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Educating for Moral Integrity in the context of an African Conception of Being

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Abstract

This paper is an exposition of an African worldview which can be relevant in the quest for cultural identity and a panacea for moral laxity in our contemporary society. Yoruba metaphysical view about man which reveals a physico – psychic and physico – spiritual nature of man is examined in relation to cultivating the virtue of moral integrity in people. Moral uprightness occupies a prominent aspect of Yoruba conception of being and moral integrity is defined in the social context of being a truthful, reliable and trustworthy member of society who is committed to social well being. This paper advanced that educating for moral integrity will not be all about moral habituation or exposing young people to the indigenous believe systems but also about enabling them to critically engage with their cultural heritage such that we will take the best from it to enrich our contemporary life.

Keywords: Education, Morality, Moral Integrity, African Metaphysics, Being

Introduction

Human societies are sustained by moral principles that determine desirable and undesirable and as such how to behave in society in order to guarantee peace and harmony. People may differ in their personal likings but there are moral principles that people agree on to be necessary for social harmony. The values cherished by a people are usually perpetuated through ages by rooting them in their education either formally or informally. It is from this perspective that the quality of a system of education can be judged by the extent it inculcates the types of values that are necessary for becoming the kind of person who can contribute to the peace, progress and development of human society.

In any educational discourse man is always at the focal point because it is man we are out to educate. Man should be educated because he alone is fit for education. The best we can do to lower animals is to train them for specific tasks. But man requires more than ability to perform specific tasks. He should be imbued with values to be a worthy member of human society. As such, every society, no matter how primitive, has a way of initiating its young into the world they are to inhabit so as to expose them to its character, methods, procedures and devices which are appropriate to getting engaged in it. To fail to do this is to condemn their cultural legacy to extinction.

In this paper, my attempt is to examine an African conception of being and how it can be relevant to educating the younger generation for moral integrity. The paper will critically examine the issue of cultural identity in Africa, a Yoruba conception of being, the concept of moral integrity, how integrity is conceived in Yoruba ethics and the implications of this for contemporary education. The Yorubas are Sudanic – speaking African people inhabiting south west Nigeria and part of Benin and Togo. They speak a language called Yoruba which belong to the Niger – Congo family of African languages.[1]

The Problem of Cultural Identity in Africa

The fact that most African countries have a history of colonialism impacted on their worldview and way of life. The contact of African ethical tradition with European ethical tradition has had a profound influence on African ethical conceptions and value – systems. This is so because the colonial masters marginalised African values such that Africans were expected to see their culture as inferior to western culture. Aside this, massive globalization has greatly modified and eroded most African values such that a lot is not being remember of the socio - moral foundations of most African societies. However, the question is: can Africans become Europeans or Americans? In spite of the fact that a lot may have been modified in the indigenous African values but the enduring characteristics seem to remain. As observed by Kosemani

> *Irrespective of the brainwashing of colonialism and the imperialism of modernisation and technology, basic African concepts of ethics or morality*

remain. The African, as a being in praxis, possesses the fundamentals of basic value judgement and moral response.[2]

Evandro Agazzi (1983) also attributes the seeming desire of Africans to be what they were originally to what he calls implicit ethics.[3] By this he means that every community is rooted in a mental and spiritual heritage which may not be expressed or formulated in definite form but which has a considerable influence on the worldview of the people who belong to that culture.[4] The implicit ethics gives a society a typical character which is distinct from others. As such, an African child tends to have an intuitive knowledge of his culture and no amount of brainwashing would make him or her to internalise European or any other culture as the native of that culture would do. However, Africans stills have to contend with their colonial past which has a profound influence on their orientation as they can hardly fully recapture their past. Therefore, most Africans have to identify with two realities, which are sometimes contrasting, of being African and at same time being western.

Colonialism heralded a social change which has changed the social orientation of African people from communalism to individualism and materialism. This emerging individualistic orientation is manifesting in corruption and pursuit of wealth without regard for the well being of other members of society in most third world countries. While corruption is a universal human tendency, its proportion and dimension in some developing countries is posing a serious threat to human development. While one would not fully align with the perspective that colonialism is a major cause of corruption in most third world countries, it is unrealistic to say that it has not contributed to how people behave generally and in fact their moral behaviour. Africans before colonialism were known to live simple, communal life with great sense of brotherhood and solidarity. Well being to them was not individualistic but communal. As such, people gave primacy to what the impact of their actions would be on the society as opposed to what they can personally gain or lose.

