Re-Orientation of Value System in Ogba Ethnic Nationality

By

Christian Idibia
Department of Educational management,
Faculty of Education,
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education,
Rumuolumeni, Port Harcourt,
Rivers State, Nigeria

Abstract

Ogba kingdom the land of "black Gold" is currently deeply endangered morally, politically, spiritually and religiously. This negative scenario is caused by value - disorientation. The paper after critical examination of the root cause of the current ugly moral atmosphere in Ogba, states right types of value, value re-orientation as way out from the shambles moral behaviours, the extrinsic and intrinsic value system as it affects Ogba people, education as well as socio-economic development in the kingdom. The paper further proffers solutions to this ugly situation through cultivation of intrinsic values system in the youths as well as adults of Ogba kingdom.

Keywords: Re-Orientation, Value System, Ethnicity, Education, Socio-economic development

Introduction

In times like this, when Ogbaland is of age and at the day of Nchaka festival proclamation that angry youths stormed the gate of the monarch destroyed and stoned security men on duty.

As if that was not enough, few months later, marked the beginning of what I may phrase as "mass youth madness" (MYM). This marked the killings and beheading war among Ogba youths. It does not ended in killings and beheading alone but extended to rapping of women both married, unmarried and even young girls, ritual killings, certified rubbering and so on. These calamities spread throughout the four zones of the clan and even to the nearby clans such as Egbema and Ekpaye. Obviously, this was not accidental but an evidence to prove to the world that Ogba clan was and still is suffering from moral shambles or lapses.

At the family levels, things were not better, even in the communities and the entire clan level also. In some families, children chased and kidnapped their brothers to the extent that some family has scattered. Again, the rich people mostly the oil workers and business men were kidnapped on daily basis and subsequently released after payment of some millions of naira as negotiated. Others had to leave the clan with their families for their safety. This trend continued till the level that the clan was divided into zones controlled and headed by different cult group leaders.

But it disturbs one's mind to hear that the trauma Ogba clan passed and is passing through is political.

Well, at certain time in the life of a person, community, or even clan like Ogba comes an effort to re-order or re-organize it, if there is feeling or feelings of dissatisfaction, and abnormality with the existing conditions. It could be social, political or moral. Such initiative could be from the educationists, elites group, social clubs or even the traditional leaders provided it is aimed at changing the mind or attitude of the citizens towards their value system. It is a welcome effort as it would inculcate into the citizens the spirit of oneness, respect for one another, tolerance, contentment, brotherliness and respect for the dignity of human person. Such efforts will also instinct fear into the citizens on crime against humanity, the gods and the land. This will not only help in stabilizing the functionality of the clan but would equally give the clan a good image in the eyes of the outside world who may want to engage in business transactions with the citizens of the clan or even doing business in the clan.

Although Ogba people have had similar kind of initiatives as a means to discouraged immoral behavious/acts in the past but in different forms.

In the late seventies, in the clan, any person caught on the crime of having sexual intercourse with the sister were flogged nakedly in public place, at a time in the clan, those caught in stealing were killed, and even in the year 2011, at the eve of the calamity period, all the major towns and villages in the clan used their traditional way/means of juju spread round against killings, stealing, raping, adultery etc. Sometimes 2015, the general overseer of Deeper Life Bible Church, Bishop (Prof) Kumuyi stormed the land on one of the most populous crusade ever to sanitized the land. Within the same period too, a renowned man of God, Rev. (Dr) Umar Ukpai also stormed the town of Omoku on another huge population crusade also in the name of sanitizing the land.

As it stands, these past efforts by the leaders of towns and villages as well as those of the renowned men of God does not seems to work. Why is it so? Because of the new value system of the people of Ogba: Ogba people is suffering from the impact of wrong values which were introduced from outside the clan as against its traditional values of primacy of community over individual, respect for parents/elders, personal discipline, integrity, self service, sense of justice, truthfulness, hard work, honesty, abhorrence of cheating etc. This supplanted of foreign values in the land with its dangers is the cause of all the negative activities and actions that the people of Ogba are going through. In order to really apprehend the work, let us ask and answer this question, what is value?

Concept of Value:- The concept of value has multiple and complex interpretations in line with the view of various philosophers most especially moral philosophers. Okoh, (2003:39) views it as "a selective orientation toward experience, imply deep commitment or repudiation which influences the ordering of choices between possible alternatives in action". To Anameze, (1996), "it is elements that guide person's choices in a definite direction".

