

EMERGING NATIONAL ISSUES: THE ROLE OF MORAL EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EDUCATION AS REMEDY FOR PEACE AND CO-EXISTANCE

BY

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Abstract

One of the biggest obstacles facing Nigeria today is an emerging national issues, which has led Nigeria to lose a lot of fortunes to corrupt practice, youth restiveness, terrorism and thuggery (criminal-behaviour). This paper aimed to establish moral awareness and psychological education as a foundation for national reforms in the contemporary Nigerian society. Moral and psychological education as a foundation can serves as a powerful instrument of social change and liberation. Nigeria now was faced with some outstanding emerging issues like, economic-recession, insecurity, organized violent groups, poverty, kidnapping, terrorism, and youth unemployment, and religious insurgence. Therefore, moral awareness and psychological education will serves as instrument of social order that provides guidelines and principles drives from its teaching to develop acceptable behaviour such as trust, forgiveness, honesty, integrity, confidence and commitment among people that strive for unity, peaceful coexistence and moral foundation for achieving development in contemporary Nigerian society. The paper observed that, Nigerian education system needs moral and psychological education intervention because it is an indispensable instrument for actualization of national integrity and unity.

Keywords: Emerging, National, Issues, Moral, Psychological, Education and Peaceful Coexistence

Introduction

Moral and psychological education plays a cardinal role for building and sustaining the human development holistically. In this light, the concepts of moral education and psychological education are indispensable instruments in the development discourse. These concepts in their capacity aimed at promoting peace, unity, progress and all above all creating a sense of fear patriotism in the mind of citizen. By and large, moral, and psychological education provides fundamental orientation, instructions that relevant and paramount for restructuring the human society positively in order to maintain sustainable development and social change especially in

our dynamic society. Numerous moral codes have been created since ancient times, indicating the perpetual interest and importance to what is right and wrong, good or bad. In those times, such codes were often associated with religious contexts and were integrated into religious writings. Subsequently, philosophers developed a complex diverse literature on the subject of ethics. As psychology has its roots in the philosophical domain, but strived to impose itself as a science, it developed new approaches to human morality, placing a very strong emphasis on their empirical bases.

It is from this understanding that scholars like, Tomasello and Vaish (2013), Charlse (2005) observe that moral and psychological instructions promotes many qualities, like display of fairness, empathy or altruism in face to face groups where individuals all know and depend on each other while values education hinges on some aspects of morality that promote welfare, in the society. However, both morality and psychology instructions, and values education are meant to create a good and harmonious society where all citizens irrespective of race, tribe, and religion, social or economic status should peacefully co-exist. It is not a contestable argument that education is one of the sectors that has all it takes for the development of a society. It is the central code where other sectors in the country or nation find insight for their advancement and development in the society. Moral and psychological education of course, is first and dependable field for the actualization of this trend. However, from the glossary observation the Nigerian government has not given significant priority to the educational sector over the years. This has led to low standard in education that paves way for all these sorts of emerging national issues and problems. This also, affects all other sectors too. Importantly, morality and sanctity of educational sector determine the extent to which education can attain its goals of shaping the entire aspects of the life of any society. This calls the attention to be given to educational sector especially morality and psychological education by the government of Nigeria (Charles, 2005).

The reasons being that morale and psychology are indispensable tools for development and social change, hence education is fundamental to development, therefore, this means that, the Nigerian educational system needs radical moral and psychological interventions as argued by Hedrik, Olga and Mareike (2013). Concerted effort have been made by scholars in various fields of study to proffer solutions to the achievement of national development and social change in Nigeria. These changes include growth in things and persons which are commonly characterised by events that are desirable or undesirable, necessary or unnecessary, and pleasant or unpleasant, sometimes. In a modern society like Nigeria, many contemporary social, national issues have emerged which are against the ethics, moral, and norms of our society and of course make life very uncomfortable. Such national issues include economic-recession, insecurity, organized-violence, kidnapping, poverty, terrorism, unemployment and insurgencies (Samuel, 2014). These in turn creates problems in the society in particular among the youth. These efforts yield small or no results because the roots cause of achieving social change in Nigeria is yet to be identified and addressed. It is from this backdrop that this paper aimed at establishing moral and psychological education as foundation for achieving development and social change in contemporary Nigeria society. This paper set out to argue to that there exist a strong inextricable link between education, morality, and psychology that will contribute meaningfully to the achievement of national-development and social-change in Nigeria (Sani, 2009).