As societies become more complex and more western, the slogan began to become ‘everybody for himself’. People began to think about what they can get from the society and not what they can do to benefit the society. As such, leadership becomes a means to amass wealth rather than a call to service. As observed by Amadi, the problem of corruption or lack of integrity could be traced to the civil service during the early days of colonialism in Nigeria. He posits that as the British replaced the native judicial, political and educational systems with their own, the natives did all they could to resist it. The natives who served as warrant chiefs, court clerks and messengers to the colonial masters saw the white man as an intruder who should be outwitted at every possible opportunity.[5] The courts and the civil service especially were centre of bribery and corruption. In the opinion of the natives, they thought they were sabotaging the white man, but they were in fact destroying the moral fabric of their own society. After independence, this corrupt perspective prevailed and the civil service was still regarded as a white man’s job in which it was acceptable to cheat. As the British officials were gradually replaced by Nigerians, the incidence of corruption increased. This mindset gave way to some expressions such as ‘’ a kii sise oba ka laagun’’ meaning that ‘’ you do not have to sweat while doing government job’’, a saying which encourages indolence among the civil servants. This above is not however to not to say that people were

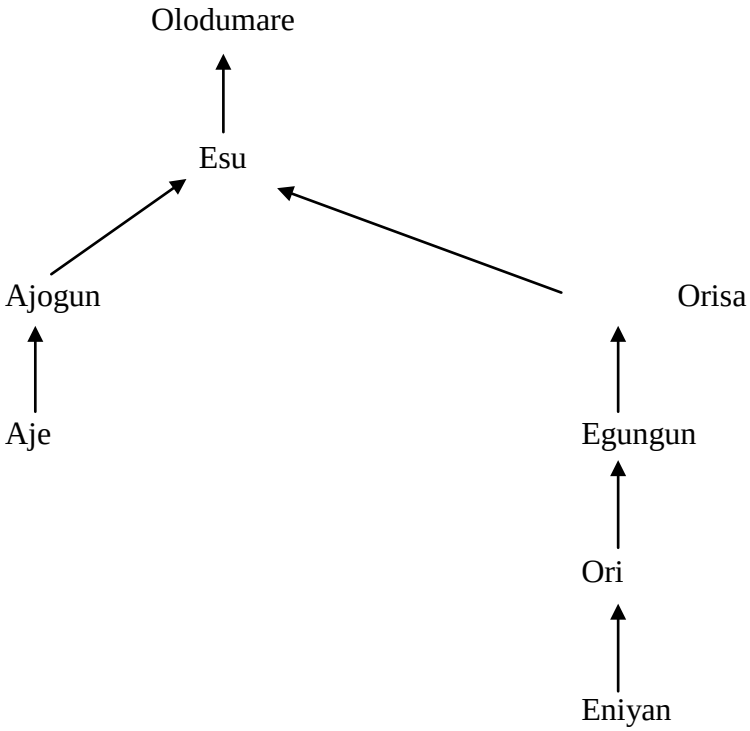
absolutely free from corruption before colonialism. It only goes to say that the incursion of the British goes a long way to disrupt and corrupt the psyche of the colonised people.

Among the 176 countries surveyed by Transparency International in the year 2013, most African countries scored below 20 out of the maximum 100 marks and Nigeria as country scored 27.[6] This goes to show that corruption is still a problem in the Nigerian society. It is true that some people have reasons to question or doubt the reliability of the TI survey for being based on mere peoples' perception, it is however a reflection of the moral tone of the countries being reported. Since it is based on peoples' perception of states of affairs in their country, it cannot easily be discountenanced as some of their critics are suggesting. Acts of corruption like bribery, embezzlement, and misappropriation of public funds are often done so discreetly that it may not easily be discovered and investigated even when people easily experience the negative impacts of the acts of venality in their daily life. No level of denial will erase the fact that corruption and lack of integrity remains a serious problem facing most African countries.

