



GOOD PARENTING SYNERGY FOR THE CHILD'S CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT: THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN WOLE SOYINKA'S CHILDE INTERNATIONALE

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ABSTRACT

The instruction from the Holy Scripture says "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov 22:6). This quote makes it mandatory for parents to have a divine partnership with the creator in the training of the child because the harm that the infiltration of cultures, beliefs and traditions are having on the child is more than the good therein. Therefore in considering CHILDE INTERNATIONALE as a case study is to look at the numerous roles the parents has to play in moulding the child's attitudes and bahavious at home and in the society at large. This paper attempts to do a functional analysis of the effects of different parenting styles in the development of the child's character. Attempt is also made to x-ray the different traits that form the personality of a person which will help in understanding the stages of child development through existing literatures. If Wole Soyinka in 1964 recommended paternal discipline as the immediate solution to the problem of socio-cultural and religious pollution caused by the infiltration of foreign culture then one would recommend the joint effort of the woman as a co-pilot with the man in the future journey of the child in this present age of technological development so that the child will not be corrupted but will grow to be appreciating, just, loving and responsible to him/herself, to his/her community and the nation at large because "The child that is not trained will sell the house that is built in the future".

KEY WORDS: *Good Parenting, Synergy, Development, Character, Child.*

INTRODUCTION

Biology is the least of what makes a parent, it goes beyond conception, (Bruce 2005) it is a divine assignment of partnership with God in which training the children in character formation is very essential. Children are society's most critical foundational, back bone that shapes its future progress and that of humanity in general. By considering the utmost importance of a child in the society, this paper will expose us to the prominent role the parents play especially the mother in the character development of the child while focusing on the play text of Wole Soyinka "CHILDE INTERNATIONALE as a case study"

The child as an essential segment of human society is the most valuable natural resource, the childhood shows the man as morning shows the day.

Kundu and Tutoo (2007) thus, the child is the main constituent of any future generation. The minds of children are like wet cement in which in which what we inculcate mainly in the family atmosphere are permanent inscription in their minds throughout their lives either good or bad. Just as we cannot make a dry fish bend, so is in the child unless we bring him/her up in a family atmosphere of good values, culture, tradition and moral especially at the initial stage of life, it will be difficult to mould them at later stages of life and there is no substitution for any family to achieve this, if not done when eve young (David 2010). Thus the family is supreme in the character development of the child with the parents playing a crucial role especially the mother.

According to the Yoruba cosmic view "Iwa" denoting character is the 'Ewa' meaning beauty that



guarantees one a good standing in the society. Thus Iwalewa is a concept that is appraised among the Yoruba people, a concept linked to character, personal virtues, attributes and grit. Another attribute excepted of the child in general is “Omoluabi” cited in Adegboyega (2016) in the 21st Convocation Lecture at the College of Education Ikere Ekiti, by Erelu Bisi Fayemi who describes the notion of Omoluabi thus.

“the Omoluabi is someone who is regarded as having an abundance of respect, humility, compassion, productivity honesty, good manners and all things which makes it possible to relate to various stakeholders in public, private and across divides. In Yoruba we would describe these attributes as “Ofàya” ‘Iwapele’ ‘Irele’ ‘Iteriba’ etc.

To prevent total collapse of moral values and virtues that define a people and check the state of anomie as witnessed today in home and society at large, it is not out of place to have a notion about women and the role they play in the child character development because a Yoruba adage says:

“omo ta o ko, lo ma gbe ile taa ko ta”. Meaning “the child that is not trained will sell the house that is built in the future”

According to (Templar, 2008) the challenges facing parents in the home front in the upbringing of the children are enormous, along the way there are frustrations, anguish, bewilderments and soul searching as we look for the right things to say and do that will set the child on the road to growing up into a happy, well-balanced adult. Luckily, the rewards are huge, the fun, the hugs and closeness. Even the thanks and the pleasure of seeing the child grow into the kind of person you can be proud of. Therefore as a father or mother it is expedient for you to learn some basic facts when it comes to developing character of the child in the atmosphere of discipline, dignity, honor and love.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The child’s character development and its personality formation are the results of the complex interaction of several categories of factors which shall be looked into as basis for proper analysis for the play text.