Anya, (2010) citing Nduka, perceived value as "an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence".

In any way one views the concept of value, obviously, in a society, there are certain characters, actions, ideas etc that society may wish to sustain and transmits to younger generations.

These sustained ethics; behavious, actions etc may have certain quality inherent in them or useful for further satisfaction that the society cannot do without wellbeing. These behaviours, actions, ethos, materials etc are valued. Their values could be due to the quality in them, or their usefulness for the satisfaction of human and the society as a whole.

Therefore, values are seen as those actions, behaviours, ethos, materials, etc that are cherished by man, praise/price worthy, satisfies, etc. It connotes important objects, things (materials) behaviours, character, objects etc. Amaele (2010:10) made this assertion clearer that "values therefore are standards of conduct, efficiency or worth which a society endorses, maintains and even transmits to her members' present and future generations". "Values are those positive ideas that society hold on to very dearly and warmly (Nwala (2012). Based on this, there are moral value, cultural value, intellectual value, religious value, social value, aesthetic value, economic value and so on.

When these values are no more valued in a society or a change from people's values to imported ones which is what Ogba people are suffering are non moral and dangerous. These negative or non-moral values in Ogba clan has caused or is causing values disorder in the clan, then let us look at what values disorder is.

Values Dis-order:- When there are chaos and inconsistencies in a people's values and problems occurs over making choice of what is right and what is wrong, what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, what is good and what is bad. The end point of these situations is value confusion or values dis-order.

In their paper titled "Re-orientation of value system in Nigeria" Okoh and Ibekwe (2012) cited Anamaeze, who viewed value dis-orientation as "when there are inconsistencies in a person's value and consequent disagreements over what is right and what is wrong, then we have value confusion or disorientation". This is what Ogba clan is facing, which calls for urgent concern in the clan. It's effect on the members of the clan and also to the foreigners who are doing business in the clan are very sympathetic as negative values are in saturation in almost all the sector of the clan. This has been and is still causing problems and threats to the social harmony, a situation which is rendering all the traditional values of the land useless. The youths are mostly affected by this ugly scenario as they are faced with the challenges of making values choices. Although the situation in Ogba may not be peculiar to the clan alone as Ibekwe (2002) claimed that "the youths in almost every country of the world was deeply uncertain of its value orientation" what is peculiar is that it is in excess to the extent that the youths turns to militia with armed causing and committing meharms in the land neglecting the traditional values of hard work, sincerity, contented, justice, truthful, integrity and so on. The presence of these moral values in the land before is an indication that the clan was a peaceful and hospitable clan with all form of positive values that sustained the peaceful co-existence amongst the citizens and their neigbours. From this, we will look at the clan and its value system before the latest breakout of mass youth madness (MYM) as was earlier called from 2011 till date.

Ogba Traditional Values:- Ogba the land of black gold as it was known and called since the discovering of crude oil in sixties has been a peaceful clan made up of hospitality and kind people. The people had been known for their peaceful coexistence amongst themselves and their neigbours such as Egbema people, Ekpeye people and Aboh people even the Ikwerres. The people of Ogba used to enjoy good friendly relationship to the extent that most Onuobudos (Linages) members are scattered all over the clan. Ellah (1995:1) affirmed this fact that "the members of the various Onuobudos are to be found in all parts of Ogba". This is to buttress the fact that there was unity among the people. Hard

work was never pushed aside but as a means to survival. To this, all the families in Ogba have Ogbonru (farm settlement/plantations) where farming and fishing activities were practiced. Due to values on hard work, names such as "Ekah bu Okrobia" (Hard work is a man), Dike di La obu (strength is in mind) and so many others were used as nike names for young men. To this, there was no abject poverty (Ogbonyi Onuntuh) as everyone engaged on the production of food for his/her family consumption, to this, begging, stealing, killing, class struggle were not felt in the clan. Isiali greetings were held in high esteem as people of Ogba have respects for seniority (elders), mother's relatives and senior brother's wife. This is to say that Ogba people values respect for elders, mother's relations, elder brother's wife and constituted authorities. Elders were regarded as those next to the gods.

