

THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL FACTORS IN CHILD LEARNING IN NIGERIA: A PHILOSOPHICAL EVALUATION OF CHILD EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Education is systematic training and instruction designed to transmit knowledge and develop skills in individuals. It has also been agreed that child learning is one very crucial part in the formation stage of anyone. Scholars have also argued that any crack in this stage, can affect the whole of the person's life. It has also been argued that most adults who become deviants in the society may have suffered from some educational missing-links during their child formation. This paper, applying the analytic method of enquiring, will be focusing majorly on the negative implications of the social factors in the learning of the child, how they can be identified in learning process, and how these effects can be prevented in the child's education. It encourages that educators invent the kind of [Albert Bandura's](#) social learning theory, which emphasizes learning through observation and modeling in teaching. Without prejudice, it is right to note that the alarming effects of these social factors in the child's learning is already a bane the educational terrain in Nigeria. Both parents and educators as therefore of the interest that the psychology of the learner be put into consideration by checkmating these factors in our Nigerian children.

Keywords: Education, Social Factors, Child, Learning and Negative Effects.

INTRODUCTION

Education no doubt is the key factor in the advancement of any nation. It is the major player in national building because through education individuals that make up the society acquire knowledge and experiences which bring about changes in their behavior. Little wonder then, Whitehead (1929) said, that "education is the acquisition of the art of the utilization of knowledge. Hence, the Government in Nigeria, though not very intentional about this strives to give education a position of great priority in the affairs of the nation. Notably, one of the reasons that informed the federal government of Nigeria to introduce the New Policy on Education (1977 revised in 1981). Even if not explicitly stated, the policy in talking about the inculcation of the right type of value and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigeria society implicitly considers that, the negative effects of social factors on learning will certainly impede this right type of value and attitude that education is supposed to inculcate in learners.

If we believe that child learning is one very crucial part in the formation stage of anyone and accept that any crack in this stage can affect the whole of the person's life, as already seen in most adults who become deviants in the society. It becomes imperative what this paper intends to address namely, evaluating the missing-links in the educational formation of the Nigerian child.

The question now is, at what point do the learner exhibit these negative attitudes of social factors? How can they be identified in learning process? where they intentionally inculcated by the Teacher and how can these effects be prevented. Without prejudice, it is right to note that the alarming effects of these factors in learning begin from the home and accelerate into the society through religion and other cultural expositions.

THE IDEA OF EDUCATION

Education as a concept appears to be defined in any precise terms, it even seems there is no general agreement as to its range of meaning or connotation. This difficulty according to Igwe (1990) is partly because it has the growing qualities of a living organism and among its permanent attributes is that is constantly changing in emphasis and at the same time, adapting itself to new demands and new circumstance. Generally, education has been viewed as a systematic training and instruction designed to transmits knowledge and develop skills in individuals. This definition embraces both formal and informal education. Some say that education is the process of changing the behavioral patterns of individuals in the desired direction. It is the learner's mode of thinking, feeling and overt action that is regarded as the behavioral change in this context. According to Yoloye (1980) some educators have Identified education as a transmission of culture, others as a preparation for life, and still others as a continuous process of growth through life. Thus, education is a process by which young people acquire the cultural heritage, knowledge ideals and civilization of the past so as to be able to take part in the civilization of the present and help build the civilization of the future. Following spiritual–sociological truths and reality, education is a systematic process of developing the individual physically, mentally, spiritually and socially for his own benefit and for the benefit of the society in which he lives.

No doubt, Obanya (1980) noted that education means more than any single one or even any combination of the following characteristics: literacy, numeracy, possession of skills, the acquisition of knowledge, the ability to memorize and recite facts and figures and even schooling, each of these does contribute something to the process of education. To get the wilder conceptualization of the concept education, Dewey (1916), notes that education is the continuous reconstruction or organization of experience, which adds to the meaning of experience, and which increases the ability to direct the course of subsequent experiences. We see from this definition that education is about habit development, solving problems and processing of experience of a learner. Hence, Herbart (1776-1841) stated that education is a process of developing sound moral character and for the good of the society. Borrowing from Herbart, Farrant (1980), said that education, describes the total process of human learning by which knowledge is imparted, faculties trained and skills developed.

This definition relates with that of Fafunwa (1989) that education is the aggregate of all the processes by means of which a person develops abilities skills and other forms of behavior of positive (and sometimes negative) value in the society in which he lives. From social perspectives, Itedjere (1997), affirms that education is a social process and a continuous process till death.