Good Parenting is the process of caring for the child in an acceptable standard which should be in line with the culture and custom of a given locality cited in Burn and Mutcher (1999). It is the general belief in most part of Nigerian society that there must be discipline, mutual understanding and respect among family members and this should be maintained at all times. For example, one must not address elders or senior people by their names. Among the Yorubas, greeting and the manner of greeting are very important, as a matter of fact failure to greet or answer when greeted is seen as a sign of contention, and failure to greet in the proper way is seen as a sign of disrespect or pride. Such an attitude is immediately scolded by calling to order the person concerned. The concept of training the child is a serious issues that should not be waved aside with the left hand (Sanni 2013) and it is the response to some of these issues that Wole Soyinka decided to use drama to ridicule this kind of undesirable attitude in the lives of present day Nigerian youths.

Ontologically it is the duty of the parent to strategize measures, ways, methods and input extra energy, power to inculcate in the child what its takes to be a responsible citizen. In fact it has been acknowledged that women have a role to play in the nurturing of mother-natures, as the creator has endowed them with a physiology designed to give birth to new life. The adage that says “the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world” cut across cultural boundaries. The “woman” has been and remained a co-pilot with the man in the development indices of the child character development (Adegboyega, 2006).

There are different types and styles of parenting that we have:

- ✓ **Authoritarian:** This type of parenting has clear expectation of how their children should behave; they act like a controlling force, set goals for the entire family. These types of parents also give more importance to social image and family prestige. They do not subscribe to the idea of handling family affair in democratic ways. Above all, this type of parent control the family with some degree of force not loves.
- ✓ **Equalitarian or Authoritative:** These types of parents are democratic in handling family issue and do not take decision in child’s issue erratically.
- ✓ **Permissive:** Parents with this style display some measure of inconsistency in child discipline. They exhibit a nonchalant attitude towards child’s upbringing



Table Showing the Three Types of Parenting Style

Style	Parenting Attitude	Effect on Children
Authoritiation	Expect children to follow their rules without deviation	Angry rebels, no independent judgment over dependent.
Permissive	Enforce discipline irregularly (sporadically)	Children may not learn how to keep safe secure and healthy
Authoritative/Equalitarian	Provides children with some freedom but also enforces appropriate limitation and boundaries necessary for safety.	Encourage to develop their own judgment and develop their own interest.

Source: Marrionito Hinacay (2008)

According to Landry, and Smith (2001), the parent is profoundly important to the development of emotional and cognitive growth of a child. A child will learn about relationships with others, morals, self esteem, self-worth and loyalty, all by watching and participating in the family affairs. A family is also the home of the nation and the root of national survival. It is the University of Life and source of human society. The relationships within the family influence the child's character development survival. Therefore, the family is the first socializing institution known to the child. Where the child first learns about right and wrong. Thus, family led by parents has great influence and set the stage for how they grow and develop.

As soon as a baby is born, the parent becomes attached to their child through touching holding, carrying and playing. The world of movement begins and it is the parents who become the first teacher especially the mother. Parents have a much longer and sustained intimate relationship with their children, than anybody else. When they are young, they are learning to identify and label the world, familiarization develops, parents need to understand and learn how they see the world. Parents are natural teachers because they know their child better than anyone else does and they have a better idea of what he/she is ready to learn. Parents should dedicate more time to their children in order to take advantage of the many ordinary events that happen throughout the day in the normal course of family life which are vital to teaching opportunities. As parents, we must provide opportunities for our children to experience the world under our guidance. Children should be able to learn good habits and acceptable societal values that will last a life time.

Several studies on child's development show that the physical presence of parents as well as their concerted efforts is essential to the emotional and overall character development of the child. The parents, especially the mother who is not taking their responsible role or is away most of the time hampers the proper character development of the child, their

demonstration of inconsistent, indiscreet neglecting behaviour mars and spoils the proper growth and development of the child's mental attitudes and social behaviour pattern. Furthermore, young children deprived of parental affection develop emotionally disturbed behaviour and are often seen demonstrating aggression towards their siblings and peers Mead (1934).

Who is this child:- He/she is a young human who is not yet an adult, a person who is strongly influenced by the ideas and attitudes of a particular time and person. As the child develop from infant through teens to adult, they go through series of developmental stages that are important to all aspect of their personality, including physical, intellect, emotional and social. So the proper role of parents is to provide encouragement, support and access to activities that enable the child to master key characters that enables the child develops into a matured and responsible person in the society.

What is character development?