Justice was seen and practiced in the clan. This was made possible because the people believed in the gods and ancestor. Shrines were seen as where truth could be obtained. This was because of the belief and fear of ancestors who comes as spirits to punishes whomever that do wrong or cheat his fellow man. In short, Ellah (1995:8) lamented on the nature of Ogba people and values thus;

> *Ogba people were generally contented and happy, peace loving, orderly and proud, contemptuous of all forms of menial service other than the properly regulated farming, fishing and treading activities carefully allotted to every man, woman and child in the community by immemorial custom and tradition on excessive conscious of outward appearance with lavish clothing.*

Ellah further affirmed that "the propensity of the generality of Ogba people towards pomposity and adornment of their persons indicated clearly that they must have enjoyed prolonged period of peace".

Children were raised by both parents and other members of the extended families and the entire society. No parents received gifts of any kind from his/her child without knowing or asking how the child got the gift. No parents allowed their children to dress in a rough way neither would they see their children dressing what does not belonged to them. Parents were equally watch dog on their children, as they questioned their children on dressing of new materials such as shirt, dress, shoes, watch etc. children were not given the chances to go and sleep with their friends as this was seen as means of corrupting the children morally.

Forest and farm lands were regarded as sacred places for the gods. For this reason, fighting, crying, sexual intercourse, etc on the forest or farm land were regarded as evil which its occurrence attracts appeasing the spot with rituals. Married women were also seen as sacred, as no man is allowed to cross his hand on the neck of a married woman (another man's wife), tap her back or hold her two hands. To this, married women were not allowed to go with bare neck i.e without necklace whether at home or outside the home. Any violation of these rules attracts fines and appeasing the gods (Ndeze).

There were forbidding plays such as brother and sister facing each other in a closed range, looking at married woman buttock, or touching her jaw, sitting on husband and wife's bed etc.

In short the people of Ogba were good custodians of culture, norms, rules and order. Any member of the clan that goes against these rules was forced to face difference punishments of various capacities according to the level of offence. This was a means of sustaining law and order. Unfortunately, things have fallen apart in Ogba as regard to their traditional values. The center can no longer hold, as the values system in the clan has make U turn. What used to be is no more, what we have now is foreign values system imported from outside the clan. This imported negative value has kept the clan restless as peace and order are no more. The clan has turn to war front without soldiers. Then, let us look at the current value system in the land?

Current state of value in Ogba clan:-

It is very sympathetic and painful to see what the people of Ogba clan passed through few years ago and even till now, if not for the presence of indigenous security outfit OSPAC.

The introduction of bizarre values has put the clan in value shambles situation. At the home level, children no longer listen to the advice of their parents and elders, living vagabond lives for the sake of committing atrocities. They (parents and elders) are seen as those with obsolete ideas..

Those forbidding plays and sitting patterns between brother and sister become the orders of the day.

Dressing patterns that were forbidding become home dressing pattern in the presence of parents and elders.

On the others hands, parents accepts gifts of various kind from their children whom they knew are not working without asking for the sources of it.

Parents allowing their children to sleep anywhere like sheep without shepherd. Children are no more questioned by parents or elder when they see them with expensive things such as wears, handsets, motor-cycles or even motor cars, in some instances, even building houses without the knowledge of the way about of their resources by parents or elder ones. They don't care attitude and slogans such as; "that is how other children are doing", "you want to expose your family to outsiders" etc. become the order of the day, and they are the things that kept us where we are today in Ogba.

The current much values for money as against virtue, money speaks no matter whatever or any sources it comes from no problem, I must make it no matter e.t.c syndromes are the diseases in Ogba for now. People turning things upside down, turning paddle upside down to paddle canoes, chewing corn from the head, and cutting yam from the head.

Achebe in his story noticed that things has turned upside down, those who were supposed to correct the situations all joined the trend and the respects and values of Umuofia all vanished and he called it "Things fall Apart, the center cannot hold, mere anarchy is loosed upon the land".

Things has fallen apart in Ogba, those who are suppose to correct it (parents/elders) all join the new trend thereby washing all Ogba traditional values away.

Farm lands and forests which used to be sacred areas before has turned to sexual ground for men and women leaving homes and houses, married women that forbids certain plays and closeness are now wearing low waist, with necked neck (without necklace), showing their breast to other men and even to their own brothers. Brother Sister Body contact that used to be abominable before is no more forbidding as it is now regular occurrence. All these immoral acts experiencing nowadays have bring man closer to animal such as goat and other lower sense animals. Killings, robbering, kidnapping, easy money making ways such as bunkery has replaced hard work such as farm work, fishing and other traditional ways of earning a living.

