

Effecting Values Re-orientation among Primary School Children through Story Telling

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KEYWORDS Value. Value Re-orientation. Children. Story-telling

ABSTRACT This is an experimental study to find out the effects of story telling in value re-orientation of the primary school children in Nigeria using selected stories from “my story book on values”. A total of 300 participants (100 each) were selected from three primary schools in Lagos metropolis. Participants from two primary schools served as the treatment groups, while the participants from the third primary school served as the control group. Two research hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 critical level. Data collected were analyzed using the Univariate Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Results of the study showed a significant difference in the posttest score of the dependent variable (value re-orientation or choices). There was no significant gender difference in the posttest scores of the dependent variable. The experimental treatment was considered as being responsible for the significant difference in the posttest scores.

INTRODUCTION

No society is healthy, creative or strong unless that society has a set of common values that give meaning and purpose to group life (Kluchohn 2005). Sociologists believe that communities, which share a common core, of values, tend to last much longer than communities, which are not guided by values. The source of value might not be great importance to the member of a community. What is important is the fact that the group has a clear commitment to a common set of goals or values. This common set of values can be used as a standard for making decisions, and to help settle differences of opinion (Living Values News 2000).

Some decades ago, there were very strong religious beliefs, values, cultural and moral ethics that are passed across to children as moonlight stories which formed the root of children's values and guiding principles for individual's behaviour as they grow older. As a result there seems to be a kind of common understanding of what behaviour was good and what was bad and which attitude and aspirations were appropriate. The child growing up at that time had little difficulty absorbing the norms of the society such as sense of cooperation, truthfulness, respect for age, self reliance, dignity of labour etc. In other words, it was easier for the child to understand what the society expected of the young one's and would expect of an adult. However, from this generally

accepted culture and values of the society, one witness today, and a departure that leads to uncertainty, confusion and contradictions. Past ideas on values could no longer hold in today's context due to the influx of new ideas and values through mass media exposures and various e-net working. Thus, children are growing up without developing an adequate value system or moral code as a result of defective socialization (Adebajo 2002; Agbe 2001; Unicef 1997). For this reason, young children are most times in a state of confusion. They are confused by thoughts of what they had to do, what they are afraid to do, what they did not want to do and what they felt other adults thought they should do. The most important skill a child needs to be taught is how to relate well with other people in the environment.

There are certain basic value orientations which center on universal human problems or issues. Many a time, behaviours which children consider to be normal for themselves and their peers, are seen to be maladaptive or abnormal by their parents, teachers, and elders in the society (Omoegun 2004). Hence, the basic institutions (family, education and religion) are established to lead children, adolescents and youths towards the things the society values. As such, values are often times passed on to the younger generations through the process of socialization. Borne out of the desire of the author to meet the needs of the present day Nigeria child; *My Book*

on *Values for the Nigerian' Child* was written to redirect value choices.

Statement of the Problem

Genuine efforts are being made to emphasize programmes that will positively affect value re-orientation of the Nigeria child by the Government, and non-Governmental organizations alike (Fajonyomi 2001). However, school and guidance counsellors recognize the fact that more creative strategies (such as story telling) could be helpful in influencing children value choices. Researches have revealed that the choice of cultural values made by the people determines their emotions and overall behaviour (Ekanem-Epiken et al. 2004; Dansen 2000; Nwamuo 1996). The objective of the study therefore is to see if tangible principles that will help the child in value re-orientation towards socio-cultural demands could be achieved through the counselling intervention employed.

Hypothesis

In view of this study, an attempt was made to find out the effects of story telling in changing the value orientation of children selected from certain primary schools in Lagos metropolis. Thus, the following hypotheses were raised to guide the study:

- I. There will be no significant difference in the posttest scores of participants who are exposed to treatment (treatment groups) and those who are not (control group)
- II. There will be no significant gender difference in the posttest scores of participants who are exposed to treatment and those who are not.