It is from this perspective that I seek to examine how an indigenous African metaphysical view of man can enrich educators' attempt to morally educate the younger and coming generations for moral integrity. A critical look at the values that are inherent in these indigenous ethical conceptions may inform articulating them in our contemporary education system with a view to resolving the moral crisis facing the Nigerian nations especially.

Yoruba Conception of Being

Being is a generic term which represents all existing things. Yorubas like most other Africans conceive of everything as being. Hence, nothing that exists is taken lightly because it is believed that there is a reason for whatever is.[7] Although they may not immediately know why a thing is created or exists, they know that all things serve a purpose. Yorubas have a hierachcy of being with Olodumare at the apex followed by Esu who is believed to be among the gods, he is followed by supernatural forces called Ajogun, then Ori (destiny), and lastly human beings.[8] This is represented diagrammatically by Ali thus:



Olodumare – God (Creator)

Esu – Devilish spirit

Ajogun – Supernatural forces

Aje – Witches

Orisa – Holy Deity

Ori – destiny

Eniyan - Humans[9]

Yorubas believe that *Olodumare* is the creator of everything. Sowande opines that *Olodumare* is derived from the word *Odu* meaning a big or great thing and *Are* meaning a stranger whose father or any of his relatives is not known.[10] Hence, Olodumare who Yorubas believe is the creator and the ultimate controller of the universe is a being who does not have a father nor mother and he creates himself. They believe that Olodumare is so great a being to the extent that they can only approach him through the gods like *Orunmila, Ogun, Obatala* and so on.[11] This is premised on the Yoruba belief that it is respectful to send an emissary to an elderly person whenever an inferior person requires him to do anything. An attempt will be made in the next section to look at how man is conceived in Yoruba belief system.

Man (Eniyan) in Yoruba belief system

Man, in Yoruba belief system is made up four components: Ara, the physico– material element, Okan – the physico psychic element, Emi - soul, and Ori – the bearer of destiny.

Ara (Body)

This is composed of the flesh, bones, intestines, blood, heart and so on. The activities of *ara* are controlled by physical laws. It is believed that the physical body should be taken care of but Yorubas also have a normative dimension to the usage of *ara*. As observed by Gbadegesin, the usage of *ara* sometimes seems to suggest that it refers to the whole person as when it is said that: *are re lo mo,* meaning that he is concerned only about himself. The Yoruba word for selfishness is *imotara – eni – nikan*. The idea is that a selfish person is concerned with his or her own physical well being without regard to the other components of his being like the soul, the heart and his destiny. When the needs of the physical body are met without regard to the needs of other components parts of the being, human well being will not be holistic. In the same vein, when an individual lives at the expense of other members of the society in a negative or fraudulent way, it is believed that the infraction will impede his own well being in the long run as he or she will not have peace of mind. It is therefore considered as ignorance to be selfish or self centred. A holistic understanding of the meaning of well being is that you give others what is due to them and you will get what is due to you and everybody live happily even with little material provisions. Yorubas believe that all humans have bearer of destiny which fight for them whenever they are cheated. In traditional Yoruba society, people are cautious of how they treat others because even if the individual being cheated is weak and powerless, his or her *ori* – bearer of detiny will fight for him or her. True well being in Yoruba conception is therefore not individualistic but communal and corporate.

***Okan* (heart/mind)**

Okan (heart) appears to have a dual characteristic to Yorubas. There is okan, the heart which is the physical organ which is concerned with blood circulation and there is the usage of okan as that which is concerned with mental activities and feelings. When an individual is absent – minded, Yorubas would say '*okan re ko si nibi'* meaning literally 'his heart is not here'. This does not mean that material organ called the heart is not present in the individual but in that context they are referring to the mind. To illustrate further, when someone is weak – minded, Yorubas would say *'ko lokan'* meaning literally that 'he has no heart' but it actually means that the person gets upset easily. The heart is believed to be seat of feelings like eru (fear), ife (love), ikorira (hatred), idunnu (happiness), ibanuje(sadness), igboya (courage), ojo (cowardice) and so on. Hence, *okan* is a very important part of the human persons as its state affects the entire life of an indivdual in fundamental ways. The implication of this analysis to moral integrity is that a person of moral integrity in Yoruba language is referred to as *eni to see fokan tan* meaning 'someone you can entrust your heart with'. This actually connotes that *eni to see fokan tan* is a reliable and trust worthy person – a person of integrity.

