

ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF BIG BROTHER NIGERIA SHOW

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Abstract

Big Brother *Naija*, BBN in the contemporary media entertainment industry, is a show of deep lack of sense of human worth and degradation of human dignity, as well as a show of complete loss of sense of shame and basic human values. It is the enthronement of Immorality expressed in dirty romance and all forms of sexual rakishness and indulgence, mediocrity and poor value system. The researchers in this study x-rayed the ethical as well as the implications of *Big Brother Naija Show* and all other media entertainment that depict poor value system and of course gives room for all sorts of moral decadence in general. Critically reviewing available write-ups in the dailies amidst discussions on the issue, the scholars were able to bring to the open that BBN is nothing but enthronement of *immorality*. However, every Nigerian must rise up to this fight of eradicating immorality from the Nigerian Entertainment Industry since no nation can develop, irrespective of their academic and economic giants, under the auspices of moral depravity. The researchers, however, recommend among other things that the Nigeria censor group(s) should look into the scripts and scrutinize whatever the entertainment industry has for public display and consumption.

Keywords: Entertainment, Media, Censor, Immorality, Moral Decadence.

Introduction

Prior to the advent of modern technology and science advancement, life was simple and less demanding even though primitive. Men and women engage themselves in activities that could occupy their time and still give them time to rest. Children at that era were more responsible; since they had little or no source of distraction other than going for moonlight tales (Uganwa, 2009). With the emergency of technology and some sorts of electrical facilities or devices, standard of living were greatly changed and improved. The pleasure the present age is enjoying was not available to olden day people, even though it is not without negativity. Modern technology comes in with a lot of joy, comfort and easy life alongside with disengagement, distraction and disaster.

One of the most interesting and exciting inventions of modern technology is home video. There is hardly any home today without a television. Unfortunately, people are carried away by the pleasure of television without cross examining the negative influence of television on our lives especially with particular reference to the youths. A situation where the young people

could spend three to four hours watching television movie or videos could justify the fact that home videos/movies viewing among young people have engendered myriads of bad habits and behaviours. In most homes, many adolescent and youths glue their eyes on the television watching movies of all kinds. Some of these movies may adversely affect their emotion, psychic, moral behaviour and cognitive development. The prevalence of immoral behaviour among youths has been linked with the types of programmes/movies they view.

Recent research has shown that high rate of crimes in Nigerian schools and society at large could be related to influences of bad movies or videos. For instance, the display of pornography shown during most of the Nigerian movies has affected many youths and exposed them to all forms of sexual harassment like practice of homosexuality, lesbianism, rape, prostitution, incest to mention but a few. It has made our youths sexually aggressive. Practices like adultery, witchcraft and ritual practices are glamorously shown; and most of the young people do not border about the end of the practice which is usually shown at the end of the movies. Marriages and family breakdown is being trivialized. The effect of television movies could be seen in different ways ranging from presenting model of behaviour for the viewers, information to viewers that extend far beyond one's personal experience or environment and lastly to suggesting appropriate values and ideas for particular positions among others. Psychologists and sociologist has confirmed that people, especially, the youth are highly influenced by what they see. Most young people accept it as subconsciously as an acceptable code of conduct in a contemporary society. No wonder the popular slogan among Nigerian youth is "The in thing".

BBN show is neither a *Talent show* nor *Life Enhancing Show*. It is rather so irritating that it is a show where adults, young people with moral weakness, are kept in one place, celebrating every form of sexual immorality and deprivations with impunity, on the National Television, losing completely every sense of shame because of some financial peanuts while the organizers smile to their banks in billions having dubiously extorted from the public frailty. *BBN show* questions our morality as well as the fundamentals of our religious tenets as every religion is built on basic moral principles. *BBN* simply ignites the unhealthy passion in one.

Historically, *Big Brother* is a television reality game show based on an originally Dutch TV series of the same name created by producer John de Mol in 1997. The series follows a diverse group of contestants, known as Housemates, who are living together in a custom-built home under constant surveillance with regard to daily life and activities amidst loss of the sense of

shame. The *Big Brother Show* is actually an interpretation and a replay of the character in the George Orwell novel *Nineteen Eight-Four* emphasizing a big brother under a constant surveillance permitting a new world order and new ethical value system against the basic tenets for being just human. The logo of Big Brother Show is an eye literally emphasizing that *am watching* which popular opinions refer to as the *eye of horis*, an ancient symbol in the invocation of spiritual beings.

