

## RE-ORIENTATION FOR MARRIED COUPLES TOWARDS EFFECTIVE PARENTING IN NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*Nigeria is a nation plagued with significant value issues which have greatly contributed to its struggling economy, negative national reputation and declining standards. Implementing a process of value reorientation to instil positive values can assist Nigeria in overcoming its many challenges and redirect the nation towards achieving greatness. This influence can be realized when Nigerians adopt virtuous principles that can transform the mindset and conduct of individuals, leading to a substantial decrease in corruption, indiscipline, immorality, terrorism, abduction, poverty, and other societal ills. This paper explores the definition, concept, and characteristics of parenting, as well as the importance of effective parenting. It also addresses specific challenges faced by parents in Nigeria and examines socialization as a means of instilling and reshaping values. The paper suggests that achieving a value reorientation in Nigeria is possible by implementing effective parenting practices, utilizing traditional methods of social control, reforming the education system, regulating the media, and promoting democratic principles.*

**Keywords:** Efficient Parenting, Value reorientation.

### Introduction

Effective parenting is essential in creating the principles and personality of individuals in a society. In Nigeria, where national values play a crucial role in promoting unity, growth, and progress, the influence of successful parenting becomes even more vital. Values are cultural assertions about what is morally or ethically desirable. Values are overarching concepts that serve as the foundation for beliefs, representing specific claims that individuals consider to be true. Values function as overarching principles that provide direction for one's actions. A significant number of Nigerians, both residing in the country and abroad, persistently advocate for a reorientation of values as the solution to the majority of Nigeria's issues and difficulties. They contend that Nigerians have deviated and continue to deviate from the road of honesty, honour, discipline, and focus as a country (Patrick, 2019).

Every human society possesses distinct qualities that differentiate its inhabitants from those of other societies. The Nigerian value system encompasses the collective beliefs, standards, and principles

that dictate what is considered right and bad within the society. Values determine the decisions that individuals make, and these choices then impact the behaviour of every individual within society. The level of growth in any human community is dictated by its value system. Similar to other elements of culture, the value system is intangible (Bieh & Boroh, 2023). Cultural and societal norms exhibit temporal variation. The fundamental principles upheld by Nigerian society are discipline, honesty, diligence, accountability, loyalty, reverence for the elderly, and truthfulness. The national values surpass ethnic or religious beliefs and represent the essence of our identity as a nation. The value system is responsible for moulding the perceptions and beliefs of individuals. Our values have a profound influence on all elements of our lives, including religion, relationships, career, and character. They exert influence over our thoughts, words, and actions. Hence, it is crucial to focus attention on the need to reorient the value system of Nigerian society in light of the widespread moral decline and to consider the potential role of women in addressing this problem (Bieh & Boroh, 2023).

### **Concept and Nature of Parenting**

Parenting is a crucial societal act that involves social interaction, accountability, progression, and a vital role in maintaining social stability and peace. Engaging in this endeavour requires a significant level of dedication, selflessness, resilience, mindset, expertise, patience, and resolve, among other qualities. The family structure in society institutionalises a type of function which is accompanied by a feeling of attentiveness, connection, affection, empathy, and optimism. It involves providing intimate direction and exercising strict control inside the most basic social unit which can be viewed as the process of firmly establishing societal norms and values, as well as providing instruction and education to children and young people at the individual social level (Lydia, 2023).

Parenting has been previously defined in several ways, which might aid in understanding it as a universal idea. According to (Ohazulike, 2023) parenting is the act of providing care and support to one's child or children. Parenting is a multifaceted responsibility and undertaking that is entrusted to an individual upon becoming a father or mother. Childcare encompasses the provision of care, education, and support to individuals in their formative years, including teenagers and adolescents. Not all fathers or mothers can be considered parents, only those who are truly dedicated to fulfilling the responsibilities of good parenting. The status of being a biological parent entails certain fundamental obligations that extend over some time and necessitate ongoing effort, devotion, and attention to fulfil. A father who ensures that these tasks are properly fulfilled might be referred to as a parent. If a father or mother fails to meet the requirements of their children, except for what they can afford and are capable of supplying, they cannot be seen as parents (Ohazulike, 2023).

