

**EXPLORING CULTURAL EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE MORAL
DEVELOPMENT AND ETHNIC INTEGRATION IN OGUN STATE, NIGERIA**

BY

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Abstract

The study explored cultural education for sustainable moral development and ethnic integration in Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive survey research design where a questionnaire was used to acquire necessary data for the research work. Simple random sampling technique was utilized to select a sample of one hundred (100) respondents consisting of Social Studies students of FCE Abeokuta, Ogun State. Two (2) research questions were raised and answered in the study. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentage. The findings revealed that cultural education is significant in enabling the individuals develop good morals for ethnic integration and achieving personal and professional goals; that through cultural education, the individuals are able to acquire information in terms of norms, values, principles, ethics, morals, principles and standards; that the inculcation of these traits helps the individuals turn into effectual citizens of the country. Therefore, the study recommended that cultural education should be introduced as a compulsory course/subject from primary to tertiary levels of education in order to inculcate moral values, character and civil responsibilities into students.

Keywords: Cultural Education, Moral Development, Ethnic Integration, Sustainable, Integration

Introduction

Education is regarded as an important instrument that establishes the foundation upon which livelihoods opportunities of the individuals are enhanced. In the present existence, the individuals, belonging to all communities, categories and backgrounds have recognized the significance of education and aspire to enrich their educational skills. The acquisition of education and development of literacy skills according to Khanam (2010) augment the skills and abilities of the individuals to get engaged in the implementation of various tasks and functions. Within educational institutions at all levels, to carry out one's job duties in an appropriate manner and when students are dedicated towards achievement of academic goals, they need to recognize the impact of culture on education. Culture and education according to Ezegebe (2008) are inseparable and they are regarded as two sides of the same coin. Every human society devotes considerable time and resources towards augmenting knowledge among individuals regarding cultural education (Obanya, 2005). Acknowledgement of culture in the field of education helps in the enrichment of the overall system of education.

Culture according to Falade, Akinola and Adejugbe (2009) plays an important part in the lives of the individuals. Education on various elements of culture helps the individuals in adapting to the social and cultural environments, in the development of personality, in the socialization of the individuals, in making appropriate use of leisure and recreational activities, in treating other individuals with respect and courtesy, in preventing imposition of any unfavorable effects upon anybody, in understanding of other cultures and significance of liberality. Cultural education is primarily imparted to the individuals in the family, communities and schools (Obanya, 2005).

Cultural education has a significant contribution to the transfer to knowledge, competencies and values among individuals. Within the course of pursuance of cultural education, the individuals generate awareness in terms of morality and ethics (Gyekye, 2002). These are regarded as indispensable for the development of one's personality, adequate sustenance of living conditions, achieving one's goals and objectives and enrichment of the overall quality of life. Cultural education facilitates the development of skills and abilities as these are necessary for the individuals to carry out various tasks and activities. Cultural education according to Nbofa (2003) promotes historical awareness, contributes to the formation of the individual's identity and encourages creative and inquisitive attitudes that benefit the individuals throughout their lives.

Cultural resources vary from region to region. Due to this, inequalities are formed and individuals from different divides do not obtain opportunities to acquire same cultural experience. Acquiring cultural education generates the feeling of pleasure and contentment and promotes well-being of the individuals and communities.

Individuals are introduced to aspects of culture in their primary and secondary education. Within the course of acquisition of this education, individuals are able to acquire the opportunity to pursue cultural interests.

The various teaching-learning processes and instructional strategies that are adopted to promote cultural education among students are through arts and crafts, music, singing, dancing, and other creative activities. Apart from these, in academic lessons also, individuals are provided knowledge and information regarding cultural values(Ogundare,2000). When the individuals are able to acquire an efficient understanding of cultural traits, they are able to have some level of improvement in their livelihood opportunities and maintain good terms and relationships with others. In order to

render an effective contribution towards promoting well-being of the community and nation as a whole, apart from acquisition of educational qualifications and development of competencies and proficiencies, it is essential for the individuals to acquire cultural education.

The theoretical set of individual rules of actions that are considered adequate and admired in a specific group of communities within a specific territory is called 'ethics.' Morals play a very important function in determining the behavior of human beings. Societies also thrive and cultivate relations through practice of ethical morals. The ethical virtues like integrity, equality, truthfulness, justice and politeness are appreciated as well as inevitable for healthy relationship among individuals irrespective of their race and color (Khanam, 2010).

