INOCULATING NORMS AND VALUES IN PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS: A BALS TO EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract
Nigeria is engulfed in crises ranging from ethnic violence, kidnapping, suicide bombing, robbery, certificate forgery, corruption, nepotism, godfatherism, just to mention but a few. These social crises are results of disregard for societal norms and values. This shows that Nigeria’s educational system has not imparted positively on Nigerians since character formation and behaviours are molded at the formative stage of a child's life. This paper therefore emphasizes the inculcation of norms and values at the primary school level because the formation stage of child falls within the primary school level. The paper looks at the concept of norms and values, the roles played by parents, the school and teachers in the inculcation of norms and values in children so that when they grow up they will not depart from it. The paper
suggests among others that schools should not hesitate to recognize and reward good behaviours by pupils.

Introduction
The compass to national peace, stability and growth is education. This is because education determines how we think and how we think determines how we behave. Ocho (2005) insists that the ability of a nation to grow and develop depends on the quality and emphasis in its educational system. The importance of education cannot be over emphasized hence Plato in his book "The Republic" states that the best a man can have is education, garnished with moral values which is the bedrock of sound education. In the same vein, Comenius (1592 - 1670), Locke (1632 – 1704), Herbart (1776 – 11841) and Froebel (1782 – 1852) agree strongly that the primary purpose of education is virtue or character training (Ocho, 2005).

With the spate of social vices in Nigeria, one cannot be wrong to state that our educational system has not actually impacted positively on Nigerians. The problem of insecurity and the breakdown of law and order in the society lend credence to the above assertion. For instance, turning to the Northern part of Nigeria, one is greeted with the frightening menace of Boko Haram, to the Southern part; kidnappers and communal clashes welcome one. Meeting the political class, one is handshake by greed, avarice, corruption, in short kleoptocracy as the kings that reign supreme. In the bureaucratic class, lying, cheating, gangsterism, insubordination, certificate forgery and plagiarism simile and usher one in with reckless abandon. No part of the society is left out, no wonder ESU, Cornelius-Ukpabi and Ndifon (2009) bitterly weep that violence has become the order of the day as people no longer respect the dignity and worth of human lives and property.

Ezea (2008) acknowledges that various governments in Nigeria have invested heavily on our education, yet unemployment, indiscipline, lack of respect for elders abound in our youths and society. He further maintained that curriculum planners of our educational system have attempted to evolve a blue print for the survival of education in the country, still youths roam the streets in search of jobs. Even the few that are frustrated to secure some job are seduced by corruption, embezzlement of public fund as a result of lack of accountability and transparent leadership.
The failure of the society as highlighted in the scenario above is a clear manifestation of poor inculcation of norms and values in the children who have grown into youth and adult members of the society. The Holy Scriptures in Proverbs 22:6 states "train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it". This implies that if norms and values must impact on the society, their inculcation must start from the formative years of a child, which falls within the primary school level.

Primary education according to Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2004) is the education given in institutions for children aged 6 to 11 plus. She further stated that since the rest of the educational system is built upon it. The primary level is the key to the success or failure of the whole system. One of the major goals of primary education is to mould the character and develop sound attitude and morals in the child. It is the firm belief of the writers of this paper that if this is achieved, Nigerian education will develop to be functional and the society will be better than what it is today. This paper therefore takes a look at the concept of norms and values. It goes further to consider the roles of parents, school and the teacher in the inculcation of the right types of norms and values for the development of education in the Nigerian society.

Concept of Norms

Norms according to Ocho (2005) are appropriate and acceptable ways of behaviour in a society. For Igu (2012), norms are ways of behaving that are considered normal in a particular society. Wikipedia (2013) describes norms as group held beliefs about how members should behave in a given context. Gibbs in Wikipedia (2013) affirms that norm is a belief about the acceptability of behaviour. A norm indicates the degree to which a behaviour is regarded. In a nutshell, a norm is a behavioural rule that produces a feeling of obligation. It is an appropriate and acceptable way of behaviour in a society. Norms are standard rules, behavioural expectation of a society, which are seen as acceptable ways of behaviour.

