

CORRUPTION AND VALUE-RE-ORIENTATION IN NIGERIA: ROLE OF GUIDANCE COUNSELING

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Abstract

This paper looks at lamentable condition of Nigeria as a result of corrupt practices everywhere and the need for urgent effort to initiate value re-orientation for Nigerians in order to make Nigeria a great nation. To achieve this objective, this paper will take a look at the roles of Guidance counseling in stamping out corruption and corrupt practices in Nigeria. It draws conclusion that if counseling techniques are well utilized by the guidance counselors, backed with the promulgation of law enforcing people in position of authority to visit the counseling centers at regular interval. Equally that the values of Nigeria should be taught among the adolescence right from the secondary to university level, who are the leaders of tomorrow, corruption will become a thing of the past in Nigeria.

Key: Corruption, Value Re-orientation, Guidance counseling techniques.

Introduction

A class of 25 Basic 9 (JSS 2) English language students were asked to describe the Nigerian situation in one word, they all chorused corruption. This is to show the level of decadence in our society. Corruption can be described as dishonest or illegal behavior especially by powerful people, such as government officials, and those in position of authority. It can also be described as wrong doing on the part of an authority or powerful party through means that are illegitimate, immoral or incompatible with ethical standards of the society. Corruption often results from immoral patronage and is associated with bribery. Al-Gohari (2010) observes that corruption has become a disease in many African countries threatening the comprehensive development processes and severally resisting growth. The level of corruption varies from country to country, the political and social conditions in the continent as a whole provided an ideal environment for its spread due to the simple fact that both the leaders and the led are guilty of corrupt practices.

Corruption, in form of bribery and misuse of funds can result in the failure of government to provide basic services (Umaru, 2013). A close look at Nigeria situation since independence, calls for quick intervention to protect the country from corrupt practices. All attempts to set Nigeria on the path of political, economical environmental, social technology educational and cultural greatness have proved abortive. Even though different political system have been put in place, numerous economic measures implemented, adoption of various educational policies and variety of social transformation efforts to facilitate the process of nation building, yet all these have failed because those that are supposed to checkmate corrupt

practices are deeply in the act. Nigeria has been drawn backward by poverty, conflict, corruption, poor governance, materialism, weak institutions, political misbehaviour, indiscipline and infrastructural weaknesses.

The national ethics has fallen below what was stated in the 1999 Nigeria constitution Section II sub section 23 which states that "The national ethics shall be discipline, integrity, dignity of labour, social justice, religious tolerance, self-reliance and patriotism. In view of the deplorable condition of Nigeria as a result of corrupt practices and for the simple fact that all efforts put in place to make Nigeria a great country has failed the principle of counseling psychology should be property utilized and supported to bring about the needed changes. In other words, there is need for value re-orientation especially among the entire citizenry.

Conceptual issue

Corruption, an English word known in Yoruba as Egunje, Igbos call it Igbuozu while the Hausa called it Chuachua. It is found everywhere and practiced by almost everybody in Nigeria.

Corruption according to Ekiyor (2019) is the unlawful use of official power or influence by an official of the government either to enrich himself or further his cause or any other person at the expense of the public, in contravention of his oath of office and/or contrary to the conventions or laws that are in force. Corruption is practiced by almost everybody, the leaders and the led. It is a global phenomena i.e. it is not peculiar to a particular nation, though its degree varies from nation to nation.

Corruption is neither peculiar to an era or a political party. It stemmed from leadership to the led, when leaders are corrupt, the led watch with keen interest and follow suit because there is no one to checkmate the menace. Corruption according

to Aluko (2009) has led to situation like slow movement of files in offices, police extortion of toll fees, port congestion, queues at passport offices and petrol stations, ghost workers syndrome, election irregularities among others.

Collaborating the facts that everybody is involved in corrupt practices, directly or indirectly is the fact that government officials enrich themselves by converting government money in their custody to personal use, force citizens to pay bribe and the led (citizens) induce the officials with bribe to get whatever they want without delay.

Obasanjo in Afolabi (2007) enumerated the various forms of corruption to include fee fraud (419), money laundering, unconventional and fraudulent trade practices, misappropriation or diversion of funds, kickbacks, under and over invoicing, bribery, false declarations, abuse of office and collection of illegal tolls. As a result of corruption, government have not been able to provide welfare for citizens because the resources to do are in the hands of few that are in the position of authority. There is urgent need to fight corruption in Nigeria. This paper believes that the only way to do this is through value re-orientation.

