

Teachers' Perception On The Extent Of Educational Stakeholders' Involvement In Promoting Moral Education In Primary Schools

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Abstract: The main purpose of this study was to find out teachers' perceptions on the extent of educational stakeholders' involvement in promoting moral education in primary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State. The design of the study was descriptive survey design and three research questions guided the study. The population of the study consisted of the 665 teachers from the 45 public primary schools in Awka South Local Government Area, while the sample size comprised of 120 teacher respondents. Simple random sampling by balloting was used to select a sample of 120 respondents. Data was collected using 30-item questionnaire titled "Teachers' Perceptions on the Extent of Educational Stakeholders' Involvement in Promoting Moral Education (TPEESIPME)". The instrument was duly validated by three experts, two experts in the Department of Early Childhood and Primary Education and one in Measurement and Evaluation from Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. To establish the reliability of the instrument, Cronbach Alpha formula was used and a reliability of 0.87 was obtained. Mean was used to answer the research questions. The findings of the study reveals that parental involvement in promoting moral education in primary schools is of low extent. The extent to which teachers are involved is of high extent while that of the government is of low extent. Based on the findings, the researchers recommended among others that parents should refrain from challenging teachers when their children are being punished for behaviour misconduct, government should make moral education an independent subject in the curriculum and also provide guidelines and materials for moral education in primary schools and government should organize workshops, seminars and conferences for teachers and head teachers on the need for moral education in primary schools.

Keywords: Moral, moral education, primary school, educational stakeholders

I. INTRODUCTION

Man always seeks to know and this unquenchable thirst for knowledge has led man to seek out various ways and different tools of acquiring this knowledge. This acquisition of knowledge is called education. Education is the process of learning and training in order to develop knowledge and to acquire skills. According to Parankimalil (2012) education is a systematic process through which a child or an adult acquires knowledge, experience, skill and sound attitude which makes an individual civilized, refined, cultured and educated. The National Policy on Education, Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN 2013) posits that education is an instrument for national

development: to this end, the formulation of ideas, their integration for national development and the interaction of persons and ideas are all aspects of education. Education fosters the worth and development of the individual for his sake and for the sake of the general development of the society. It is a tool for disseminating or transmitting societal values, knowledge and cultural heritage from one generation to another. The general objective of education is to equip an individual with appropriate skills, values and knowledge to function effectively and contribute meaningfully to his or her dynamic society. To achieve this goal, it becomes necessary to begin earlier in educating the young minds starting from primary education.

Primary education is defined according to National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN 2013) as the education given in institutions for children aged 6-11 years plus; the duration shall be six years. Its objectives according to the National Policy on Education (FRN 2013) include to give citizenship education as a basis for effective participation and contribution to the life of the society and to mould the character and develop sound attitude and morals in the child among others. These goals are pursued with a primary school curriculum that comprises of Social Studies, Religious Studies and Civic Education among others. Thus when children are exposed to the primary school curriculum, children will live to become effective citizens in the country and as well develop into adults with good morals and be able to interact with other people in the society. There is need therefore for moral education in the primary schools. In order to ascertain the need for moral education, it is however necessary to understand the meaning of moral.

Moral means the code or customs of a people, the social glue that defines how individuals should live together. Oladipo (2009) sees moral as right conduct, not only in our immediate social relations but also in our dealings with our fellow citizens and with the whole of human race. Man being a social being, there are some basic important moral values which are expected of him in his daily relationship with one another. Such moral values include; honesty, respect, obedience, empathy, decency, humility, loyalty, cooperation, tolerance, discipline, hard work, diligence and many others. Moral is simply the process of learning what is right or wrong. The lack of moral values and the unhealthy attitudes of pupils is a main reason of many problems in our society today. In order to curb these unhealthy attitudes and immoralities in our society, it therefore becomes necessary that moral education should be promoted at the primary school level.

Effective moral education is one of the best gifts our children can be offered. Hiko and Shamiga (2013) defined moral education as the program of planned educational actions aimed at the development of values and character. Also, Peters in Folawi (2011) defined moral education as the direct and indirect teaching of issues concerned with right conduct. In the context of this study, moral education is concerned with inculcating values and character to integrate the child into a conforming member of the society.

