

TEACHERS' VALUE RE-ORIENTATION: THE BASIS FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

By

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Abstract

Socio-economic development of a nation is a factor of the educational system. Education is a tool for socio-economic development and for fighting societal ills. The Nigerian nation is faced with value crisis as seen by the prevailing circumstances in the nation, which has led to poor socio-economic development in Nigeria as indices indicate. Education as the effective tool for fighting societal ills will go a long way in combating this challenge. Teacher education is fundamental in pursuing this goal. Teacher education dictates the moral tone of the education system and by extension the moral tone of the nation. Based on this therefore the paper recommends that teacher education programme in Nigeria should be reviewed to emphasize the tenets of sound moral character, influence of hidden curriculum on learner character formation, effective engagement of the cognitive, effective and psychomotor domains of the teacher amongst others. There is also the need for the government to incorporate national character orientation as an integral part of the teacher education curriculum. Taking the issues raised into consideration will go a long way to boost the tone of the moral standard in the nation in the positive direction and this will metamorphose into a vibrant social and economic state for the nation.

Keywords: Teacher, Education, Values, Re-orientation, Socio-Economic Development

Introduction

Education is a process of teaching and learning through which the innate potentials in an individual are developed and knowledge, skills, values and attitudes are impacted (Wikipedia, 2017). It involves acquiring and developing abilities to think critically and logically, make sound judgment, live functional life and contribute meaningfully to the growth of the society. By the above definition, it implies that education prepares individuals in the society for functional adult life, contribute to the socio-economic development of the society, and to uphold and preserve the cultural values, ideas and virtues for the growth and survival of the society (Victor-Ishikaku, 2018). Education therefore has two major roles; to the individual and to the society. The equipping of the individual empowers the individuals to contribute actively to the socio-economic growth of the society.

Education, considered to be the most crucial of all human endeavours is the principal tool for creating a productive and sustainable economy in a society. To Ochoma, Victor-Ishikaku and Emesiobi (2016), it is a fundamental tool for the development of the individual and the society. It is adjudged the veritable tool for the socio-economic development of the society, hence it is said that the level of education of a society determines its level of socio-economic development. In like manner, the quality of the teacher force of a nation determines the quality of education provided for the citizen. This is so because the teacher is the manager of the education process and the education process is the crucible where the manpower needs of the society are produced.

Through the process of education, individuals are trained; thereby producing the workforce who engages in different economic activities that translate to the economic growth of the society. The manpower is the tool for the socio-economic development of the society. It therefore goes to say that quality teachers will give birth to quality learners (manpower) who will in turn give birth to a quality and vibrant economy. If this assertion is anything to go by, it therefore means that a teacher with the right value orientation will produce learners with the right value orientation. Quality education is the basis for quality socio-economic development. So, it is the opinion of this paper that the production of teachers who have the right value about life and work

culture is fundamental to producing quality manpower to feed the nations' labourforce.

Teacher education is about equipping the teacher with the right type of knowledge, skills, values, attitude and ideas which they will in turn impact on the learners. It is important therefore for the teacher to be trained to have the right cultural values and ideals because an individual cannot give what he does not have. It is on this premise the paper advocates for the proper value-reorientation of the teacher as the basics for societal re-orientation and at the long run providing sound socio-economic development.

Socio-economic development according to Dictionary.net (2021) is about the social and economic status of a society. The indices for measuring socio-economic development are Gross Domestic Product (GDP), life expectancy, literacy and level of employment, personal factors such as dignity, freedom of association, personal safety, freedom from fear of physical harm and the extent of the participation of individuals in civil society amongst others. Some factors that cause changes in socio-economic status of a society are innovation in technology, changes in laws, physical environment and ecological changes. Its focus is to bring about sustained growth and improvement in the well-being of the individual in the society. It involves maintaining the social and economic standards of a nation by increasing the physical and human capital, and improving its technology (igi-global.com, 2021). It then implies that the essence of education is to continuously improve and maintain the socio-economic of a nation which in Nigeria is yet to be realized. Hence, the paper advocates for teacher value reorientation in Nigeria as a panacea to surmounting this challenge.

Statement of the Problem

The challenge of poor value orientation in Nigeria is evidently seen from the happenings and reports in the country. The international reports on the indices of the socio-economic situation of Nigeria states that;

- in 2020 the Transparency International, a global coalition for fighting against corruption, in their survey on Corruption Perception Index (CPI) ranked Nigeria 149th out of 180 countries, a score of 25%
- Nigeria Gender Development Index (GDI) of Human Development Reports –United Nations in 2019 was said to be 1.92%
- Unemployment rate in 2020 was 9.01%

- The United Nations Human Development Index (HDI) in 2016 ranked Nigeria as 152 out of 188 countries.

