

A REVIEW OF “POSSIBILITY OF REINCARNATION:  
A BIOLOGICAL EDUCATION APPROACH”

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The paper was published in 2020 in Nnadiesube Journal of Education in Africa (NJEA), Vol. 5, No.4. Reincarnation is a trado-religious belief by which a living being starts a new life in a different physical body or form after an established biological death. The phenomenon of reincarnation has been severally debated and differently believed by several cultures. Therefore, the word "reincarnation" is derived from Latin meaning "entering the flesh again". It was further defined by Reown (2013) as soul reborn into new lives, consciousness or something transcendent in an interconnected cycle of existence. This has puzzled human mind since the origin of mankind. The question is: “Does human beings truly reincarnate?”

Accordingly, the author specified that traditionally different cultural groups have different beliefs about reincarnation. The Igbo believe in Ogbanje and Ilo uwa. This is seen when a child keeps dying and coming back to life in another body in which the character traits of people who were dead are found in him. In Yoruba, they are given names like Babatunde (Father Returns) Yetunde (Mother Returns) etc. Jude emphasized on a belief in rebirth, held by Greek historic figures such as Pythagoras, Socrates and Plato (Norman, 2016). It is also to found as well in many tribal societies around the world and in African religion. It has been part of our strong cultural belief before the Advent of science and technology.

Jude strongly articulates that the advent of science has brought biology with the introduction of hereditary to the fore to counter the idea of reincarnation. Biologically heredity is the sum of all biological processes by which particular characteristics are transmitted from parents to their offspring. This involves the transmission of physical traits and mental peculiarities from ancestor to descendants through the molecular mechanism lying primarily in the DNA and RNA of the genes. For example, eye color is an example of inherited characteristics. A portion of a DNA molecule that specified a single functional unit is a gene.

Jude further explained that a gene can be dominant or recessive. Phenotype is the organism's outward appearance or resemblance while genotype is set of genes that an offspring inherits from both parents, a combination of the gene. Dominant phenotype is more apparent and visible than the recessive phenotype.

Therefore, despite the visibility of the genotypic and phenotypic traits in human, it is not totally conclusive to say that a person has reincarnated. This is because, it is not only the physical features, behavioural and biological features that make a full man; the soul and spirit inclusive. The dominant phenotype and genotype of a person can cause a striking resemblance between people but no man is born the same as the other.

Jude an astute critical thinker noted pertinently that reincarnation is a mere belief of a lay man and how he understands the mystery of life surrounded and wrapped in mere religious innuendoes that boost the aura rather than the rigor needed to appreciate realities in life. Reincarnation, therefore, remains an effort by our uninformed and tradition-based parents to unlock the mysteries beyond their explanation and comprehension. In a bid to understand all realities, reincarnation was presented to explain many forms of deaths in Igbo society and some semblance of family members dead and or alive.

However, through Biological Education approach, Geogor Mendel described the manner traits are passed on from generation to the next through parents. In this contemporary world, the religious concept of reincarnation should be abolished because it is a mere belief due to lack of knowledge and understanding of the revolution in science which has proven the transmission of genes from parents to offspring that is hereditary which could be phenotypic or genotypic that must reflect in the offspring as the case may be in resemblance. Secondly, in the case where children are born and die shortly after or later their youthful age, the parents should go for laboratory examinations to determine their genotype whether they are compatible for reproduction in order to prevent disorder in the offspring in the case of Sickle cell anemia (SS).

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