The basis of moral education is proper feelings, proper conduct and the development of acceptable habits of the society. Generally, its features are manifestation of actions, reactions and feelings. Moral education entails more than classroom teaching and learning or book content; it also includes the hidden curricular aspects of education. It aims at directing the child to always pursue the 'good life' without which no individual can be completely human (Sharma 2007). This includes ability to think good and make reasonable decisions by learners. Nonetheless, moral education cannot be given in the vacuum. It goes along the environment and lasts through lifetime. An infant grows into a human being in a human society. To live happily in the society, he must learn how to relate with others. Sequel to this, Warriwei in Hiko and Shamiga (2013) stated that the objectives of moral education include:

✓ To inculcate moral ways of judging actions.

- ✓ To foster a brief for adoption of some fundamental principles or ideas or values as final basis for moral judgment and decisions and
- ✓ To promote the achievement of autonomy, self-governance or spiritual freedom.

With these objectives in mind, it is not an overstatement that Nigerian children need this essential and indispensable ingredient of life. There is need to begin from a very tender age to inculcate these values in our children. The early years in life are the most important stages for infusing moral standards and the values necessary for a just and honest living. Thus, one of the major goals of primary education is to mould the character and develop sound attitude and morals in the child. Plato in Amaele (2007) emphasized that moral training should start at the primary or even pre-primary stages of education and all that is ugly and immoral should be avoided or omitted from children's stories. Plato made moral virtues the main objectives of education by maintaining that any training or knowledge which merely teaches the acquisition of wealth or mere cleverness devoid of justice or moral control cannot in the real sense be called education. Thus, the core essence of educational stakeholders in promoting moral education.

It is the duty of the educational stakeholders to promote moral education in primary schools. These educational stakeholders include the parents, the teachers and the government. Moral education starts first at home because all learning process begins at home. As children grow up, they inculcate unconsciously the habits observed from their parents. The children learn all forms of behavior like talking, walking among others from the parents and in the process; the child can also learn bad behaviors too from the parents. Thus, there is need for parents to teach their children good behavior and character beginning from a very tender age. According to Sushama and Daya (2016) states that when parents participate actively in curbing and pruning immoral acts in children, the children also learn better, get better grades, have more positive attitude towards school and work, and are likely to exhibit more positive behaviours. Also, Danielson in Oladipo (2009) emphasized that parents are vital in the moral development of the child because they are the children's role models and first moral teachers. Hence, children will automatically desist from their misdemeanors when they lose their parents backing and support. Therefore, moral education of the children should be promoted and not neglected by the parents because it is within this period that the foundational structures of behavior of the child are formed and inculcated at home. The moral education which already had started at home by the parents is enhanced in the schools by the teachers.

Teachers play an important role in the moral education of children especially beginning from the primary level of education. In this level, the teachers employ effective strategies and methods in inculcating moral values on the pupils. This inculcation of moral values by the teachers in the schools is meant to consolidate the efforts of the parents already started at home. In the words of Obanya (2010), teachers are responsible for the teaching of the importance of honesty, dedication and right behavior. Sandeep (2015) pointed out apart from parents who have been referred to as the moral teachers, school teachers are also very influential

and significant adult in the lives of children starting from the pre-school years. Sandeep pointed out that teachers help children to understand character traits and values. Teachers also model desirable character traits in the pupils both within the school setting and in the large society. It is essential that teachers use their behaviour to mould pupils because the pupils idealize the teachers, watch and try to emulate their behaviour. Kay in Yusuf (2012) opined that the teacher is a crucial factor in the moral education of the child. The child spends most of his time during the day in the custody of the teacher. The teacher contributes significantly in the character formation of the child from the pre-nursery to primary, to the secondary and tertiary institutions. To the child, the teacher is a role model and embodiment of knowledge. The child learns so many things from his teacher, positive or negative ones. For these reasons, teachers must accept that they are moral educators, whether this influence operates subtly through the ethos of the school, or overtly in the moral education system (Obanya 2010). Also, Fafunwa (2004) posits that teachers can help in the children's moral upbringing by teaching them using stories and children's literature in the classrooms that emphasizes positive values and heroic action. However, the teachers would find the promotion of moral education difficult without the aid of government.