### **Challenges of Parenting in Nigeria**

Similar to other responsibilities in human society, parenting presents its own set of difficulties and obstacles. According to (Ugese, et.al, 2024) several challenges associated with parenting are as follows:

1. **Illiteracy:** the level of illiteracy remains below average in comparison to wealthy Western countries. This issue is having an impact on parenting in Nigeria as it prevents parents from fully comprehending their children and effectively influencing them by instilling both our commendable traditional values and beneficial Western values that are essential in today's modern and globalised society. Parents with a strong educational background are more capable of providing their children with effective instruction, instilling in them both traditional and Western values necessary for success in life.
2. **Poverty:** the impoverished state of the country's economy has hindered the ability to engage in successful parenting in Nigeria. There is a widespread belief that poverty is escalating in Nigeria, and it is often assumed that parents, who bear significant responsibilities, may be the most severely affected. Economically disadvantaged parents may have financial constraints that limit their ability to provide for their children. Consequently, they may struggle to exert control over their children's behaviour, leading the children to seek alternative means of obtaining the resources they require, both at home and in school.
3. **Overindulgence:** the youngsters who receive everything belong to the category of those experiencing excessive indulgence, when parents refuse these children's desires, they respond with temper tantrums and attempt to manipulate their parents by engaging in provocative behaviour such as damaging objects, weeping incessantly, and even making threats to run away. Many children frequently assess their self-esteem based on the quantity of possessions they acquire. They correlate receiving with being loved and significant. These youngsters become accustomed to always receiving things to the point that they may feel endangered in the relationship when parents refuse to give them something (Cynthia, 2021).
4. **Overprotection** refers to the act of parents assessing potential hazards and consistently highlighting them to their child. Certain parents, particularly women, attempt to dissuade their children, particularly females, from participating in physical education and household tasks due to their belief that these activities are physically demanding. As a result of excessive protection, numerous youngsters lack regular social interaction with their peers in their local community or educational settings. They abstain from engaging in the activities that are commonly pursued by others.
5. **Insufficient parental control:** A youngster, being inexperienced in life, necessitates parental supervision and direction. Parental care, support, and guidance facilitate a child's acquisition of appropriate knowledge and social skills, enabling them to effectively navigate the trials of puberty and adulthood. The absence of adequate parental care and supervision has been a significant factor in the prevalence of societal values issues. This is due to the failure of certain parents to instil appropriate values in their children.

### **The Need for Efficient Parenting**

Parenting is the act of caring for, nurturing, and training children and adolescents. Similar to other aspects of human existence, certain actions might be performed poorly, inefficiently, or in a manner that leads to difficulties for people and society as a whole. However, parenting may be

optimized to be efficient, outcome-driven, and constructive, thereby having a beneficial influence on society for future generations. Effective parenting entails providing children with optimal care, treatment, attention, love, and upbringing necessary for them to develop into well-adjusted, well-behaved, and productive individuals within their family and community (Ofeimu, & Kolawole, 2021). In traditional African civilizations, such as Nigeria, parenting is regarded as a lifelong commitment in which parents provide care, protection, nurturing, and education to their children for the duration of their lives. Parents do not cease their care and supervision of their children upon reaching the age of eighteen, contrary to the prevailing practice in the Western world. They were raised by their biological parents who consistently provided care and education till their passing. Thus, it is an ongoing tradition that persists over successive generations. Efficient parenting in Nigeria can be accomplished by combining certain aspects of our traditional parenting system with those of the Western world that are worth imitating. In the context of globalisation, a developing nation such as Nigeria must engage with other countries and not operate in isolation. It is unable to retain all of its ancient systems and traditions (Njoku, 2017).

