

ESSENTIAL CORRELATES BETWEEN CHILD REARING PRACTICES AND SOCIO-CULTURAL VALUES OF UPPER BASIC SCHOOL STUDENTS IN OWERRI, IMO STATE

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Abstract

This study was on the interplay between child rearing practices and socio-cultural values of students in Owerri Educational Zone 1 in Imo State. Child rearing practices in Owerri impacts the society to a large extent, especially on students' development. The paper reviewed literatures on the field and at the end encouraged parents to rise up to the occasion and encourage them in the homes to morality; plus the promotion of values which were hitherto held in high esteem; their children/students must learn to live according to the societal law, rules and regulations of the government as well as understand the socio-cultural values.

Key words: Correlates, Child-rearing, Socio-cultural values, Upper basic school

Introduction

The issue of child rearing in African culture is an age-long thing that requires careful thought as the society sees the child as everybody's responsibility once he or she is born. Child rearing is seen as a process by which parents transmit, and the child acquires, prior existing competence require by culture to assume values future tasks in the society. Okafor (2003) regards a child as a precious gift from God, and therefore seen as link to both the ancestors of the past and a means of going survival in the future. The birth of a child is highly celebrated in all Nigerian cultures and children are held in high esteem. How children grow up to respect norms, values and culture of their societies depends to a large extent on parental background.

The Upper Basic School students are young people who could be daring and vulnerable to vices if not closely checked. Danladi (2005) noted that teaching of values in the subject, social studies helps the young people to, among other things acquire and develop enduring values among citizens; and this will ensure sanity in political and economic life of the country and stabilize democracy.

Children that are reared properly grow up to be responsible adults who will uphold the traditions of their people. Onodugbo (2005) sees socio-cultural factors in the society as those that affect the thoughts, feelings and behaviour of individuals. The factors he included were; child-rearing practices, cultural change, family structure and regional differences. Creating a link between child rearing practices and socio-cultural values of upper Basic School Students is therefore pertinent if we must have a sustainable, functional society, in Imo State of Nigeria as our focus.

Socio-Cultural Shock and Educational Development

Nigeria educational sector has witness serious socio-cultural shock in the recent time. Some of these socio-cultural shocks are positive while some are negative. In the positive aspect, the educational sector has embraced the use of ICT, especially in federal government owned schools and most privately owned.

This is evidently seen in examination bodies like JAMB. Teachers now use public address systems, projectors and white board/markers unlike before when black board and chalk was used. In the negative aspect, students embrace some foreign cultures like sagging, hair styles, dressing that exposes their bodies, cultism, kidnapping, rape, disrespect to elders, national symbols and constituted authority. The socio-cultural shock in the educational development are the socially transmitted behaviour patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions and all other products of human work and thought. Most of these socio-cultural shocks are as a result of educational development which students are exposed to. The old way of doing things are being changed as a result of innovations in the education sector.

Social Studies and Teaching of Cultural Values in Schools

Social Studies education according to Pruyn in Ross, (2004) is geared towards fostering obedience to authority through the memorization of disconnected facts in the preparation of standardized test and curricula based on the value and beliefs of supremacist society. This was in agreement with Danladi, (2005) who sees social studies as a subject that has potentialities for inculcating the right type of virtues in the learner through unified and interdisciplinary study of man.

The Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council (1980) has identified and acknowledged the need for the development of good citizenship through the upliftment

of moral standards and character, promotion of social understanding in the society, equipping citizens with critical thinking and problem -solving for personal and social survival.

Teaching of values in Social Studies education according to Frankel in Danladi, (2005) is to foster effective concerns among students. These functions mean that learners of social studies in schools are expected to demonstrate in practical ways, amongst themselves and members of the larger society for positive actions and values for democratic stability and social progress. This is so because the acquisition and development of enduring values among citizens will ensure sanity in the political and economic life of the country and stabilize democracy.