CLARIFICATION OF THE CONCEPT LEARNING

The Oxford Advance learner's dictionary shows that to learn means the act of gaining knowledge or skill by studying, from experience or from being taught. Paul Ireyefoju (2009) opines that learning is the object of educating or teaching when he talked of the object of the new entrants initiated in learning process. Kneller, (1972) holds that learning is the acquisition of skills.

Learning is an activity that involves doing something. Against this activity nature of learning that prompted Hirst, (1974) to describe learning as being polymorphous. it is difficult to point at a particular change in behavior as learning without giving consideration of the activities that constitute learning. According Farrant (1964), learning is a special activity namely, conditioning, association. It was this definition that made Oniyama (2005) called, habit learning, thus, learning as a result of the relationship between a stimulus and a response. Learning is an intentional activity directed towards an end state, achievement or success. This achievement and success is known as learning experience.

According to Tyler (1949), learning experience is the interaction between the learner and the external condition in the environment to which he can react. The implication is that the learner must be an active participant in the learning environment. This participation must bring about change. Thus, Ughamada (1998), states, that another way of looking at learning experience is to view it as any activity that the learner engages in with resultant change in behavior in the desired direction. This learning experience view shows that learning is an activity of improved growth in the learner. Learning is the acquiring of skills for function, hence, Taba (1962) holds that learning experience must have a specific function else it becomes a waste of time. Learning must be guided. This is why Edgar Stone (1983) said that experimental psychologists and teachers investigating or encouraging learning very frequently guild the learners in their efforts to solve their problems. Learning in all things is the acquisition of knowledge or skill through study, experience, or being taught. Learning is an act of acquiring new or modifying and reinforcing, existing knowledge, behavior, skills, values or preferences and may involve synthesizing different types of information. Psychology defines learning as a relatively lasting change in behavior that is the result of experience. So behavioral change is the hallmark and heart of the understanding of the early part of the twentieth century definition of learning. It holds that every successful learning must bring about some forms of changes in the learner.

THE NOTION OF SOCIAL FACTORS

There is no one single word that defines the word social, rather as an adjective, it is an

appendices word prefixed to give meaning to situations. It has special connections to society and other things, examples are social works, social climbers etc. and it is with this frame work that we have the concept social factors. On the other hand, factor is a noun meaning one of several things that cause or influence something like economic factor, thus factors are causes elements, circumstances or influence which contribute to produce a result. At this level of etymological clarification, one can ask the question what then is social factor or social factors. Social factors are those facts and experiences that influence individuals' personality, attitudes and lifestyle. According to www.ask.com social factors are things that affect lifestyle, such as religion, wealth, or family. As this definition holds, that they are things, facts and experience that either affect or influence human progressive behavior. From a psychological point of view, the world's most comprehensive online psychology Dictionary says, that social factors are factors that affect our thought and behavior in social institutions. This includes feedback splitting into smaller groups and unresolved conflict. This definition seems to give a holistic nature of the effects of social factors, for them they are feedbacks splitting into smaller groups and unresolved conflict affecting man at social levels especially in learning in all social especially within educational genre are that experiences, issues and realities arising especially from family backgrounds cultural–religions background, demographic backgrounds and other environmental related realities that affect learning and enabling impediments in child progressive growth with immediate or after mart resultant effects in the child learning behavior. Records show that the effects of social factors may sometimes delay to manifest and other times can be immediately resultant.

All of these factors, according to Oakeshott, (1973) are socially generated since man as a social being lives with other persons in accordance with desirable and acceptable rules and regulations that characterize their beliefs, attitudes, goals, choices values, customs, thoughts, feelings, emotions, pattern of inquiry and understanding of their given environment within which the learning child exist, then he or she becomes socio–environmentally venerable to what is called new entrants, that is facts and experiences already initiated into the learners community. Hence, [Albert Bandura's](#) social learning theory, which emphasizes learning through observation and modeling, is encouraged to observe the child's growth process. It will be important at this point to note the following social factors affecting learning in the child education.

SOME SOCIAL FACTORS AFFECTING CHILD LEARNING AMONG NIGERIA PUPIL

Family: A family is a fundamental social unit typically comprised of individuals related by blood, marriage, or adoption, who live together and provide mutual support, love, and care. Sometimes, family is traditionally defined by a specific structure, such as parents and children, the concept of family has expanded to include chosen connections and diverse living arrangements, encompassing a wide range of relationships united by strong bonds and shared experiences that is, a set of parents and their children in the case of immediate family. The extended family is inclusive in this biological explication.