Statement of Purpose

Home video industry commands a large active audience and it is almost part and parcel of every Nigerian society. The impact of home video on culture, religion and moral behaviour has generated a lot of concern and uneasiness to many Nigerians. Much fear looms in the area of traditional values and culture of the Nigerian nation; even though some claims that it is merely for entertainment and as such does not raise any pertinent moral questions. The truth and reality of the video industry confronts us with a situation which demands immediate response; hence the problem remains.

The challenging part of the show is the handsome reward that awaits anyone who emerged as the winner. One may ask: What is the price for? What are our values and priorities as individuals and as a Nation? What impact are we making to the up-coming generations? Does it worth it, to sell off once conscience/talent/dignity for a mere porridge? The dignity of man is slaughtered on the altar of materialism and Nigerians give themselves off for ignoble things. Let us inform our youths that they are unique, fearfully and wonderfully made. Let us tell them that they are eagles and royal eagles at that. They should know that even in the dungeon, a lion's cub cannot eat grass. Let them know that what makes a leopard beautiful is inside it and not outside so that they can harness that which God has given them and use it for the good and dignity of humankind. We must fight this just cause to be able to leave reasonable footprints on the sands of time.

Definition of Terms

Concept of Media

The concept of media is one that is used to refer to all media in which an idea or message can be transmitted. Today, however, the concept is commonly related with certain media, more specifically with newspapers, television, radio, internet, graphic publications.

Historically, the media have been something very exclusive and reserved always for the upper social classes who could eat this type of information. For this we must remember that you would not just until the 19th century that would expand the literacy of societies through public education. Thus, it is

understandable to note growth that the media have had in the 20th century and today. This is not only due to improvements in technology, if not especially to the fact that it is increasing the amount of population available to receive that information. The media are, as stated in its name, a stand which are transmitted ideas of different type that may be news, advertising messages, ideological debates, etc. Always the media are broadcasting message in a language or code that must be accessible to the type of audience that is direct, this is the reason why there are different languages for different audiences.

Currently, the two most widely consumed media are certainly internet and television. This has to do with the fact that they allow the use of a diverse range of audiovisual resources that attract the attention much easier for the consumer. On the other hand, are much more visible in economic terms. Finally, in the case of internet, we must also add an important and significant detail which is the immediacy with which the message arrives at the recipient, being able to send an e-mail and receive it instantly, being able to also read updated news at the last moment on an internet news site or being able to listen or get audiovisual material in the moment in which it is published.

The media today have a very important role since they help largely, to shape the thinking of your audience, and here the game is very delicate because many media (product interests political, economic or cultural) can send a message wrong or interested to an audience that is not used to being critical about the same.

Concept of Entertainment

Entertainment is a form of activity that holds the attention and interest of an audience, or gives pleasure and delight. It can be an idea or a task, but is more likely to be one of the activities or events that have developed over thousands of years specifically for the purpose of keeping an audience's attention. Although people's attention is held by different things, because individuals have different preferences in entertainment, most forms are recognisable and familiar. Storytelling, music, drama, dance, and different kinds of performance exist in all cultures, were supported in royal courts, developed into sophisticated forms and over time became available to all citizens. The process has been accelerated in modern times by an entertainment industry that records and sells entertainment products. Entertainment evolves and can be adapted to suit any scale, ranging from an individual who chooses a private entertainment from a now enormous array of pre-recorded products; to a banquet adapted for two; to any size or type of party, with appropriate music and dance; to performances intended for thousands; and even for a global audience.

The Concept of Values

The value of a thing, be it an object or a belief, is normally defined as its worth. Just as an object is seen to be of a high value that is treasured, our beliefs about what is right or wrong that are worth being held are equally treasured. A value can be seen as some point of view or conviction which we can live with, live by and can even die for. This is why it seems that values actually permeate every aspect of human life. For instance, we can rightly speak of religious, political, social, aesthetic, moral, cultural and even personal values. We have observed elsewhere that there are many types and classifications of values. As people differ in their conception of reality, then the values of one individual may be different from those of another. Life seems to force people to make choices, or to rate things as better or worse as well as formulate some scale or standard of values. Depending on the way we perceive things we can praise and blame, declare actions right or wrong or even declare the scene or objects before us as either beautiful or ugly. Each person, as we could see, has some sense of values and there is no society without some value system (Idang 2007 p 4).

