A Reflections of David Hume's Problem Of "Is" "Ought" In Nigeria's Education System: Implication for Moral Education.

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Introduction

David Hume one of the British greatest philosophers is the first philosopher to raise concern on the proposition of "is" "ought". Hume in Omeregbe (1996:116) questions the validity of the transition from "is" which he calls "proposition of fact" to "ought" which he calls "proposition that enjoins obligation".

He used the proposition of fact and that of obligation to refer to the human nature.

In his words, "the "is" "ought" dichotomy with regards to human nature stems from the fact that the human being, unlike the infra-human beings, is a being who is not yet fully what he is meant because man is not a finished product".

He goes further to attests that "if man were finished product, a ready-made being, the "is" "ought" dichotomy would not exists and the problem of deriving normative propositions from descriptive proposition would not arise, but man is yet an incomplete being, a being who is not yet what he is meant to be'.

For to say, Hume continuous "that something is lacking in a being implies that there is something which ought to be in that being but which is not there".

In referring this to the Nigeria's educational system, it shows that the education system is not yet what it is meant for.

All over the world, education is seen as an important tool for the development of human person as well as his society. It is based on this fact that the planners always plan it to reflect the will and aspiration of the people. But in some situations, gaps exist between planning and implementation. This may be the problem of Nigeria's education system.

To buttress this fact, Nigeria's education planners may have been making series efforts to ensure that the education system meets the targeted objective which is the production of educated men that will be of "good character". This Akinpelu affirms as the most important quality of and educated man.

Unfortunately, the education system is not producing men with this quality. Evidently, the involvement of many product of Nigeria's education system in crime related offences such as sex for mark, thugring, armed robbering, kidnapping and so on attest to this fact.

Amaele (2010:169) argues on the same direction that "Today, some of those who have enough does of Nigerian education are armed robbers, prostitutes, murderer, hired assassins, drug dealers or users, thugs, secret cultists, dupes, cheats, arsonists etc. Yacub (2012 in his observation of this, lamented that "the Nigeria's educational system does not appear to be engendering the expected positive qualities in its product, especially since the late sixties till date. We need to know what has been responsible for the unexpected result".

In the process of searching for this, the concepts of education, morality and moral education will be briefly analyzed for better understanding and application. Thereafter, the work will look into the Nigeria's education system as to find out what is wrong, and finally solution will be offered through recommendation.

Conceptualizing Education, Morality and Moral Education:
Education is not an easy concept to define this is because opinion differs in what constitutes education. Based on this, Omordu in Osaat (2011:81) views it as "multifaceted". Various philosophers and educationist define it in their various ways, at the end of their views, it points at the same direction which is transmission of values from one person to another, or from generation to generation.

It is based on this value nature of education that Okoh (2003:86) views education "as the testing laboratory of human values" Kosemani (2007:13) views education as "the transmission of culture from one generation to another for the benefit, survival and continuity of any given society. For O'connor (1957:5), education is "a set of values or ideas embodied and expressed into the purpose which knowledge, skills and attitudes are imparted and so directing the amounts and types of training that is given".

Well in any angle we may view it, one may rightly define education as the intentional transmission of societal cherished values from one person to another or generation to generation in morally accepted manner.

Morality: Morality is the basis of ethics as Omoregbe affirmed. It could be seen as the rightness or the wrongness in human actions. It deals with the question of what is right and wrong or what is evil or good in human conducts. It is based on this that Amaele (2010:71) affirmed that;

> It is the ability to establish differences between what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. This is related to conduct of individual's behaviours or attitudes. It deals with the goodness and badness of an action, character and disposition.

To Higgins (1967:46) morality is "the quality attributed to human actions by reason of its conformity or lack of conformity to standard or values according to which it should be regulated".

Looking at morality in all angles, it concerns human conducts or actions as it relates to his fellow person. It is on this basis that the common saying that man is a "moral animal" emerged. To this end, Omoregbe (1993:102) affirms that "morality is rooted in man's nature and the right understanding of man's nature is necessary for the right understanding of morality". Omoregbe further lamented that "morality is a mean to an end; no bad means leads to good end, a good means must lead to a good end".

All these views hand point to good relationship among human person for better and progressive society.