***Emi* (Spirit)**

In Yoruba belief system, man is made by the combined effort of *Olodumare* and some of his subordinates like *orisa – nla and Ajala*.[12] The body is constructed by *orisa nla* the arch divinity after which the supreme deity, *Olodumare* , supply *emi* (spirit) which activates the body. Having *emi* gives the title *elemi (living thing)* and this makes the created being a 'child' of the Supreme Deity and therefore worthy of protection from harms. Reference to something as *elemi* in Yoruba conception is an indirect warning against maltreating such a being. This is extended to animals and plants because it is believed that they are also part of the creative activities of the supreme deity. Hence, Yorubas frown at maltreatment of not only fellow humans but also plants and animals. It is believed by that the soul is immortal. It continues to exist after the dissolution of the body and its subsequent abode is determined by how well it lived on earth. If it lived a life of moral rectitude, it would reside in a special place of rest with *Olodumare*. If he or she lived otherwise, the soul will be barred from entering the resting place which is believed to be the home where we came from. Another reason why a soul would not be allowed to the resting place called *iwale asa* is when the owner of the soul dies prematurely and as such the spirit re - incarnates. This belief is not peculiar to Yorubas as Ibos, and other Africans also have similar belief and appellations such as *Abiku, Ndem, Ogbanje* are used to refer to re incarnated souls in their new born babies. The implication of this for morality is that the belief system goes a long way at shaping peoples' moral behaviour. There was little or no use of police to enforce societal laws in epochs when these beliefs were part and parcel of peoples' way of life because they were conscious of the interrelatedness of all that exist and the all - knowing creator who oversees all that they do. This is a religious dimension to Yorubas notion of morality.

***Ori* (bearer of destiny)**

As earlier shown, Yorubas believe that two subordinates of *Olodumare* are involved in creation of man. After *orisanla* has built the body and *Olodumare* has given the spirit, the newly created human being moves to the next stage which is the house of *Ajala* for the choice of *ori.* It is believed that man picks up the preferred case without knowing what is stored there and whatever is stored there determines the life – course of the individual.[13] This doctrine of destiny presupposes that important events in the life of an individual have been predetermined in the spiritual world. How do we reconcile this to individual effort and moral responsibility? As most belief systems that uphold determinism, they do not provide a final answer to resolve the issue. They keep dangling between the belief in destiny, the need for moral uprightness and the need to work hard to achieve whatever the individual desires to achieve. For example, in spite of their belief in destiny, they will still say *atelewo eni kii tanii je* meaning that 'your palms will not deceive you'. This implies that with hard work you can be rest assured that you will achieve your goal. A detail of this is outside the scope of this paper.

As the physical head occupies a place of prime importance in the physical well being of man because it harbours the brain, the inner head *(ori inu)* is regarded as an individual's personal

divinity which caters for its personal interest. For the inner head to do this effectively, Yorubas believe in offering sacrifices to it. On this an Ifa corpus says:

Kosoosa tii da nii gbe,

Leyin ori eni,

Ori pele,

Atete niran,

Atete gbeni koosa,

Ko soosa ti da nigbe,

Leyin ori eni.[14]

Meaning:

No deity can favour someone

Apart from ones destiny,

Oh destiny,

Quicken to direct me aright,

No deity favours,

Except one's destiny.

In the next section, an attempt will be made to examine the concept of moral integrity in the context of Yoruba' metaphysical conception of man.

What is moral integrity?

