



Link between education and culture and its implications for national development

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Abstract

Education and culture are two concepts that have always generated wide spread confusion in understanding and usage. This has led some people to argue as to which one is superior to the other, which is unfortunate. This paper therefore seeks to underscore this position and to find out how their proper comprehension can enhance development, in society. Accordingly, the pertinent questions to ask are what is education? And what is culture? And to what extent are they link, and how can they influence development in society. The study qualitatively studied the link between education and culture and its implications for national development. Finally, some important recommendations were proffered, among others was that courses in History and Culture be vigorously pursued in our institutions of learning, because they remind us of what transpired in the past and how to shape constantly for present and future use. Also, courses in history and humanities e.g. sociology, economics, literature should be re-enforced because they promote social interaction and thus enable us to appreciate the worth and value of each other.

Keywords: education, culture and national development

Introduction

Culture and education are complex phenomena and their causal relationship is of a “chicken or the egg” character. There is of course a great debate over what constitutes both “education” and “culture”, let alone their relationship with one another. According to Bock and Papagiannis, (2013) ^[26] one way or another social transformation are powerfully affected by cultural developments, some of which may be clearly thought about in terms of the impacts of deliberate and incidental educational activity. In the process individuals, communities of various kinds, the state and collectivities and communities beyond the state are constructed. When we examine human history in these terms, another theme emerges: the ways that interactions between cultural groups and ideas, and educational practices and institutions become crucial factors in understanding and explaining social change. This process, be it focused on individuals or society more broadly, often has profound effects. Some may be beneficial, but rarely are they less than complex. Sometimes they may be threatening. Whether intentional or not, the history of humanity is one of interactions. Significant issues for this process are surely those of culture and education. Sometimes the discussion occurs in terms of “civilizations”. Any understanding of the historical emergence and trajectories of civilizations is barely possible without strong attention being given to “interaction”. Some of the forms in which this occurs include political competition, attempts to redefine cultural, even geographical borders, and boundaries (Psacharopoulos, 2016) ^[24]. There may be remarkable periods of stability for cultural and educational formations and the role they play in the making of particular ethno-national-religious communities but then there is seemingly inevitable challenge, reform, sometimes regression always change (Bray, Clarke & Stephens, 2006) ^[2].

Basic Clarification of Concepts

It is necessary to cast a cursory glance at the two major concepts that are germane to this study: Education and Culture.

The concept of Education

Education seems to mean different things to different people depending on their socio-philosophical underpinnings as well as their societal settings and their value systems. Some people view education in terms of what it can offer for instance education is power, wealth etc. while others see education as a means to an end. Education is regarded as an instrument for national development and social change as well as the process of preparing an individual to become acceptable member of the society. It is widely recognized as a veritable tool for addressing issues of poverty, underdevelopment, population, illiteracy, ignorance, gender exclusion, health problems, conflicts and tolerance, human right as well as sustainability. According to Joseph, (2015) ^[13] there is a general consensus amongst Social Scientists, Educators and Philosophers that education is the greatest investment in human capital. He went on to say that it is also the most enduring asset capable of stimulating socio-economic, cultural, technological and political development. Thus, it is an established fact that education provides solution to most problems of a nation, typically within the education framework. One of the objectives of education is to ensure character and moral development of the young learners and the development of sound attitude. Since education is regarded as a means of making individuals understand their society and its structure, there is need for all and sundry irrespective of who they are and where they are and where they live to be educated (Nwafor & Joseph, 2021) ^[16].

From the global perspective, economic and social development are increasingly driven by the advancement and application of knowledge. Education is general, and higher education in particular, are fundamental to the construction of a knowledge economy and society in all nations. Yet the potential of higher education systems in developing countries to fulfill this responsibility is frequently thwarted by long-standing problems of finance, efficiency, equity, equality, quality and governance. Now,

these old challenges have been augmented by new challenges linked to the growing role of knowledge in economic development, rapid changes in telecommunications technology, and the globalization of trade and labor market. Knowledge has become the most important factor of economic development in the 21st century (Nwafor & Joseph, 2021) ^[16].

Conclusively, education has become the central theme of our lives as well as the bedrock of any meaningful development of any nations as it prepares younger generation for life as well as informing illiterate adults of the dynamic world around them. students' perception on higher education quality is heavily influenced by the university they study at, scholarship status, extra-curricular activities, parents' education, age, and previous educational success, the results for students' participation in part-time employment only shows moderate significant and parents' income shows no influence on students' perception.

According to Fafunwa (2004) ^[7], education is the aggregate of all the process by which a child or young adult develops the abilities, attitudes and other forms of behavior which are of positive value to the society which he lives.

