

## PROMOTING VALUE RE-ORIENTATION IN NIGERIA

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### Abstract

This paper explored the critical need for value reorientation in Nigeria, focusing on the development of value system and its evolution through pre-colonial and post-colonial eras with a suggestion for a change model. It delved into the values that characterized pre-colonial Nigerian societies, such as honesty, integrity, and communal living, which fostered a sense of trust and mutual respect among individuals. However, in the aftermath of colonization, distortions emerged, leading to the entrenchment of lies, dishonesty, deceit, and other malpractices in post-colonial Nigeria. The paper underscores the urgency of addressing these distortions and advocates for a comprehensive value reorientation model that seeks to instill positive societal values and behaviours in Nigerians. The change model calls for a paradigm shift away from favoritism, crime, corruption, robbery, and fraud, to core values like honesty, integrity, trust, and mutual respect. Drawing on relevant sociological, historical, and ethical literature, the paper emphasizes the significance of restoring traditional values while adapting them to contemporary realities. It highlights the potential positive impacts of such a reorientation on Nigeria's social fabric, governance, economy, and overall development. The proposed model envisions a collective effort involving all tiers of government, educational institutions, religious bodies, and non-profit organizations to achieve a healthy value reorientation in Nigeria. The paper concludes with a call to action, emphasizing that fostering a culture of honesty, integrity, trust, and mutual respect is essential for Nigeria's progress and development. It emphasizes that a society built on strong values will enhance social cohesion, encourage responsible citizenship and create an environment conducive to growth and prosperity for all Nigerians.

**Keywords:** Honesty; Integrity; Mutual Respect; Value Reorientation; Pre-colonial Nigeria.

## Introduction

The value system of any society is a significant reflection of the history and culture of the people of that society. Value systems are not natural, but social, and in a good number of cases, they tell what a people see as worth striving for in terms of forming the socio-cultural image of the society in which they find themselves. In other words, value system is a collection of standards of behaviour which in its aggregation defines what is viewed as important for a particular people. It is the expectation that certain social sectors, groups or institutions are saddled with the responsibility even though not exclusively, to inculcate the standards and values of society into the young ones. As a result, the family and the educational systems take the center stage in this regard. That is why parents, teachers and the larger society at different instances function in their capacity to ensure that children are brought up in such a way that they mirror the values of the society into which they are born. Among the numerous institutions that are responsible for inculcating values, the family stands out as a formative hub for young people before they proceed to other secondary social settings such as the education, religious and economic systems.

Interestingly, children, while in school, are guided by rules and regulations which in turn guide their behaviour. Observations have shown that society to a large extent, influences the behavioural pattern of people irrespective of their culture, race, ethnic, tribal and religious affiliations. This implies that what children see their parents, teachers and other members of their community of residence do, influences their total value system.

Africa is known to have evolved a value system that is built on respect, love for others and hard work. These values rest on the communal character of traditional African societies where children are believed to be the responsibility of all members of the community of residence and as such, are well catered for in terms of the training and socialization that they get. However, the intensification of globalization and spread of modernity has been strongly indicted for the current decay in the values of traditional African societies. As a result, contemporary societies in Africa are more than ever before, confronted with the urgent need of dealing with the withering away of collectively held value systems that traditionally define the pathways of young people from the continent. In Nigeria for instance, it is a lamentable situation that moral decadence has waned significantly as honesty and integrity seem to be less emphasized while wealth, no matter how it is acquired is eulogized at the expense of the former.

Currently, there is a public outcry for agencies responsible for value orientation to take the front stage in ensuring that citizens in Nigeria especially the youth are enlightened on values that are considered worthwhile to pursue and by extension, shun behaviours that portray negative images of individuals, groups and the country at large. Even the education sector which ordinarily is supposed to promote the learning of good or positive values amongst young people is perceived to be failing in this regard. Perhaps, this is why Fafunwa and Aisiku (1982) resorted to blaming the education content of the country when they argued that Nigeria's academic culture makes it clearly unavoidable for positive values to be thrown into the rubbish heap of history, because certificates are valued above character.

The Federal government of Nigeria via its National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004) recognized the importance of character in its broad goals and states that education should project: 1) the inculcation of the right type of values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and Nigeria and; 2) the acquisition of appropriate skills and development of mental,

psychological and social abilities and competence. For these goals to be achieved, the NPE prescribed that quality of instruction should inculcate basic values. These values are: 1) moral and spiritual principles in interpersonal and human relations; 2) shared responsibility for the common goal of the society and; 3) respect for the dignity of labour and promotion of the emotional, physical and psychological health of all children.