Therefore, morality is the quality of human action as it concern good or bad, right or wrong, and the ability to choose the right or good as against the wrong or bad for better human relationship and progressive society.

Moral Education: Moral education as the combination of two concepts of morality and education point to the direction of teaching and learning of how to choose positive societal values for interpersonal relationship. It is based on this that Aminigo and Nwokugha (2013:95) citing Peter defined moral education as;

> *That aspect of education which aimed at promoting in the individual a desire to gain the greatest possible knowledge and understanding of whatever kind that will help him make autonomous choices that are based on careful and informed thinking about the issues involved.*

To Okoh (2003:88), it is "programme of study which teaches the pupil about behaving in accordance with a certain standard of what is good, while rejecting the bad".

However, as earlier stated, moral education concerns about transmission of skills and ability to choose the good human actions or behaviour as against the bad or negative ones for better relation and progressive society.

Nigeria's Education System: Nigeria's education system has come a long way, from the era of traditional education otherwise known as indigenous education to the era of missionary down to this current system which is offshoot of the missionary but coined to be known and called western education. This current education system which is modified in contents and method originated from the missionary education.

From its first era (stage) till this current system, there is no where it aims at the production of criminals, armed robbers, killers or those that will work against the progress of the society. Yacub (2010) argued on this direction thus;

> *One can hardly see where a country has defined the objective of its education system as being aimed at producing irresponsible citizenry or churning out graduates that did not or could not acquire any skills that would be relevant to society as they pass through the anvil of the educational institutions.*

From 1977 when the first policy paper for uniform education in Nigeria otherwise known as National Policy on education was formulated till the current edition in 2014, there is no where the document pronounced any negative objective.

The policy paper 2004 (4th edition) stipulates the role of education in National development.

In order to attain this, the Nigeria's philosophy of education is based on:-

a) The development of the individual into a sound and effective citizenry.
b) The full integration of the individual into the community, and
c) The provision of equal access to educational opportunities for all citizens of the country at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal school system.

(National Police on Education 2004:7)

The policy paper captured the bull by its born when it affirms that;

> *For the philosophy to be in harmony with Nigeria's national goals, education has to be geared towards self realization, better human relationship, individual and national efficiency, effective citizenship, national consciousness, national unity, as well as towards social cultural, economic, political, scientific and technological progress (NPE 2014).*

Then the goals of education which is derived from the philosophy are:

- The inculcation of national consciousness and national unity.
- The inculcation of the type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigeria society.

- The training of the mind in the understanding of the world around, and the acquisition of appropriate skills and the development of mental, physical and social abilities and competencies as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of the society.

In line with this, the quality of instruction at all levels is channels towards the inculcation of the following values. They are;

- Respect for the worth and dignity of the individual
- Faith in man's ability to make rational decision;
- Moral and spiritual principle in inter-personal and human relation.
- Shared responsibility for the common good of society
- Promotion of the physical, emotional and psychological development of all children; and acquisition of competencies necessary for self reliance.

Proper examination of these values to be inculcates, they all hand point to the same direction; that is a better inter-human relationship for progressive society. To this respect, the business of education is to better the life of the recipient who in turn better his society.

Yacub (2012) concord this fact as he asserted that "Education has no business other than empowerment, the cultivation of skills as well as the inculcation of sound moral values for the betterment of the individual and the state".

From personal experience, after proper examination of the education policy paper on the topic titled "the purpose of pre-primary education" and its associated instruction, the primary education and its curriculum down to both that of secondary education (junior and senior) one hardly see any subject that is related to character development, values education or even

moral education. Only what one could see that is somehow related to the development of character is "Religious knowledge".

In a multi-religious society like Nigeria that has three major religions, which one of among the religion that the curriculum would cover? Religious on its own has its values known as religious values which are transmitted to the recipients in a method known as indoctrination.

Therefore it is obvious from the foregoing that upon all the instructions in the national policy paper, there is no moral education as a subject in the policy paper. If we recalled the view of Akinpelu on the importance of "good character", there is no subject in the National Policy on education from its inception that geared towards the production of autonomous moral personals that would make sound and autonomous moral judgment. This knowledge is inculcated through the subject of the curriculum. Therefore, the inability of Nigeria's education system in relation to the production of morally sound individuals, in the meeting its objectives is blamable to absents of moral education in her school curriculum. One would rightly argue that the moral ill of our society today is the outcome of lack of moral education in her education curriculum. What is used today in the place of moral education is Religious studies. So moral education in Nigeria schools is taught along religious line with its methods, curriculum, contents and instructors. Therefore moral education is lumped with religious studies as one.