Whether we are aware of it or not, the society we live in has ways of daily forcing its values on us about what is good, right and acceptable. We go on in our daily lives trying to conform to acceptable ways of behaviour and conduct. Persons who do not conform to their immediate society's values are somehow called to order by the members of that society. If a man, for instance, did not think it wise to make honesty a personal value, and it is widely held by his immediate society that truth telling is a non-negotiable virtue, it would not be long before such an individual gets into trouble with other members of his society. This shows that values occupy a central place in a people's culture. It forms the major bulwark that sustains a people's culture, making it more down-to-earth and real. Elsewhere, we have seen African culture as "all the material and spiritual values of the African people in the course of history and characterising the historical stage attained by Africa in her developments" (Idang 2009 p 142). This simply means that there is a peculiar way of life, approach to issues, values and world views that are typically African.

Based on cultural considerations, some forms of behaviour, actions and conduct are approved while others are widely disapproved of. To show the extent of disapproval that followed the violation of values that should otherwise be held sacred, the penalty was sometimes very shameful, sometimes extreme. African culture, with particular reference to the Ibibio people in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, for instance, has zero tolerance for theft. The thief once caught in the act or convicted, would be stripped naked, his or her body rubbed with charcoal from head to toe and the object he or she stole

would be given to him or her to carry around the village in broad day light. The sense of personal shame and the disgrace the thief has brought on himself/herself, family, relations and friends would be enough to discourage even the most daring thief. Antia (2005) writes that "what a people hold to be true, right or proper with regard to those things explains much of the cultural traits by which they become identified" (p 7). What Antia calls "Traits" here can as well be called values; and Etuk (2002) writes that "no group of people can survive without a set of values which holds them together and guarantees their continued existence" (p 22).

The concern with values, whether moral or aesthetic, occupies a very wide area in the discipline of philosophy. To show the fundamental importance of values, it is regarded as a core area in philosophy, together with knowledge and reality. When we are dealing with actions that a people see as good or bad, right or wrong, praiseworthy or blame-worthy, we are dealing with the aspect of value theory that rightly falls under ethics or moral philosophy. But when we are dealing with an appraisal of beauty in the arts and crafts of a people, we are dealing with the aspect of value theory called aesthetics. It does appear that while material culture can be studied and evaluated under the aesthetic aspect of value theory, non-material culture can equally be studied and evaluated under the ethical aspect of value theory. Just as ethics and aesthetics are twin sisters that form or constitute value theory, the non-material and material dimensions of a culture together constitute two related aspects that give a people their unique identity, hence the relationship that exists between ethics and aesthetics. Having seen the centrality of values to African culture and any culture for that matter, it can be stated that the values of culture are what give it uniqueness and identity. Let us now look at African culture and values.

Review of Write-ups/Comments on Big Brother Naija (BBN)

In the Guardian of 18th April, 2017, responsible Nigerians bemoaned the aftermath of BBN. This was a day after the price of N25, 000,000 was given to Efe the winner of 2017 BBNaija show a.k.a See Gobe. Ojeifo, E said "What values are we transmitting to youths today, in a society where immorality and stupidity are rewarded with big prizes"? We cannot continue to nurture a society that places a premium on iniquitous shows such as BBNaija and expect to groom a generation of cultured, disciplined and morally upright leaders.

"The promoters of this immoral show must ask themselves what they intend to make out of it; they must ask themselves what values and morals they are projecting to the larger Nigerian society." "They must honestly answer if they'd

be proud to gather their children in their living rooms at home and make them watch such a distasteful show.’”

Sharing similar sentiments, Dr Reuben Abati, the spokesman for the former President Goodluck Jonathan said “I was relieved because, for about 70 days, the show was a big distraction, crass capitalism at its most cynical edge, a source of unmanageable madness in homes and on the streets. Its sponsors, MultiChoice, and Payporte, through its Big Brother Naija and Big Brother Africa franchises, seems committed to the promotion of base values, adultery, prostitution, love of money, nudity and sex.