Population/Demography: By population we mean here the group of people living within a given political or geographical boundary. It could come to mean a group of people with a given characteristic. According to Wikipedia.org, population is a summation of all the organisms of the same group or species, which live in a particular geographical area, and have the capability of interbreeding. It could also mean a number of residents within a political or geographical boundary such as a town, a nation, or the world. Demography studies human population and how they change.

Culture and religion: There are serious interconnectivity between religion and culture, religion is the acts, customs and beliefs of a people, which with regards to worship and further relationship to or with a higher being most times turn into culture. While culture is the beliefs, values, behavior and material objects that constitute a people's way of life. In culture, the spoken language and geographical location is considered a characteristic feature. Religion is a system of faith and worship. It is a devotion or worship of supernatural controlling power especially a personal god or gods or god. So, when we use religion and culture interchangeably, it is because we have considered their apparent connection with regards their ideas, beliefs, and custom etc. and how to reflect in their relationship to a higher being.

Environment: This is referred to, as the composition in nature within which the learner is nurtured or the surroundings or conditions in which a person, operates. This is the nature and nurture composition of the learning child. The dictionary defines environment as the surrounds of and Influences on a particular item of interest. It could also mean the natural world or ecosystem. It refers strictly to the place a learning is born and the situation of his or her training. It is the natural world, as a whole, or in a particular geographical area especially as affected by human activating. A situation of human operation. The land of birth and growth.

THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL FACTORS ON CHILDREN LEARNING

Effects here as used creates room for generalities it could mean positive or negative; but for the purpose of this finding, our interest is to study the negative effects of these social factors of the learning of the Nigeran child. Negative effect here, stand for antecedent errors present in a thing as a result of the lack or the absence of goodness or moral perfection. Negative effect is the bad result in any classification. Thus, the negative effects of social factors are those ill and evil, misconduct and imperfections that becomes present in the life of the child as a result of the absence of perfection. We shall outline some negative effects of the following social factor, family, population, environment and culture.

THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF FAMILY ON THE CHILD'S LEARNING

Every child is born into a family the introductory foundation of his or her human formation. They are exposed to experiences that are products of their existing interpersonal

relationship and social interaction in the family, these experiences determine what they later become. One of the functions of the family is to provide social, economic and educational security for the child.

The type of security that a child enjoys at home is expressed in his behavior at school. Secured children seen to do better in school, whereas, the unsecured children learn poorly. The eagerness, intensity, discipline and determination to learn are also learnt from the home, the school only encourages those characteristic traits that are associated with learning through teaching learning process. A family that respects success and achievement would always encourage better attitude to hard work, resilience, diligence, self-reliance and courage in the child way long before it is learnt in the school.

The occupation of parents also affects child's Learning. The socio-economic status of the family is partly a function of how parents earn their living and one of the indices of measuring socio-economic status is occupation of parents. Oniyama and Oniyama (2005). The educational qualifications of parents can also influence the child's learning too. Literate and educated parents encourage their children by exposing them to educational materials even before school age. While, most uneducated parents may not be able to teach these children, even if they are able to provide these materials for them.

Single-parenthood is also an element of that affect children. What single parents sometime refer to as care, concern and love for their children are not, but could be compensations for time spent outside the home. Single parents spend a lot of time and evening looking for means to provide food for the home at the expense of the child. This is a lack of interpersonal relationship and social interaction in the social process of the family. Giving some other considerations, children from single parent homes tend to demonstrate traces of insecurity. The size of family also affects the child's learning because parental loving attention is limited especially with the presence of poverty as the child may lack through care.

Barbara Schneider, Vanessa Keeslev and Larissa Marlock on the effect of family on the child's learning; opined, that the socio-economic family background and status of parents is a profound influence on the child's learning. According to them, children's well-being and development are influenced by the engagement of both mothers and fathers. Children are more likely to learn when they have structured home environments with clear expectations about learning. In all, children who lack all of these from social and economic family background are disadvantages and this result negatively in their leaving and affects performance in their academics.

THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF POPULATION/DEMOGRAPHY ON THE CHILD LEARNING

Population is one of the disabilities of learning in educational psychology and this is known as crowd defect in sociology. Compounding these ugly situations is overpopulation in school. It means that the available scarce resources are over stretched beyond their limits; here the facilities cannot meet the increase in school or class population. Ordinarily, the

ratio of students to a teacher is about 1:40 in the primary school, 1:55 in the secondary and 1:800 in higher institutions. This ration has no statistical proof; they are stated to describe the population growth in the school in Nigeria educational system. There are supply of benches and tables in the classrooms. The teacher finds it difficult to interact effectively with the class.

Over population leads to poor learning in the class situation in primary, secondary and even higher education. The hazards of over population in learning situation and environment are numerously great. Beginning from the difficulty of the teacher to have maximum control of the learner, to managing their noise and general classroom attitudes etc.

In all, any form of lack or ill arising from not being able to control student because of their too large population leads to failure in educational system and these to a very large extent affects the child's learning ability and productivity. This is what Demography tends to study in other to aid control over population in learning environments.

THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF THE ENVIRONMENT ON THE CHILD'S LEARNING

We have use surrounding of, and influence on, to designate the characteristics of environment. Learning is also affected or influenced by the nature and location of a community. Most Nigerian communities are agrarian, subsistent or noisy. The people there depend largely on what they can make out of the environment. In some villages children are made to go to farms, river or even market first thing in the morning before going to the school, while in class there are already tired. What about the situation were the modern parents go to events with their toddlers in a very noisy clubs and bar, only to come back very into the night, forgetting that these also affect the innocent child that will go to school the next day. They are occupied thinking of their trading experiences, fears and concerns as learning is going on.

Most times, the school may not be established in conducive areas, and even when they are the immediate environment may not be conducive especially the classrooms. Poor infrastructure, poor finishing and an analogue method of teaching instead of using the new teaching techniques contributes too to these problems. Child friendly education is centered on the comfort of the child and most schools may not have embraced this pattern of education. These environmental influences affect the child negatively in their learning productivity.

THE NEGATIVE EFFECT OF CULTURE/RELIGION IN THE CHILD LEARNING

Culture and religion are used interchangeably, but our major focus is on culture since we have been able to prove that the truth and belief system in most regions are translated through culture. Some aspects of our culture also affect the child's leaving, especially the people's attitude towards formal education which determines their consciousness too. In some cultures, the people build schools through self-help projects and give scholarships to

indigent and brilliant children of the community unlike other places with poor attitude towards education, such innocent children are never encouraged. The girl child educational restriction practiced as a taboo in some localities is another environmental menace that have left some children within such environment disadvantaged. Most parents who suffered such see it as waste of time training a girl. All of these are erroneous beliefs and alien to the 21st century educational philosophy. Until recently, this poor image which inversing affected most girls leading to their choice of carrier choice courses in school as a catalytic is being taught with the modern canvass against gender stereotyping, and equality especially within educational Spheres.

Marriage as an aspect of culture creates its own impact on the child's learning. Marriage is a necessary condition that presupposes a family; it is the society's way of legitimizing a social structure of procreation and a medium of face-to-face socialization (Morrish 1978). So, Children born outside wedlock and those taken care of by aged parents tend to feel unsecured and unsecured children do not learn effectively. Again, family situation, like monogamy and polygamy marriages influence the way the child learns in a formal setting. The children from monogamous homes may enjoy parent's attention more than those from polygamous homes where they may be competitions and other family issues. Some academic environments may influence the child with the religion alien to them. When this happens, the child's who is not abreast with the religious theories he or she is exposed to, become disoriented. Parents must make good choice of the schools they take their children to, in other to protect them. All these put to gather affect the learning productivity of the child.

CONCLUSION

Social factors will always have negative effects on the learning and productivity of the child because it is a distortion from the normal realities. And the negative effect can be enormous ranging from the family, population, environments, cultural and religious beliefs which affronts the child's openness and ability to study the correct thing. This paper, accessing the subject; the negative effects of social factors in child learning in Nigeria; suggests that the Nigeria education system create better enabling curriculum, that keeps the educators abreast of the reality discussed hitherto, as to consider the learning growth of the Nigerian child. Child learning theories like **behaviorism**, which focuses on environmental influences and reinforcement; **cognitive theories**, such as Piaget's stages of development, which emphasize mental processes; and **social theories**, like Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which highlight the role of social interaction, and other prominent theories like Erikson's psychosocial development and Bowlby's attachment theory, can be implored so as to curb the menace of the negative effects of social factors, if and only if we wants the child's learning process to match words with nation building.

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