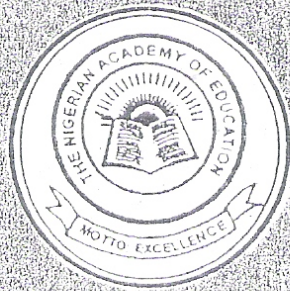


# VALUES EDUCATION



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# Changing Values in the Nigerian Educational System

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## Abstract

*This study was designed to examine the changing values in some aspects of Nigerian Educational system via descriptive and historical approaches of the pre-colonial, colonial to post-colonial era. At the pre-colonial era the major educational system though not systemized, was mainly informal and non-formal. The informal consisted of Nigerian moral and ethical values which every child learnt from adult generation by instinct e.g. mode of greetings, dressing and hygiene. On the non-formal ground the child learnt a trade which earned him a livelihood, and the period of skill acquisition was at the discretion of the master and the complexity of the required skills. e.g. learning of carpentry, masonry and bricklaying In the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the missionaries came with the sole aim of spreading the gospel in order to convert Nigerians to Christians, a systematic formal education dominated by liberal arts subjects was introduced. The weakness of the system was inadequate funding and non- recognition of the need of Nigerians as corroborated by Elliot (1945) and Ashby (1959) commissions (Fafunwa, 1980). The need for changing values in the system brought about the curriculum conference of early 70s. The conference put Nigerian educational system on a quasi-scientific outlook in form of 6-5-2-3 system, which was later found to be inadequate to the needs and values of Nigerians. And later it was replaced*

*in the 80s by 6-3-3-4 system with the goal of self-reliance and scientific outlook, which was considered necessary for the sustaining development.*

## **Introduction**

The type of educational system embraced by any society depends on the nature and the needs of the people in that society. These needs include the moral and ethical values of the sustenance of the society. This paper examined the changing values in the Nigerian Educational system from the pre-colonial, colonial to post-colonial periods with the purpose of determining the chronological changes in these values as well as their effect on the lives and property of the contemporary citizenry.

In the pre-colonial period the Nigerian Educational system was purely informal and Non-formal. At the informal level a child was expected to learn through instincts from the adult generation about the traditions of the society. The child learnt the mode of dressing, greetings and even sanitation without being confined into a definite place of learning in the formal system as it is today. Infact, it was an abomination for the Yoruba child to stretch out his hands while greeting an elder, except he is given such a privilege to do so. This was to ensure adequate moral values to be passed to the subsequent generation. Apart from this, it was a taboo in those days to see a male child put on a female's dress or vice-versa. This was considered an act of hooliganism in the society and virtually all the adult generation raised an eyebrow against this act. Furthermore, it was not traditional to use the right-hand to clean faeces as the left hand was considered for such purpose. This was to ensure adequate hygienic condition for the people to live. Fafunwa (1980) observes that informal education encompassed all facets of human livings.

As a result of the agrarian nature of the Nigerian society in the pre-colonial period another form of education called non-formal system was well organized though without a written document to regulate. This educational system was to equip intending member of the society the skill under the control of a master. It contained such trade as carpentry, bricklaying, and masonry, whose duration of mastery depends on the complexity of the skill as well as the master. These were the practices of the educational system of the pre-colonial period with

much emphasis on moral and character training, ethical values and meaningful contribution of every member of the society towards meaningful development. Meanwhile in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the missionaries came into Nigeria with the sole aim of spreading the gospel and specifically converting the Nigerians to Christians, there was a need to introduce a formalized system of education to the people in order to bridge the communication gap. Then the curriculum of the missionaries were mainly liberal arts subjects like New Testament criticism, Christians faiths, geography, Arithmetic just to mention a few (Taiwo, 1980). Though the system did not rubbish the existing in formal and non-formal ones that were met on ground, yet it failed to address the needs and aspirations of the Nigerians to the extent that some sections of the community raised an eyebrow towards its full blown. For instance Oba Ovenranwen and Jaja of Opobo were in the forefront of not having keen interest in the then missionaries' educational system. Apart from that the missionary educational system was ill equipped due to lack of materials and funding to make its operations grow as wild as that of the informal and non-formal ones. The child was taught the history and culture of the white people at the detriment of his own immediate environment. According to Olaoye (1996) it was easy for a child to locate a foreign land on a map than his immediate environment.