In understanding socio-cultural factors according to Onodugbo and Onodugbo (2015) Socio cultural factors are factors relating to both society and culture matters. Socio-cultural factors are the larger scale forces within cultures and society that affect the thoughts, feelings and behaviour of individuals. Such factors include:

- i. Child rearing practices
- ii. Cross cultural differences
- iii. Cultural deprivation
- iv. Cultural Change
- v. Ethnic values
- vi. Family structure
- vii. Kingship structure
- viii. Regional differences.

All these are the totality of learned, socially transmitted behaviours from one generation to the other in Igboland

Furthermore, in his research on *How Social Studies Educators See the Essentiality of Their Discipline for Social Mobilization of Youth in Nigeria*, Ogundare, (1991) disclosed that social psychologists who study social influence and attitudes on individuals are concerned with basic issues such as “What conditions and variables cause individuals to form and change their attitudes, their beliefs and their behaviour?” and “How do we know whether an act, by ourselves or others, is freely chosen or is the consequence of coercive pressures?” Ogundare stressed that today, Nigeria children and adults are bombarded by print and electronic media, advertisers, the government, and religious groups attempting to influence the way they think, feel, and act. Schools attempt to influence their thinking; friends influence their style of dress, vocabulary, music and ideas of what constitutes an

acceptable date. Their parents stress the importance of personal hygiene, certain sexual attitudes, and much more.

Social Studies and Socio-Cultural Awareness among Students

Social Studies curriculum provides opportunity for the acquisition of knowledge on socio-cultural values in the society. These values like human rights, freedom, integration, mutuality and truthfulness, and unity of Nigeria as a diverse country, among others are taught to students in school and home.

When such teaching is done within the context of social studies, it has a greater benefit to a wider society. Thus, Fafunwa, (2002) opined that Nigeria education should be geared towards these socio-cultural values like self-realization, better human relationships, self and national economic efficiency, effective, citizenship, national consciousness, national unity, social and political progress, scientific and technological progress and national reconstruction.

Furthermore, Ibrahim, (2015) added that a multicultural nation like Nigeria, a country blessed with many ethnic groups of different cultures, social studies should be an important subject which every learner is expected to have basic knowledge of, in order to understand and appreciate the culture of the various other ethnic groups; including its values. For this, social studies is made compulsory at primary school levels through JSS 1 – JSS III classes (for the socio-cultural values to be learned growing up) but optional at senior secondary school levels. Ibrahim, (2015) stressed that Social studies should serve as an orientating course to indoctrinate new students with our values, basic morals to enable them grasp focus of their mission and aspiration in the institution. By so doing, more awareness on the subject are provided to our students and society. This global sensitization on socio-cultural values, with its continuous awareness to the society makes it imperative for the establishment of Social studies courses in different institutions of higher learning in Nigeria.

In another development, Ogundare (1991) reported a study conducted on a typically planned policy which indirectly is a social studies enlightenment programme effort on students, individuals and society. The study was on the Babangida administration in Nigeria – the Mass Mobilization for Self-Reliance, Social Justice and Economic Recovery (MAMSER), initiated and developed in 1987. MAMSER hoped to influence attitude formation in Nigerian social and political policy. Like its predecessors, such as the Ethical Revolution and War Against Indiscipline for Mass Mobilization, the operations and

logistics of MAMSER assume that attitudes can, in fact, be symmetrically formed or modified through several organs of the society, including schools. Some analysts consider MAMSER a call for change of attitude, values and perception as well as a new child training approach to providing pragmatic solutions to mundane problems. Yalokan (1987) analyzed the objectives and strategies of MAMSER and concluded that MAMSER is geared toward building individual citizens' capabilities for attaining self-fulfillment and contributing to social, economic, and political development of both the community and the nation. MAMSER relies on rallies, widespread distribution of pamphlets and posters, and mass media to influence the sources of attitude formation.

In addition to the above, it is pertinent to highlight the essence of attitude formation and morals of the children in the society, which according to Onodugo and Onodugo, (2015) highlighted as the use of Omenani (the custom) by the Igbos in the communities to ensure that the children follow the cultural norms of the society and behave accordingly.