Purpose of the Study

This study was carried out to investigate the effects of the moral lessons selected stories from *My Story Book on Value for the Nigerian Child*, on the participants value orientation, their perception of 'right' and 'wrong' and their relationship toward other members in their neighbourhood.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design: The quasi experimental pretest, control group research design was used

for this study; this involved two experimental groups (exposed to treatment) and one control group (given a placebo treatment on spelling test).

Population of the Study: The target population of this study comprises all primary six pupils in Nigerian primary schools. This is because it is easier to guide children and to inculcate acceptable patterns of behaviour than older ones whose minds have already been made up. This age group is also attaining adolescence and may probably have better understanding on the need for socio-personal relationship than younger age.

Sample and Sampling Procedure: Three co-educational primary schools were selected through simple random sampling from three different Local Government Areas in Lagos mainland of Lagos State. This was done to cater for the three experimental groups needed and also for a wider study area. 100 participants consisting of 50 males and 50 females were randomly selected from each of the schools given a total of 300 participants within the age bracket of 9-13 years. The three experimental groups include: (1) Story telling to influence participants' perception of values in relation to self (2) Story telling to influence participants' perception of values in relation to others (3) The control group with spelling test.

Instrumentation: an instrument named Value Assessment Scale (VAS) fashioned after Ford, L. H and Rubin, M. B's Children's social Desirability Scale (YCSD) was used to collect data for the study. The instrument had 10 pair of statements. Each pair had two statements A and B. The participants were instructed to tick or draw a round circle round the letter representing the statement that best describes the way they behave toward other people or feel about self. There were 20 statements in all, 10 positive statements (representing the right or acceptable values) and 10 negative statements (representing the wrong or unacceptable values).

Method of Data Analysis: The statements on the instrument were scored. Every positive statement attracted 1 mark, while the negative statement had no mark. Participants' pretest and posttest scores were analyzed using the Univariate Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The ANOVA was used to test for any significant difference in the posttest scores of experimental groups when compared with the control group.

RESULTS

Table 1 presents the mean and standard deviations of participants' posttest scores based on gender and experimental conditions. In testing hypothesis 1 which states that there will be no significant difference in the posttest scores of participants in the treatment groups compared with the control group, the ANOVA statistical tool was employed and the results are shown in Table 2. The calculated F. value of 17.71 for experimental condition was greater than the critical F. value of 3.04, thus, the null hypothesis 1 was rejected. The result shows that there is a significant difference in the scores due to experimental treatment. However, there was no significant difference in the posttest scores of the experimental groups due to sex disparity. The calculated F. value of 0.54 obtained was lesser than the critical F. value of 3.89. The result obtained

shows that both male and female participants were both positive influenced in their value perception through the counselling strategy (story telling) employed.

Scheffe Post-Hoc Test

In order to check for the significant differences among the groups, the Scheffe's pair wise comparison was carried out. Table 3 shows that all the pair wise comparisons were statistically significant at the mean difference of 0.05. The experimental group 1 and group 2 evidenced the greatest between-group difference with 1.01 mean difference, while the experimental group 1 and group 3 show the least between-group difference of 0.19. The greatest improvement, at posttest was recorded by participants in group 2 (story telling to influence participants' perception of values in relation to others.)

Table 1: Mean and standard deviations of participants posttest based on gender and experimental condition

Experimental condition	Sex	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Group 1	Male Female Total	8.308.728.50	1.031.641.88	5050100
Group 2	Male Female Total	7.767.767.55	1.271.721.52	5050100
Group 3	Male Female Total	8.098.208.15	1.271.281.32	5050100
Total	Male Female Total	8.098.208.15	1.271.381.32	150150300

Table 2: Summary table of ANOVA on dependent variable (value re-orientation) posttest

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean of square	F. cal	Sig. of F.
Model	19967.38	5	3993.48	2524.72	*
Exp. Condition	56.02	2	28.01	17.71	*
Sex	0.85	1	0.85	0.54	n.s
Pretest	2.07	1	2.07	1.31	n.s
Error	466.62	295	1.58		
Total	20434.00	300			

ANOVA statistical tool was employed to analyze the data collected at 0.05 level of significance.