To this end there was nothing like scientific approach to educational system. It was based on this ill-equipped system that Elliot commission (1945) and Ashby commission (1959) kicked against the missionaries' educational system (Fafunwa, 1980). According to the reports, Nigerian education deserved to be given a pride of place in terms of the needs and aspiration of the people (Fafunwa, 1980). The good aspects of the informal educational system like proper greetings as accorded male and females were not recognized in the missionaries' educational systems. This was the practice until 1960 when Nigeria became independent and by 1963, after Republican status, it was decided that the country dominated liberal arts subjects should change into the scientific outlook while the non-formal and informal educational system should be upheld. The nature of the Nigerian educational system was 6-5-2-3 systems whereby a child was expected to spend the first six years in the primary school, five years in the secondary school, two years for higher school certificate and the last three years in the higher institution of learning. This system went for a long time until it

was discovered that it did not meet the needs of Nigerians aspirations fully. Apart from the liberal arts subjects, which dominated the previous 6-5-2-3 system of education of postcolonial era, it was decided that a virile educational system should be upheld for the nation due to the expanding population and technological advancement. The curriculum conference of the late 70s upheld among others that meaningful development of the country based in the neighbourhood of science and technology. And by the 80s it was decided that the best educational system for Nigerian should be the one to make her citizens self-reliant, which gave birth to a new structure known as the 6-3-3-4 system of education. The new system, apart from the scientific outlook, give premium to the existing informal and non-formal education which were believed to be panacea to some society's ills. The new system of education featured in table 1 below.

The 6-3-3-4 Education Structure

AGE			CONTENT	LEVEL	
19-22 and above	PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION	HIGHER INSTITUTION	VOCATIONAL	HIGHER EDUCATION	
15-18			SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS	VOCATIONAL AND GENERAL	SECONDARY EDUCATION
12-14			JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS	GENERAL AND PRE-VOCATIONAL	PRIMARY EDUCATION
6-11	BASIC EDUCATION	PRIMARY SCHOOLS	GENERAL	PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION	
3-5		PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION			

Keys



Out of school Education  
In-school Education

The chronological development of Nigerian educational system as documented by various scholars like Fafunwa(1974), Taiwo(1980) and Osokoya(1997) gave premium attention to the society as well as her march towards technological development without neglecting the informal and non-formal aspects of education but the Nigerian orientation seems to be after the formal educational system that has continued to affect the moral and ethical values of the society in general and the inhabitants in particulars.

### Statement of the problem

As a result of various preponderance of the moral and ethical decadence plaguing the Nigerian educational system the study was carried out to examine the aspects of the system in the past and present that have changed in values. Specifically, the study sought answers to the following questions

RQ1: What are the moral and ethical values in: informal education

(b) non-formal education of Nigerian educational system

RQ2: Are these moral values compatible with the colonial system of education?

RQ3: Are these moral values as entrenched in the informal and non-formal systems desirable/undesirable as witnessed in the contemporary Nigerian society?

RQ4: Should citizenship education like civic, moral instruction, garden and nature study be compulsory in the national policy on education?

### Purpose of the Study

In order to make Nigerian educational system more viable and virile, the changing values in the system is worthy of study so that the good aspect of the moral and ethical values that conform with the modern development should be continued while the obnoxious ones should be discontinued.

The main goal of learning is to bring about desirable outcomes in the learner,

either in character formation or academic advancement or both. The study will shed more light on those areas that have affected negatively the society's progress to be stamped out completely.

Finally the study would resolve those areas of culture conflict with others that had ruled the country, and that had imposed such a culture on the nation the need to juxtaposition our educational values with theirs' and not to abandon those good and laudable values.

### Significance of the Study

The study examined the changing values in the Nigerian educational system with the aim of identifying those values that are culture-friendly.

Secondly, the study would provide the adequate rationale for upholding some of these values in our educational system despite the clamoring for technological advancement. It is pertinent to state that government alone cannot provide all the needs of the citizens, hence, the study is necessary to complement the nation's educational system of self-reliance by providing ethical and moral values that could ensure self-reliance in the non-formal educational set-up. Finally, the importance of the study cannot be over emphasized, as it would be additional knowledge towards making Nigerian educational system more viable and dynamic.

### Methodology

#### Research Design

The study employed both descriptive and historical approaches in examining the changing values in the Nigerian educational system.

#### Population

The study had the Nigerian population of different tribes as the target.