Behavioural problems have become a source of worry to parents, teachers and the general society. In essence, a number of questions have been raised as to what could be the possible cause of this ugly scene. Could it be poor management of our educational
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system? or quest for materialism or the total disregard for societal norms?

**Concept of Value**

Throughout the history of human existence, the word value has been in the fore banner of human interaction as organizations, individuals and nations are always confronted with value based judgment in decision making process. Education being one of the organizations aims at producing individuals who are found worthy in character and in learning. According to Kanno (2004), to be worthy in character entails among other things, the acquisition of sound values which will enable the individual to be morally sound, emotionally stable and socially relevant. Noah (2003) defines values as the building blocks of society. This implies that without values, men are not human and hence cannot take decisions that can be of benefit to the society. Otouli (2004) supportively states that values occupy a central position in all human pursuits. Values have to do with desires, interests, goals, ideas, approvals, disapprovals, preferences and standards. This implies that values are beliefs about desirability of a means or the end of existence and mode of conduct.

Rokeach in Igu (2012) refers to variables such as beauty/ugliness, truth/falsehood, justice/injustice, honesty/dishonesty, pleasure/pain, discipline/indiscipline as determinant of values. The above shows that out of the alternatives, the most preferred and desired ones are chosen. It is used to assess specific behaviour in a specific situation. The major characteristics of value is that it is based on a belief about what is desirable rather than on mere liking. It is a preference for an equitable rather than an inequitable distribution of rewards. Eze (2008) states that value refers to a single belief of a specific kind, a belief about desirability that is based on conception of morality, behaviours and situations. This shows that value occupies a more central hierarchical place in human personality.

Such values as respect for elders, honesty, discipline, humility are upheld as a guide to action but they are now juxtaposed with ruthless materialism and inordinate quest for political power. Noah (2003) affirms that values are the building blocks of society. Values are derived from a society's judgment/perception of virtue and vices and judgment of social behaviours that are acceptable in a society. Values are acceptable principles of standards of behaviours of a society. They are ideals which most members of a society have
collectively accepted. Bolarin (2004:13) believes that values are the
determiners in man that influence his choice in life and this informs
his behaviour.

African Leadership Forum ALP (1993) highlighted values
that are specific to Nigerians which need to be inculcated into the
younger ones. They include:
i. Love and protection of the family and family name
ii. Filia piety honour and respect for parents and all elders.
iii. Attachment to and appreciation of one’s nature dialect
iv. Respect for hardwork and productivity
v. Truthfulness and honesty
vi. Respect for sanctity of life
vii. Hospitality
viii. Respect for leadership and authority.

Summarily put, values are beliefs and specific mode of
conduct that are personally and socially preferable and acceptable.
Values are conscious belief of what is right or wrong and what is
good or bad.

Norms and values are two independent words that are inter
changeable. Norms are evaluative beliefs that deal on acceptability
of behaviours whereas values deal on desirability of behaviours.
Norms are often derived from values but both have their base in
conception of morality, esthetics and achievements.

The Roles of Parents in the Inculcation of Norms and Values
Parents by their God given position have the primary responsibility
of inculcating in children acceptable norms and values of the society
in which they live. The ALF (1993) affirms that the primary unit for
instilling norms and values in children is the family. Krishnan
(2007) supportively affirms that teaching children ethics, moral
standards and values starts right at home and that this can be done
from a very early age. According to Eze (2002), a child reared in a
home where the parent-child relationship is warm would normally
grow with adequate confidence in himself, positive self concept and
emotional stability.