It would seem that the lofty ideals reflected in the goals described above have not been sufficiently integrated in the education of young people in Nigeria. Otherwise, the widespread outcry for value re-orientation would not have been necessary. Maduewesi (2002) shared the view that any nation anxious to make progress must plan for the development of good character of its young people. However, the reverse is the case in Nigeria. What we always hear and read on the pages of our national dailies are wars among national assembly members, pen robbery, sponsored kidnapping, examination malpractices, disrespect for constituted authority and rule of law, and dishonesty, among others.

The need to drive attitudinal change in Nigeria has led to several programmes in the past. This notwithstanding, the overall value system defined by materialism has continued to undermine such programmes. For instance, General Yakubu Gowon after the civil war introduced the “3Rs”, which stand for Reconciliation, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation. This was an attempt to sustain the national values of the country after being battered by the Civil War of 1967-1970. But this did not yield positive results due to the mutual suspicion that characterized the build up to the war and the post war era of that period. Also, in a bid to create enabling environment for positive value system, the Murtala Mohammed military administration favoured patriotism with zero tolerance for corruption. As a result, Nigeria was respected regionally and internationally. Although his regime was short-lived, due to the coup d'état that claimed his life, he inspired positive values in the country.

Following in his footsteps, the Buhari/Idiagbon administration of 1983, also attempted a re-orientation by introducing the War Against Indiscipline (WAI). While Nigeria was trying to adapt to the WAI programme, the Ibrahim Babangida regime which overthrew that of Buhari, introduced the Mass Movement for Self-reliance, Social Justice and Economic Recovery (MAMSER). The aim was to re-orientate the people of Nigeria, but this had very little effect because of the insincerity on the part of the leadership. Similarly, Olusegun Obasanjo introduced what he tagged “Heart of Africa Project” in 1999 with the aim of rebranding Nigeria. In support of the need to rebrand Nigeria as a way of getting its values on track, late president Yar'Adua and his successor, former President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan equally inherited the rebranding agenda and continued in the attempt to revive the image of Nigeria by still addressing issues on societal values.

In the same vein, former President Mahammadu Buhari also introduced the “change begins with me” campaign which was launched in 2016. While past value re-orientation projects focused more on how the larger society can influence individual behaviour as a way of driving positive values, the Mohammadu Buhari led value reorientation campaign came with a micro-outlook focusing first on the individual just like his WAI campaign when he was military head of state. However, the impact of this project is yet to be felt by the people because in all facets of individual and group life, very little is seen in terms of positive values in the country. This perhaps is as a result of long years of decay or even due to the general value system of the country which is strongly based on materialism.

The fact that the above attempts at reorienting citizens and rebranding Nigeria for positive values have not yielded the much-expected results is clear for anyone to see. As a result, the need for new insights into how positive value re-orientation can be achieved in our society is still very strong and necessary even today. It is in the light of this, that this study examines value re-orientation in Nigeria. To achieve this aim, the paper provides a conceptual framework where all variables are clearly defined and possibly linked. By extension, it also addresses how value systems are developed before delving into the historical trajectory of value systems in Nigeria.

### Conceptual Clarification

The key concepts to be discussed here are values and re-orientation. However, for the sake of placing them in context, we have chosen to also clarify the concepts of orientation and national development. The reason for this is that we cannot talk of re-orientation without orientation. Furthermore, value re-orientation should be tied to the development of the society in question, hence, the need to link it to national development.

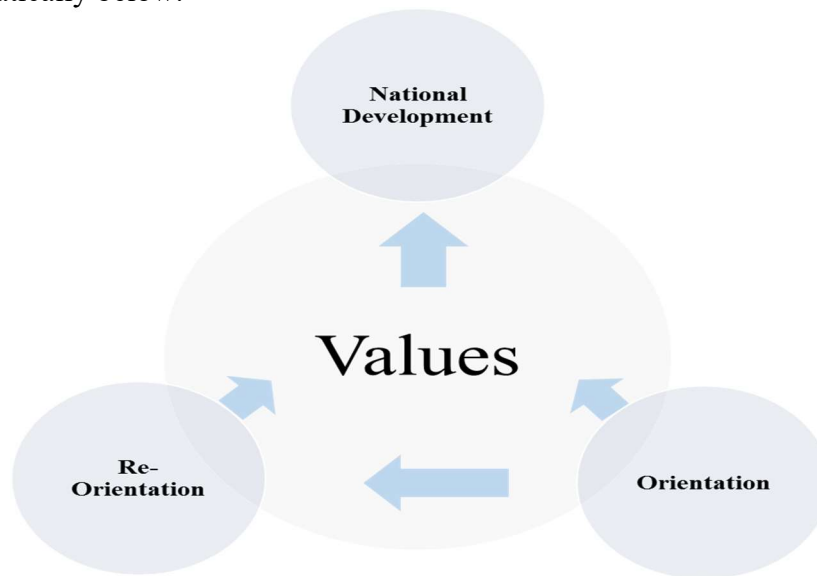
**Values:** Within the context of academics, the concept value has its place in Sociology as well as Anthropology and it connotes what is cherished or regarded as important either by an individual or social group. They are generally seen as an expression of a thing that has worth, quality or importance. Hornby (2000) in Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary defines values as beliefs about what is right and wrong and what is important in life, cultural or social. Peil (1977) defines value as a conception explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, which influences the selection from available modes, means and end of action. Amaele (2007) on the other hand, sees values as standards of conduct, efficiency or worth which a society endorses, maintains and even transmits to the members and future generations. In a similar vein, Amaekhai (2010) conceptualizes values as the highest ethical parameters, standards, and criteria through which individuals, groups and societies order their goals, determine their choices and judge their conduct on fundamental issues of life. Maduwesi (2002) supports this by opining that values, together with two other ingredients – attitude and morality- constitute the character of an individual. If these are positive in majority of people in the population, then we would have an ordered society.