#### Sampling and sampling technique

The study chose the Yoruba speaking people as sample's study via quota sampling technique. A total of three hundred people were selected for the study as follows 75 skilled labours that comprised professionals in different fields of human endeavours like teaching, engineering, healthworkers and others. 75

unskilled labours that made up of fishermen, cattle-rearers, blacksmiths and other culture-promoters. 75 semi-skilled labours that constituted drivers, artisans, market women and farmers; and 75 resource persons such as curriculum planners, policymakers, ministry of education's officials, parents, Obas, chiefs, media houses and religious bodies (Islam, Christianity and traditional religions).

### Instrument

The instrument used for the study was questionnaire designed for two categories of people. This was further divided into four broad areas as spelt-out under sample's study. The first questionnaire was meant for the literate while the second one was meant for the illiterate ones in form of structured interview.

### Validity of Instrument

The features of informal and non-formal educational system as stated by Afunwa(1980) were carefully studied and subjected into table of specifications shown in table 2 below.

Table 2: Features of Informal and non-formal education

Features	Greeting	Dressing	Hygiene	Obedience	Submissive	Transparency	Honest	Uprightness
formal								
non-formal								

These were put together and entrusted to experts in Education and English to ensure criterion related validity of the questionnaire with the features of informal and non-formal educational system.

### Reliability of the Instrument

Having done criterion related validity the instrument was administered to people of the identified two groups (literate and illiterate) though not part of the population used for the main study in order to ensure internal consistency. The exercise was carried out within a week interval and the items scored through Kuder-Richardson (KR-21) with coefficient of 0.70. The value which was considered high for the study.

## Procedures

Thirty students outside the scope of the study were trained to conduct the structured interview for the illiterate people while the principal researchers conducted the administration of other administered questionnaires to the literate. The exercise lasted for three weeks.

## Data Analysis

Out of the three hundred questionnaires sent out only two hundred were returned. The data collected were analyzed using simple percentages.

## FINDINGS

Research question one (RQ1)

What are the moral and ethical values in:

informal education (b) non-formal education of Nigerian educational system

**Table 3: participants response to question one (a)**

Statements	Skilled labours		Unskilled labours		Semi-skilled labours		Resource persons	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Greeting habits	45	15	30	15	60	05	20	10
Dressing habits	20	40	40	05	58	07	18	12
Proper sanitation habits	55	05	43	02	60	05	25	05
Uprightness at all times	53	07	41	04	65	0	19	11

The findings in table 3 showed the people opinion on what should constitute moral and ethical values of informal education expected in the national policy on education. 155 out of 200 participants agreed that proper greeting habits should be entrenched in the national policy of education while 45 disagreed. By implication 77.5% of the people believed that there were changes in values which ought to be corrected in the National Policy on Education while 22.5% were of the opinion that these values were retrogressive to the modern society, and they should not be reflected in the policy.

Secondly, 136 people representing 68% believed that proper dressing habits should be firmly rooted, as it constituted a focal point in the moral values of Nigerian educational system, specifically the pre-colonial era. Others opposed to this belief on the ground that it infringed on individual human rights to decide the acceptable life style. This 32% believed that individual's dressing habit should not be something the society should sledgehammer due to civilization in vogue. Furthermore, 183(91.5%) welcomed proper sanitation as a panacea to the different endemic diseases and as such should firmly upheld values in our educational system. Finally, 178(89%) held that uprightness at all times to be a cornerstone of good educational system and thereby need to be emphasized. Other 11% participants believed that uprightness would be a dream and need not to be entrenched since our leaders themselves are not sincere with the populace.

In summary the participants believed that these changed values in Nigerian educational system are factors that bedeviled the national integration and retarding the development.