Oyekan (2002) ^[19] adds that education is the totality of all forms of brilliant ideas, useable skills, and desirable value orientation that can nurture individuals to responsible competent citizens. Such educated men and women would use their competencies and experience and vision of good society to create wealth for nation building (which is development). Plato said long time ago that: education consists in giving to the human body and soul all the beauty and perfection by which they are by nature capable. According to Joseph (2015) ^[13], education should be peculiar to a set of people since it is the most enduring asset capable of stimulating socio-economic, cultural, technological and political development of a society. Thus, it is an established fact that education provides solution to most problems of a nation, typically within the education framework. While Locke (1965) ^[14] saw education as the process of learning through human experience in the world in order to work towards realization of happiness. Meanwhile Ghandi (1980) ^[8] sees education as a complete living of those who go through it. Similarly, Pestalozzi (2002) ^[21] holds that education is a natural harmonious and progressive process of developing man's innate powers. On his part, Dewey (1938) ^[1] sees education as all round activities of drawing out the best from the learners' body, mind and soul as a means of social continuity. Likewise, Okafor (2019) ^[17] sees education as a process aimed at the acculturation of the individual learner to attach his personal potentialities to attain his maximum reasons for his perfect fulfilment.

Pattern (2009) however observes that education can be seen from two perspectives namely; education for the young and education for the other aged groups; among the young people, education involves transmitting skills, beliefs, attitudes and other aspects of behavior which they have not previously acquired while for the adults, it means a replacement of old ideas with new ones. Shading more light to this, Meroyi (2017) ^[15] observed that an important expectation of any educational system is molding individuals that pass through it intellectually and morally, which should result in the transformation of such individual from ignorance to knowledge. Adding his voice, Gytot (2017) ^[10] put it thus: education is a form of learning which

the knowledge, skills and habits of a group of people are transferred from one generation to the next. Peters (1966) ^[22] rather proposed the criteria of education and of educated man to include:

1. That education implies the transmission of what is worthwhile to those who become committed to it.
2. That education must involve knowledge and understanding and some kind of cognitive perspective, which are not inert.
3. That education at least rules out some procedures of transmission on the grounds that they lack willingness and voluntariness on the part of the learners.

The concept of culture

According to Gytot (2017) ^[10] Culture simply refers to certain personal characteristics, manners, and taste of literature which distinguish him from others. In anthropology and sociology culture refers to the sum of human being, ways of life, their behavior, beliefs and thought. It connotes everything that is acquired by them as social beings.

Edward Taylor in Gytot (2017) ^[10] perceived culture as that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society. In the same vein, Haralambos, Holbom and Heald (2008) ^[11] defined culture as a process shared by people which is transmitted from one generation to another through the process of socialization. Similarly, Hobbs and Blank (2009) ^[12] holds that it is a symbolic way of perceiving, interpreting and using experience by a group of people. Meanwhile Beals and Hoijer (2015) ^[1] sees culture as the ways of life common at any one time to all mankind. It applies specifically to ways, behaving characteristic of a group of more or less of interacting societies.

To further understand culture, it would be worthwhile to consider its characteristics and functions, thus;

1. **Culture is a way of life:** culture is simply the way of life of a people or their design for living. It is not a force but a human product operating by itself and independent of human acting.
2. **Culture is learned behavior:** some behavior is learned while others are not. Behaviors such as combing of one's hair is learned, but greeting is by imitating parents which comes in involuntarily.
3. Culture is abstract and is variable. Culture before it is learned, exist in the mind or habits of the members of society. It is also a shared way of thinking and doing things. This arise from the fact that man is always engaged in wishful thinking, desiring and planning.
4. Culture include attitudes, values and knowledge. The thinking, agreement or disagreement of a group of people can easily be noticed when closely observing them.
5. **Culture is shared:** following from the forgoing, it can be seen that patterns of learned behavior and the results are passed not by one person but usually by a larger group.
6. **Culture is super-organic:** this implies that culture is somehow superior to nature. It means different things to different people even from the same society.
7. **Culture is continually-changing:** some societies change slowly hi comparison to others, e.g. the act of throwing a big feast during funerals is fast becoming a norm in some states like Plateau, this was hitherto being

known only to the Western and Southern Nigerian states e.g. Lagos, Ibadan or Port-Harcourt.

Functions of Culture

To a very large extent, culture has some functions for both individuals and some society. Some of such according to Carnoy and Samoff (2019) ^[3] include:

1. **Culture define situation:** each culture has many subtle clues which define each situation i.e. when to run, fight back, cry, laugh. In some communities, it is very wrong for a younger person to first offer hand shake to an elder.
2. **Culture defines attitude, values and goals:** by simply approving certain goals and enriching others, culture channels our ambition in these ways, culture and education determines the goals of the individual in life.
3. **Culture defines, myths, legends and super natural power:** Myths and legends are powerful forces in a group's behavior. Culture also provides the individual with a ready-made view of the universe as grounded in philosophy. The nature, of driving power and important moral issues are defined by culture.
4. **Culture provides behavior patterns:** an individual, may not go through trial and error learning all things from what food can be eaten, how to choose a mate.