According to Hornby oxford advanced dictionary, character is all the qualities and features that make a person group of people and places different from others. It is strong personal qualities such as the ability to deal with difficult or dangerous situation. On the other hand, development is the gradual growth of something so that it becomes more advanced, stronger etc. it is also an event or stage that is likely to affect what happens in a continuing situation. These definitions stands a solid foundation for the concept of good parenting to fit in properly when it comes to training the child to stand the test of time and situation in the present and the future to come. Furthermore character is defined by McDougall in Jafar (2011) "as the most important in personality in a man that gives or rather is the ground of consistency, firmness self-control power of self direction or autonomy"--- there is also a moral factor, character training and moral training are one and the same thing. Appreciation of



values or ideals such as justice, goodness or truth which is an essential part of each kind of training, if a man knows what is right and what is working, what is valuable and what is trivial, what is good and what is bad, he will be able to form wise judgment and mould a good character. Character is rightly said to be “an accomplished will”.

Character, good or bad is considered to be observable in one's conduct. Thus character is different from value in that values are orientations or dispositions whereas character involves action or activation of knowledge and values, from this perspective values are such as one of the foundations for character (Robert and Fadiman, 2005).

In terms of defining good character, educators stated that this should include developing: (a) moral responsibility and sound ethical and moral behaviour (b) capacity for discipline (c) a moral and ethical sense of the values, goals and process of a free society (d) standards of personal character and ideas which should be seen in any responsible child that has received home training.

According to Campbell and Bond cited in Nayah and Rao (2001) said there are four major questions to be addressed when focusing on character development: (i) what is good character (ii) what causes or prevent it (iii) how can it be measured so that effort at improvement can have corrective feedback (iv) how can it best be developed?

Good character is defined in terms of one's actions. Character development traditionally focused on those traits or values appropriate for the industrial age such as obedience to authority (parents), work ethics, working in group under supervision etc. character development can be influenced by various factors like (1) heredity (2) early childhood experience (3) modeling by important adult and elder youth (4) peer influence (5) the general physical, social environment (6) the communication media (7) what is taught in the school and other institutions and specific situations and roles that elicit corresponding behaviour (Nayah & Rao, 2004).

Actually while schools play a role in the development of character families, communities and society in general also have important influence on the child that is why children that are not properly taught, elicit abnormal behaviours like students indiscipline in schools, students suicide rate will be high, in fact in Nigeria, a students who fails WAEC committed suicide. Is that the solution to his problem or to read hard for another exam? As if that is not enough, crime will be at alarming rate which is even happening in our

society now, burglar issues are numerous, homicide is at an appalling rate, the pregnancy rate of teenage girls is another social problem. Antisocial activities like smoking cocaine, indian hemp and the likes are just the order of the day because children lack good character development due to bad handling from the parents.

SYNOPSIS OF THE PLAY: CHILDE INTERNATIONALE

The play *childe internationale*, written by Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka was first published in 1987. It appeared first as stage play in 1964 and since then *childe internationale* has been a popular choice for school acting.

The writer brings to the fore a pathetic situation in an African family where the man feels insulted and disturbed as a result of the unruly behaviour of his wife and daughter who have returned from Britain. The daughter has imbibed the western way of life and finds it difficult to come to terms with the indigenous African culture and practice though, this is due to the fact that her mother who is supposed to be the custodian of good nurturing ethnics refused to give her proper home training from the onset and the politician, instead of allowing the situation to get the better of him because of the clash of cultures and ideas that occur between him and the rest of the family demands that he compromise his stand as the head and bread winner of the family, which he is not ready to do; he finally decides to apply (probably as the first and a temporary measure) the traditional method of discipline which is applying a few lashes of the cane to his wife and daughter to bring them back to their senses. Taking into consideration the fact that western civilization has done us both good and bad. The playwright uses “the good” i.e the writing mode to expose some of the “bad” that western civilization has done especially to the young one who have totally relegated the good side. Wole Soyinka is capable of entering not only the world of the adult but also that of the youth and children in order to teach them character and to be able to show case our cultural heritage even outside the country. There is a Yoruba saying that “Tomode ba a da lode ile ni ewo” that if a child is good outside examine his background or home in which he/she comes from.

The play is fun, is a comedy and the writer's satirical humor and skillful use of the English language enable a wider variety of reader to experience the rich details and literary quality that are enjoyed by both young and old, no matter their religious or ethnic backgrounds.



DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF THE CHARACTERS IN CHILDE INTERNATIONALE

For a reader to appreciate the discourse of the role of parents in the character development of the child, particular attention must be paid to the main characters i.e (the politician, the wife and Titi) in the situation depicted, conflict presented and their final resolutions.

Politician: - He is a typical African man a no-nonsense man, who is highly confrontational

Politician: What is all this about? It is either she was given a report or she was not. Were you given a report?

Titi: Gee Dad you sure are persistent

Politician: Did you get a report? An end of term report? Yes or no, pass or fail

Wife: Oh Kotun, you do keep on so. Don't you realize she "il show it to us when she's ready

Politician: (Flabbergasted) when she is ready

Wife: so don't keep on about it. You'll only aggravate her resistance mechanism

The politician's stance is a direct confrontation with what he feels is out of place as the daughter demonstrates insensitivity to her school reports. While the wife tries to avoid direct confrontation, the politician expressed his emotions loud and clear by shouting for and demanding the daughter's report card, which is the evidence of a term's work at school. The father will not tolerate nonchalant attitude from the daughter but the mother is not helping matters which should not be.

Wife: Oh she is already dating

Politician: Dating? What is that one

Wife: Dating boyfriend. Parties -----

The politician is also surprised that the daughter has a boyfriend which totally goes against the African culture of purity and sanctity for woman before marriage. Girls are expected to keep themselves pure until after traditional marriage. It is believed that a girl going about with boyfriend cannot keep herself pure. This is also part of what the mother suppose to train the child on, she did not and by so doing neglected her role as a mother. The father also got irritated when his daughter announces that her boyfriend is coming to their home for dinner without the permission of the parents. For the daughter to have a boyfriend at that young age of 16 years is disturbing to the father and to say he is coming to their home for dinner without the consent of the parents is disgusting to him.

The Wife: "A been to", who went abroad to study but came back to Nigeria to want to be like the whites and

at the same time want her daughter who went to study abroad to be like the white. She wants the child to throw her indigenous culture away, this makes her child to go 'a -wire' and lacks respect for her culture and for elders. The wife lost her responsibility as a mother to inculcate into her child good character forgetting the fact that "charity begins at home" and that "the child that is not trained will be the one to sell the house that is built".

Titi: But Dad -----

Politician: Oh shut your mouth!

Wife: I've warned you. Don't give this girl a complex

From the excerpt, it shows the kind of woman the wife is. Good parenting can easily be done by both parents infact, especially by the mother but reverse is the case here. The woman as the mentor, the chief instructor should be able to do better. It is the duty of the woman to mould the character of the child with the help of the father. The wife is not persuasive which shouldn't be, children can be daring in such a situation, she is supposed to apply direct confrontation like the politician.

Titi: She is a girl of about 16years of age, she is sent to school in abroad which made her go a-wire, though she has not been properly taught by her mother the rudiment of home training from the on-set. She is a spoilt brat who lacks respect for elders and the culture of the land. She is very lazy and rough, she dislikes going to the class, she hates her teacher and even careless about her report card. She talks a lot without courtesy. Her mother has pampered her so much that she even allow her to date a boy at an early age. She sees her father as an "old fashioned" man who sees nothing good in anything she does. She does not believe in God, infact western culture has done her bad than good.

Titi: (sits and put her feet on a corner of the dining table)

Wife: Don't put your feet on the table

Titi: Oh, I'm tired

(Daddy firmly pushes her feet off the table)

Titi: What did you do that for?

(Put her feet back on the table. Dad stares in disbelief, pushes his food away and turns for solace to his note).

The politician is so frustrated by his daughter's lack of respect for him as a father that he turns to his notes especially since the mother also fails to discipline the daughter at this time. He just cannot believe that only a short period at school in England could snuff out courtesy and home training in his daughter. This is a child who has just returned home from a boarding school, she is expected to greet her



parents properly and show appreciation for the money they spent to send her abroad. She must be reminded to show courtesy when greeting her father and she displays her waywardness by not greeting him properly and later, by putting her feet on the dining table on which her father's food is placed. In African, it is customary for the young person to show courtesy when greeting the elder person, especially in Yoruba land, where girls are expected to kneel down and boys to prostrate. Titi has to be reminded to do that, despite the reminder she refused to greet her father the African way. Instead, she moves near her father and gives a peck on the cheek and this make the politician sad as a father. As a result of his confused state of mind, the politician asks a lot of questions in his attempt to try to understand or bring sanity to the confused situation around him, all but to no avail until he applies the traditional method of discipline (on his wife and daughter) which is caning. Though, he has no intention of disciplining his wife but the conspiracy between the wife and the daughter in lack of discipline makes him discipline the wife, who finally cooperates and then makes the daughter submit to discipline (the application of a few lashes of the cane).