**Table 4: participants' response to question one (b)**

Statements	Skilled labours		Unskilled labours		Semi-skilled labours		Resource persons	
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Obeying rules and regulation	60	0	35	10	40	25	30	0
Submissive to master's order	40	20	20	25	55	10	25	5
Transparency and Honesty	50	10	36	09	50	15	28	02
Punctuality at work	55	05	40	05	60	05	26	04
Ensure Dressing Code	36	24	38	07	63	02	24	06

The findings in table 4 showed the shades of opinions of participants to the features of non-formal education. On moral and ethical values with (a) 165 (82.5%) people supported the obeying rules and regulations of skill to learn to be entrenched as feature of non-formal education and 35 (17.5%) people disagree with the opinions. (b) 140 (70%) agreed on submissive of learners to master's order for him to become mastery of the skill while 60 (30%) believed

that the submission could be dictatorial without the respect of the learners' right. (c) 164 (82%) held transparency and honesty to be something missing in our educational system and this principle if held firmly will reduce the incidence of corruption to the minimal level while 36 (18%) held contrary opinion. (d) 181 (90.5%) of the participants believed that punctuality at work was very necessary to be introduced permanently in our educational system because this factor had actually made people to feel a non-challant attitude towards public life; while 19 (9.5%) believed that punctuality should feature in all forms of education. (e) 161 (80.5%) strongly believed that non-formal education dictates the form of dressing code for each trade/ skill and so the need to re-emphasize the code not only in the formal level but at all facets of human endeavour. This according to these people would reduce unethical dressing habit among all and sundry. This opinion was not shared by 39 (19.5%) of other participants on the premise of fundamental human rights.

Researches question two (RQ2): Are these moral values compatible with the colonial system of education?

180 (90%) people opined that major purpose of missionaries' education was to convert Nigerians to Christians with the remaining 20 (10%) people held a contrary belief due to their faith. As a result, majority of the respondents agreed that the entrenchment of these values were not clearly stated and incompatible with the colonial educational system. In most cases missionaries raised eyebrows when these features clashed with the "dictate" of Bibles. On the other hand, 190 (95%) people opined that non-formal aspects of our education, which gave missionaries, open avenue to get cheap labour like carpenters were valued and embraced.

Researches question three (RQ3): Are these moral values as entrenched in informal and non-formal systems desirable/ undesirable as witnessed in the contemporary Nigerian society?

The participants agreed that two-third of these values changes have affected all human endeavors be it political, economical, social and others; and they saw the value changes in our educational system as very undesirable. Infact, some people believed that the level of poverty had often contributed to these value changes. To correct these negative attitudes, these value changes in Nigerian educational system have to be corrected.

Researches question four (RQ4): Should citizenship education like civic, moral instruction, garden and nature study be compulsory and be entrenched in the national policy on education?

The responses of the participants to this view were that self-reliance could be attained if our non-formal education is well attended to. By implication, the entrenchment of citizenship education would bring back good values of educational system and the aspect of it would reduce heavy dependence on searching for white-collar jobs that are not in existence. Empty hands are devil's workshop is the tale of the contemporary Nigerian society today that has neglected non-formal and informal education for formal ones as the only solution to their needs. All these changing values have critically bedeviled the Nigerian educational system, partly due to the British culture, which the nation has come in contact with, and partly due to over clamouring for the technological advancement at the detriment of the home-based and grow development.

### **Conclusion**

From the aforementioned view it is obvious that most changing values in our educational system have greatly affected our political, economical, social and physical structures in undesirable ways. Steps have to be retraced to correct these values imposed by the British cultural system of education on our educational system.

### **Recommendation**

As a result of diverse problems facing the nation's political, economic, social and physical terrains occasioned by changing values in our educational system desirable aspects of informal education should be entrenched into our National policy on Education as done to non-formal education under 'vocational education'. This would ensure a meaningful development of all facets of human endeavor.

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Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire was prepared to elicit information from you on the changing values in Nigerian educational system. It is hoped that your prompt response will be treated with great confidentiality, as your response will be used for academic purpose alone.

Thank you for the response.

Yours sincerely,  
The Researchers

1a. Do you consider the features of informal education listed below as moral and ethical value for the sustenance of Nigerian educational system?

Statements	Agree	Disagree
Greeting habits		
Dressing habits		
Hygiene		
Uprightness at all times		

1b. Do you consider the features of non-formal education listed below as moral and ethical value for the sustenance of Nigerian educational system?

Statements	Agree	Disagree
Obeying rules and regulations of skills to learn		
Submission to master's order		
Transparency and honesty		
Punctuality at work		
Ensure dressing code		

Do you consider these moral and ethical values in (a) and (b) compatible with the colonial system of education?

Yes	No
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Are these value moral values as entrenched in the informal and non-formal systems desirable or undesirable as witnessed in the contemporary Nigeria?

Yes	No
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Should citizenship education like civic, moral instruction, garden and nature study be made compulsory in the National policy on Education?

Yes	No
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