

Revigorating Supervisions in the Teaching and Learning of Cultural Values as Panacea for Moral Decadence in African Society

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Abstract

Cultural values are complex whole of man's acquisition of knowledge, morals, belief, art, custom, and technology which are transmitted from generations to generations. Cultural values that can bring good moral standard in any society include discipline, integrity, and dignity of labour, social justice, religious tolerance, self reliance and patriotism. All these values are clearly spelt out as measures to ensure good moral standard of people in any society. Moral values are good, worthwhile, positive attributes, and attitudes such as patience, generosity, kindness, love and compassion. They are principles and standards which determine whether certain actions are right or wrong. This paper is advancing that meaningful modernism which can be attained not by jettisoning very important cultural values of the people but making such values the fulcrum of our developmental programmes. The vacuum created by the neglect and non inculcation of our cultural ethics, values and practice in the children, especially being taken over by foreign cultural variants which have little or no relevance in our cultural milieu and which have caused a disconnection in our total wellbeing and a dislocation of values and goals. This paper discusses some of ideals and clarifications of our peculiar values as yardsticks for developmental programme as a way of getting Africans back to the path of progress, peacefulness, accountability, unity and global respectability. The paper recommends that a well drawn out action plan and time frame should be clearly stated to assist in assessing the level of implementation of the programme for cultural values teaching and learning in African schools

Keywords: *Innovation, Supervision, Revigorating, Cultural Values, Morals*

Introduction

Cultural values of any nation have become a matter of concern since the development of society. It is being rooted on what the members of such a society cherished or abhorred. Examples of cultural values which are cherished in the country are basically focused on enhancing human dignity, these which includes: disciple, integrity, dignity of labour, social justice, religious tolerance, self-reliance and patriotism. All these cultural values are critically spelt out as a yardstick to ensure speedy progress of the nation. It is understood that any group of people that could not promote their values will surely have a problem of development.

In the pre-colonial period, the various Nigerian groups make sure that worthwhile cultural values are bequeated to their societies. This was evident in the emergence of fortified empires and kingdoms whose prevailing administrative structure of the colonial masters adopted (Eyiye, 2001).

It is quite unfortunate that cultural values transmitted to the Nigeria society now is the culture of violence, rigging of election, corruption, immorality, dishonesty, conflicts, drug abuse, stealing, armed robbery etc. which has resulted in the retrogressive nature of Nigeria as a nation.

This retrogression could be seen in the aspects of constant crises and disruptions of economic activities particularly in the Niger Delta and Northern region of the country (Azide, 2007). Emphasizing supervision as a way of teaching and learning cultural values as panacea for moral decadence in African society will go a long way of bringing back our cultural values to the part of glory. Teachers should be reminded of the iota of teaching cultural values in their subjects areas, in their various subjects matter, area of emphasizing should be laid toward the teaching of cultural values for the sanctity of the society.

Concept of Cultural Values

Cultural values are the attitudes which a particular society cherishes and abhors for the peaceful co-existence of the members of the society which brings about the development of such society. According to Nwuzor (2002), cultural values are those worthwhile and acceptable aspects of non-material culture of a people which help in moulding the character of the people. They are the bedrock of the society. The value held in the society shape the behaviours of the people and when values are good, they are transmitted from generation to generation. The essence is to bring up people who can think positively resulting to self-discovery and development for the benefits of mankind. According to Maduekwe (1979), sound mind breeds sound people and sound people build a sound nation. He goes further to maintain that cultural values held by people help them to do good, say good things and above all love themselves and be able to do the same to others around them, because one can only give what he has to another person.

It is true that cultural value differs from one place to another, society to society, but it is still true that there are values which are acceptable by every society of the world. For instance, every society must have family institution for continuity of the society and every society forbids murder although there may be differences in the conception of circumstances which actually constitutes this. Other examples of cultural universal are cooking, bodily adornment, sports, dancing, food, taboos, incest taboos, laws, medicine, music, funeral ceremonies, gift-giving, games, myths, poverty rights, personal names, religion, sexual restrictions and tool making (Eddiefloy, 2003). Although, culture is universally practiced, the conceptions and practicability may differ from place to place, and society to society. The extent to which a particular group of people upheld the values will determine their relationship with others. The situation in which a particular group of people consider their culture superior to others is referred to as “ethnocentrism”, the tendency of a cultural group to regard its own culture as a yardstick or standard for judging the goodness or badness of other culture.

