strong position in championing the rightful development of its young members largely due to the increasing pressures from urbanization, westernization and technology advancements. It is in the school and other educational arenas of education that are the current most relevant institutions to relocate such a crucial responsibility as moral education. Haselbarth, (1976) stressed that,

Our culture and tradition abound with rich moral values that shun corruption but these values are eroding fast because we as a people have not made conscious effort to entrench them in our new ways of living. Instead there is a crave for foreign culture some of which influence and change our world-view giving rise to acts and practices that border on corruption.

### **Advantages of Moral Education to a Nation**

Moral education refers to helping children acquire those virtues of moral habits that will help them individually live good lives and at the sametime become productive. Since, the word moral comes from a latin root (mos, moris) it means the code or customs of a people, the social glue that defines how individuals should live together. The reverse is the case today. Moral degeneration is very high among our youths, and if this is not changed, we will not have a good nation because these young people will be the leaders of tomorrow in various spheres of life in the society. So we must build a strong foundation that will enlighten them and bring them up to be morally upright, disciplined and well focused. Our youths should also be diligent, determined and hardworking. The mission of schools has been to develop in the young ones both the intellectual and the moral virtues such as honesty, responsibility, and respect for others which is the domain of moral education.

### **Conclusion**

Obviously, the western educational tradition has remained the most functional in Nigeria’s educational history which among others served the needs of the various communities where they existed. There have been remarkable advances in the nation’s educational system at all levels, although several problems have continued to plague the educational system. If the Universal Basic Education Scheme took care of the problem of access, those of discipline and funding are yet to be seriously addressed, and

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addressing them should be one of the major policy thrusts of the present democratic dispensation at both state and federal levels.

Undoubtedly, education must be adequately funded if quality must be guaranteed. In pursuing the ideals of quality, the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) should be strongly supported in its efforts at curriculum reform towards greater relevance.

### **Recommendations**

The society should be made to have a rethink, the issue is that the Nigerian society mostly the youth have placed so much emphasis on accumulation of wealth, which has trumped the value of education. The accumulation of money is more important than the acquisition of knowledge, cognitive, and problem solving skills. Based on the above, the teaching of moral education can revolutionize some of the immoral vices we have in the society, and improve the behaviour patterns of the people and thus reduce or minimize social vices and thus increased the sense of productivity and self reliance. These are the recommendations:-

- The educational system in Nigeria needs an urgent top-down review of its structure, including revamping educational curriculum at primary, secondary, and university levels with total infusion of moral education in an effort to massively overhaul the system for optimum standards.
- More emphasis should be given to funding of education and the quality of teachers as well as to accountability.
- Students need to develop the virtues of responsibility and respect for others.
- They must eliminate habits of laziness and sloppiness and acquire habits of self-control and diligence.
- Teachers should be adequately remunerated so that they can work wholeheartedly. Constant training and re-training should be embarked upon.
- Teachers should be evaluated based on their teaching, research and publication abilities.
- The appalling state of education in Nigeria could be ameliorated if consistent and sustainable corrective measures are taken with long term planning, that is constant and consistent.

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