The government being the controller of the nation's affairs, is expected not to leave any stone unturned in the various sectors of the nation. The government is responsible for the control and provision of guidelines for the various levels of educations obtainable in the country. It is quite disheartening that the government is not really giving much attention to moral education. According to Nwabuani (2009), posits that there is no specific guideline or material provided by the government for teaching and learning of moral education in primary schools. A specific guidelines and materials will help promote moral education effectively and uniformly in primary schools. When children come in contact with reputable and respected people, listen and communicate one on one with them, they will be definitely inspired and imitate their lifestyle and moral conducts. The government has failed to make the subject moral education a core subject to be studied in schools, just like English Language and Mathematics. In line with this, Okoro (2011) posits that there is need for formal incorporation of moral instruction in the curriculum where it is completely lacking and moral education is not really given a full attention as an independent subject curriculum. Guidance and counseling services which is a key factor in promoting moral education doesn't exist in most schools; yet the government isn't perturbed about it. The government needs to expand the horizon of their responsibilities to cater for not only the academic growth of our people, but also the moral aspects. Sequel to the above, Amaele (2007) enumerated the following as the government's tasks in promoting moral education to include; certification, curriculum of study, teachers' salary and other remunerations, appointment of heads such as ministers, commissioners, chairmen, supervisors of schools and guidance and counseling services among others. In addition, strong moral consciousness is a better way of imbibing good behaviours in the children's lives. Nduka in Yusuf (2012) affirmed that sound moral character is the indubitable criterion of not only

good life but also the veritable fountain head of other veritable human values. Against this background therefore, the researchers seeks to find out teachers perceptions on the extent of educational stakeholders' involvement in promoting moral education in primary schools.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Parents, teachers and government who are the three basic educational stakeholders that are expected to promote moral education by inculcating right moral values in children seem to be seriously lagging behind. The researchers observed that some primary schools teach moral education just once in a week while in some schools, moral education is not taught. Without doubt, there seems to be an increasingly low level of morality in the society and decline in ethical standard among primary school pupils in Awka South. Again, the researchers observed that school pupils today are engaged in various forms of indiscipline such as fighting, using abusive words, bullying, pilfering, stealing, lying, immoral acts, disruptive behaviour and lateness to school among others. The dangers of this moral laxity is clearly seen in the instances of frequent breaches of trust and confidence, domestic indiscipline and instability, feminine revolt against decency and traditional loyalty, escalating dishonesty, increase in peer cruelty, disrespect for parents, teachers and other legitimate authority figures. In the light of the above, the researchers embarked on this study to find out teachers' perceptions on the extent of educational stakeholders' involvement in promoting moral education in primary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to find out teachers' perceptions on the extent of educational stakeholders' involvement in promoting moral education in primary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State. Specifically, this study sought to find out:

- ✓ Teachers' perceptions on the extent of parental involvement in promoting moral education in primary schools.
- ✓ Extent of teachers' involvement in promoting moral education in primary schools.
- ✓ Teachers' perception on the extent of government involvement in promoting moral education in primary schools.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- The following research questions guided the study:
- ✓ To what extent are parents involved in promoting moral education in primary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State?
 - ✓ To what extent are teachers involved in promoting moral education in primary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State?
 - ✓ To what extent is government involved in promoting moral education in primary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State?

II. METHOD

The study adopted the descriptive survey to find out teachers' perceptions on the extent of educational stakeholders' involvement in promoting moral education in primary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State. Three research questions guided the study. The population of the study consisted of all the public primary school teachers in Awka South Local Government Area, which comprises of 665 teachers in the 45 public primary schools in the Local Government Area. Simple random sampling by balloting was used to select the respondents. The sample size of 120 teacher respondents was used for the study. Data was collected using a 30-item questionnaire tagged "Teachers' Perceptions on the Extent of Educational Stakeholders' Involvement in Promoting Moral Education (TPEESIPME) Questionnaire". The instrument was face validated by three experts, two experts in Childhood Education and one in Measurement and Evaluation from Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. To establish the reliability of the instrument, Cronbach Alpha formula was used and a reliability of 0.87 was obtained. Mean was used to answer the research questions. The level of extent of the items was determined in relation to the boundary limits as indicated in the four-point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE) = 3.50–4.00, High Extent (HE) = 2.50 – 3.49, Low Extent (LE) = 1.50 – 2.49 and Very Low Extent (VLE) = 1.00 – 1.49.