Moral Education

It is a glaring fact that Nigeria is going through what can be described as moral meltdown. It is this moral deficiency that is manifesting in Nigerian society today in forms of corruption, kidnapping, terrorism, thuggery, insecurity, insurgencies, and armed-robbery. The only way to correct these anomalies is through the provision of sound and quality education, especially in the area of moral and character education. Morality is a derivation of the latin word *mores*, meaning customs or morals. To Fageyinbo (2005) therefore, denotes morality refer to “pursuing a virtuous life”. But according to Akanmidu (1995) defines morality as “the accepted standards for the determination of the right from the wrong behaviour of the people” is the yardstick through which “good” or “bad”, “right or wrong”, “acceptable and unacceptable” behaviours are measured in a particular society. Tracing the origin of morality in every society, some are of the opinion that moral behaviours, as it is found in every society today, are the product of experience. To this opinion group, it is the everyday experience that taught man what should be classified as moral and immoral.

Society and religion exert more pressure on man’s faculty of morality than any factor, most especially, those religions that have universal acceptance, because religion has codes, rules and regulations which the adherents needs to abide by. Fageyinbo (2008) share similar view when he says :what constitutes the moral code of any particular society, that is, the laws, taboos, customs and some forms of behaviours derive their compelling power from religion. Moral education therefore, is the inculcation of refined ideas, values and principles with a view to bring a purposeful behavioural change among inhabitant of the society (Promila, 2007).

The focus of moral education is to make an individual behaviour to be in tune with established societal moral prescription, that is to produce people of good moral behaviour who will always behave in a manner which is in-turn with the society is approved code of conduct.

Psychology Education

Psychology could be defined as the scientific study of human and animal covert and overt behaviour, with the aim of understanding, explaining, and describing, predicting, controlling, and modifying behaviour. American Psychologist Association (APA, 2012), defined psychology as a diverse discipline, grounded in science but with nearly boundless applications I everyday life. Behaviour in this respect includes anything a person or animal does that can be observed in some ways. From what is done or said, psychologist can and do make inferences about the feelings, attitudes, thoughts, and other mental processes of individuals, which may be behind the behaviour of such individuals (Ajagbu, 1999). The different field in psychology is Abnormal-psychology, Health-psychology, Forensic-psychology, Educational-psychology, Cognitive-psychology, Child-psychology, Developmental-psychology, Social-psychology, and Experimental-psychology among others.

The focus of this paper is Educational psychology which is the field of psychology that deal with the scientific study of human learning and behaviour modification. The study of learning processes and behaviour modification from both cognitive and behavioural perspectives allows researchers to understand individual differences in intelligence, cognitive development, effects of motivation, self-regulatory, self-concept, reward and punishment, as well as their role in learning.

Educational psychology can in part be understood through its relationship with other disciplines like Moral Education. Educational psychology covers a wide range of areas within education studies, including instructional design, educational technology, organizational learning, curriculum development, special education, and classroom management, and student's motivation. This implies that psychological education has a very broad scope, thus, it has much to contribute in actualizing not only an individual but the whole Nigerian society (Ajaegbu, 1999).

Emerging National Issues in Nigeria

It is believed that change is the only permanent factor in life and nothing is more permanent than change. These changes includes growth in the things and individuals which are commonly characterized by events that are either, desirable or undesirable, pleasant or unpleasant, necessary or unnecessary, sometimes. In a modern society like Nigeria, many contemporary social national issues have emerged which are against the ethics, moral, norms and psychological of our society and of course make life very uncomfortable. Such national issues include, *Economic-recession, Insecurity, Organised-violence, Kidnapping, Poverty, Terrorism, Unemployment and Insurgencies*. These in turn create problems in to Nigerian society in particular among the youth, the issues are briefly explained (Samuel, 2014).