Big Brother Naija is nothing other than the corralling of some human beings into a zoo, pressuring them to behave like nothing but animals. “The organisers made money devaluing other human beings; MultiChoice and Payporte, the sponsors, turned alcohol and pornography into a legitimate sport.” Critics of the show have also been asking that looking at the so-called immorality and alcoholism in the BBNaija house, what difference does it make with alcoholism, prostitution and immorality in the contemporary society.

The notion of morality plays an important role in national building. Its relationship with the law and which view, (moral or immoral) should dictate the tune of behaviour is a hard debate to tackle amidst a decline in decency. A fog of decadence is polluting the country’s moral ecology. That immorality is becoming prevalent in our communities does not prevent the same community from disallowing the promotion and encouragement of such activity nor is it an excuse to allow immoral activities to thrive. Despite the prevalence of corruption, we have not legalised nor encouraged corruption, we are fighting it and the fight is bearing some fruits. This is the least the community can do. In an early dialogue of Plato’s, the Protagoras, Socrates asks Protagoras why it is not as easy to find teachers of virtue as it is to find teachers of swordsmanship, riding, or any other art. Protagoras’ answer is that there are no special teachers of virtue, because virtue is taught by the whole community.

Many commentators have argued that a major source of concern is the children. Since children are gullible, easily impressionable and influenced, they have to be prevented from “adult entertainment” until they are 18. Does this make sense to us? Why should something inherently harmful have a threshold? How can something below 18 be bad and after 18 that same thing becomes good and permissible? If the whole community is responsible for teaching virtue, why should adults be dispensed from their duty to act

uprightly? Since most part of the show has been considered by many as immoral, it simply means it is not good for public display.

BBN when compared with *Gulder Ultimate Search (GUS)* which millions of Nigerians has considered 100% educating, thrilling, action, and adventure is a total bizarre to the morality and value system of our youths. Where GUS rewards patience, endurance, fortitude, resilience and determination in the life of a proven youth, BBN rewards indolence, vulgarism, indiscipline and indecency. What impact does this make to the society except that whatever gives one money and places food on our table is considered noble and morally upright. The loss of the sense of what is appropriate is bamboozling us into indifference. The confusion of licentious behaviour for freedom is falsely peddled as progress. Morals matter. It is a portrait of lack of self-confidence and low self-esteem on the part of our youths. The frustration and yoke of unemployment has made us develop low self-worth. We cheapen ourselves and sell off our dignity for mere porridge. And I ask again, can the cub of a lion eat grass in dungeon? If it's impossible, then no amount of pressure can make us concede to things that will demeanour personality.

How do we raise, nurture and produce the next Chike Obis, Chinua Achebes, Wole Soyinkas, Cyril Stover & others? If only there could be an educating version of this programme. If only they could house some intelligent people in like manner and make them compete for similar prizes. But, no! Our people do not encourage sanity. Our society promotes evil over good, indecency over decency, immorality over morality, and ungodliness over godliness. The best in Mathematics competitions will go home with either a carton of cowbell milk or Indomie noodles, ridiculous stipends and laughable prizes. Yet these morons in BBN will earn millions for coming to suck br**sts, speak thrash, display indecency, and get under the sheets on International TVs. Soon, they are celebrities, winning international modelling contracts.

Morals and virtues are wrongly associated solely with religion. Atheists and secularists connote such concepts with Islam or Christianity. They are not. Rather it is part of what it means to be human. Aristotle and Plato who both existed prior to Islam and Christianity discussed morals and virtues extensively. Aristotle pointed out that all rational thinking is ultimately ordered towards some perceived good, and its function is to help us discern between good or bad, an essentially moral purpose. Plato insisted that man's nobility lies in his desire for ultimate truth, goodness and all these are really facets of the same reality, making the pursuit of truth (rationality) impossible to divorce from the pursuit of good (morality).

Morals and virtues are necessary for the smooth running of a country and that is why they underpin many of our legislations. Their importance and indispensability has been stressed from time immemorial. W. Cleon Skousen said:

Man is a mixture of sunshine and shadow, the sunshine consists of the perfectibility of human reason. This makes government and civilization possible. The darker side of human nature is the imperfectability of human passion and man's faulty sense of judgement that makes government necessary.