Titi represents present day children and youth in Africa whose social and self consciousness have been totally bastardized and what is regarded as real African values and religious beliefs have been labeled "primitive" and something not worthy of association. Although technological advancement and western education bring good, they also have negative influence on the younger generation in Africa as this has resulted in pride and arrogance on the part of these youths.

UNDERSTANDING THE STAGES OF CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD

Our habits, thoughts, attitudes and beliefs, sentiments, goods and ideas, in fact, all that we are and all that we hope and aspire to become constitute our personality. Our taste, our understanding, our enthusiasms and ambitions, our principle of life and conduct etc. colours our personality. They are blended and merged into a unity in such a way that they function as an integrated whole (Jafar, 2007). According to Morton Prince in Jafar, (2007) says personality is the sum of all biological innate disposition, impulses, tendencies, appetite and instincts of the individual and the dispositions and tendencies acquired by experience.

There are about five distinctions of traits in man discovered by Allports and Odbert cited in Jafar (2007).

- **Cardinal Traits:** it is a single trait that dominates most a person's acts. Characteristic or disposition that is so pervasive and outstanding in person's life. This act is traceable to its influence. They are dominant in person's life with ruling passion. They are responsible for making the person famous e.g a person may have on overwhelming need to be powerful, a need for power that can be inferred from virtually all his/her behaviour, such person would not only strive to attain a position of power within the society but would also interact with his partner, his mail carrier, his children and spouse with domination.
- **Central Traits:** Allport term this habit as way of dealing with the world that together dominates a person personality. These are express dispositions that cover a more limited range of situation than is true for cardinal traits. They are the building block of personality which control person's behaviour in a variety of situations, when we describe somebody's behaviour, we are usually referring to central traits such as intelligence, sincerity, kindness, possessive, competitive, honesty etc.
- **Secondary Traits:** it is an often changing traits that often appear as tastes or preferences. They represent dispositions that are less important, less generalized and less often called to describe personality. They refer to one specific attitude or habit. A person might love banana or prefer to spend vacations at home. The traits thus refer to food preferences, clothing habit etc.
- **Common Trait:** This is for basic way of dealing with the world that are seen to some degree in every person. Common traits are categories for classifying group of people on a particular dimension. We might say that some people are more dominant than others. They appear in greater or lesser amount in all man.
- **Personal Disposition:** It is a unique individual ways of responding to the world that cannot be assured by test but only discerned studying the person. It is a trait not shared with others but just personal to the person involved.

These traits or characters should be studied in children to know how to attend to them when it comes to parenting now when we also want to look at it from when the child is in the womb to their teen age, it has different stages also that should be considered (Jafar, 2011).

**Formative Stage (Age 0-5)**

As soon as a baby is born, the parents become attached to the child through touching, holding, carrying and playing. This stage is the entry point where parents no matter where you live or who you are, you stand the chance as a marketer to introduce, inform, influence, instruct and inspire your children to have a clear understanding of your principles, values, beliefs and philosophy about the person you are and that you want them to become. The formative period of building character for posterity starts from the womb where the mother is the queen of that realm and sways a scepter more potent than that of the king. Don't say the child is small and innocent that they don't need training at this level infact you start training them early enough because when they get to 5 years old you have already come too late.

This period is also the stage of INDOCTRINATION

- ✓ When you shout at them at this time, they jerks and if it is done often they grow up to be scare of situations and happenings around them.
- ✓ Don't delegate the child to an house girl or daycare-takers because whatever he/she experience there will be part of what he/she will live with.
- ✓ Don't let the child go out from your care before the age of 6years so that you will be able to exclusively dominate and indoctrinate the child in love. Research by Goldfarb and Spitz (cited in Jafar, 2007) indicated that children institutionalized during infancy who do not experience consistent "mothering becomes apathetic and socially unresponsive. For the adequate character development of the child the role of love is most significant, the amount of affection given to the child during the early years of life seems to be related to the kind of relationship which he can eventually live for with other individuals. It gives him his basic security. Infact being loved permit the child to identify with peers, parents and the culture. Maslow (cited in Jafar 2007) believes that psychological health comes from being loved. The self actualized individual has both the power to love and ability to be loved. A climate of love enables the child to develop more adequate concept of self society and the world.