These poor ratings in the above indices of socio-economic status of Nigeria is attested by the unprecedented and incessant occurrences in violence and other social vices such as cultism, militancy, ritual killings, human trafficking and trafficking in human parts, banditry, insecurity, terrorism, immorality and cybercrime amongst others. All these are strong indicators to the challenge of value crises in Nigeria. There is a serious decline in the moral values in the Nigeria society (Jabaar and Aliyu, 2019). Cases of corruption, social injustice, election malpractices, examination malpractices, lack of trust of the masses on leaders, misappropriation of public funds, stealing, and embezzlement of public funds are regular news on National and International media. All these are indices of value disorientation. People have become insensitive to moral values and such low moral standards and decadence has become the order of the day. Materialism and individualism has taken over every facet of the Nigerian society and institutions, be it government, traditional, religious, political as well as academic institutions (Njoku, 2015). This has led to get rich quick business by all means. The good neighbourliness that characterized being your brother's keeper no longer holds water. Studies has shown that when the majority of individual in a society have negative values, life becomes selfish and brutish as the individuals becomes self-centered, while upholding positive values tend to bring about good and healthy relationships, unity and progress. The crossroad in which Nigeria is now as a nation is a precipitate of low moral values and value disorientation, hence the position of this paper; advocating for value re-orientation of the Nigeria society beginning with the teacher education system, which is fundamental for a healthy education system and by extension a healthy socio-economic state.

Why Value Re-orientation

The concept value according to online dictionary is the regard, worth or usefulness about a thing. To Thesaurus.com, (2021), it is about a consideration given with respect to the worth, excellence, usefulness or importance of something. Value is about the moral principles or standard of judgment or behavior on the importance of something. It looks at how useful or important something is. It looks at the belief system of people or group about what is right or wrong (Denen, 2020), what is important in life, and as such controls people's behavior and attitudes. Value is the acceptable standard of doing things in a society.

Values are intangible aspect of culture that play very prominent role in the way of life of a people. It could be said to be the way of life of a people as it controls their lifestyles and survival. To Jabaar&Aliyu, (2019), value constitutes principles that strongly influence the people's belief, ideas, attitudes, way of life and convictions. It influences how an individual behaves and the corporate behavior of the individuals in that society constitutes the overall behavior of the society, the overall behavior of the society shapes the moral tone of the society. When values are acceptable to the norms of the society, it is seen as positive and negative when they are not acceptable. So, the constitute lifestyle of the majority of the individuals in the society detects the moral tone of that society. The value of every society is fundamental to its existence. The values upheld in families and the collective values of the society make up the societal value system. It is the guiding code of conduct of a society; it is what guides individual's on their attitude to work, relationships, lifestyle and other activities.

Re-orientation as a concept means change, transformation, adjusting or aligning something in a new or different way. For something to be aligned means it has left the original position thereby causing problem or not being useful as it should be. Re-orientation therefore is about bringing something back to its original and useful state. And so, value re-orientation is about deliberately and consciously attempting to change the attitude and behaviour (values)of a person or people from the negative to positive.To Njoku (2015), value re-orientation is a conscious effort to develop human resources through planning, training and education.

Value re-orientation is about redirecting and channeling people's attention and interest to something else; redirecting the interest and attention of people from values that are inimical to societal wellbeing, to that which will bring about societal growth and stability. This is done through providing new or alternative information, knowledge, idea and experience. It will require people unlearning the previous knowledge, wrong values and beliefs that are not right and relearning the right thing. It involves providing opportunities for people to adjust to new and innovative trend to fit into new and better situations of life. Value re-orientation is a task for the education system. Like Njoku (2015) said the importance of value laden education in the contemporary society cannot be overemphasized. Emphasizing this, Jabaar&Aliyu (2019) said education is the tool for fighting social ills.

Value re-orientation as it relates to Nigeria has to do with deliberate plans and efforts to inculcate acceptable values in individuals such that the corporate lifestyle of Nigerian's will bring about a change in the narrative of value crises as we see it; refocusing the citizenry for a better lifestyle of unity, peace, good neighbourliness and productivity.

Value Re-orientation for the Teacher: Basis for Socio-Economic Development

Education as it is well known is the tool for addressing societal challenges. Education that can handle the value crises in Nigeria is that education that is positioned to address the challenging issues; in terms of the teacher training programme. The capacity of the teacher to instill positive moral values in the learner must begin with the training of the teacher (Howard, 2005). The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) of United Nations (2015) has as its goal four that quality education is critical for socio-economic development in all ramifications. This is premised on the fact that education equips individuals with the relevant skills and knowledge for social and economic resources and development. Education is a powerful tool for national transformation (Olasehinde-Williams, 2018). To the author there are variables that are critical to quality education;

- Input variables; teacher, learner and facilities
- Process variables; curriculum content, teaching strategies and learning experiences.

These two factors interact to determine the quality of education output.

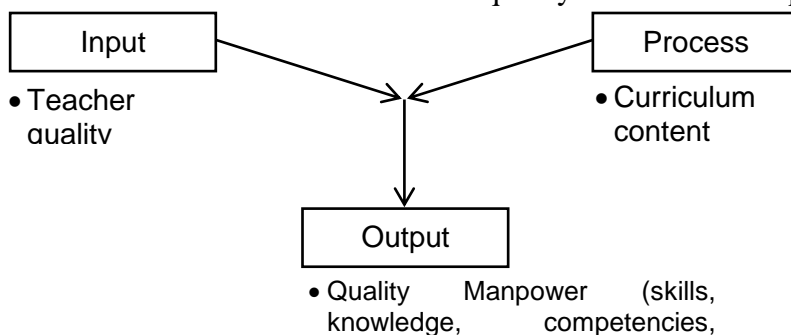


Fig 1: Input-Process factors as determinants of quality manpower.