Ethnic integration is the entire set of social processes by which individuals of different ethnic backgrounds continually interact. This results in changes to the cultural content, structural form and ethnic identity of the participants. There are, according to Obayan (2005), four forms of ethnic integration: the Melting Pot, the Mosaic, the Dominant Conformity, and the Paternalism Model. There are also several levels of ethnic integration; these range from the necessary adoption of society-wide attributes and the participation in secondary institutions, to the adoption of different cultural attributes and the participation in the private sphere of the primary institutions (Ogungbemi, 2007).

Cultural education incredibly influences the moral and character building of students. Cultural education helps the individuals to acknowledge their identity. Within the household, educational institutions, employment settings and communities, the individuals have certain roles to perform (Ogungbemi, 2007). It is apparent that all individuals aspire to achieve their goals and objectives, which are personal and professional. Apart from

focusing upon the achievement of one's goals and promoting better livelihoods opportunities, the individuals need to work towards promoting well-being of the communities. For example, educators employed in educational institutions are not only engaged in employment opportunities to generate income to sustain themselves but are also making use of their educational qualifications, competencies and aptitudes to promote well-being of the community (Torpev, 2006). One can promote well-being of the community by not just imparting knowledge in terms of academic concepts, but it is also essential for the educator to encourage cultural education as well. Cultural education can be encouraged by generating awareness among individuals in terms of morality, ethics, values, norms, principles and standards in their culture.

Making culture as part of the school curriculum would help the students in understanding the significance of education and learning (Adediran, 2021). In some cases, students do not show interest and enthusiasm in academic learning. The major causes of this are inability to understand academic concepts and problems and challenges experienced (Obanya, 2005). However, when the local culture is blended with the school curriculum, students develop some motivation towards learning of academic concepts. The curriculum and the teaching-learning methods need to acknowledge the cultures, values, norms, principles and the overall lifestyles of the individuals. Apart from educational institutions, individuals are able to acquire an efficient understanding of cultural education at religious places, historical places, museums, heritage sites, research institutions and places of worship.

In cultural education, there are provisions for extra-curricular activities as well. The extra-curricular activities focus on creative skills among individuals which enhance their understanding. Furthermore, to promote cultural education in an appropriate manner, it is

vital for the teachers to possess adequate skills, competencies and abilities to be able to carry out their duties in an organized manner. Well qualified and well trained teachers promote amiable and pleasant learning environments which motivate students towards acquisition of cultural education.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study is to explore the role of cultural education in sustaining moral development and ethnic integration in Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. Identify the prospect of cultural education in sustaining moral development and ethnic integration in Nigeria.
2. Identify the relationship between Cultural Education and moral development for ethnic integration in Nigeria.

Research Questions

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the following questions were raised for the study:

1. What are the prospects of cultural education in sustaining moral development and ethnic integration in Nigeria?
2. What is the relationship between Cultural Education and moral development for ethnic integration in Nigeria?

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population comprises of all Social Studies students of FCE Abeokuta, Ogun State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select one hundred (100) respondents as the sample for the study. A self-developed questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection. To ensure the validity

of the instrument, the researcher gave the draft of the questionnaire to the experts to restructure the instrument in line with the research questions. The instrument was validated by experts in Educational Test and Measurement. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach Alpha which yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.72. Data collected was analyzed with simple percentage.

Data Analysis and Presentation of Results

Question one: What are the prospects of cultural education in sustaining moral development and ethnic integration in Nigeria?

Table 1: Prospects of cultural education in sustaining moral development and ethnic integration

S/N	ITEMS	YES		NO		TOTAL	
		Freq (N)	Percent %	Freq (N)	Percent %	Freq (N)	Percent %
1.	Culture plays an important part in the lives of the individuals	70	70%	30	30%	100	100%
2.	Learning the elements of cultural education helps the individuals in adapting to the social and cultural environments	85	85%	15	15%	100	100%
3.	Cultural education promotes historical awareness, individual's identity	90	90%	10	10%	100	100%
TOTAL		235	78%	55	22%	300	100.00

The analysis in table 1 shows the prospects of cultural education in sustaining moral development and ethnic integration in Nigeria. In item 1, 70% of the respondents agreed with the statement while 30% disagreed. In item 2, 85% of the respondents agreed with the statement while 15% disagreed and for item 3, 90% of the respondents agreed with the third statement while only 10% disagreed with the statement.