The society has already laid down procedure for all these to be achieved. So also is with education which promotes social interaction. As a saying goes, a society without rules or norms to define right and wrong behavior would be very much like a heavily travelled street without signs. In such a situation, chaos would be inevitable. But through education, this issues can easily be resolved.

The Relationship between Education and Culture

It can be observed from most definitions of culture cited in this paper that culture actually represents a peoples' way of life, and passing of their ways from generation to generation. Notably, through the home, schools, peer groups, religious institutions etc. but to a large extent, schools which are educational institutions serve to preserve and in the process transmit the culture of society (Casapo, 2011) ^[4].

Secondly, schools which are educational institutions do not just exist in isolation of the immediate environment in which they are found. Enoh (2003) ^[6], therefore insist and the writers agree with him that 'this being the case, the school curriculum should represent the values, art, morals and skills that are prevalent in any society (which is emphasis on culture).

Thirdly, it is also the case that schools do not present and transmit culture but also serve as instrument of cultural change. This role of education as instrument of cultural change emanates from the fact that schools in general do not simply pass on from generation to generation, the culture of the past, but they even evaluate existing culture and only pass on to the growing generation, those aspects that are still found necessary (Psacharopoulos & Woodhall, 2015) ^[23].

Fourthly, culture also influence education in the sense that schools exist in definite cultural contexts and are considerably influenced by attitude to education which in

turn reflects the position of education in the scale of value of the different cultures, i.e. when education is highly valued, attitude to education will similarly be positive, thereby leading to high enrolment; but where high emphasis is placed on early marriage and other trivial issues than education, enrolment figures not only go low but worst to the girl child who have high tendency to be forced into early marriage than their male counterparts (Coles, 2012) ^[5].

Fifthly, to a large extent, each of this concepts is explained in terms of the other; for instance, when one is said to be educated connotes the fact that he/she is highly intelligent and organized in his conduct, and in relating with others, that is why Peters (1966) ^[22] insist that an educated man should in addition to being knowledgeable should also have the knowhow of things around him. Similarly, when one is said to be highly cultured implies that he is well grounded and can also exhibit the norms of his culture. He hardly deviates but is always in compliance, by implication this also keeps him in constant check in the society. On the whole, whereas education sharpens one's knowledge, culture helps in preserving same, and since we leave according to cultural lineage, the need for proper comprehension of the two becomes apart. From the foregoing, it can be seen that there is a thin line to separate between the two.

Influences of Education on Culture

According to Bray, Clarke, & Stephens, (2006) ^[2] the following are the influences of education on culture

1. Preservation of Culture

Culture is the blood vein of a society, which needs to be conserved. It is an important function of education to help in the preservation of culture or social heritage. Education, through its specialized agencies, tries to inculcate the traditions, customs, values, arts, morals etc. into the tender minds of pupils. "Education must help in preserving the vital elements of our heritage".

2. Transmission of Culture

In addition to preservation of culture, it is a task of education to maintain the continuity of culture by handing down the existing cultural experiences, values, traditions, customs etc. from one generation to another through its various programmes and practices. Without this transmission, the nation's survival may be the toughest task and the progress of mankind can be stifled. Society reels in utter chaos and confusion. Men will become savages and human relationship will be broken into pieces. Therefore, the substance of unity in any society is its precious culture. The famous sociologist, Ottaway writes, "The function of education is to transmit the social values and ideals to the young and capable members of society".

3. Promotion of Culture

Besides preservation and transmission, another vital function of education is to modify the existing cultural patterns in the light of changes visible in the needs and demands of the society. These changes are heightened owing to cross-cultural variables. Thus, new cultural patterns are formed by replacing and reorienting the old outmoded cultural forms to suit the changing needs of time and man. Therefore, society makes ostensible progress. This part of education is called progressive function of education. As such, education performs by constantly reorganizing and reconstructing human experiences for the promotion and enrichment of culture.

4. Equips Man to Adapt to Changing Cultural Patterns

It is an admitted fact that every generation after generation modifies the old and archaic cultural forms and adds new ones to the best advantage of theirs. This is possible through educational means and method. Moreover, education equips the individual to adjust himself or herself to the changing cultural forms and patterns for better and successful living.

5. Molding the Personality

It is a universal element of culture that personality is shaped and molded by education. An individual's personality goes on developing when he or she continues to forge a web of relationship with other members of society. This form of interaction is made possible by education according to the behavioral patterns or culture of the existing society. In simple words, culture is an informal agency of social control which helps in molding and shaping the behavior of the individuals in a desirable way.