Currently, the globe is in an age characterised by global collaboration and competition. This suggests that individuals and nations must invest time and effort into establishing goals, ambitions, and plans that not only benefit themselves but also contribute to their global relevance. Nevertheless, it is not feasible for our country to abandon the commendable conventional parenting techniques that have proven effective for us and fully adopt the Western approach to parenting. It is widely acknowledged that many elements of our conventional parenting methods are undemocratic and encroach upon the rights of children, while others contribute to the establishment of discipline and adherence to our societal norms and ideals (Rahman & Uddin, 2017).

In democratic cultures, the concept of flogging as a punitive measure is regarded as a type of child abuse, and as such, it is considered both undesirable and illegal. It is not advisable to continue this practice on the pretext of providing education to children in Nigeria. However, we must avoid embracing the excessively permissive and sometimes careless parenting style observed in many Western cultures. In light of this situation, successful parenting in Nigeria must combine a practical integration of certain positive traditional values that are worth emulating, together with others from the Western culture that are both beneficial and aligned with religious principles. For a Nigerian parent to be successful in parenting, they must dedicate time to consistently teach their children our positive traditional customs and principles, without resorting to force, intimidation, or any coercive methods that could be seen as violating the rights of children. For a normal Nigerian parent to properly accomplish these tasks, they must recognise the importance of safeguarding children's rights. Parents can only obtain knowledge of Fundamental Human Rights and Child rights if they have received a significant level of formal education (Ohazulike, 2023).

Children raised in many Western regions frequently have a strong sense of personal freedom and prefer to prioritize their own choices in life. For example, a child may opt not to acknowledge or

show respect to older individuals when encountering them in public. African culture strongly condemns this unjustified, reckless, and antisocial conduct and considers it highly detestable. For Africans, notably Nigerians, achieving societal expectations is not optional, but rather a need. Failing to greet one's elders is considered deviant behaviour. In conclusion, effective parenting in Nigeria necessitates that parents acquire a certain level of formal or informal knowledge that will enable them to instil our positive traditional values in their children or wards without subjecting them to any type of mistreatment. They should assimilate certain beneficial aspects of Western parenting, such as enrolling their children in school rather than having them engage in street vending (Cynthia, 2021).

### **The Challenges with the Value System in Nigeria**

The problem with our current value system is that it is not effectively meeting the needs of our progressing nation. We support certain detrimental Western values that hinder our progress in both personal and national growth. Over time, we have also forsaken numerous commendable traditional principles. The values of our current era are defined by aspects of individualism and materialism. They tend to influence our preferences and considerations based on personal factors and self-interest. They promote self-centeredness, avarice, and lack of patriotism (Patrick O. A. (2019).

Furthermore, the growing level of materialism is also linked to the notion that one's worth is primarily determined by their possessions or their ability to obtain them. The society places less importance on how you obtain your possessions. This is a potential explanation for the current value crises we are experiencing. Contemporary children and young people in Nigeria are being adversely affected by the ideologies of individualism and materialism, which prioritise self-interest and the excessive pursuit of material possessions. As a result, they are unable to embrace and adopt the values, whether traditional or Western, that hinder or act as barriers to their pursuit of selfish desires and acquisitions (Phillips & Ambilly, 2014).

The consequence of this is that our value system is negatively impacted, leading to the abandonment of important virtues such as perseverance, hard work, honesty, integrity, good reputation, respect for elders, and respect for authority. Instead, children and young people now tend to be idle, seeking quick and effortless (often illegal) solutions to every situation or task. For example, they choose to indulge in activities such as playing around, participating in cultism, gambling, and womanising (which they believe boosts their ego and earns them respect), instead of dedicating their time to reading or pursuing important endeavours (Patrick O. A. (2019).

A significant number of individuals frequently exhibit immodest attire, engage in unconventional activities during unconventional times of the day, disregard guidance, and demonstrate disdain towards their parents. Indeed, they embrace detrimental beliefs that bolster their pursuit of individualistic, self-centred, and occasionally illogical pursuits. This is the prevailing state of affairs for the majority of children and young people in Nigeria. This is cultivating a rare species of future leaders that is at risk of extinction. These children and teens are being adversely affected by harmful societal influences. Their knowledge and actions are inseparable from the resources and opportunities provided

by society. They are native to our civilization and hence are a direct result of the society (Rahman & Uddin, 2017).