In an attempt to draw a point of consensus from all the definitions of values reviewed above, we can agree that values are moral principles, standards, which individuals uphold to be important; a collective understanding of what is good, desirable and adequate in a culture. Each culture has its own unique value system with different kinds and levels of mores, rules, and norms governing conduct, evaluation and sanctions.

**Re-Orientation:** The concept, re-orientation simply brings to mind the fact that a people may be required to go through an orientation process designed to get them back to where they are expected to be with regard to their knowledge of or belief in something. That is perhaps, why we have chosen to see it here as an education-related training or information aimed at making someone to do something well or make the individual change focus or direction or position from the earlier position or direction. In fact, Fagade (2017) captures this more succinctly when he adduced that it implies retraining because the initially accepted norms and values have been either forgotten or abandoned.

**National Development:** As a concept, national development is encompassing or comprehensive in whatever context it is looked at. It means that all aspects of the individual and the nation are affected by the wind of change/development. National development involves development of all facets of a given economy. John (1964), sees national development from the point of its effect on citizens following an addition to the stock of physical human resources, knowledge and skill. Furthermore, the United Nations Decade report defined it as growth plus change. Change in turn is social and cultural as well as economic and qualitative as well as quantitative.

Having defined the key concepts in this work, it is important to provide the conceptual model or framework that establishes the link between them. The four concepts; values, orientation, re-orientation and national development share some practical linkage. This is shown schematically below:



**Fig 1.1: Conceptual model for value re-orientation**

The link between the variables is presented in Figure 1.1 above. Every society starts by weaving its values together and placing it at the hub of its internal and external interactions. However, values are sustained through orientation and re-orientation. The latter comes when it is believed that some aspects of the values system of a society are under-functioning or even dysfunctional as the case may be. Furthermore, orientation and re-orientation for the purpose of ensuring a healthy value system have significant impact on the direction of national development. This is perhaps why Fagade (2017) is quick to remind us that for any nation to achieve a sound sustainable development, its value system must be reflected in all sectors as a way of cementing the collective drive of the society. So, in summary, values can only be deployed to enable national development through consistent orientation and re-orientation of the people.

### **Development of Value System**

Classical works of philosophers have shown that value system is socially derived through learning processes. Perhaps the ancestral example provided by the social thinker John Locke is a traditional pointer to this fact. It is on record that Locke described the human mind

as a *Tabula Rasa* or a blank slate, thereby emphasizing the role of experience and socialization in forming the knowledge, belief system and culture of human beings in society. On the other hand, Rousseau is of the opinion that children are born with an innate sense of right and wrong-noble savages. His view was that education must enhance natural sensibilities, and protect the child from the corrupting influence of civilization (Elechi, 2003; Osaart, 2003).

The fact that both philosophers rely strongly on the role of learning in social context as a way of filling the human mind with everything it comes to know shows that there is no man born into this world with a set of values. Hence, each person develops values as part of a social system, an aggregation of which translates into every ethnic group having their own unique custom, culture and values. This is done via socialization – the process in which people learn the attitudes, values and behaviours necessary for members of a particular culture (Maduwesi, 2002; Huitt, 2003). From a sociological perspective, socialization provides for the transmission of a culture from one generation to another, and thereby, for the long-term continuity of a society.