Question Two: What is the relationship between Cultural Education and moral development for ethnic integration in Nigeria?

Table 2: Relationship between Cultural Education and moral development for ethnic integration

S/N	ITEMS	YES		NO		TOTAL	
		Freq (N)	Percent %	Freq (N)	Percent %	Freq (N)	Percent %
1.	Cultural education promotes historical awareness, contributes to the formation of the individual's identity	50	50%	50	50%	100	100%
2.	Cultural education encourages individuals in terms of morality, ethics, values, norms, principles, and standards	64	64%	36	36%	100	100%
3.	cultural education promotes appropriate manner in an individual	49	49%	51	51%	100	100%
TOTAL		163	54.3%	137	45.7%	300	100%

The analysis in this table indicates the relationship between Cultural Education and moral development for ethnic integration in Nigeria. From table 2, item 1 attracted 50% agreed and 50% disagreement with the statement. For item 2, 64% of the respondents agreed with the statement while 36% disagreed and for item 3, 49% of the respondents agreed with the statement while 51% disagreed. In the total, 54.3% of them concurred while only 45.7% disagreed with all the statements.

Discussion of Findings

The analysis in table 1 shows the prospects of cultural education in sustaining moral development and ethnic integration in Nigeria. In all responses, 78% concurred with all the items while only 28% agreed with all the statements.

This shows the prospect of cultural education for sustainable moral development and ethnic integration in Nigeria. This finding confirms the fact that cultural education promotes

historical awareness, contributes to the formation of the individual's identity and encourages creative and inquisitive attitudes that benefit the individuals throughout their lives. Cultural resources vary from region to region. Due to this, inequalities are formed and individuals do not obtain opportunities to acquire same cultural experience. Acquiring cultural education generates the feeling of pleasure and contentment and promotes well-being of the individuals and communities.

This view is in line with Obanya 2005) that cultural education helps the individuals to acknowledge their identity. Within the household, educational institutions, employment settings and communities, the individuals have certain roles to perform. It is apparent that all individuals aspire to achieve their goals and objectives, which are personal and professional. Apart from focusing upon the achievement of one's goals and promoting better livelihoods opportunities, the individuals need to work towards promoting well-being of the communities.

The analysis in table 2 indicates the relationship between Cultural Education and moral development for ethnic integration in Nigeria. In the total, 54.3% of the respondents concurred while only 45.7% disagreed with the statement.

This view is in line with Obanya (2005) that cultural education helps the individuals to acknowledge their identity. Within the household, educational institutions, employment settings and communities, the individuals have certain roles to perform. It is apparent that all individuals aspire to achieve their goals and objectives, which are personal and professional. Apart from focusing upon the achievement of one's goals and promoting better livelihoods opportunities, the individuals need to work towards promoting well-being of the communities.

The excursion to the world of various scholars seems to show that the problems with national integration and security challenges emanate from lack of moral education that create virtuous national environment. For this reason, the society must endeavour to instill a sense of identifying right and wrong deeds in the citizens, because when people learn to do good and love the good, they take delight in doing the good. Cultural education is regarded as significant in enabling the individuals to develop good morals for ethnic integration and achieving personal and professional goals. Through cultural education, the individuals are able to acquire information in terms of norms, values, principles, ethics, morals, principles and standards.

Conclusion

From the findings of the study, it was concluded that, cultural education is a significant component of traditional society that enables the individuals to develop good morals for ethnic integration and achieving personal moral development. Through cultural education, individuals are able to acquire information in terms of norms, values, principles, ethics and moral standards. Inculcation of these traits would help the individuals turn into effectual citizens of the country.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that:

1. Cultural education should be introduced as a compulsory course/subject from primary to tertiary levels of Nigerian education in order to inculcate moral values, character and civil responsibilities into learners.

2. Research shows that those who grew up under a corrupt system tend to be corrupt. Therefore, all leaders (various associations and organizations, including teachers, public office holders, politicians and parents) should lead by example.
3. The inculcation of cultural education for moral values should not rest on the shoulders of the teachers alone but must also involve parents, religious leaders and community leaders as well.
4. Youths should learn to identify pride in self-worth regardless of race; colour, or creed. Discrimination will disappear from society when persons are judged not by skin colour, ethnic background, or the class to which they belong, but by their ability and integrity.
5. Provision of the right education/training that will ensure the possession of a stable skill suitable for youth to enhance and participation in social orderliness and national development is essential.

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