A cursory examination of most Nigerian homes today show
that parental upbringing is daily on the decline as parents are more
grossed in activities that will help in the economic well-being of
the family. Economic meltdown has forced fathers and mothers out
of their homes with their children left at the mercy of house helps
who like the children they are taking care of equally need training.
Hyzin and Lawson in Udeagah (2001) state that children today are searching for security, care and love and when they are unable to find them, disillusionment takes over. Children in this category often seek control over their circumstances through any means which more often than not are rebellions to society's norms and values. Secondly, parents’ love and regard for norms and values have deep-seated impact in the lives of children who learn more through imitation than instruction. Bertini in Eze (2002) opines that the nature of relationship, discipline and resources available in a home can make or mar the behaviour of children in that home.

Conclusively, Krushnan (2007) maintains that parents should teach their children the value of respecting all elders, being helpful to friends and others at all times, to be respectful of public properties, not telling lies and other social vices.

**The Roles of the School in Inculcating Norms and Values in the Pupils**

The school is an agent of socialization, which stands out in the inculcation of norms and values. It is a social system where all characters from different backgrounds meet to create a serene society. A peer review of the school system of any society will show a lot about the people, their needs, their culture, their hopes and their aspirations (Ukeje, Akabogu and Ndu, 1992). They further maintain that this is because the school exists in an environment and reflects that particular society and the way it is structured helps to control and guide the behaviour of its members. Being a home of mixed multitude, the school is structured to help mould the character and the development of the young towards ends that are regarded as desirable by the society.

Contrary to expectation, it does appear that schools are failing in their responsibilities. The inability of school authorities to curb pupils’ excesses in cultism, quasterism, tribal sentiment and other unethical behaviours puts a big question mark on the roles of the school in inculcating norms and values in pupils. According to Awoniyi, most teachers have lost focus of the demands of their calling. Teachers have become cheaters, teaching vices instead of morals through their behaviours and life styles. To make the schools live up to their expectations in the inculcation of norms and values, teachers must be alive to their duties because an important sign of the long-range health of a nation is the spirit and quality of its teachers. The future of the nation rests in the hands of its teachers.
for the qualities they possess today will inevitably be reflected in the citizens of tomorrow. This could be why FRN (2004) insists that no nation can rise above the quality of her educational system and the educational system cannot rise above the quality of its teachers.

**The Roles of the Teacher in the Inculcation of Values**

The teacher as far as the education of the child is concerned is a loco parent that is, second parent to the pupils. The teacher is a role model and a mentor to the pupils. The pupils believe so much in their teacher to the point that whatever the teacher said is correct. They swallow the teachers’ ideas, beliefs and values whole line and sinker. This could be why Olaoye-Williams (2006) asserts that the value worldview of teachers largely affects the development of values in pupils. This implies that teachers are pupils screen savers. In that regard, teachers must be conscious of what they do, where they do it and how they do it. No wonder Ocho (2005) reiterates that for a teacher to educate others, he must first be educated. Education in this context does not only mean the ability to read and write but being morally upright. Eimuhi and Eliagwuna (2012) warn that teachers being custodians of knowledge should inculcate the right type of values, norms and ethics in the pupils. Teachers therefore must be persons who are honest, sincere, truthful and of proven integrity.

**Conclusion**

There can be no good transition in a country that is faced with economic, political, cultural and environmental crisis unless its educational system is poised to inculcate acceptable norms and values to affect-behavioural change in its citizens. Nigeria being a typical example of a country in crisis needs to begin from the very foundation of her educational system, the primary level to inculcate desirable norms and values in the pupils who will tomorrow grow into adult members of the society. The success of this effort at the primary level will guarantee the development of Nigeria since all other levels of education depend on the primary level which is the foundation.

In conclusion therefore, the authors of this paper suggest that: the school should not hesitate to recognize and reward good behaviours of pupils. Teachers, as the mirror through which the pupils see their reflection should live by example.
The parents should devote time to the upbringing of their children so that they will grow up to be responsible to themselves and the society at large.

References
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