In other words, values have been contaminated and getting eroded and in the opinion of Azide (2007), the paradigm has shifted and Nigerians have generally slipped away from those cherished core values and embraced new culture, a way of life, a new view. The current generation of Nigerian youths is increasingly affected by violence-ethnic and religious wars in many parts of the country, social problems such as lack of respect for each other and the society, poverty, fraud, corrupt practices such as desire for quick money, ritual murder for money making, drug abuse and child trafficking. Other aspects include armed robberies, examination malpractices, oil bunkering, disregard for constituted authorities, escapism, smuggling etc. Sebiomo (2003) opines that the positive values are no longer in vogue. The cherished values therefore include detecting of laziness, hospitality, respect for authority, integrity, hard work, respect for sanctity of life, sharing and caring, truthfulness and honesty, dignity of labour, kindness, pride in the family names etc.

Inculcating Cultural Values in students through Moral Education.

Cultural values can be inculcated in students through moral education, because moral education is the formal teaching of morals to learners in order to inculcate in them discipline and make them conform to the proper way of life in the community.

Moral education is a teaching for conforming to a way of life. Durkheim in Mezieobi, Mezieobi, Fubara, Izuagba, Nkwocha and Okobia (2008) see moral education as that teaching that leads the learners to acquire the virtue of respecting the rules and institution of society. According to Peters in Ivorgba (2006) moral education is influenced or indoctrinating the learners with respect to things morally. In the words of Arikpo (2003) moral education is a deliberate and systematic effort to transmit attitudes, beliefs, moral codes of a social group.

Moral education is therefore a way of indoctrinating the learners to conform to the normal ways of life in the society. Moral education is the formal education oriented or driven teaching-learning process in educational institution through which generally prized behaviours, attitudes, habits of life, and codes of conduct and their unprized and unacceptable or bad alternative (attitudes) are exposed to the learners who ultimately are concertedly guided to distinguish or discriminate between the right and the wrong with a teaching bias for right and proper conduct which the learners are implored or rather influenced to make manifest or apply in their lives (Mezieobi, Mezieobi, Fubara, Izuagba, Nkwocha and Okobia, 2008). Therefore teaching moral education in schools brings about cultural values that culminate to moral foundation of student's sense of responsibility to the norms and customs of a society and how far this sense of responsibility extends. It shows the needs for every person to inculcate a sense of commitment and responsibility in daily activities to the norms of the society. According to Oyebo (2008) moral unethical values and moral decadence in Nigeria is very often wrongly traced to a poor and ignorance followership that is ever ready and willing to hail the power that be, rather than appreciating the fact that since fish usually starts getting rotten from the head, therefore the type of leadership existing in a society invariably determines and shapes the nature and consciousness of the society. Moral decadence have resulted in having a country filled with social injustice, economic inequality, environmental degradation, conflict and human right violations (Adedeji 2003). To overcome these moral unethical values and moral decadence, it is imperative that issues relating to ethics and values be of great concern in our educational curricula. The teaching and learning of ethics and cultural values must be given great prominence in our education policy and curriculum.

Characteristics of Moral Education

The features of morals according to Nnodum (2001) include:

- 1 Moral value can be discerned from most, if not all lessons taught in schools.
- 2 Morals are society or culture relative as what is moral in one society may be considered immoral in another society.
- 3 Every society has its moral code.
- 4 Moral education commence at the family level.
- 5 Setting for right morals has something to do with maturity age or experience.
- 6 Moral development is susceptible to the influence of many factors including the family, schools, peers, teachers, mass media, churches etc.
- 7 Irrespective of the fact that moral education is concerned with the teaching of standards of right and wrong, the right aspect of morals is usually emphasized.

- 8 Morals are taught or learned.
- 9 A social group's morals are usually established and accepted by the group as code of conduct or behaviour or as a way of their living or life.

Teaching Cultural Values in Nigerian schools

The period of the government takeover of all the schools from the missionaries in Nigeria and the eventual change of these schools into public schools marked the beginning of moral, values and cultural values degeneration in Nigerian schools as schools were boarded. The students who are now to attend the neighbourhood schools from home were injected into the morally or culturally depraved society and religious and moral education were no more mandatory. Till today in Nigeria, moral and cultural values have continued to be paid lip service in Nigerian schools.