The Igbo word used in describing custom is *omenani*. This word is sometimes interpreted as tradition. *Aru* (abomination or pollution) and *Nso Ala* (behaviour contrary to the laws of Ala; that is the earth deity) are two words that are used when speaking of contraventions against approved social and religious norms. There are two kinds of custom; customs that pertain to morality and those that are purely social and cultural. Social and cultural practices are detailed for each activity that makes up the institutions of society. There are various omenani (customs) governing for example marriage, burial, offering of Kola nut, drumming or style of speaking. Such could be found in Social Studies books and class lessons. For instance, some days in the week are prohibited from working or farming. Of all these omenanis mentioned above, emphasis shall be on four market days in Igbo Land of Eke, Orie, Afor and Nkwo. In Ubomiri area of Imo State, on the market day, people do not go farming.

It is a taboo punishable by IkwoAla (a tradition of cleansing of the land) to go to farming on that market day. It is equally a taboo to go to farm in Umuonyealiugo Mbieri in Mbaitoli Local Government of Imo State. This equally affects entrepreneurial activities because for those entrepreneurs who engage in agricultural activities, such days are wasted because of such culture, and as a result, it retards entrepreneurial development. Therefore, children are taught all these omen at home (even in the schools) as they grow up by their parents, elders, teachers and custodians of the culture in the villages so that they can conform to the cultural values of the land.

Another important aspect of child upbringing in our land is the use of Religion by the Christians. According to Onodugo and Onodugo, (2015) religion is a set of common beliefs and practices generally held by a group of people, often codified as prayer, ritual, religious law. Religion also encompasses ancestral or cultural traditions, writings, history, and mythology as well as personal faith and mystic experience.

The term “Religion” refers to both the personal practice related to communal faith and to group rituals and the communication stemming from shared convictions. In the frame of European religious thought, the division of the world is two comprehensive domains, one sacred, the other profane. Religion is often described as communal system for the coherence of belief focusing on a system of thought, unseen being, person or object, that is considered to be supernatural, sacred, divine, or of the highest truth. Moral codes, practices, values, institutions, traditions, rituals and scriptures are often associated with the core beliefs, and these may have some overlap with concepts in secular philosophy. Religion is also often described as a “way of life”. Organized religion with prescribed set of beliefs, often taking the form of a legal entity. Other religions believe in personal revelation.

Furthermore, Onodugo and Onodugo argued that “religion” is sometimes used interchangeably with “faith” or “belief system”, but is more socially defined as that of personal convictions. While considerably concern has emerged about the impact of religion on economic development, little is known about how religion impacts on the decision making of individuals. Observations have shown that religion shapes the entrepreneurial decisions. In particular, Christian Religion has been found to be conducive for entrepreneurship. To buttress this assertion some Christian churches like the Catholic Church and Anglican Churches have many ways encouraged entrepreneurial activities.

For example, the Catholic Archdiocese of Owerri under His Grace Most Rev. Archbishop Anthony Obinna has been in the activities of conducting workshops and training of youths on how to be self-reliant and thereby establishing small businesses.

Societal Values

The definition of the word “Family” is necessary to understand what we know and celebrate as family values. Family in the traditional setting and in the Holy Scriptures represents the father, mother and the children. Both the traditional religion and the Holy

Scriptures also recognize siblings and other close relatives in the extended family. Family ties were so pronounced in the Bible that God warned Israelites not to pollute themselves with unlawful sexual relationship with family members (Leviticus 18; 6-20).

Family is celebrated by the society that days were set apart to commemorate uniqueness of the family members such as; Mother's day, Father's day, Children's day. Today, we have diversity of family structure at the societal level in general. The new family structure vary differently from the traditional married families, to single parent families built around partnership with or without marriage which include members who may be step parents, grandparents, gay or lesbian parents or partners.

In the time past, the father was undisputable, the head of the family and the mother a homemaker. Women had rigid traditional roles in the home and that is to keep the home, undertake domestic chores, take care of the husband by cooking delicious meals and train the children. The change in this traditional role has a great impact on the lives of men and children today. Society's recognition of the diversity of family type must be seen in the context of the evolving and changing roles engaged in by women and men and in society's understanding of same sex relationship. Feminist movements have dramatically changed the way women plan their lives in terms of how they will invest their time, whether it been invested in a career, family or other activities. Nowadays, there is a general call for men to share in the domestic responsibilities to allow women that are desirous to achieve their career, family goals and avoid stress overload.