* Significant $P < 0.05$; n.s = non significant; Fcrit. (2,295) = 3.04; Fcrit. (1,295) = 3.89; F crit. (5,295) = 2.26.

Table 3: Multiple comparisons of significant differences between groups.

Independent variable	Experimental condition (i)	Experimental condition (j)	Mean Diff. (i-j)	Standard Error	95% confidence interval		Remarks
					Lower bound	Upper bound	
Value Re-orientation Post	Treatment Group 1	Treatment Group 2	1.01	0.13	8.29	8.81	*
	Treatment Group 2	Control Group 3	0.82	0.13	7.29	7.79	*
	Control Group 3	Treatment Group 1	0.19	0.13	8.10	8.61	*

* Significant (mean difference >s); ns = not significant

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This paper examines how story telling can be used as a method of impacting societal core values especially in children who are greatly amused and interested in folklore. Story telling is also used as a means of collecting authentic and revealing research data from children. The method is suggested as a valuable way in which to gain insights into children's discourse, and is used in this paper in relation to children's discourse about value choices and value awareness. The results of the survey showed that hypothesis one was rejected. This implies that the children engaged in story telling for social value re-orientation improved better in their posttest scores than those who were engaged in spelling test. In hypothesis two, the findings revealed that there was no significant gender difference in the pretest and posttest scores of pupils who were in the treatment group and those who were in the control group. The results revealed that irrespective of sex certain social values have been committed to heart by the participants through the stories presented to them during the counselling programme. Both the male and female participants show great improvement in their perception of appropriate values in relation to self and to others as revealed through the posttest scores.

The first step to changing one's value system in line with Ekanem-Epiken et al. (2004), Dansen (2000) is awareness. Inaccurate and self limiting values will continue to be accepted until the individual examine such and make efforts to change them. In most societies core values are assumed understood and seldom discussed but exploring and discussing values are known to enhance harmony and belongingness. Values that remain unclear or unexplored can create emotional tension due to the conflict that may arise between the belief (value choice) and the action that is been put in place. Thus, as children grow into adolescence, may tend to develop maladjusted behaviour of various kinds. This is because any person trapped in a conflict state as this could feel miserable, confused and frustrated.

In conclusion, the results of this study show an efficient intervention on the participants value choices (irrespective of sex difference) which according to Adebajo (2002) and Agbe (2001) has been negatively influenced due to defective socialization. Once, values are internalized a

child's ethnical standards and moral acceptance become incorporated into the 'self' and this becomes part of the individual. As young children approach and enter the adolescent years, they become increasingly able to generalized and conceptualized moral rules and principles (Animashaun 2004; Reid et al. 2002). Hence, adequate value awareness and value re-orientation would be of tremendous help in solving the conflict puzzle and in aligning and unifying the societal core values. Parents, teachers, religious leaders and other adults in the society should understand that a child brought up with teachings of the right values (truthfulness, obedience etc.) or teachings on how to behave or relate to one's peers, younger and older members (such as respect, humility, caring etc.) of the community or in any environment where he/she finds himself is not likely to forget such teachings or instructions

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results obtained from this study, the following recommendations were made:

- 1 Emphasis should be placed on the importance of teaching the right values to children from an early age with the use of story telling which is African traditional approach of educating children.
- 2 In spite of so many vices as criminal acts, sexual immorality and cheating, eating deep into the fabrics of our society at such an alarming rate what has been entrenched into the subconscious of the child through instruction received early in life will help the child to avoid being pressurized or prone to develop such bad habits or vices.
- 3 Apart from religious lessons in schools, periods should be allocated on the school time table for the teaching of moral values using stories from books such as *My Story Book on Values for the Nigerian Child*: Omoegun (2004) or other texts as may be found relevant.
- 4 Parents are also encouraged to create quality time for their younger children when they could tell stories or read out stories that would teach and enhance the development of appropriate values.
- 5 School counsellors should emphasize the need for value re-orientation among pupils through the use of story telling in form of group guidance.

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