Benjamin Franklin said "Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom. As nations become corrupt and vicious, they have more need of masters." John Adams was equally explicit, "The American Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."

In his *Politics*, Aristotle describes the role that politics and the political community must play in bringing about the virtuous life in the citizenry. That's why many of our laws have moral foundations and the Constitution have empowered the government to be mindful of morality when acting. In this line, I commend Honourable Olusegun Olulade of the Lagos State House of Assembly who has taken the uncommon stand to also call for the ban of BBN.

The National Council of Women Societies (NCWS) and the Nigerian government have condemned the sexual content on Big Brother Naija (BBN), a reality TV show, stating that it is not a Nigerian culture. Segun Runsewe, Director-General of the National Council for Arts and Culture (NCAC), said this while receiving Gloria Shoda, President of the National Council of Women Societies (NCWS).

The NCAC boss also revealed that the government was in talks with Startimes to start a state-owned BBN that will truly reflect Nigerian content. He also warned that the agency would present a nudity bill to punish sexual acts as displayed on BBN. He said: "We are going to re-present that bill. You can't fight a battle without a legal framework; we are definitely going to be conscious of that.

"I will take up the issue of Big Brother Naija. I have spoken with officials of the National Broadcasting Commission because what is going on now is terrible. Having love affairs on the screen is not part of our own culture at all.

“Let me use this forum to tell Nigerians that a new Big Brother Naija is on its way coming and we are working with Startimes. We are doing BBN that will reflect the true Nigerian culture. We are already working on it, all that will be eaten there will be Nigerian food, the dresses will be Nigerian dresses.”

The NCWS president said she was not against the BBN reality show but the sex content was disgusting. Shoda said, “Having live sex on stage is the thing affecting my sensibility and it is impacting negatively on the young children coming up. Does it mean that they can’t abstain from sex for three months? I’m condemning the sex content on BBN.”

The Muslim Rights Concern (MURIC) has urged the federal government to immediately place a ban on the Big Brother Naija show. MURIC posited that the reality show promotes immorality in the country branding it as ‘immoral, dangerous and Bohemian’. Professor Ishaq Akintola, Director of MURIC also said the promoter of the show must be held accountable for promoting immorality in the country.

“We are being forcibly dragged to a world of nudity, shamelessness and open promiscuity. Inmates of BBNaija kiss, romance and engage in sex openly. BBNaija is Bohemian, anti-social, crude and immoral. It constitutes a potent danger to every home. BBNaija is Satanic. It is unacceptable.

“Where are our norms and values? Is it part of African culture to engage in sex in the open? Where are the authorities? Is the Ministry of Information and Culture sleeping? Is the National Orientation Agency on sabbatical? Who will protect our children from this despicable onslaught? Who did this to Nigeria?”

“This reality show is dragging our children into a life of moral debauchery. It is robbing them of the last vestiges of honour. It is deleting the word ‘Shame’ from their vocabulary. BB Naija has alienated our youth from the elders. A yawning lacuna now exists between the young and the old. Irreversible social crisis looms.

“We must see those who woo our young ones with humongous amounts of money, big cars, and palatial buildings as those bent on destroying industry, diligence, and integrity, particularly among the youth. Nothing destroys a nation faster than materialism. The daughters of Jezebel are here already. Unless the authorities move with the speed of lightning, human dignity in Nigeria is going, going, going!”

“Or do we not realize that for every single BB Naija inmate who wins a big amount of money and a car, more than 50 million young people are misled? Qur’an 30:41 says, ‘Evil has appeared on both land and sea as a result of the handiworks of men...’ The Bible in Ephesians 4:19 was also describing these

people when it says, 'Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.'

MURIC calls for unity among the Christians and Muslims in the country to jointly condemn and force the government to place a ban on the reality show.

"We can put an end to this anomaly called BB Naija if Christians and Muslims bury the hatchet and come together to fight evil. Home is home. Moral debauchery knows no religion. The destructive influence of television shows like BB Naija penetrates both Christian and Muslim homes.