According to Soboyejo (2010) it is a well-known fact that family values have been debased. Parents no longer play their traditional roles and children are disobedient and act flagrantly against social norms and duties. The attributes of old family values which include honesty, respect, purity, caring and commitment have all been thrown into the garbage. In the present, families have been shattered by divorce and truth has been thrown out of homes. Parents lack integrity and children are more criminally prone than being obedient. There is no respect for traditional family roles any more. Each family member is more interested in what is in there for him or her. Children are at home alone while parents are at work, sex outside of marriage is acceptable, truth is relative, and the focus is more on self-interest than family interest. There is no longer respect for lives especially as television, computer and the internet expose the future generation to commonplace crimes and more crimes. Children are exposed o videos and computer games that glorify killing, rituals and nudity. Is it any wonder that there is no respect for life anymore? Family values have been debased. According to Soboyejo (2010), parents

no longer live in the fear of God. Children no longer respect their parents. Trust has been displaced for suspicion and truth neglected for falsehood. All are in shambles. Shamelessness has taken over the front row and disarray is the order of the day. Corruption is the password as marital beds are daily defiled. Pre-marital sex is celebrated, x-rated and modeled as the norm. Lust is mixed with love. The centre can no longer hold. Those who hold on to the truth are castigated and regarded as outcast. Really this world is upside down.

Another important area to discuss under societal values is family policy. Families in Imo State/Nigeria operate several policies that help them to be united and feel sense of belonging especially when it comes to land ownership. They operate either communal or individual ownership of land, where they land is owned by the community, the elders of village makes sure that every member of the village/community gets equal land during the planting session, this policy is very peculiar to all the village in Owerri in Imo State and where the land was individually owned people try to acquire it by themselves for their personal purposes. There was also policy in marriage, how marriage rites are performed, the issue of widowhood in Imo State.

Family settlement is another aspect of societal value that needs to be looked at. A family settlement is essentially an agreement where family members mutually work out how a property should get distributed among themselves. All the parties should be related to each other and have a claim to a share of the disputed property. An agreement to how the assets of an estate will be distributed without the family going to court for decision as explained by the Law Dictionary 2nd Edition. According to Kaji's (2015, para 301)

A family arrangement is an agreement between members of the same family, intended to be generally and reasonably for the benefit of the family either by compromising doubtful or disputed right or by preserving the family property or the peace and security of the family by avoiding litigation or by saving its honour.

The agreement may be implied from a long course of dealing, but it is more usual to embody or to effectuate then agreement in a deed to which the term family agreement is applied.

Another important aspect of societal values to discuss here is education, different societies in Nigeria have diverse culture and also train their younger generation according to the culture that governs them. In Imo State younger generation are taught

how to respect the aged, care for themselves, do chores at home, both boys and girls are engaged in farm activities. Families use different ways to educate their children by presenting to the child with 'recipe knowledge' of his world – accepted norms and modes of conduct, values of his society which may shape his later personality development. Despite the fact that the Nigerian family, rural and urban areas, includes towards having firm grip of its place in the socialization process, the practical realities of the family cast aspersions on its role as the 'principal or primary agent of socialization' Meziobi, (2017).

Core Cultural Values

Value, according to Ezegbe in Mustapha and Danladi, (2017. p.237), is "the worth or importance which is attached to something" They further pinpointed that "general values represent the ideas, beliefs, and norms of any society upon which there is general acceptance. Cultural values are adapting relationship in behaviour, beliefs and tradition in different settings (Answers, 2017). It relates to the norms of a society and its culture, but they are more global and abstract than norms. Norms provide rules for behaviour in specific situations, while values identify what should be judged as good or evil. While norms are standards, patterns, rules and guides of expected behaviour, values are abstract concepts of what is importance and worthwhile.