Economic Recession: Refers to economic hardship of a nation, there are various reasons why countries enter into a recession, and it all depends on the economic framework of that country. For-instance Nigeria a recession could be triggered by a dip in government revenues and a drop in consumer spending. And there is a greater decrease in oil prices, this cause a drop in government spending due to the government not being able to earn what is used to gain before the dip. Thus, a recession is a consecutive decline in the quarterly real gross domestic product (inflation adjusted) and a decrease in activity across the economy, lasting longer than a three to four months. It is visible in industrial production, employment, real income and wholesale-retail trade.

Insecurity issues: insecurity means an absence of safety, danger, hazard, uncertainty, lack of protection against lives and public properties against any attack. Saleh (2017) states that insecurity is a state of anxiety or fear due to the absence or lack of security. Achumba et al. (2013) explained insecurity from two perspectives, *first*, insecurity is the state of being subject or open to danger or threat to danger where danger is the condition of being vulnerable to harm or injury. *Secondly*, insecurity is the state of being exposed to risk or anxiety, where anxiety is vague unpleasant emotion that is experienced in anticipation of some misfortune. These definition of insecurity underscore a major point that those affected by insecurity are not only uncertain or unaware of what would happen but they also vulnerable to the threats and dangers when they occurs.

Kidnapping issue: is an act of taking an individual by force, as hostage or to keep under a tide guards, usually through the use of arms or weapons for purpose of ransom. Recently, this criminal acts has become wide spread and very frequent as a result of the monetary inducement of the process. Most often, the victim so captured are usually kept in an unknown place and the victim relatives are compelled to pay certain amount as ransom to secure the victims release, and failure to comply within the specified time, the victims may be killed (Lambora, 2009). Through kidnapping is both legally and morally wrong yet thousands of youths find it as a lucrative business especially the unemployed youths. This can be checked by provision of employment opportunities though some people are also kidnapped for other reasons (Samuel, 2014).

Organized Violent Group: organized violent group such as ethnic militia, vigilantes, secret cult in tertiary institutions and political thugs contribute significantly to security challenges in Nigeria in different dimension and forms. Their emergence has been linked to some factors which include the culture of militarism that has its antecedents in military rule. The failure of the state and its institutions, economic disempowerment, the structure of the state and Nigeria's federalism. Indeed there is non-separation of state and religion, politics of exclusion, the culture of patriarchy, ignorance and poor political consciousness (Eme & Onyishi, 2011).

Poverty Issue: Poverty is one disturbing contemporary social problems affecting Nigeria as third world country. It is a state of absolute lack of minimal means of livelihood. This problem gives birth to incidence of high involvement of citizen in criminal activities such as corruption, bribery, and all types of immoral conducts. The poor lacks the means to satisfy the basic needs of life. They do not have personal assets necessary to produce income and wealth (Famoyin, 2007). Poverty are of different pattern, first is, there is a psychological standard of poverty which measures a poor person's income as falling behind his basic need capacity. Second a poor person can always be identified by lack of emergency medical care and the kind of shelter and clothing that protect his life (Haig, 2003).

Terrorism Issues: Terrorism is a global phenomenon, and it is ravaging the whole world. It has been defined by Saleh (2017) as 'the intentional use or threat of use of violence by a group or an individual to cause fear destruction or death, especially against unarmed civilians, infrastructure or property in a state. These intended to compel those in authority to respond to the demands and expectations of the individual or group behind such violent act. But in Nigeria, the most fundamental source of insecurity today is terrorism which is traceable to religious intolerance particularly in majority states in Nigeria.

Unemployment Issue: unemployment can be define as the "fact of a number of people not having a job; the number of people without a job; the state of not having a job" but unemployment occurs when people who are able and willing to work are without jobs, or cannot find a work that is effective and productive to do. It also occurs when people undertake jobs that are contrary or lower than their academic qualifications or areas of specialization. Unemployment gives birth to poor future prospect and individual from poor socio-economic backgrounds that are also unemployed face a serious social and psychological hazard. According to Adamu (2011) the condition of unemployment, like isolation from work-place, psychological withdrawal occasioned from diminished self-esteem, and frustration may be deepened by the material factors of poverty. Such conditions may generate intense anti-social behaviour in any given society.