"Ditto for the custodians of our culture and tradition! Our traditional rulers ignore a program like this, which has all the potentials to diminish the dignity of our culture. They are fighting over who should be chairman of the council of traditional rulers. They want to be the king of kings and rivals of the supreme creator. Who placed a curse on Nigeria?"

"Homo sapiens may not respect a single snake when they see one. But can anyone wait to see what follows if the cobra leads and it is faithfully followed by the python, the black mamba, rattlesnake, garter snake, and the anaconda? So what do you think will happen if our traditional rulers from the East, West and North march on Aso Rock to demand the immediate halt of this horrible show?"

MURIC charged the Ministry of Information and Culture to move swiftly against BB Naija before moral debauchery becomes Nigeria's middle name. On the other hand, it's good to ask ourselves, as a nation what are our) priorities? In an era of unemployment and economic woes, we have institutions like Heritage Bank and Payporte sponsoring this programme. What positive effect or common good do they think this programme will bring to the youths in the country? How willing will these same companies be to sponsor activities which will add value to the lives of people? We hope their sponsorship of BBN isn't part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) otherwise it would be corporate social irresponsibility. As Dr Uju asked "Why can't we sustain Dragon's den, where people like Madam Folorunsho Alakija, Madam Ibukun Awosika, Oga Aliko Dangote, Oga Femi Adenuga and others, would be invited to invest in the potentialities of our youths? Why can't we copy The Apprentice, where a man like Oga Femi Adenuga would organise a 12 week-long gruelling business selection to educate and inspire youths all on National TV?"

From the crisis of today, the Nigeria of tomorrow will emerge. We are aware of the decline of the Roman Empire. It had many causes, but one major cause was the disintegration of the fundamental attitudes that had protected peaceful

coexistence among peoples. Immorality is inimical to the growth of any civilisation because its spread and promotion affects every thread of society's fabric. Where virtue is disdained and vice is glorified, corruption and demagoguery are the harvest.

Causes of Moral Problems in Nigeria

Let us examine some of the causes of these moral vices. Have they been there before now? What have suddenly brought an upsurge to it? These include:

Break Down of the Family unit/lack of Parental Influence

As we all know, the home is the foundation for acceptable behaviour. The quality of this foundation determines the quality of subsequent efforts toward desirable behaviour. There is a breakdown of the family structure due to the individualistic tendencies now exhibited by our people due principally to the economic situation in the country. This has also forced many parents to abandon their responsibilities to their children and to their families for a white cola job that keeps them on the street for a better part of the day. The care of children are now trusted into the hands of "House girls and boys" who in turn will corrupt the children. The end product of this seemingly "abandoned children" is moral decadence.

Gross Materialism

This is a factor which has been responsible for the high level of moral problems facing the nation. It is noted that attention of people has shifted from morality to instant wealth. This desire for instant wealth has led many people to get involved in acts that are inimical to the society not minding whose ox is gored. In this regard, Awokoya (1978) states categorically that:

...the type of environment now developing is very materialist. Most people love and worship money because of what it can buy. In the quest for it, kindness, love, justice, social responsibility gets undervalued and the virtues of yesterday are replaced by the vices of today. This presupposes that attention has shifted from the things which are of value and emphasis is now placed on material gains. These materialistic tendencies have a negative implication for our development (p 3).

The society glorifies it and give our chieftain titles to rogues, criminals and notorious armed robbers. Famous prostitutes made their way into the House of Representatives and constitute a strong part of our decision makers. The crème de la crème of the society partners with them, patronises them and contracts them. Our undergraduates are made rich through prostitution particularly, with

the people that matters in the society. Others are pressed down or enticed into joining the ruling crew.

Poverty of the Mind

This is a problem which is affecting most Nigerians causing them to behave in a particular way. Osagie (1985) asserts that by mental set is meant an unconscious mental disposition to behave in a particular way irrespective of the circumstance. It is a rigid adherence to a “way” of doing things whether or not that “way” works... (p 133)

These characteristic mental set retards rather than facilitates activity. Right from their university days, the youths thought is only to leave school, get a white collar job and start making money. When their dream is not actualised poverty of the mind sets in. The youth believes that anything that places food on our table is acceptable. They cannot think of any other legal and sound means of making a living. Therefore, they resort to illegal and immoral means as the only option left.