In Omoku for example, more than 100 persons (active young men) has lost their lives from 2014-2017 on gas pipeline cutting fire of bunkry, while more than 20 buildings which were built with hard earned currency from hard-worked men has been raised down by fire due to the stocking of unrefined petrol.

The peasant farmers mostly our mothers and fathers who used to produced food for their family's consumption are now afraid of going to farm to avoid being raped or behead by the militia.

If not for the introduction of local security body known as OSPAC only God would have know the position of the clan.

In short, as earlier stated Ogba clan is now saturated with crimes of various types, ranging from killings and beheading, killing of Okada riders (motorcycle riders) raping, robbering, kidnapping, etc. Well these are the situations on grand which requires remedy.

Conclusion

We have heard enough of what Ogba people are passing through. Discussing more myriads of the problem will not solve the problem rather it will disclose to the world our nakedness but then, there is a common saying that "a problem shared is a problem solved.

The urgent need for solution is the way forward, and the urgent need as profound by this work is value re-orientation. Ogba people need to change their attitude towards material wealth of the world. But how do we go about this?

Suggestions

As a common saying in Ogba that "the beginning of sickness is always cold", the beginning of anything that will benefit a society must come from the elders (parents, elites).

The parents/elders must bear in the bottom of their heart that everything in this world is not wealth, money, material possession etc. When the elders limits their much pursuit of wealth and material things of the world and give faith to hard work, sincerity, truthfulness, good human relationship, honesty etc, then the children will learn from them as they are good in learning by imitation and observation. They will be made to know that there is no joy in building skyscrapers and executive cars while their brothers or neigbours are languishing in abject poverty as it leads to envious which its consequence may result to kidnapping and other vices. Helping the needy is very importance for peaceful society. Okoh and Ibekwe (2012) observed the very importance of helping the needy when they lamented that "in 2005, the richest industrialist in United Kingdom, when interviewed in the C.N.N news, about his plans with his money, it was discovered that he has already issued instructions as to how much money will be paid into the accounts of various arms of their government and non-governmental agencies like hospitals, old people's home, charity shops, cancer and HIV research institute etc". They further assert that when this

same man was asked about the lot to his children, "he said that his son is taken care of himself". This kind of behavious would bridge the gap between the haves and have not thereby reducing envies and strengthen brotherly relationship among the Ogba people.

As a young man/woman or youth, you should disabuse your mind from the slogan of "making it by any means" or making it by all means" syndrome. You can contribute your own little quota knowing that" little drops of water makes a mighty ocean" a journey of one million miles starts with a step, believing also that Rome was not built in a day. They should believe in hard work as the only right way to success. Although it requires endurance, slow and sufferings, hard work leads to relaxed mind success. It is the way of nature because nature uses success to reward hard work.

Success that comes through hard work is always long lasting and increases by more efforts. In short, we must follow our traditional societal value path as suggested by Nwala in Irewi et-al (2012:46-47).

- In the use of folk-story, cultural, historical and living role models in teaching basic moral values as truth, respect, honesty, courage and valour, observance of major cultural and social values etc.
- The traditional use of the folk-story enables the child to reason and locate moral ideas and values within concrete setting of life processes.
- Through inculcation of ideas located within a broad world view and vision of life (folklore, ritual activities, etc).
- Through constant parental admonition, commendation, praise, acknowledgement, expression of gratitude, reward on the hand, and punishment and reward, sarcasms, castigation, public opinion exposure and public disgrace etc.
- The application of moral codes observed in various social organizations and institutions such as age grade, masquerades, title societies. Invocation of family name and history.
- Traditional instrument of moral education or inculcation of moral values: making the child a moral agent both in consciousness and conduct.
- Through the use of cults and social symbols that extol, promote and instill various values such as justice in the symbol of Ofor (Ohuor), truth in the symbol of Uzi tree (Ukesi tree or Osi Chi), Nwa Yagara fowl of false hood (Nwaoriebah Akpahirah), Ikenga (Ikehgah) the social cult of achievement, at the same time these cults are held as capable of exerting metaphysical or cosmic punishment on wrong doers.

If we agree to these suggestions and put them in practice, the land of Ogba will be rescued from the current value shambles facing the people and it would returned to its original status.

May God save the people of Ogbaland.

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