Flying the (Green-White-Green) Nigerian flag on a public holiday is a norm, but it reflects the value of patriotism of Nigerian citizens. Wearing dark clothing and appearing solemn are normative behaviour to manifest respect at a funeral, Wearing Ashebi (traditional dressing) for marriages and naming ceremonies is a normative behaviour, people can put up in their community.

Different cultures reflect values differently and to different levels of emphasis (Santrock, 2007).

Socio-cultural values seemed to have changed, affecting the beliefs, and attitudes of the students. Members take part in a culture even if each member's personal values do not entirely agree with some of the normative values sanctioned in that culture. This reflects an individual's ability to synthesize and extract aspects valuable to them from the multiple subcultures they belong to. Examples of socio-cultural values include individualism, communalism, courage, wisdom, religion, loyalty.... Basically, anything that can be considered positive behaviour within a culture (Wiscombe, 2016). Cultural values can therefore be defined as the widely held belief of sentiment, some activities, relationship, feelings and identity that are important to the community as well as the wellbeing of individual (Mustapha and Danladi, 2017).

It is a common knowledge that if any society, nation or state must succeed she must have certain core values to which she attaches considerable significance. The values to be further through social studies education are essentially the core values of a democratic society. In Nigeria it is generally accepted, that the core values of the Nigeria nation inherent in a democracy is respect for the rights and differences of others. There are, however, certain values which citizens of a democracy should internalize if that democracy is to survive. These core values include such values as a belief in the worth and dignity of every human being, personal freedom, equity and justice for all, discipline, integrity, dignity of labour, social justice, religious tolerance, patriotism, self-reliance and a sense of responsibility for and brotherhood such as rule of law, due process of law, equal right under the law and the idea of government by representation and consent.

Some of Nigeria core cultural values could be seen in the area of integrating every citizen through the national goals that the fore fathers of Nigeria has set before us, as contained in the national goals of Nigeria as enunciated in the National Policy on Education (2004 p.7). These core values help in unified us as one anytime anywhere, these includes:

Sport

Sport is one of the unifying factors in Nigeria. The country being heterogeneous in nature, uses sport to drive unity. The relevance of sporting activities to engendering national unity has instituted national oriented sport teams that open to all.

The constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria – The nation has a constitution (revised in 1999) that guides and controls the behaviour of individuals and all the states in Nigeria. Invariably, the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 attaches unbounded premium on national integration focusing on integrating all the 619 ethnic groups in Nigeria.

Another form of core values that unifies Nigeria people is the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) this scheme was launched in 1973 with a view to ensure that Nigeria youths, no matter their ethnic origin, who graduate from Universities and Polytechnics are for one year, exposed to serve the nation in State other than their own.

Other cores values cannot be fully discussed in this work include National Identity Card, National Passport, Postal Stamp etc. These core values of Nigeria nation represent the dreams of the founding fathers of the country. But all seems to be history today because of the effects of the loss of morals. The schools in a democratic society, as one socialization agency have a responsibility to help children acquire the values which are necessary for

full participation in the society. These values are branded “core values” because they are the very heart of the way of life in a democratic society.

Cultural Shock

Cultural shock according to Mustapha and Danladi, (2017), is a psychological or psychiatric problem that arises when an individual is exposed to a culture different from his own. This could lead to a very serious mental problem if the individual fails to adjust to the new culture in which he finds himself. It can as well be seen as experience a person may have when one moves to a cultural environment which is different from one's own; it is also a personal disorientation a person may feel when experiencing an unfamiliar way of life due to immigration or a visit to a new country. Culture shock is a persistent feeling of uneasiness, loneliness and anxiety that occurs when a person has shifted from one culture to a different one.

Conclusion

So much has been said on the relationship between child rearing and socio-cultural values of children Dania (2015); Oyeku (2012); Akinola (2014) all touch on society, child rearing and development. Whichever angle any authority looks at the question of child rearing practices and socio-cultural values, the environmental influence is not to be forgotten as it relates to students at the upper Basic Education level made up of a very sensitive age group. Since there is no known record of specific studies on impact of socio-cultural values as touching child development in Imo State, parents are enjoined to take it as a matter of urgency to create awareness and encourage ethics and values as the society has deviated from values that were hitherto be held in high esteem.

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