Currently, the culture or custom and value system of our society are changing significantly based on some unavoidable and avoidable interventions with a proportionate positive or negative effect on young ones. New values are learned and imbibed through various mediums of socialization. These include: the mass media (Internet, computer, radio, television, etc.), books, the family, religious and educational institutions as well as peer groups.

At the moment, the values held by youths are a reflection of the value orientation of the society in which they are found. Education is a powerful tool not only for intellectual development but also for the development of shared values, beliefs, attitudes, moral and ethical principles. It is very essential for the survival and sustenance of the nation, ensuring that individuals acquire essential life values and ethical principles. Values such as trust, love, cooperation, courtesy, truthfulness, tolerance, honesty, respect for individual differences and interests, dignity, right attitude to work and national consciousness are often taught at all levels of our education system.

At the adolescence stage, young people in their search for a personal philosophy are often critical of the adult figures (parents, immediate family members, leaders and teachers) especially when they have failed them in some situations. They look for help to realistically examine their values and beliefs and develop a concept for desirable behaviours in their immediate society. This indeed will assist to form a value system, which will motivate and direct their lives.

Generally, individuals develop value system from the time they are born. Through the process of socialization which begins from the family, children start to learn how to behave or not to behave. This road to inculcating values in young ones continues when they eventually get into primary, secondary and tertiary schools. Even when they get into their various places of work, they continue to imbibe the key values of society. In other words, values are constantly being learned through the process of orientation at all levels of human endeavours. We shall in the next few sections discuss values in Nigeria focusing on the pre-colonial, colonial, post-colonial and post-civil war periods.

### **Values in Pre-Colonial Nigeria**

Prior to the coming of the colonial masters into what is now known as Nigeria, different ethnic cleavages existed independently in their own rights guided by the culture and tradition

of the society in which they live. As a result, there is a consensus that in pre-colonial Nigerian society, the process of socialization of the members served as the means of education and cultural transmission. Hence, through informal education values and skills were inculcated into young ones. This is perhaps why Imaga (2004, p. 1) observes in relation to the Igbos and their values that: their culture and education has an inbuilt character of honesty of purpose, fear, respect for the supreme deity, respect for elders and constituted authorities, respect and reverence for knowledge and wisdom and for whosoever was capable of parting with genuine wisdom and knowledge like teachers at all levels.

A careful look at Imaga's description of the Igbo people would easily show that they share values such as honesty, respect and fear for supreme deity, reverence and quest for genuine knowledge. On the other hand, this same society abhorred and disliked all forms of social vices and negative values such as armed robbery, stealing, raping, cheating, pre-marital pregnancy by young girls, killing, and lies among others. Still eulogizing the values of pre-colonial Igbo people, Osuji (2004) argued that they were hardworking and willing to provide for their children against all socio-economic odds. This simply implies that positive values were highly extolled and sustained through informal education in Igbo land. Parents considered the training of their children seriously and as such, they make conscious efforts to ensure that young ones get the best form of training that is necessary to integrate them into the larger society. In fact, Osuji (2004) is of the opinion that because of the communal character of the Igbo and other societies that constituted the pre-colonial era, children were seen and accepted as community properties and treated with utmost care. This child-rearing scenario ensured that children learn the best possible values of the community as they grow up.

In other parts of pre-colonial Nigeria societies such as the Yoruba and Hausa-Fulani areas, similar values were obtainable. The Yoruba for instance are known for their unparalleled values for respect and submission to higher authorities. The prostration of younger people when greeting elders is known to be a lofty model of respect when it comes to salutation. In addition, other values such as good neighbourliness, honesty, transparency and accountability were associated with the Yoruba people (Fakunle, 2016). The Hausa-Fulani's also maintained a strong value system that revolves around respect for one another especially elders and constituted authorities, humility, hard work, among others. Mumini (2014) captures this succinctly when he argued that the Hausa-Fulani of northern Nigeria before the arrival of the colonial masters displayed remarkable and outstanding values such as love for others, respect for constituted authorities, honesty, dignity of labour and so on. However, Mumini like others such as Fakunle and Osuji are united in the fact that the advent of colonialism and the incursion of the white man's culture of capitalism, individualism and private property provided enabling conditions that gradually undermined some of the unique values of the pre-colonial societies of Nigeria.

### **Values in Colonial Nigeria**

Colonial Nigeria marked the period from 1860 to 1960 when the country officially gained independence from British rule. While the pre-colonial societies were all built on their respective cultural and traditional structures, the colonial period in Nigeria was marked by forceful unification of these hitherto separate societies under one alien rule that undermined the distinctive history, culture and tradition of the people. As a result, the peculiar collective conscience that determined the value system of the people came under attack by what was

considered a superior culture and value system at the time. According to Fagade (2017), one of the major distortions to the value system of the various socio-ethnic cleavages that now formed the colonial period was the breakdown of the communal system which was the major foundation upon which the key values of the people rested. We believe that Fagade's point of view is based on the fact that the communal system that characterized pre-colonial societies provided the much-needed social incentive that promoted the values of that time in contrast to the individual, private property-driven and profit-seeking society that accompanied the colonial epoch in the country.