On a few designated days in a school week, according to Ivorgba (2006) one sees an assembly of students in school prayer or worship or students in a group that are being subjected to what seems to be a casual moral or value education which is conducted by any teacher in the school who is appointed to give the moral education irrespective of the fact that a generality of the teachers are quacks in the knowledge, skills and methods of teaching moral or value education. Teaching cultural values or value education according to Lijadu, Sobola and Adetunji (2010) encompasses respect, responsibility, compassion, sharing, perseverance, friendship, cooperation, self-discipline, honesty and tolerance, value, attitude and morality all constitute an individual's character and are all crucial to have order in a society. However, to have order in a society as cited by Jimoh and Lijadu, Sobola and Adetunji (2012) attention must be paid to providing value education, in other words, law and order in any society, could be further enhanced by having cultural value education in society. In the words of Bamisaye in Lijadu, Sobola and Adetunji (2010) maintained that educating people on cultural value is not a process of ideological brainwashing, but rather, a process of intellectual knowledge development, critical examination that is clarification and volitional acceptance, not coercive manipulation. She emphasized that it is a process of giving learners the opportunity to confront, appraise and embrace the values of their society on conviction or reject them on rational grounds.

Methods of teaching Cultural Values in schools

Ekenode, Lijadu, Sobola and Adetunji (2010) analyzed the methods of teaching cultural values in four possible ways. These are as follows:

- i Cultural value inculcation: This means that teachers mould the learner to the kind of people the society wants them to be as though they had no say in the matter.
- ii Value justification: This involves individuals striving to identify good and relevant reasons for holding the beliefs they cherish.
- iii Values negotiations: This is when individuals may achieve charity and defensibility in the development of their personal value system.
- iv Value clarification: This involves making clear to one self what values are and which values one hold a live by.

Quality supervisions in the teaching and learning cultural values for moral standard in the society

Quality supervisions in the teaching and learning cultural value would have a great influence on the learners for positive change this will bring about moral standard in the society. Supervision in the teaching of cultural values can be done through development of curriculum, organization of instructional package, staffing, provision of materials, rendering of special services that would

enhanced successful implementation of programmes, developing public relations and evaluating programmes outcomes against targets and plans. Studies have revealed that very little has been done in the field of supervision and monitoring of instilling values into the learners. Teacher has little or no time to checkmate the behavior of their students.

This truism, however is that value teaching is not given serious attention in Nigerian schools. This behavior has occasioned the pervasiveness of moral crises in Nigerian schools. Some of the antisocial behavior of students according to Adediran, Lijadu and Sobola (2012) in our schools are manifest in their refusal to conform to school rules and regulations, indulgence in examination malpractices and cultism, armed robbery all manner of crimes and high rate of immorality and over indulgence in it. This is due to the fact that teachers have no time to pay attention to their students, this explains why supervision of students to imbibe cultural values for moral standard has been grappling at the formative stage. Studies even confirmed that supervision generally in schools has suffered a setback and this has conversely affected effective inculcation of cultural value in students.

There is an outcry by moral citizens to reintroduce moral instruction that shall be culminated into cultural values as a distinct subject in Nigerian schools. This moral oriented clarion according to Lawal (2006) can hold immense potentials for school oriented moral education accomplishments if the teachers pay serious attention to the attitude and activities of the students in school, this will make government respond positively to its meaningful incorporation in the school curriculum.

Conclusion

Moral decadence appears to be a socio-moral rule in contemporary Nigeria as it is pervasive and permeates all facets of life. Nonetheless, governments declared war against indiscipline, corruption and economic crime and behaviours inimical for good moral standards, coupled with the continual condemnation of the high immoral behavior index of the Nigerian citizenry by our people are ample evidence to show that cultural value teaching is desired by our people as a panacea to stem the tide of galloping immorality in Nigeria, all geared towards a positive and stable social order.

Recommendations

The paper recommends that proper supervision and monitoring of students in schools should be done properly by the teachers, teachers should have more time for their students by monitoring their attitudes and activities. Also, proper implementation of moral and value education should be done by the policy planners and the ministry of education.

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