

Introduction

Education is a life-long process. That is, it begins at birth, and ends at death. Education transforms the helpless infant into a matured adult, and this makes education to be significant and remarkable. This transformation is achieved through the contribution of various institutions and bodies. The various institutions and bodies which have contributed to the upbringing and education of the individuals are the agencies of education, which include the home, school, peer-group, mass media, religious institutions, and the community.

The Family/ Home as an Agent

The family or home is made up of the father, mother and children and it is regarded as the primary agent of education (National Teachers Institute 2000). The family as an agent of education, parents are the most important agent for the child at the very early stages of his development from the child depends on them for his physiological and psychological needs. This is based on the premise that home is the first station of a child and where he learns the appropriate behaviour patterns of the larger society.

The role of the family in the education the child cannot be over – emphasized. According to Akinloye (2001), family lays the moral and spiritual foundation for the child to build upon in later life. The family members teach the concept of good and bad or right and wrong right from infancy. Furthermore, home contributes to the intellectual development of the child. A number of activities is planned as provided by the family to assist the child to grow intellectually. It is the family that helps the child to develop language. This is done through imitation. Learning in the school becomes easier for the child he starts schooling.

Every child is an extension of his or her family. The child acquired the values of the society from his family. No family will be willing to associate with failure. Hence, the family ensures that the child is prepared for the challenges of life. If the family fulfill its educational function a firm basis would have been laid for the school to build upon

The school

The family alone can not provide all that is required for the education of that child. He is therefore sent to the school where professionally trained personnel are involved in the upbringing of the child. The school is an institution where the behaviour of individual is shaped to prepare him to be effective and functional member of his society. It is the school that can be regarded as a factory where the child is processed into a refined personality that can cope with the increasing the complexity in labour market and also industrialization. Like the family, the school is an institution where the culture of the society is transmitted it's also help the child to develop skills necessary for survival in the society. In addition, the school also develops the child civic consciousness for effective citizenship. These roles are achieved by teaching subjects like social studies government e.t.c School enable the child to interact, at a wider level with other children, thereby bringing about mutual understanding and respect for other peoples culture and their opinions. The school is an agent for national development. Clubs like scout movement, Drama and Debating Societies, Boys Brigade, Red-cross etc. are established which introduce the child to co-curricular activities like drama debating games to socialize the children. In performing its roles, the school is complemented by the home schools should therefore instill in children good attitude, usable skills and knowledge that will make the

children to develop and contribute meaningfully in their various communities.

THE PEER GROUP AS AN AGENT

This is the social relationship between people who fall within the same age range peer group exerts great influence on the education of individuals. This is because every group has a common interest Peer group, according to Musgrave (1979) is a group in which the child spends more time with ,other children interacting closely both at home and the school. In the course .of their interaction, children emulate themselves exhibit especially those of their interest.

When a child interact with others, the freedom and equal status ,of the peer group help the child to acquire culture of democracy. The members of the peer group express their feeling freely ask questions and even demonstrate their potentialities. The respect and loyalty which members have for the group assist them to learn.

However it should be noted that members are from different socio – economic and ‘cultural background. It is this different background that help the child to learn many things which may not be possible while he is alone. At this level, the see themselves as equal and do not discriminate against one another. Therefore peer group provides children the opportunity to play many social roles. For instance a child may play the role of a teach8er, a doctor, a lawyer and so on. The children tend to exhibit and develop interest in certain profession. When children mingle together while females are together. At other time play together both sexes play together to prevent sex discrimination.

The condition that exist in the relationship among children facilitate intellectual development. They learn more when children are together. This is because, at home, the parents may refuse to answer their question and

they may be too shy to ask teacher in the school. When children play in their peer group, they ask questions freely and members who have answers give them. The children at times meet to discuss academic questions. This may generate from debate and quizzes. Children should be encouraged to keep good company and avoid bad ones.

Mass Media as an Agent

The mass media comprises of the newspapers, radio television, computer, internet. Etc. Mass media provides information education and entertainment. It has been observed that the mass-media available to a child goes a long way to determine.