Value re-orientation

Value according to Otive (2013) are deep seated beliefs that influence people's actions and the rules by which they make decision within their society. Values determine attitudes which in turn influence behavior. In view of this, it is important that every individual, group and the nation must have core values which serves as the driving engines of development and progress. Every society needs to put in place activities that will sustain the set values. The 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria Section 23 spelt out the value of Nigeria.

However, the life experience of Nigeria is quite different from the

constitutional provision on ethics and values for the country. There is indiscipline in every facet of the society, integrity is no longer cherished, dignity of labour have been reduced by the get rich quickly syndrome, there is religious intolerance everywhere, no respect for national institution and national symbols. There have been argument in many quarters that what is needed in Nigeria is reformation in the various Sectors but in spite of the reformation projects, it was concluded that, what was really needed is more than reform but transformation.

Nigeria became independent in the year 1960. A look at the political history shows that there is political instability with about 8 military Coup d'etat and 29 yrs of military rule out the 63 years of Nigeria's existence Corruption is still everywhere because there is lack of transparency and accountability in governance and insecurity (Kidnapping, Boko Haram, and day-robbery) religious conflict and a lot of other forms of Anti-Social behavior. A large number of people became wealthy overnight with nobody to question them about their source of wealth; instead such people were rewarded with chieftaincy titles and honorary doctoral degrees.

The upcoming youth watch all these and they are internalizing all the wrong values, thinking that what they see happening represent the acceptable ways of life. The extended family value has degenerated as everybody is now minding his/her business. To achieve the desired transformation in Nigeria, there is urgent need to re-orientate our value system.

Value re-orientation is the conscious development of human resources through ideological appeals, planning, training, productivity and efficiency in achievement through cooperate culture, In re-orientating the value system of Nigeria, so as to achieve the desired greatness for the country, the following groups has roles to play through the following outlet: (i) Mass media (ii) Economy (iii)

Government (iv) Education (v) Parents/Family (vi) religion (vii) Guidance counseling (viii) Military and Para military units.

For the purpose of this paper, the role of guidance counseling/ Counselors will be focused.

Guidance Counseling

Guidance and counseling is defined as an enlightened process whereby a counselor help client(s) by facilitating growth and posture adjustment through self-understanding. Akinade (2012) also defined guidance and counseling as a process of helping an individual to become fully aware of himself and the ways in which he is responding to the influence of his environment.

It further assists him to establish some personal meaning for his behavior and to develop and classify a set of goals and values for future behavior. Counseling is a learning process in which a counselor helps an individual or individuals learn, understand themselves and their environment and be in a position to choose the right type of behaviour that will help them develop, grow, progress, ascend, mature and step up educationally, vocationally and socially. Egbo (2013) summarily said that counseling is a transformative process of helping people to learn all that are to be learnt both in and outside the school system. Also, to provide students with the skills, awareness and knowledge that will enable them to confront social inadequacy.

Roles and functions of guidance Counselor in Value re-orientation

Roles and function according to Idowu (2013) have been used almost synonymously. Roles is defined as a part one play in any given position social situation or social relationship. It is a concrete set of expected behavior, function can be described as the activities assigned to a role. To determine the roles and functions of guidance counselor in value re-orientation, there is need to take the

roles and functions from the definitions.

Guidance is defined as the process of helping individuals achieve the self-understanding and self-direction necessary to make the maximum adjustment to school, home and the community. To achieve this role, in value re-orientation, adolescents who are mostly secondary school students should be targeted and this can be done by organizing the school guidance programme to systematically and comprehensively study her pupils.

Also, by providing them with a wide variety of information about themselves their education social vices like indiscipline, corruption, embezzlement injustices, religious intolerance etc and offer them the opportunity to receive individual assistance through counseling and render Services of information, training and research nature to the school, staff, parents and community agencies in order to help them meet the needs of these pupils (Idowu, 2017).

The stated definition above will help in raising consciousness of the students to truly appreciate their value and worth in the society (Idowu, 2017) defined counseling as the process by which one person assists another person in a person to person or face to face encounter. This assistance may take various forms: educational, vocational, social, recreational and emotional or morally counseling, according to (Idowu, 2017) is the service offered to the individual who is undergoing one problem or the other and professional help to overcome the problem, a counselor is to help individual respond to influence of the environment positively and to develop and clarify a set of goals and accepted value for future behaviors.

Apart from rendering services to adolescents that are majorly found in secondary and that are equally the future leaders, the guidance counselor can equally serve as a community change agent (Idowu, 2017). In carrying out this function, counselors apart from talking and educating students about the meaning

disadvantages of social vices like dishonest, disunity and so on. The adults in the society especially, people that are in position of authority can be counseled by employing any of the following counseling techniques.