It leads to apathy in the performance of official duties; it creates inefficiency rather than competence, and it complicates rather than simplify. This has engendered a lackadaisical attitude among Nigerians in the ways they attend to issues. There is a phenomenon now called “the Nigerian factor”. This mental set encourages indolence, laziness, confusion, discouragement, apathy and ineptitude in both public and private lives. The sum total of this attitude results in laiz-affair attitude which ultimately engenders low productivity and hinders the development of the nation.

Unemployment/Lack of Empowerment

It is estimated that over 60 million Nigerians are unemployed. So many Nigerians are already on the psychic road to madness as a result of unemployment. They are depressed and frustrated. When the unemployment is prolonged, they are pushed to the wall and as such see every available opportunity as a means of remedying their situation without scrutiny. Unemployment can make one lose confidence in self. He/she sees himself or herself devalued and dehumanised and treats himself as such. When man is turned into an object, demeaned and becomes an article and a source of making money for others, poor self-esteem sets in and those things that makes one unique are drowned, not refurbished, and no creativity which is the only thing that singles man out in the midst of animals. Without creativity therefore, there can be no empowerment because any amount or thing invested will definitely waste away.

When a whole lot of persons is unemployed in our communities, every other sector is affected. And as such, human beings resort to immoral means as a source of making ends meet. Prostitution sets in, kidnapping and all manner of evil. The society on the other hand exalts evil and enthrones it. Moral decadence becomes the order of the day.

Moral Values: Catalyst for Development

Fundamentally, a good moral foundation is an indispensable and absolute factor for social, economic and political developments. Our development efforts should commence with the human capital. By human capital, we mean the investment in the moral development of the people who are living in such society. Human capital involves giving the people the right kind of environment to sharpen, develop and actualize their skills which they have acquired over a process of time. The channelling of this skill in the positive direction will bring about a change in the life orientation of the people for maximum benefits. Human capital also involves the moral worth and development of the people. Omorogbe (1990) encapsulates this as follows: "Moral development is the most important aspect of national development, for there can be no development of a nation if its citizens are morally under-developed or immature" (p 197). In similar perspective, Isokun (2003) lends credence to this when he asserts that: A Nigerian society obsessed with that which is scientific without the consciousness of the societal values must be mending her rope of suicide if her search for knowledge discounts the value on which the Nigerian social order rests (p 116).

This shows that the role of moral values in the society for meaningful development cannot be compromised. Therefore, primacy should be given to the acquisition of moral values among the people rather than any abstract projections. The imperative of moral values is a fundamental tool for social, economic and political emancipation. In this regard, no nation can grow or develop if morality is extricated from the body politic. Thus, without a solid moral base, our social, economic and political development will be in shamble. I shudder to think of a Nigeria of intellectual giants and astute economists and politicians without the relevant moral values as internalized through the socio-cultural orientation as espoused by religion. Therefore, we need to relate our development to our values system. To do contrary is in the words of Isokun (2003) "to entrust the safety of the insane man into his own hand which is a recipe for self-destruction" (p 121). Consequently, he surmises that: A scientific modern Nigerian society without a sound social and moral base will be her worst enemy in terms of the human misery, fear, insecurity and barbarism that would be self-inflicted in the process of a misguided scientific advancement.

In similar perspective, Omoregbe (1990) opines that “If a country produces” intellectual giants” but who are “Moral dwarfs”, it is simply producing obstacles to its own development” (p 199). The purport of this is that morality is germane to social growth and development. Therefore, to extricate morality from the Nigerian society is to destroy the very essence of the society, thereby inviting anarchy and disorderliness.

Morality is a necessary tool for the survival of human society. It is vital to the survival of any society because it is the basis of all social structures and institutions. It should be noted that the problems which besiege us as a nation are anchored on non-compliance with or total neglect of moral principles and these have led to the doldrums we are experiencing in our private and public lives. This shows that national growth and development depend largely on the good sense of justice, moral worth and responsibility, conscientiousness, devotion to duty, selflessness, probity and honesty exhibited by the leaders and the led. This will bring about the much needed growth in our national lives.