Beyond acquiring knowledge, teachers must also imbibe positive attitudes to be efficient and productive in the society. It is believed that exposure and interaction with integrity promoting environment is the

Teachers' Value Re-Orientation: The Basis for Socio Economic Development in Nigeria

determinant factor of value re-orientation. Education that will promote values should be the needed education for the society. Bullough (2011) stressed the need for trainee teachers to be trained such that the moral character becomes strong, the ability to understand the need for due process in handling issues and be rich in moral vocabulary. This involves the ability to understand the significant impact of the hidden curriculum of a school and the contribution it greatly has on the shaping of the learners character.

Teachers play significant role in the society. Teachers are arguably the most significant and influential members of the society. They are the stepping stone for every other profession. As such, they are active contributors to the socio-economic growth of the society (<https://mylearningviews.wordpress.com>>...2015). Teaching and impacting knowledge is only one aspect of the teacher's responsibility. Much more than teaching is the duty of developing the desirable values, virtues and moral wellbeing of the learners. To Narvaez and Lapsley (2008), the question of whether teachers should be involved in the moral upbringing of the learner is not debatable as education itself is a value laden enterprise. The question the authors stressed should rather be; how do we train the teachers to have sound moral character and be able to impact same to the learners. Emphasizing this issue, Kuehn (2012) asserted that if teachers fail in the duty of the moral upbringing of the learner, the more deviate behaviour problems will be seen. This assertion is not far from the truth as the indices of moral decadence and value crises show. The moral upbringing (affective domain) of a learner is fundamental to having a successful and responsible adult life (Kuehn, 2012 & Jabaar & Aliyu, 2019). Values are taught and learnt and it affects the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of an individual.

To Osguthorpe (2008), there is a serious connection between the teacher's disposition and role modeling, and the learner's moral development. To the author, a competent teacher should be knowledgeable in content, skilled in pedagogy and virtuous in character; this means competence in professionalism, high concern and commitment for social, psychological and intellectual prosperity of future citizens. These qualities are the competences needed for the labour market for the development of the society. Attesting to this fact, Achuonye, (2019) pointed out that nation development is not based on the abundance of national resources of a people but on the quality of the human resources with the right competencies, and investing their knowledge and skills to harness the natural resources to the development of the

society. Laying further credence to this is the words of Martin Luther King Jr “Intelligence plus character should be the goal of education”. Furthermore C. S. Lewis said; education without values as useful as it may be seen will end up making individuals more clever devils. This is the picture of the society we see today, hence the need for value re-orientation for the teachers’ who are the determinants of the moral tone of the education system and by implication the society.

Strategies for Trainee Teacher Value Re-Orientation

To give teachers’ the needed value re-orientation beginning with the trainee teachers will require a well-structured mentoring programme to socialize the culture of desirable attitudes as sponsored by the social-cognitive theory of Bandura (1986) in Olasehinde-William (2018). The teacher should be equipped with intellectual competencies, emotional stability and unquestionable moral standards and commitments to duties. This will require making national character orientation an integral part of the teacher education curriculum. They should have sound moral character and be identified as such. Narvaez and Lapsley (2008) examined two ways moral values can be impacted on the learners;

- through the use of hidden curriculum
- through the use of official curriculum

Strategies in which to apply the integration of sound moral values are;

1. Encourage and support enabling environment for sound moral behavior
2. Cultivate and encourage ethical skills
3. Application of apprenticeship approach to instruction
4. Nurture self-reputation skills
5. Build support structures with the community

If these strategies are applied, value reorientation of the teachers will be inevitable.

Conclusion

From the discourse, it will be seen that indeed Nigeria is in a state of value crisis. International reports and daily occurrences in the society is a strong pointer to this fact. This challenge however can be successfully surmounted if concerted efforts are made. This the author suggests should begin with the teacher education programme. It will require putting in place proper structure and strategies to raise such caliber of teachers who are competent in

Teachers' Value Re-Orientations: The Basis for Socio Economic Development in Nigeria

the curriculum content, skilled in pedagogy and virtuous in character. Education is the tool for correcting social ills and for socio-economic development, hence the call for reviewing the Nigerian teachers education system to address the social menace and bring about national development.

Suggestions

Based on the discussion, the following suggestions are made;

1. There should be a review of the teacher education curriculum to emphasize moral education and character formation.
2. Co-curricular activities should be strategically planned to engage the learners actively in the areas of effective and psychomotor domains, just as it is done in the cognitive domain.
3. The issue of hidden or unofficial curriculum in schools should be taken seriously. They should be properly planned to always engage the learners in value laden activities that will help them form healthy habits.
4. The government should make national character orientation an integral part of the teacher education curriculum.
5. Employment of teachers should be based on the individual's sound moral character and values.

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Eunice C. Victor-Ishikaku, Ph.D and Patience O. Emesiobi

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