Moral Education and Psychological Education as a Remedy to Emerging National Issues

The Nigerian society is characterized with high rate moral decadence that dehumanized people and the society. Moses (2003) points out strongly that moral decadence in Nigeria has contributed to slow down the pace of progress and development. Taneja (2007) also argue that moral education focus on transforming human behaviour through teaching and training people about divine message. This argument buttress the facts that moral education has element of psychology that is relevant for moulding and building fundamental behavioural attitudes in the life of people of any given society.

Psychology and moral education play fundamental role as relate to imparting students or learners positively. This relationship is much felt when moral education teacher employ psychological

theories, concepts, and methodology to instill the moral influences that are relevant to social interaction in the society. Also, this relationship of psychology and morality education, important national moral values of Nigeria can be taught the younger generation about values, thoughtfulness, non-violence, hard-work, abstinence from bad-attitudes like kidnapping, terrorism, corruption readiness to serve one's father land and obedience will be learnt and passed as legacy to the younger children of school age who will be the leaders of tomorrow (Haggai, 2002).

Education in general perspectives is the key to human development and progress as it brings about changes in attitudes values and behaviour (Wakili, 2012). This will help people to know how they are obliged to live in harmony with one another and achieve divine blessing. The major aim of combine these two important discipline morality and psychology educations is to raise generation of people who can think for themselves, respects the views and feelings of others, appreciate dignity of labour which is specified in the broad nation aims as good citizen. Moral and psychological education will provides basic guidelines and principles that can offer to its members by showing or teaching them to care, love, and demonstrate sense of avoiding evils and to cultivate the habit of commitment and diligence in handling nations, political, religious, social, cultural, and economic affairs of society that focuses primarily on tackling the problems of emerging national issues (Taneja, 2003).

Moral and psychological education is conceived and understand as a powerful instrument of social change and liberation from the group of insurgency and dangerous terrorist, as well as an instrument of social order, this will also go along way for ensuring gender equality and reduce inequalities through the teaching of generally acceptable behaviours, religious belief, values, and ethics (Hermant, et al 2011). Moral and psychological education play role in promotion of peaceful and inclusive society that provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels, where restrictions are made, prohibitions and peace drives are encouraged in this way, law and order are maintained and these are essential ingredients for social co-existence.

Conclusion

The study provides fundamental insights into the discourse of emerging national issues in Nigerian context. The study unveils that issue of survival is still at the highest peak, that need more and serious intervention measures. Concerted efforts have already been contributed by various scholars in different field of the study to achieve rescue of Nigeria from moral and psychological decadence. The effort made by the society yields little or no result, because the root cause of this emergence of national issues was not yet discovered. This study shows that knowledge (education) is important, paramount and indispensable for achieving these societal-ills. The study established moral and psychology education as a solid foundation for addressing and remedying national issues and social problems in contemporary Nigeria. This paper states that, there exists a strong inextricable link between, education, moral, and psychology that will contribute to the meaningful achievement in contemporary Nigerian society.

Suggestions

The prospect for change and improvement in the present state of Nigeria are very minimal. One of the reasons is that of corruption which has made it difficult for people charged with the responsibility of leading the nation rightly. This has often given rise to diversion of public resource meant for the development of the country to personal possession, due to the nature of the Nigerian state and leadership are geared towards primitive accumulation to the determinant of the masses, in view of this statement, the paper made the following recommendation.

1. The government should give equal right and opportunity to all Nigerian students, in arts, social sciences, education and other sciences. They all have their quota to contribute for Nigerian achievement.
2. Educational planners should review moral and psychology curriculum to suit national aims and objectives
3. Government should give special attention to moral and psychological education by making attractive and supplying instructional materials to schools.
4. Government should ensure of making eligible policy makers not on educational matters alone, but on general affairs of the nation, those whom should shun from politics of primitive accumulation of wealth from the country treasury.

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