1. Self- Control methods
2. Catching Oneself
3. Behavior Contract
4. Aversion Therapy
5. Modeling

Self Control Method

This is a technique of teaching clients the requirement that would enable him have total control over his actions and in actions rather than being force to act by environmental events. For example, a person in position of authority is trained to control and record his personal asset on a monthly basis and evaluate same vis-à-vis his lawful monthly entitlement. Inappropriate acquisition would incur self-administration of punishment while lawful acquisition would yield self-reinforcement.

Catching Oneself

This technique can be used to halt a temptation to engage in corrupt practices. This technique enable the client to become aware of certain steps or activities that are directed toward the involvement of corruption with the client, the client is taught withdrawal principle that would enable him restrain himself from actions leading to the involvement in the corrupt acts. Example a government official siphoning government money anytime he travels abroad. Traveling abroad would be associated with siphoning government money and would receive withdrawal principles that would enable him to restrain himself wherever stimuli in the environment spur him to

corrupt act arises.

Behaviour Contract

This is a simple positive reinforcement intervention that is widely used by teachers to change student behaviour, parents can also use this method to eliminate unwanted behavior from children.

This is an agreement between two individuals, (e.g Coach and athlete, parent and child, teacher and students, counselor and counselee) referring to desired behavioural changes and those consequences of these changes under this technique specific expected behavior are agreed on by the two parties, i.e (Counselor and Counselee) if those expectation are met over a period of time, a predetermined reward will be given e.g. people in position of authority in agreement with the counselor can list out some undesirable behaviours like embezzlement, favoritism, bribery, misuse of government fund etc and they will agree on the reward due for the client each time he follow due process in executing government project/ policy.

Aversion Therapy

Aversion is a word used to describe a strong feeling of hatred or dislike toward a behavior or entity. It is a technique that can be used to make an individual hate corruption. For example a local government chairman may be conditioned to detest the act of misappropriation or embezzlement of monthly allocation funds: under this techniques he may be asked to picture himself receiving the allocation and using it for personal needs and as he sees himself engaging in the corrupt act, he is also instructed to picture himself been taken away by officials of economic and

financial crime Commission (EFCC) entering his office with handcuff arresting him for corruption and directing him to enter a waiting black Maria for further persecution.

Modeling

This is a technique in which a behavior is deliberately displayed to a learner or observer who is expected to learn and imbibe the behavior and carry it on. For example adolescents/Youths or people in position of authority may be refer to past leaders, encouraged them to x-ray their performances and then imbibe the good conduct and drop the bad ones.

Conclusion

The discussion of this paper shows that corruption in Nigeria can be reduced or eradicated totally through transformation and value re-orientation.

To achieve this, the role of the Guidance Counselor cannot be under estimated in the use of the stated counseling techniques for people in position of authority and the guidance counselors performing their expected roles to adolescents who are mostly found in Secondary Schools, Since they are the future leaders of our great country.

This will enable Nigerians to be proud of their value system; all the social vices that are rampant today, like religious intolerance, unemployment, insecurity, kidnapping, dishonesty, low integrity, disunity, bad neighborliness and violence will be things of the past.

Also, youths, children can be encourage to make public figures (Like Politicians, leaders in various establishment) their role model. Unlike what operates now that parents discourage their wards from emulating people in position of authority especially our nowadays politicians because of corrupt practices that is pre-dominant among our politicians.

Recommendations

It is very clear that corruption in Nigeria can be reduced or even eradicated totally through value re-orientation, and guidance counselors can be of great help if

they could discharge their expected roles effectively. For the purpose of this, the following are hereby recommended:

- i. The counseling centres in schools and also in every establishment should be adequately staffed and well equipped with modern counseling facilities.
- ii. The counseling centre be established in all establishment to be headed by a well trained guidance counselor.
- iii. All persons in position of authority should be made to receive counseling at periodic interval.
- iv. There should be a legislation that would make attendance at the counseling centre compulsory for all new entrants into governance.
- v. The guidance counselors should work hand in hand with all others agents saddled with value re-orientation our great nation.
- vi. Mobilize action via existing groups, community-based organizations (CBOs) and other structures; involving religious and traditional leaders who – in most cases – have the authority and level to influence social norms can be an effective method of mobilizing citizens, although capacity building and group strengthening may be necessary.
- vii. Creating a space to learn by moving beyond monitoring and evaluation for accountability purposes allows for adaptation and improvement. Future programmes should ensure that M&E systems are able to measure different aspects of transformative change which progresses at different rates.

Guidance Counselor in schools should be mandated to educate students and get them well informed with the meaning, advantages of having the right positive values and the effect of cultivating negative values with its attendant effects on individuals and the entire citizenry.

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