Aminigo (2013:98) in his observation of this lamented that "we observe that despite the government takeover of schools, moral education in Nigeria is still conducted along the religious lines of the missionary school days".

The religious based morality in our educational system may have some deficiencies or a challenge in the production of autonomous moral personnel's that Nigeria requires for its multi-religious nature.

Deficiency of Religious based Morality

Nigeria is a multi-religious country, with three major religious namely the tradition religion, the Christian religion and the Islamic religion and other minor ones. If the religious based moral education is allowed to play paramount role in Nigeria, which among them would impart national consciousness for the unity of the country? The most important point to note on this is that each of them operates its doctrine, then how would it be possible to produce good character person that would be accept by all the religious for the unity of the country? This would help in making moral values related to each religion as well as subjecting it.

Iheoma (1995:47) highlighted other inadequacies of religious based morality thus;

> *A number of arguments have been put forward in support of this view. First, it is speculated that a morality based on religious beliefs inculcated from childhood might be abandoned in adult life if and when a loss of faith occurs.*

In his second point, Iheoma argued that "It is alleged that a religious morality must necessarily be an authoritarian morality since the reason for accepting the moral principles based on religion must be that they are commanded by God". He continuous that;

> *As a consequence, a religiously based moral education will hinder the development of truly and autonomous moral agents. In those countries which have a constitutional separation between church and state, the presumed link between morality and religion is mistakenly used as an argument against the teaching of morals in public schools system.*

Finally, Iheoma lamented that "It is feared that failure to distinguish moral education, religious instruction may lead some teachers, especially at the

secondary school level into confusing the aim of moral education with their evangelistic and sectarian interests".

Aminigo (2013:99) equally argued in favour of this fact thus "In essence, despite the clear emaciation of the goals of moral education in the direction of autonomous moral reasoning, problem abound concerning the moral religion with the danger of sectarian indoctrination and its attendant "peril". Therefore, religious based moral education in a country like Nigeria would not produce autonomous moral thinkers that could manage the socio-economic and political sectors of the country firmly. Then what are the challenges of autonomous moral education in Nigeria.

Challenges of Moral Education in Nigeria: Moral education in Nigeria is facing numerous challenges. These challenges are not new, but were created by the missionary education that gave birth to the current western education system. If we may recall, the early western schools were purely Christian oriented with the sole goal and aim of evangelism. The Nigerian environment and culture were not relevant in the program rather it was aimed at capturing and refining it to their taste. To this end, the problem of Nigerian was not aimed to be solved through the type of education then. The culture of the Nigerians and education were not in harmony rather operated against each other, so the challenges of moral education in Nigeria includes;

- **Absence of curriculum:** It is no more news, neither is it stories that moral education has no curriculum in Nigeria. Kosemani and Orubite (2003:36) observed this fact when they lamented that "the curriculum of the early Christian schools in Nigeria included mostly the 4RS; reading, writing, arithmetic, and religion. The bible was the basic text and education was seen primarily as an aid to evangelization". Aminigo (1999:8) also affirmed this fact when he lamented that "thus we observe that despite the government takeover of schools, moral education in Nigeria is still conducted

along the religion lines of the missionary school days". So moral education in Nigeria have no curriculum.

- **Lack of Methodology:** It is worthy of note that since religious and other similar instructions took up the place of moral education, their methods were also considered for moral instruction. Iheoma (1995:188) explains that "with regard to methods, since moral instructions were part and parcel of religious education, the dominant method was to teach moral through reading and studying of the bible and other religious literature".