Repetitive or Registration Stage (Age 6-10)

During this stage, there will be repetitive learning, some of the things that they were taught during age 0-5 may not stick in them so you have to go over it again so that it will now register in them.

- ✓ It is a period where you assure them of their ability, you encourage them that they can make it, if they put more effort into what they are doing.
- ✓ Look for different ways of saying the same thing until it becomes registered
- ✓ They do funny things like being stubborn, difficult to take to correction but don't get tired repeat the process of learning again and again.

Peculiarities about These Stages

- ✓ They tend to copy/imitate; the child at these stages copy parent mannerism, that is why as mother you should be a good role model. What you do matters, it is good to also get them closer to us.
- ✓ Ask the child questions on why they indulge in some attitudes
- ✓ Create time to interact with the child, he/she need our attention more than anyone else.
- ✓ Have a one-on-one discussion with them
- ✓ Listen to them so that they will speak their minds out, let them find friendship in you so that they can show you their broken parts infact the mother is the bank where children deposits their hurts and worries.
- ✓ Don't discuss their secrets with others, it may bring damage to their personality or spoil their relationship with other siblings.

Realization Stage (Age 12 and above)

The child is grown up now, to those things he/she was indoctrinated to

- ✓ He asks questions on why Daddy and Mummy ask him not to do this or do that
- ✓ It is not a stage of commanding, it is a stage of dialoging
- ✓ Reason with the child to get feedback from him
- ✓ Don't scare them away
- ✓ They don't want you to shout at them, at this stage because they believe they are now matured and should be treated as such.
- ✓ They deserve explanation from you so that they will not misbehave

Impression/Definition Stages (Age 13-15)

At this stage, they want to do things themselves, buy clothes, shoes etc themselves

- ❖ They want to impress or define themselves, they want to be the originator of the things they do.
- ❖ They pick their NICKNAMES, abbreviate their names to suit their purpose. They try to make statement with their personality.
- ❖ To them you are "old school" or "old fashion".
- ❖ No more indoctrination but, dialoging, friendship, simulation and deliberate patience
- ❖ Be a little over-looking because they will be daring



- ❖ For you to gain them, you have to be brave
- ❖ They want to try a lot of things but help them to try it safely

Choice Stage (Age 16-18)

Parents and teenager typically don't argue over big issues during this stage, what do they fight about? They squabble about things like teenagers curfew, leisure time activities, clothing and the cleanliness of their room and choice of friends. Parents bickering is the fact that teenagers and their parent define the issue of contention very differently, parent view many issues as matter of right and wrong, not necessarily in a moral sense but as matter of custom and convention teenager in contrast are likely to define these same issue as a matter of personal choice. A mother who disapproves of her daughter's outfit says "people just don't dress that way to go to school. The daughter responds "you wouldn't dress this way for school but I do". They want to control their world during this stage so you need to understand them in (Lawrence 2011).

- ❖ They start to look for heroes to look like. They make fashion after the person they like.
- ❖ They learn from role model, so try to be their best role model
- ❖ To gain them you have to enter their world e.g. football, be a fan too.
- ❖ They want something to explore them take time to study where their interest is or study their influencer.
- ❖ Let them bring their friends home so as to be able to weed the bad ones out.
- ❖ Give them liberty to grow in your presence so that they will not go and imbibe bad character from outside.

General Trips on Good Parenting

- Relax: don't rush to get your children act like adults. They may be noisy, messy. Please take it easy when you want to put things right with them.
- Don't try to do everything: let them learn to fend for themselves. Don't make them learn violin just because you learnt it as a child and loved it. Let them do their thinking for themselves but assist them rightly
- Don't ignore your relationship with your spouse: If you don't want to end up doing this whole parenting stuff on your own. Let your spouse be involved; don't let the children come in between the two of you because in the next 20 years it will be you and your spouse again the way you started.
- Treat your child with respect: simply because they are human and not only that you won't get respect

back from them if you don't show it. Don't just be issuing instructions like eat your lunch, "get into the car" "clean your teeth and so on. You need to add please to make a request. So teach them manners by demonstration or else they will not know how to say "thank you" or "please" to people.