Entertainment Industry: A Means for Rebranding the Nation

Nigeria’s entertainment industry should be the arrow head for rebranding the nation. It is unfortunate that the moral fibre of the youth of this nation has been contaminated by bad example displayed by the generation of Nigerians that grew into the jamboree of independence and the oil boom in the 60’s and 70’s respectively. The subsequent rot of squander-mania led to social injustice and moral decadence. Nigerians, at home and in the Diaspora, are concerned about corruption in the country. Recently, Reverend Father Evaristus Eshiwu, a Nigerian resident in America, titled his book “Integrity Campaign, Antidote to Corruption”. Yet, there is great joy in the reality that the tendency towards corruption can be reversed by reorientation to legitimate approach to the pursuit of wealth and achievement. The duty of the entertainment industry in rebranding the nation would help to inculcate moral, cultural, and ethical virtues into the populace through high quality writing of scripts for film, drama, music, satire and comedy. These creative works will function in deliberate and constructive patterns that reflect and demonstrate the goodies of our rich and glorious culture. A robust character that recognizes and embraces the virtues of hard work and a positive imagination with delight is the product of a fundamentally disciplined mind. In the life of the youths and Nigerians at large, if the inclination towards dishonest behaviour in the immoral bid to acquire sudden wealth is a reflection of the negative influence of the bad examples of the past, we should then re-establish our moral values in honesty and truth. There is need to reduce manpower waste which has also been detrimental to the nation’s economy. Half-truth is a whole lie. The nation’s

ruler-ship and leadership need to apply the whole truth to make new footprints for future glory.

Recommendations

Moral decadence is a cankerworm that is eating deep into the fabrics of this nation called Nigeria. It is being empowered by unemployment and poverty master minded by greed. The truth remains that no nation can develop economically, politically and otherwise with such vice as this. Having seen how far this hedonism have affected us, I suppose that every meaningful and patriotic Nigeria must rise up and let us join hands to fight this menace. With one voice let us say no to immorality. To achieve this the following recommendations are made:

1. Africans are hardworking people. Indolence should be shunned by all so that the vices that go with it will be checkmated.
2. Our government should empower our youths with and through every available means.
3. Hard work should be rewarded starting from the home front so that our youths will learn and feel the dignity in labour.
4. The government of Nigeria both at the state and federal level should strategize on screening and regulating what the movie industry is displaying through television shows so that the cultural, social and moral behaviour of the society is not destroyed.
5. Since television has tremendous impact on all, its management is necessary so that the desired effect will be achieved. Parents as a matter of fact should direct and restrict what their children watch. This means that parents should devote time to teach children on the positive and negative effect of what they view.
6. Materialism is a product of greed. We should learn to live with our meaningful means, cutting our coat according to our cloth.
7. Workshops and empowerment seminars should be organised regularly and scrutinized to be sure it gets to the appropriate quarters.
8. Television videos/movies is a laudable means of communication and so should not be banned, but should be regulated by communication bodies, hence the need to ban some movies that contradict our culture, tradition and moral.
9. We should learn to use our time purposefully and not on frivolities.
10. Television movies should not be viewed by children in isolated places like their rooms; rather it should be placed where adults will guide what they view.
11. Effective teaching of moral education should be encouraged both in the schools and at home to ensure that children learn and understand the need for compliance.

12. General public should speak out to the media organizations on the quality of entertainment that could edify the moral upbringing of a child, than airing such that could lead them into immoral sexual practice.

Conclusion

There is no gain saying the fact that the rate of moral decadence in Nigeria is disturbingly alarming and this has affected the pace of development in the country. In this regard, there is the urgent need for a re-orientation, a re-engendering and a re-focusing on our moral values with the view to actualizing our potentials and harnessing our resources both human and materials, for a greater, purposeful, egalitarian and vibrant society. As a result of this, all hands must be on deck to actualize this goal. In this regard moral instruction and education must be given a pride of place in all our educational institutions starting from the primary to the tertiary levels. Also, every citizen must imbibe the culture of moral value recognizing that “society as a sui-generic real only to the extent to which the members are instructed and guided by their value system (Isokun 2003 p 123).

This presupposes that every social institution such as the family, the church, the schools and the government must stand against all forms of immorality especially those depicted for public entertainment, we must preach against insolence, indecency, imprudence, vulgarity, and all other vices which will project the nation in bad light. We must also stand up as patriotic Nigerians to things that protect and lift our culture and other ethical values.

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