III. RESULTS

RESEARCH QUESTION ONE: To what extent are parents involved in promoting Moral Education in primary schools in Awka South Local Government Area?

| S/N | parents involvement in promoting moral education | TOTAL | X | DECISION |
|---------------------|--|------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 1. | Parents conform to the school rules and regulations | 120 | 3.13 | High Extent |
| 2. | Reporting pupils' immoral behaviours to the teachers and school heads | 120 | 2.47 | Low Extent |
| 3. | Parents challenge the teachers if they Punish children for their misconducts | 120 | 1.79 | Low Extent |
| 4. | Parents purchase the recommended text for children's Moral Education studies | 120 | 1.99 | Low Extent |
| 5. | Parents insult the teachers in front of the pupils | 120 | 2.13 | Low Extent |
| 6. | Parents are interested in knowing their pupils' performance in Moral Education Examination | 120 | 2.81 | High Extent |
| 7. | Organizing moral seminars for teachers and pupils through Parents Teachers Association meeting | 120 | 1.86 | Low Extent |
| 8. | Supporting pupils' deviant behaviours and truanacies | 120 | 1.78 | Low Extent |
| 9. | Encouraging pupils to absent from moral education Lesson | 120 | 1.80 | Low Extent |
| 10. | Engaging children in special and moral education lessons during holidays | 120 | 2.61 | High Extent |
| Overall Mean | | 120 | 2.23 | Low Extent |

Table 1: Mean ratings on the extent of parents' involvement in promoting moral education in primary schools

Table 1 shows the extent to which parents' are involved in promoting moral education in primary schools. Items 1, 6, and 10 are to a high extent while items 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9 are to a low extent. This shows that the extent to which parents' are involved in promoting moral education in primary schools are to a low extent. This can be attested to the overall mean for all

the respondents which shows a mean of 2.23 which has been rated below the agreed criterion mean of 2.50.

RESEARCH QUESTION TWO: To what extent are teachers involved in promoting Moral Education in primary schools in Awka South Local Government Area?

| S/N | teachers' involvement in promoting moral education | TOTAL | X | DECISION |
|---------------------|---|------------|-------------|--------------------|
| 11. | Teachers exhibit good moral behaviours in the classroom | 120 | 3.13 | High Extent |
| 12. | Teachers punish pupils who misbehave in the classroom | 120 | 3.10 | High Extent |
| 13. | Teachers ignore pupils' absence from moral education lesson | 120 | 3.19 | High Extent |
| 14. | Teachers overlook the deviant behaviors of pupils whose parents are wealthy | 120 | 3.01 | High Extent |
| 15. | Teachers lay emphasis on the importance of partaking in Moral Education | 120 | 2.70 | High Extent |
| 16. | Asking pupils who commit serious offenses to bring their parents | 120 | 2.38 | Low Extent |
| 17. | Engaging in illicit relationship with Pupils | 120 | 1.70 | Low Extent |
| 18. | Presentation of awards and prizes to well behaved pupils | 120 | 2.23 | Low Extent |
| 19. | Shunning and discouraging examination Malpractice | 120 | 2.76 | High Extent |
| 20. | Using stories and songs to teach moral education lesson | 120 | 2.41 | Low Extent |
| Overall Mean | | 120 | 2.66 | High Extent |

Table 2: Mean ratings on the extent of teachers' involvement in promoting moral education in primary schools

Table 2 indicates the response of teachers on the extent of their involvement in promoting moral education in primary schools. Items 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 19 were rated high extent while items 16, 17, 18 and 20 were rated to a low extent. The overall mean for all the respondents show a mean of 2.66 which is above the agreed criterion mean of 2.50. This indicates a decision level of high extent. Therefore, the table confirms that teachers are to some extent involved in promoting moral education in primary schools.

RESEARCH QUESTION THREE: To what extent is government involved in promoting moral education in primary schools in Awka South Local Government Area?

| S/N | Governments' involvement in promoting moral education | TOTAL | X | DECISION |
|---------------------|--|------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 21. | Provision of counseling services to schools | 120 | 1.88 | Low Extent |
| 22. | Treating Moral education as an independent subject in the curriculum of study | 120 | 1.71 | Low Extent |
| 23. | Government improves teachers' salaries and other remunerations | 120 | 1.83 | Low Extent |
| 24. | Employment of only professionally trained teachers | 120 | 2.92 | High Extent |
| 25. | Appointment of school heads based on solidly proved merits | 120 | 2.20 | Low Extent |
| 26. | Easily and routinely promotion of reputable teachers with stainless records | 120 | 2.12 | Low Extent |
| 27. | Organization of seminars and workshops on moral duties and responsibilities | 120 | 1.88 | Low Extent |
| 28. | Proper and constant supervision of schools, teachers, teaching methods and curriculum of study | 120 | 2.03 | Low Extent |
| 29. | Sponsoring visitation of schools by reputable and respected people in the society to speak to the children and teachers on the importance of moral education | 120 | 1.78 | Low Extent |
| 30. | Provision of guidelines and materials for moral education in primary schools | 120 | 1.68 | Low Extent |
| Overall Mean | | 120 | 2.20 | Low Extent |

