

RELIGIOUS AND MORAL EDUCATION: ITS EFFECTS ON CHILD AND YOUTH

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Abstract

The view of this write-up is to provide a perspective on the religious and moral education on a Nigerian child and youth. In a corrupt society, where every aspect of it stinks with corruption, it is a necessity for religion and morality to be appreciated and demanded, in order to orientate ourselves and to inspire moral living on the great number of people in the society. In doing this, relevant books and journal articles were used. The findings show that the significance of religious and moral education on a Nigerian child and youth can not be over-emphasized. It is the concrete foundation on which the building of a society can be built. The nation is full of immorality which is reflected in many forms. The teaching of religious and moral education in our schools (secondary and tertiary institutions) will go a long way to correct all these decadences.

Introduction

The proposed partnership in this write-up is not exactly a blending of the two meanings of religious and moral education instead, is to bring elements of each of them into the partnership. In the source of the search for the materials for this work, it was discovered that there are good positions to adopt the best element of each meaning of religious and moral education. The term "religious education" can be traced back to the seventeenth century which denotes or often referred to as church education. The term came to have a very distinct meaning in the early decades of the twentieth century. A religious education could be looked at from two dimensions namely: (1) It could be an umbrella term for protestant Catholic-Jewish conversation

about education and (2) It could function as a bridge between religiously affiliated schools and the state (public) schools.

Lawal (2002) says that religious education are those processes designed to induct each new generation into the attitudes, belief as well as the practices of a religion or faith in order to promote the religion and at the same time provide for individual a unifying centre. Among the objectives of religious education are, to enable every student to know and perform his duties to his creator in particular and to his fellow human beings in general. Also, to enable the learners apply or use those religious teachings events, stories, experiences as well as approaches to solve personal problems, meet the challenges ahead or adapt to any new or strange situation. Lastly, to develop in the youths moral principles and values such as justice and fair play to humanity which are capable of bringing about tranquility and overall development in the society.

The term 'moral education' can be defined as the process of passing the generally accepted code of conduct 'of a given society from one generation to 'another. In other words, moral education is the transmission of right attitudes and behaviours which are acceptable to a given society to the younger generation in order to regulate their conduct in such a society. According to Adebayo (2004) Moral education has been spelt out as a process of enlightening the young people in a society about good and bad behaviours or characters, encouraging them to uphold good and discouraging them from bad so as to live a meaningful life worthy of emulations.

The development of religious education curricula has been a service to teachers. Religious education is a well-defined topic for the state-school curriculum, moral education is likely to be similarly defined as appropriate for classroom instruction. Education as a whole had a strongly moralizing character, the schools main work was thought to be properly amoral.

Partnership Between Religious and Moral Education

The relation of religious and moral education are two lifelong processes that get mixed together. Both tendencies have something of value to them, but to be consistent and effective, religious and moral education have to be conceived as having a negotiable relation within a lifelong and life-wide education. The overall

theme is that religious and moral education should be distinct but not separate areas, this principle can be accepted by both the devout Christian and the secular ethicist. In the world that has been shaped by Western enlightenment, an educational approach to morality cannot begin with religious premises. But those who act as if religion were either non-existent or morally negative just as stubborn of the religious fundamentalists they ridicule, it is time for a realignment of forces in battles over morality.

A lifelong framework for the relation of religious and moral education would have the following structure: (1) In early childhood moral and moral education together. The child does not distinguish these two realms and the adult teacher need not worry about the two processes overlapping. (2) Starting at about age five or six years, the young person needs to have some distinction between religious and moral education. This difference, brought out in school courses, may result in a sharp separation by the time of early childhood. (3) At whatever age the person finds an integral way of life, religious and moral education flow together as distinct but not separate elements in life. The person continues to learn, even in old age, from a dialogical partnership of morality and religion.

Religious and Moral Education: Its effects on a child.

According to Ridley Matt, a child is more ambiguous term than it is usually assumed to be. For example, the United Nations convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as anyone under eighteen year old. However, in most contexts, to address a seventeen year old as a child would be insulting. At the other end of the age span, a child may not include infancy. When religious educationalists say that the church has been more concerned with children than adults, they are not usually thinking of early childhood. Education is a lifelong process that begins not later than birth. While most people pay lip service to this principle, journals of education and educational experts routinely speak as if real education begins at school age. This problem is especially severe in regard to both moral and religious education. The pre-school child does not have a religion; we do not hold the child morally responsible until the age of five or six.