  This position was clearly explained by Kosemani and Orabite (2002:36) when they said that "the main method of learning was rote, that is, repetition and memorizing" Aminigo also attests to this fact. Therefore moral education is lacking methodology in Nigeria.
- **Cultural challenges:** Education is supposed to be based on cultural values of society, as well as the notions of common history, common political and economic attitudes, common language and vision for the future. But the problem of viewing values as relative which has taken the thinking of the Nigerians and the imposition of western culture on the people of Nigeria also compounds the problem of moral education in the country.
- **Capitalistic Tendencies:** Nigerians has witnessed a shift from the traditional humanism and communalism to western materialism and individualism, this helps in strengthen the economic status of few individual, selfishness and greediness became the order of the day instead of thinking about the happiness wellbeing of the majority of the people.
- **Who should teach moral education?** Hence moral education in Nigeria is missing in the national policy on education, no curriculum as well as method; there is no institution for the training of qualified instructors to handle the subject. The training is left in the hands of religious groups whose sole aim is to get new converts. Its mere memorization of fact and the indoctrination of the learner by the

> religious studies teachers without at the same time committing the learners to the voice of reasoning cannot work effectively in teaching moral education. This system only teaches moral prohibition without considering the learners autonomy. Moral education requires professional moral educators with sound qualities which many religious teachers do not have.

Other challenges facing moral education in Nigeria includes; change in value system, what value system should be taught etc.
Because of these challenges, moral education in Nigeria is baseless and invisible. Would Nigerians benefits any positive thing from moral education if all things being equal?

Moral Education and National Development: There is no gain disputing about the relationship between morality and national development.

Development as perceived by Rodney (1972:1) is "many sided process". According to him, "At the level of the individual, it implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self discipline, responsibility and material well-being". At the level of social groups, Rodney viewed it as "an increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relationship", while on the economic sector, development implies increase capacity for dealing with the environment by its members.

Rodney further lamented that; "However, what is indisputable is that the achievement of any of those aspect of personal development is very much tied in with the state of the society as a whole".

If the achievement of personal development is tied with the state of the society as a whole as Rodney lamented, then what is society? Society is made up human persons who coordinate their well-being. It is based on this that Omoregbe (1993:147) attest that "the most important aspect of the

development of any country is indisputable the development of human personality. It is, in other words, the moral development of the citizens that constitute the country". This hand point to the fact that the development of a state is a link to the moral development of the citizens of the said state. So, national development is the product of citizen's moral development and moral development is the product of moral education.

From this fact, it is obvious that national development is no more the product of science and technology, neither is it the product of availability of numerous mineral resources. The case of Nigeria has made this fact abundantly clear. With the presence of crude oil from Niger Delta, gold from Zamfara, arable agricultural land and other natural resources, the country is begging in midst of plenty. Nigeria is still rated as the poverty hub of the world, due to immorality of her citizens. This shows that a country may be blessed with multiple mineral resources, science and technology and yet poor. It is based on this that Ogundowale (2004:93) argued that;

> *Development is not so much a matter of what we have, but of what we do with what we have; how we do it and how well. Development this is the desire and ability to use what is available to continuously improve the quality of life, liberate people from the hazardous poorer and influence of natural geographical, socio-historical, and world environment.*

It is only matured moral developed persons that could manage the resources of a country to better the welfare of her citizens. It is on this note that morality would not be separated from development. Development of any country depends wholly on moral development of her citizens. This is because it is the morally sound personals that would coordinate and

develops other sectors of the country before national development would occur.

Omoregbe put this argument to rest when he lamented that "for we cannot talk of development of a country if its citizens are morally underdeveloped and immature". He went further to affirm that "the moral development of its citizens must precede other aspects of development otherwise the process of development would be obstructed by the immorality of the citizens". Therefore citizen's moral development leads to national development of a country.

Recommendations

1. Moral education should be made a core subject in all levels of our educational program, and should be made compulsory as to qualify the saying "found worthy in character".
2. Reward for good behavious in our educational institutions is a means to encourage moral uprightness in our learning institutions and should be encourage.
3. Public office appointments and recruitments should be based on moral uprightness of individuals. This will encourage good behaviour in our society, and brings all the sectors of the country into developmental limelight.

Conclusion

From the analysis so far, it is obvious that moral education as a subject is lacking in the Nigeria's education system. It is also clear that religious studies, with its method, curriculum, and instructors are used in the place of moral education. From the study, it is also observed that religious based moral education has no required moral ingredients that would produce autonomous moral thinkers that would develop this country. It may not be wrong to attribute the moral lapses in the country to this fact. Therefore, for our educational system to produce its targeted objectives (production of men with good character) it needs to undergo the reformations that are listed below:

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