Table 3: Mean ratings on the extent of government's involvement in promoting moral education in primary schools

Table 1 shows the extent to which governments are involved in promoting moral education in primary schools. Only items 24 is to a high extent. All the other items 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30 are to a low extent. This shows that the extent to which governments are involved in promoting moral education in primary schools are to a low extent. This can be attested to the overall mean for all the respondents which shows a mean of 2.20 which has been rated below the agreed criterion mean of 2.50.

IV. DISCUSSION

Findings based on table 1 revealed that the extent to which parents are involved in promoting moral education in primary schools are to a low extent. This can be seen from the responses given by respondents which is to a low extent. The findings proves the position of Danielson in Oladipo (2009) who posits that parents are vital in the moral development of the child because they are the children's role models and first moral teachers. Hence, children will automatically desist from their misdemeanors when they lose their parents backing and support. Therefore, moral education of the children should be promoted and not neglected by the parents because it is within this period that the foundational structures of behavior of the child are formed and inculcated at home. Similarly, Sushama and Daya (2016) states that when parents participate actively in curbing and pruning immoral acts in children, the children also learn better, get better grades, have more positive attitude towards school and work, and are likely to exhibit more positive behaviours.

Findings table 2 revealed that teachers are to some extent involved in promoting moral education in primary schools. This can be seen from the responses given by respondents which are to a high extent. This result is in line with the affirmation of Obanya (2010), who posits that teachers are responsible for the teaching of the importance of honesty, dedication and right behavior. In support of the above, Kay in Yusuf (2012) opines that the teacher is a crucial factor in the moral education of the child. The child spends most of his time during the day in the custody of the teacher. The teacher contributes significantly in the character formation of the child from the pre-nursery to primary, to the secondary and tertiary institutions. To the child, the teacher is a role model and embodiment of knowledge. Similarly, Sandeep (2015) posits that teachers help children to understand character traits and values. Teachers also model desirable character traits in the pupils both within the school setting and in the large society. It is essential that teachers use their behaviour to mould pupils because the pupils idealize the teachers, watch and try to emulate their behaviour.

Findings based on table 3 revealed that the extent to which governments are involved in promoting moral education in primary schools are to a low extent. This can be seen from the responses given by respondents which is to a low extent. In line with this, Amaele (2007) posits that government's tasks in promoting moral education includes; certification, curriculum of study, teachers' salary and other remunerations, appointment of heads such as ministers, commissioners, chairmen, supervisors of schools and guidance and counseling services among others. In addition, Nwabunani (2009) posits that there is no specific guideline or material provided by the government for teaching and learning of moral education in primary schools. Also, Okoro (2011) posits that there is need for formal incorporation of moral instruction in the curriculum where it is completely lacking.

V. CONCLUSION

The study sought to find out the teachers' perceptions on the extent of educational stakeholders' involvement in promoting moral education in primary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State. Determining the extent of the educational stakeholders' involvement in promoting moral education is highly relevant. It will enable them to understand their various roles better and also point out the areas in which they are performing well and where they need to improve. Ascertaining the teachers' perceptions on the extent of the educational stakeholders' involvement in promoting moral education helps creates room for a better understanding between the teachers and the parents and will help in changing their relationship with the parents to a more positive one. It gives the teachers a wonderful opportunity in seeing for themselves how high or low they are involved in their extent of promoting moral education in primary schools. It is also a better opportunity and means for the teachers to express themselves regarding the level of treatment and support they receive from the government in discharging their duties. The government on its own part will be exposed to the necessary rudiments required of them to help promote moral education and support teachers wholly and fully.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made:

- ✓ Parents should model good behaviour and not hesitate in purchasing the recommended text for the children's moral education.
- ✓ Teachers should try as much as possible to reward and give prizes to children with good behaviours and also use story books with stories of good character who through simple righteous acts become heroes worthy of emulation.
- ✓ Government need to make moral education an independent subject in the curriculum and also provide guidelines and materials for moral education in primary schools.
- ✓ Guidance and counseling services should be made available to all schools and only professional and qualified teachers should be employed into the teaching profession.
- ✓ Government should organize workshop, seminars and conferences for parents, teachers and head teachers on the need of moral education in primary schools.

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