Consequently, the value crises that have afflicted Nigerian society are attributable to its actions and choices. Parents, schools, media, and other socialising agents are integral components of Nigerian society and should be held accountable for the ethical deterioration and value crisis in our society. Hence, it is incumbent upon the "spoilors" to undertake an endeavour aimed at altering the conduct and mindset of our children and young individuals, to foster adherence to commendable, righteous, and virtuous principles that can contribute to their personal development and the betterment of our nation in the times ahead (Rahman & Uddin, 2017).

### **The Necessity for Reorientation of Values in Nigeria**

Value encompasses various interpretations, such as the monetary or exchangeable worth of anything, the significance of being useful or essential, ethical or professional standards of conduct, principles, or even numerical or quantitative aspects. From a sociological standpoint, a value can be defined as a belief in the goodness or desirability of something. It establishes the criteria for determining what is significant, valuable, and deserving of one's existence. A value serves as a universal principle that guides taking action. Conversely, a thorough understanding of re-orientation can be achieved by initially exploring the definition of orientation. Orientation is defined as the act of orienting oneself or the condition of being oriented. The term "orientate" is defined as the act of directing someone's interest towards something, aiming or directing something towards someone, or designing something specifically for someone or something. It provides a more precise definition, stating that it means "to determine one's position about one's environment; to become acquainted with a new situation." Orientation is the act of determining or adjusting one's position about circumstances, values, and other factors. Based on the definitions of orientate and orientation provided above, we can now apply the concept of re-orientation (Njoku, 2017).

Re-orientation refers to the process of providing new guidance or training when it is determined that the existing orientation is flawed, misleading, outdated, or causing setbacks or issues. To re-orientate refers to the process of providing a new perspective on information, ideas, knowledge, and experience to replace existing understandings of issues, values, or institutions within a group, society, or culture. Re-orientation can only occur in situations where there is already a preexisting understanding or awareness of many facets of a society's existence. Re-orientation can be understood as the process of renewing one's determination or adjusting to new and developing conditions, values, situations, and events (Phillips & Ambilly, 2014).

Value re-orientation refers to the purposeful act of providing a new direction and mindset to inform, educate, raise awareness, and sensitize a group, the public, or society. It aims to bring about a conscious shift in their attitudes and beliefs towards a new set of values or a modification of existing values. It necessitates a certain level of modification in the value system of individuals or society (Ugese, 2024). Values have a crucial role as a cultural instrument. It evolves gradually and might be

unyielding to alteration. However, as a product of societal development, it is susceptible to change throughout time if individuals actively seek or advocate for change. Value re-orientation in Nigeria is necessary to completely revamp our deteriorating and flawed value system (Ugese, 2024).

It is asserted by Njoku, (2017) that only a reorientation of values may effectively initiate a transformation in the attitude and perception of Nigerians towards the positive. Our value system no longer exerts a beneficial influence on our actions and behaviour. The system promotes indolence, a desire for instant wealth, a disregard for honesty, the glorification of individuals over ideas, violence, and various other societal problems. It is imperative to discard the values that have caused our disintegration, disorganization, and underdevelopment to a significant extent. This remark effectively advocates for an urgent need to change our values, which could lead to a significant transformation and revitalization of our nation.

Therefore, if Nigeria wishes to accomplish its hopes and aspirations, it is crucial to undergo a reorientation of values. The table below identifies some of the undesirable values that we need to eliminate. The table illustrates a clear distinction between values that can be categorized as incorrect and values that are considered good or correct. The document promotes the idea that Nigerians should consistently adopt the appropriate ideals (Ugese, 2024).