The word integrity can be traced to its etymological origin in French integrite and Latin integritat which is derived from integer meaning entire, a whole, a whole as opposed to a fraction.[15] Mathematically, the entire class of integers consists of the positive integers 1, 2,3,4,5..... and the negative ones, -1,-2,-3,-4,-5 ..... Hence, a person of integrity means a person who is of one piece or someone who can be described as a whole person. Integrity suggests a firm adherence to a code of conduct or artistic values. It is an unimpaired condition of soundness or completeness of a thing.[16] The word by and large connotes

entireness, wholeness, intactness of a thing, an individual, a process or a social group. This gives the concept its positive connotation as it is often used to ascribe fullness, maturity, and soundness to whatever it is used to describe. For instance, integrity of a social group suggests cooperation, unity and oneness of its members such that all members of such a group are urged against actions that may threaten its integrity. At the level of states, the primary role of armed forces is to protect the territorial integrity of the nation from external aggression and internal insurrection. The Nigerian civil war of between 1967 and 1970 was fought to protect the integrity of the nation by preventing the southeast of the country from seceding.

Integrity can be ascribed to data and information. We can talk of data integrity when the data have not been altered or destroyed in an unauthorized manner or when the data is protected against unauthorized modification or destruction. Thus, data integrity in information Technology language guarantees reliability and authenticity of the information or data. It also applies to a work of art when they work still maintain its pristine purity and has not been adulterated in any form.

Biologically, we can talk of integrity of the ecosystem when there is harmony and balance in the activities of all the organisms such as the green plants, animals, birds, snakes and human beings that occupy the biological community. This harmony is necessary for a balance in nature which is for the wellbeing of individual organism in the community. One can also talk of integrity of the body system. A system is a group of organs in the body which serves a common purpose, for example, the digestive system consists of organs that help the body to take in food, prepare the food for body use, absorb the parts that are useful and eject the parts that are not useful. Integrity of the digestive system is determined by the extent to which the different organs harmoniously work together to perform the function of digestion and the extent to which the digestive system work in harmony with other body systems to ensure biological integrity.

As a human quality, integrity is a term used to describe, evaluate and recommend people with regard to the quality of their sense of honesty and truthfulness in their conduct and motivation for action. A man of integrity lives up to what he says. As submitted by Musschenga, a man of integrity shows external consistency as well as internal coherence in his beliefs, values and conduct.[17] External consistency, according to him, refers to congruence between what an individual says and what he actually does. From this perspective, integrity means doing what a person says he would do and as such he who habitually fails to keep his words would not be a person of integrity. Internal coherence, on the other hand, requires that an individual's beliefs and values as well as his actions are logically connected.

Carter attempts an abstraction of three components of integrity. He posits that moral integrity represents the integration of moral discernment, consistent behaviour, and public justification.[18] Moral discernment, in his view, is the ability to distinguish what is morally right from what is morally wrong. This discernment should not be arbitrary but should be as a result of reflection on the meaning of good and bad as well as how the meaning applies to 'self' and 'others'. According to him, this moral discernment also includes ability to draw conclusions that would enable the individual to develop convictions. Consistent behaviour

has to do with the ability to constantly act on the convictions. This means that a person of moral integrity would act reliably across time and situations even in the face of temptations and adversity. The third component, public justification, Carter opines is seen in the ability to openly articulate that one is acting on the basis of conviction which has resulted from deep reflection and evaluation. In other words, a person of moral integrity is sure, confident and open enough to share his or her convictions with the public. The word 'public' in this context, suggests 'outside the self', that is, he or she must be capable of extending his or her convictions to others. This implies justifying ones moral convictions in a social context and this distinguishes a person of moral integrity from a self – seeking or an obstinate individual.

Integrity is generally considered to be a moral virtue because it has to do with reliability and trustworthiness of people. In our social relationships, ability to trust and be trusted is basic to social harmony. When many people in a society are not reliable and cannot be trusted, the society can be described as being morally sick and as such can hardly make any appreciable progress. Integrity as a virtue that is constitutive of many virtues and dispositions which have to be developed in an individual before he can practise integrity. These are virtues of form, virtues of unified agency, intellectual virtues and volitional virtues.[19] Virtues of form are related to quality of an individual's commitment to a rule, practice or set of practices. Examples of such virtues are honesty, openness, sincerity, loyalty and dedication. Intellectual virtues are of central importance for interpretation principles and rules in concrete situations while volitional virtues are relevant for withstanding pressures and temptations to act is a way that is contrary to normative expectations, values and standards.