A child that is exposed to newspaper and fond of story on a particular column of the newspaper the tendency is to show interest in reading the aspect of the newspaper. The habit he develops for reading is academic and education value. That is why newspaper and magazine should publish stories that are of value to the society in order to enhance all round development of the child.

The government at times ties the mass media in putting certain programmes across to citizens. During this period, mass-media serves as an agent for the propagation of government programme. Mass media through improved communication technology. Has reduced the whole world into a global village. Through the mass media from Nigeria and even other parts of the world can be heard. Mass media also assists in transmitting cultural values. These programmes propagated by the mass media not only gives the children to have ideal of the nature of other people culture. It also helps the child to have broader knowledge and understanding of the lives of other people.

It is on this basis that the child should be exposed to programmes in the mass media that will enrich the intellectual development of the child and avoid those that will destroy him. The government should control or

monitor the kind of materials which these media give to the public only those that promote the values of the society should be allowed.

Religious institutions

Religion is one preoccupation of man through which he intends to attain a perfect relationship with his creator. He (man) considers life on earth to be transient and believes that it is only the hereafter that full enjoyment obtains. Thus, most people embrace religion with passion and in Nigeria, Christianity and Islam have gained ascendancy due to the intricacies that the different forms of colonialism introduced public life. Both religions have popularized teachings that educationists consider to be of great intellectual value. For example, Akande (2001) believes that religious organizations count in a nation's quest for better socio-economic and intellectual order. Specifically, the national teacher's institute (2001) considered the church and the mosque as "the custodians of the spiritual needs of the society which teach children to love God and humanity (p. 154).

Thus, religious institutions are a good means of educating the individual. They seek to modify the behaviours of their members desirably and permanently, till Eternity, since any departure from the approved teachings is believed by the adherents to be capable of leading them to jeopardy. All religions preach tolerance. Honesty, love, humility and other virtues to members. They attempt to correct what they deem to be detestable attitudes, values, and opinions.

Religious institutions promote education by establishing schools. Offering scholarship to indigent but outstanding learners, and donating to education funds. It should be remembered that the earliest institution of formal learning in Nigeria were through religious efforts (Fuafunwa, 1974). Early Christian and Islamic missionaries founded the first school in the country, and up till today, there are schools run by missions.

The crucial role played by religious institution in the education process possibly induced government into giving official recognition to Christianity and Islam (FRN. 1999). However, education would benefit more from religion if such Recognition is extended to mother religions, especially the traditional religion which also emphasizes virtues among adherents.

The Community

Another crucial agency of education is the community. It offers definite environments that supply the learner's personal experiences which the school taps. The socio psychology experience involving the community go a long way in determining the learner's educational attainments. Yet. These educational values of the community can be said to be intrinsic.

The extrinsic role of the community in educational development is not less significant unless a ;community ,offers the needed land a proprietor may find it very difficult to establish school. Even after marking the land available the community ,works with the school to endure the lather's progress, development and growth, many communities, like progress, development, and missionaries, really established their own schools before government grant-aided the schools. Despite the grant-aiding communities continue to provide funds and facilities to the schools and monitor the teaching learning process in their own ways.

The different spheres of the life of the community promote intellectual development by serving as foci of research activities at the higher levels of education. Findings from the research effort usually lead to solutions to specific problems contributing the community in other words, a mutual relationship exist between the community and the school hence. The education process emphasizes gown and-town relationship. In order that the community /may continue to discharge is education duties effectively scholars have suggested that government embark on a dynamic

population policy (Fedipe 2001). A balanced people would have little difficulty supporting educational programme.

Conclusion

Thus education is a process that depends on inputs from many agencies. The experience of life that the recipient of formal education carry into the teaching learning situations derive from such agencies as the home. School, peer group mass medial religious institutions, and community. The agencies provide the experiences intrinsically by emphasizing good morals tolerance, humility, nationalism, nationalism, love honesty, and other attributes. They also support education by making funds and facilities available to the institutions of learning. They monitor learning activities and participate in curriculum development. Hence government is always out to empower the agencies.

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