6. Restoring Unity of Mankind through Diffusion of Culture

It is a dire necessity of the civilization that unity of mankind is to be restored. It is to be made possible through education which assists in diffusion of culture in an effective manner. Education should treat human culture as a whole like a full-blossom flower whose different petals represent different groups. Education, further, helps in disseminating the modern cultural values like co-operation, unity, mutual understanding, brotherhood of men, love and appreciation for others etc. to the mankind for its enduring survival.

7. Removing Cultural Lag

The concept of cultural lag is attributed to the famous sociologist Ogburn. When there exists a difference between material culture and non-material culture, there emerges this lag concept. As it is seen, material culture is advanced due to the rapid strides in science and technology and people adopt the modern life styles ignoring non-material part of culture. Therefore, non-material culture lags behind the former. This situation is cultural lag which needs to be eliminated by education through its various programmes and myriad activities. Cultural is antithesis to social change and progress of the civilization.

From the foregoing discussion, it is crystal clear that there exists a close relation between education and culture. Education socializes an individual in one hand and it preserves, transmits and promotes the culture of a society on the other. In brief, education and culture are mutually interwoven, complementary and supplementary in all their aspects. It is education which reifies the culture.

National Development

According to Rodney (2012) ^[25] National development is the process by which a country improves the social and economic wellbeing of its citizens through the provision of amenities such as quality education, good roads, medical facilities and other social infrastructure. The term "national development" refers to the improvement of a country in all areas, including the political, economic, social, cultural, scientific, and material spheres. The capacity of a nation to enhance its citizens' standard of living is an indicator of the nation's level of development.

Implications of Education and Culture for National Development

Literally, *Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary of English* define development as means evaluation, physical growth, maturity, expansion, enlargement, spread, build out, progress, success, blossom and headway. Also according to Rodney (2012) ^[25] development is a many-sided process. At the level of the individual, it implies skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being. At the level of social groups, development implies an increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relationships.

Economically: a society develops economically as its members' increase jointly their capacity of dealing with the environment. That is why social scientists declares that development is the harnessing of human and material resources for the advancement of mankind. The capacity for dealing with the environment is dependent on the extent to which individuals understood the laws of nature (science) on the extent to which they put that understanding (knowledge & understanding) into practice by devising tools (culture of improved technology) and on the manner in which it is organized. Man's development is best understood by reflecting on the stages of his society's progress, herein lies the role of culture. That is why Sir Ahmadu Bello sees development as a logical extension of man's general philosophy which admits of a spiritual and cultural side on the other (Gyot, 2015) ^[9]. On the whole, development revolves around the individual and his environment. His interaction with same brings out result whether negative or positive. It can be seen that in the course of interaction, man reflects on what has happen in that area (which is a product of culture) and tries to sharpens or modify the idea or product to current trend (product of schooling or education) before final outcome.

Conclusion

Whichever way the discussion goes it can be seen that education and culture are mutually linkup and both complement each other. Education influences culture by providing people with copious amounts of knowledge that ultimately alters the way that they perceive the world and their place in it. Also development which is product of man's interaction with his environment can only be possible if man can harness knowledge around him based on antecedent of history and culture available, so man is the driving force in any development. Culture and education are two inseparable parameters and they are interdependent. Any educational pattern gets its guidance from the cultural patterns of a society. For instance, in a society with a spiritual pattern of culture, the educational focus would be on the achievement of moral and eternal values of life. Culture influences how we see the world, how we see the community that we live in, and how we communicate with each other. Being a part of a culture influences our learning, remembering, talking and behaving. Therefore, culture determines to a great extent the learning and teaching styles also. Culture is the blood vein of a society, which needs to be conserved. It is an important function of education to help in the preservation of culture or social heritage. Education, through its specialized agencies, tries to inculcate the traditions, customs, values, arts, morals etc. into the tender minds of pupils.

Cultural determinants of education include ethnicity, race, country of origin, language, non-verbal communication, acculturation, gender, age, sexual orientation, values, behavior norms, rules, manners, social grouping and relationships, religious and spiritual beliefs, socioeconomic class and education. Cultural background gives children a sense of who they are. The unique cultural influences children respond to from birth, including customs and beliefs around food, artistic expression, language, and religion, affect the way they develop emotionally, socially, physically, and linguistically. Culture is an important factor in curriculum planning and drives the content of every curriculum. This is because the essence of education is to transmit the cultural heritage of a society to the younger generation of the society. Curriculum is a veritable tool for attaining the educational goals of a nation.

Recommendations

From the foregoing, it was recommended that;

1. Courses in History and Culture be vigorously pursued in our institutions of learning, because they remind us of what transpired in the past and how to shape constantly for present and future use.
2. Also, courses in history and humanities e.g. sociology, economics, literature should be re-enforced because they promote social interaction and thus enable us to appreciate the worth and value of each other.
3. This leads to healthy competition in pursuing developmental programs instead of unhealthy rivalry.

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