- Enjoy their company: Stop thinking about something else and really concentrate on them, on what they are doing and saying. When your child says "guess what" try to listen to what he/she has to say. The trick to enjoying their company is to focus on it an end in itself.
- See things from their point of view: Children often view the world differently from us, many at times they want to do things their own way let allow them it if is logical. May be they feel like watching a particular programme on TV at a particular time, don't ask them to switch it off without a genuine reason.
- Good parenting involves taking calculated risk: People who don't make mistakes, don't make anything, that means you have to allow them take risk, allow them climb tree, allow them take more subjects in GCE than you think they can handle. They may come home with fractured wrist or poor exam results but they would have learnt a lesson from their mistakes and life goes on.
- Keep your worries to yourselves: What you have to remember is that you are not the only one, your kid worries too. When they want to start school or go for exam, they worry, yours is to reassure them and give them the encouragement to go ahead that all will be well, stop saying "be careful" be careful can start to make a child think something is about to go wrong. You either say have a good time or enjoy yourself.
- Don't have a favourite: under no circumstance should you have a favourite. The children will be looking for hints to discover this and it may cause rivalry between them. Love them equally.
- Find qualities to admire in them: they may be better than you in some aspect. They cannot be like you and they will increasingly want to separate themselves from being like you as they grow older. Embrace it and admire it because your admiration means more to them than almost anyone. Don't nag and don't compare them with anybody (Templar, 2008).
- What you do matters: be a good example to your children. Avoid harsh discipline always try to explain your rules and decision to them so that



they will not see you as a bad person. Diller phyllis say “be nice to your children because they are the ones to choose your rest home” cited in Soetan (2013).

Character development entails so many things especially the parent level of commitment and level of parental activities and participation. Combination of these makes an “involved parents” which is the blue print for family to be effective in their role to ensure greater success for their children.

CONCLUSION

Above all these, parents especially mothers are supposed to fulfill the physical, emotional intellectual and esteem need of the child cited in (Richard, 2010). The children must be brought up in such a way that they will live and grow with tolerance, encouragement fairness, equity, security approval acceptance and friendship. So that they will learn to be patient, confident appreciating, just and loving. On the other hand, if a child lives with hostility criticism, ridicule and shame, they will learn to condemn, be aggressive and feel guilt. As parent we should always be conscious that any dispute or indiscipline between parents, removal of affection of both father and mother from the child is inestimable and non-compensatory. It ultimately hampers the good environment needed for the welfare of our children who are suppose to grow and develop with discipline parental love and affection. Parent should always behave in the best possible way at all times because the best moral compass is the parent’s own behaviour. We are to be a good role model, mentor, monitor, marketer, mender, master, manager, mirror to our children cited in Seotan (2013). Parents are therefore advised to give their children the very best foundation at home which will in turn have a positive impact on the larger society. This is the only way our country could move forward when the family produces God fearing honest, hardworking, responsible and well behaved children, they will in turn contribute positively and effectively to the development of our country.

Recommendations

✓ Parents, educators, affiliates of religious organizations and community member should have an obligation to provide young people with training appropriate to their age level that would assist them in holding to the absolutes that are common across philosophies and beliefs of the major religious traditions, while at the same time helping then clarify and defend their own acquired value.

- ✓ There is need for improved information and awareness about raising family unity through the promotion of positive traditional values and rehabilitation of the role played by women as mothers; one way to promote this is through the introduction of community medal awards to good mothers and families with good children
- ✓ The government should set a programme that will heighten national awareness of the importance of character development in public elementary and secondary schools to the continuing success and stability of Nigerian society.
- ✓ Good counseling and guidance should be provide to help children grow in a normal way with a view to accessing their potentials for their own character development in particular and the nation in general
- ✓ Relevant government agencies especially National Orientation Agency (NOA) and Non Government Agencies should organize from time to time seminars, conferences and lectures in both local and urban areas to enlighten parents more on the best way to raise and nurture children. Even experts in child psychology could be invited or hire to give engaging lectures and expositions to parents. Also feedback from such conferences, seminars and lectures would serve as a starting point for professional and women in academia to investigate.

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