Moral Integrity in Yoruba ethics

Every human society no matter how simple or primitive has its own idea of what is acceptable and unacceptable pattern of behaviour in such a society. Opinions, however, differ as regards the foundation of Yoruba concept of morality. There are those who claim that religion is the foundation fo Yoruba morality. In this school of thought are scholars like B. Idowu and J.S Mbiti. There are also scholars such as Kwasi Wiredu, S.B Oluwole and Segun Gbadegesin who argues that Yoruba morality is a secular one. Oluwole argues that Yoruba morality is based on the Golden rule and utilitarian considerations and not on the ideas of God or gods.[20] In his view, ethical thinking in Yorubas rule of morality as opposed to rules of etiquette and rules of taboo are based on reasoning and are explained in terms of the well being of the society. He explained that rules of etiquette such as modes of greeting are customary rules while taboos can be attributed to the gods but moral rules are based purely on social consideration. He thinks that gods are only involved in situations when man's limited sense of judgement could not ensure absolute justice. For example, when there is a case of theft or any or infraction and all effort to unravel it proved abortive, Yorubas could beseech the god of thunder called *Sango* to intervene by unravelling and punishing the offender. Sango would not only kill the person with thunder storm, he would also put what he or she has stolen on his corpse in public glare. This served as a potent social check on people in the traditional Yoruba social setting. This could lend credence to the view that Yoruba ethical thinking is religious. However, there is also the secular and purely social dimension to it. Yorubas are very sensitive to personal and social relationships as well as corporate existence

such that if you ask an average Yoruba man why he would not steal he is likely to respond that *aa tii gbo* meaning 'it is un-heard of'. He is not likely to make reference to the punishment of the gods. This is because each person is subject to social scrutiny, each polices the other and public opinion plays a key role on shaping how people behaviour. Yorubas therefore resort to gods in few cases when there are knotty cases of social infraction.

What is relationship between Yoruba conception of being and moral integrity? In Yoruba conception of man eniyan is he who can be taken for his words. They would say *ka soro ka ba bee niyi eniyan* meaning the essence of man is that he keeps his words. The word eniyan as shown earlier, therefore, has both ordinary and normative meanings. *Kii se eniyan* (he is not human) means that that the individual being referred to lacks the qualities of a good, moral person. *O seniyan* (he is human) on the other hand means that he is a good, moral person. This suggests that moral uprightness is a key part of their definition and understanding of man. As such, a person who habitually breaks his promises or behaves in any other immoral way would lose his or her standing as eniyan and will not be reckoned with in the scheme of things irrespective of his wealth, knowledge or other qualities he or she may have.

Another dimension to Yoruba understanding of moral integrity is the commitment of the moral agent to socially shared values. Moral integrity to them is not all about being principled but also about being concerned about the welfare of others. There is the saying that '*ti a ban gegi nigbo, o ye ka foro ro ara eni wo'* meaning that before cutting a tree in the forest, put yourself in the position of the tree'. This means that one should reverse the role when performing an action by putting himself or herself at the receiving end. This appears to be similar to Kant's categorical imperative which states that 'act only on that maxim whereby thou canst at the same time will that it should become a universal law'. As such, moral integrity is not all about holding strong moral principles but this should be in social context, that is, on the basis of promoting social well being.

A man of integrity is Yoruba language is 'eni to see fokan tan' meaning literarily 'someone one can entrust with ones heart'. As shown earlier, the heart occupies a position prime importance in man's physical and spiritual being and in spite of its centrality of the heart to your well being, you can entrust it with that person without exercising any fear. *Eni to see fokan tan* is opposed to *alailotito, onikebekebe eniyan* (someone who is inconsistent and unreliable) and therefore cannot be entrusted with something of importance. The issue of leadership crisis in Africa readily comes to mind here. As long as morally bankrupt people occupy the seat of power, there will be end to human suffering because the fate of people is being entrusted with people who are unworthy of it. As advance by Plato, people who should lead the society are not supposed to be given to appetites, sensibilities and feeling, but they are those who are committed to higher values and moral discipline. He submitted that no nation can develop until the highest callings, that of philosophers and that of ruler were merged into one, that is, 'until philosophers are kings'.[21]