#### **Sustainable Measures for Value Re-orientation in Nigeria**

These actions are crucial for the genuine reorientation of values to occur in Nigeria. The following items are stated by (Phillips & Ambilly, 2014):

- ❖ The media in Nigeria are exerting effective control and censorship through certain programmes and publications, which is leading to a decline in moral values among children and young people. This is primarily due to inadequate monitoring or censorship. The media, especially television, should be efficiently regulated in terms of the quality of their programming. They should reduce the emphasis on consumerism, sex, and the glorifying of immorality, among other things. Entertainment is beneficial, but it encompasses more than simply the display of the body, which can lead to corrupting the minds of young people. It also includes art, literature, and high-quality music.
- ❖ Effective parenting refers to the practice of providing children with optimal care, treatment, attention, nurture, and upbringing necessary for them to develop into well-adjusted, well-behaved, and productive individuals within their family and society. To be effective parents, parents need to integrate the teaching of our valuable traditional values, such as reverence for elders, diligence, and determination, with certain beneficial Western values, such as obtaining a formal education, embracing democracy, and upholding human rights. This combination is essential for individuals to thrive and prosper in life. Establishing a harmonious blend of positive Traditional and Western values can greatly contribute to the attainment of excellent parenting in modern-day Nigeria.
- ❖ Societies ensure their continuation by producing individuals whose behaviours, ambitions, and objectives align with what is considered suitable and desirable. Nevertheless, when societal ideals become counterproductive, inappropriate, and unwanted, it becomes necessary to eliminate them. To

achieve a shift in values in Nigeria, it is necessary to ensure that Nigerians undergo thorough socialisation that instils positive ideals inside them.

❖ The reinvigoration of traditional techniques of punishment that were prevalent in the past can facilitate the reorientation of societal values in Nigeria. Punitive measures such as kneeling, prolonged hand-raising, imprisonment, and manual labour like lawn cutting are no longer being implemented, or at least, strictly enforced. In the past, they aided in efficiently managing behaviour and inducing individuals, especially children, to adhere to laws and regulations. They can assist in promoting a shift in values in Nigeria.

❖ The reinforcement of democratic principles, such as fairness, justice, equity, equality, transparency, accountability, participation, due process, and the rule of law, aligns with the societal norms and values of love, patriotism, hard work, peace, integrity, and other virtues. Hence, endeavours aimed at reorienting values in Nigeria must encompass the reinforcement of democratic principles. This is because such reinforcement serves to strengthen and disseminate the desirable and morally correct values inside the country.

### **Conclusion**

At this point in Nigeria's quest for genuine identity and progress, it is crucial to undergo a reorientation of values that we are deliberately overhauling our set of principles and beliefs. Adopting positive values can lead to a transformation in the way Nigerians see, behave, and think, ultimately contributing to the revitalization of our national ambition for a brighter future. The undertaking at hand is not a simple one, but rather a complex one that necessitates the combined efforts of all Nigerian citizens, as well as other groups and institutions, including the media and education sector. Currently, Nigeria should actively pursue and discover genuine value reorientation due to the growing incidence of corruption, criminality, violence, immorality, poverty, negative national image, and declining standards.

### **Suggestions**

According to the conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are proposed for doing research and implementing practical ways to assist married couples in Nigeria in reshaping their beliefs and attitudes towards effective parenting. This would ultimately lead to healthier family dynamics and enhanced well-being of children.

1. Counsellors should receive assistance in providing counselling sessions or seminars that concentrate on enhancing marital communication and effectively resolving issues to establish a nurturing atmosphere for parenting.

2. Parents, teachers, and leaders should make use of every possible opportunity to diligently instil the positive ideals of humanity into their children, students, young people, and the general public in their daily contacts, activities, and across many sectors. This has the potential to rescue Nigeria from the pervasive value crisis that is afflicting the country and to strategically position it for rapid progress and exceptional achievements.

3. The government should promote community-based parenting support groups or initiatives that utilize local resources and cultural strengths to improve parenting knowledge and skills. Additionally, they should advocate for easily accessible and culturally relevant parenting classes that offer evidence-based strategies and support networks for couples.

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