At the societal level, Yorubas strongly believe in communal living and therefore frown at any action that can threaten the integrity of the society. They hold that human actions are like a

seed (irugbin) which is sown, germinates, and bear fruit not only for the doer of the action but also for everybody in the community. They say *'ti ara ile eni ban je kokoro buburu, o ye ka so fun tori wuruere re ko ni je ka sun loru* meaning 'when your neighbour is eating a poisonous insect, you better stop him because his groaning at night would not let you sleep'. With this worldview, each individual is concerned about the well being of others and possible consequence of his or her actions for himself and for others. As Koseemani puts it, African moral concepts can be summarized as 'I am because we are, I exist because this community exists.'[22]

Implications for Education

Any education which is devoid of morality would not be able to fulfil the primary goal of education which is to produce individuals who will contribute positively to the development of society. hence, intellectual as well as moral development have to go together in an ideal educational system. Bamisaiye rightly describes moral education as:

> *the process of education in which we develop a learner's intellectual ability along the values of the society.*[23]

To educate for moral integrity, we may have to go beyond moral habituation. This is because integrity is not all about conforming to the status quo especially when living in a corrupt society in which social support for integrity is weak. In such situations, to uphold integrity could be mean being different and to be different is not always easy. It requires courage and self motivation to hold constant values and withstand temptations to join multitudes to do what is not right. In this wise, education for moral integrity should develop in learners 'critical, imaginative thinking, motivational self – sufficiency and moral unity'[24].

An educational system that would produce persons of moral integrity would necessarily have to enable them relate critically with their culture. Since not all aspects of our culture are glorious and are worth preserving as they are, people should have a critical attitude to them so that we preserve those that are conducive to our social well being and discard or modify those are may be harmful to our contemporary way of life. For example, Yoruba and most African culture place too much emphasis compliance and submission to the constituted authority to the extent that upholding that practice may impede individuality of children and their need to develop to morally autonomous human beings. In a cultural environment that submerges the individual in the group, creativity and integrity may be hindered.

Again the communal nature of social life sometimes encourages corruption as the Nigerian society becomes larger and more complex. Since it is seen as a virtue in most African cultures to be your brother's keeper, many public officers engage in favouritism and nepotism when it comes to allocation of national resources in order to favour their kinsmen. This is seen not as corruption but as a virtue of being brotherly. It takes courage to do otherwise as it usually generate condemnation that you occupy a public office and your kinsmen do not benefit and they are treated just like other from other persons from other ethnic group. Education for moral integrity should therefore teach and develop people to the level at which

they will look at issues from a wider perspective of our common humanity and not from ethnic or racial perspective.

Children's school years are very important to their moral development. Therefore, the formal education system should play a significant role in moral education. One of the way by which this can be done is through integrative approach. This approach aims at restoring character formation to a central place in schools. It entails recasting the school mission statement, programmes of learning, programmes of activities and programmes of guidance to reflect formation of character formation. It also requires that teachers are hired not only on intellectual grounds but also for their moral qualities.

With respect to the programmes of learning in the school, subjects like languages, social studies, history, sciences and can be used effectively to promote learners moral development. Local languages should be made compulsory because through them learner can have access to the indigenous cultural practices and so can have intuitive knowledge of what is right and what is wrong in the context of their culture. Apart from this, teaching of history of our past heroes can go long way towards conveying to the learners a vivid images of the kinds of personality our society admires. By this, learners can be motivated to emulate people who have exhibited high level moral integrity in history.

Aside the formal curriculum, school traditions, rules and regulations can go a long way at impacting on students' moral sense. Students should be allowed to hold opinions and school rules and regulations should be rooted in reasonableness rather than mere coercion.

In conclusion, Yoruba conception of being places premium on man's moral uprightness and his ability to contribute to the wellbeing and development of his society. It is, however, important to educate the young such that they have a critical attitude to their culture so that they will imbibe the aspects of it that is conducive to our contemporary life and modify or discard aspect that are may be detriment to our collective existence.

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