However, while it is believed that the colonial system provided the impetus for value erosion in Nigeria, this did not completely happen until the post-colonial epoch arrived in earnest. This is because despite the introduction of individualism through the private property mentality that came in the wake of the capitalist industrial system, the colonial masters maintained some level of decorum and a healthy value system. The only remarkable deviation between the pre-colonial value system and that of the colonial value system was the new ideology of profit seeking that shattered the collective conscience of the former period ushering in the conditions of unhealthy struggle and rivalry. Similarly, the introduction of divide and rule especially regional politics equally created the foundation for ethnic administration that helped to sectionalize the country. These new systems promoted unhealthy social relations and by extension skewed value systems that were to pave the way for the progressive deterioration of the traditionally held values of the people.

Nevertheless, it is believed that during this period the colonial masters still ensured that values such as honesty, transparency and accountability were sustained at least to promote the smooth running of the colonial administration. This is perhaps why in the colonial era, academic calendars and school sessions were treated with high sense of values. Tutors and other staff members were remunerated promptly. Social harmony was a common practice between the leaders and the led. Students in schools worked hard to earn their grades. Success was attained through merit, hard work, dedication and commitment. To promote a student from one class to another was strictly based on merit and not mediocrity. Boarding schools were the order of the day, and all students irrespective of the status of their parents, obeyed all the rules and regulations in the school hostels.

Also, senior personnel in government and private schools had their children enrolled in Nigerian schools at all levels of education. This was simply based on the premise that there was trust and confidence in the education system at the time. This practice was the same in all government quarters. There was value placed on punctuality and regularity at the work place. The concept of ghost workers, impersonation, non-payment of salaries and embezzlement of public funds was completely absent in our public service. Transparency, honesty, trust and accountability were the ethical practices widely upheld by civil servants. These attitudes and values were in place until independence in 1960 and the first period preceding the Civil War. However, immediately before the war some degree of disorientation in the values of the country started emerging especially in the political system.

### **Values in Post-Colonial Nigeria**

What is known as the post-colonial period in Nigeria is believed to have started from 1960, the year that the country officially gained political independence from British colonial rule. The saying that the history of Nigeria is the history of colonialism is worth emphasizing

here. This is because post-colonial Nigeria became an administrative facsimile and by extension, a strong reflection of its colonial history in many regards. However, the only difference was that at the point of independence, the country was handed over to a crop of persons who felt only obliged to step into the shoes of the departing colonial administrators without a modicum of idea on how to move the nation forward or sustain the values that were handed to them. Perhaps, this is why Fagade (2017) has argued that the first set of Nigeria politicians though having noble values themselves did not move to re-orient the country towards the desired direction necessary to promote good values and a great nation.

As a result, the period prior to the Civil War was the only time that Nigeria experienced what was left of a healthy value system. While it is believed that the Civil War laid the foundation for the decay that the country now faces, we are of the opinion that the seeds of the destruction of our value system had already been sowed in the colonial period; it was just a matter of time before we start reaping its fruits. This is because, individualism and ethnic distrust occasioned by regional politics as well as alien culture of profit seeking through any kind of means are some of the characteristics of colonial capitalism. These adverse characteristics of the new social system that came with colonialism were considered as serious social spikes that choked every sense of decency left in Nigeria. This, coupled with bad political scenario and ethno-nationalism created the enabling environment for the Civil War which was considered as the last straw that broke the camel's back in Nigeria.

The Nigeria Civil War which lasted for three years from 1967-1970 is known to have had the most deleterious effect on the values of the country. For instance, the disruption of the education system, especially in the Eastern part of Nigeria forced school age children to abandon the idea of going to school for some years even after the civil war. Hence, the place of schooling in the orientation and inculcation of values such as honesty, devotion, hard work was largely undermined and in place of this, violence and hatred became the new indicators of our value system. At this point, men in the region enrolled into the army, engaged into some form of training for survival, and the women folk engaged in petty trading and small farming activity for their livelihood. The social scenario of the time matched what one of the founding fathers of sociology, Herbert Spencer, referred to as the survival of the fittest.

Under the survival of the fittest scenario brought about by the Civil War, negative behaviours built on lies, deceit and dishonesty became the order of the day. According to Elendu (2012), some men and women alike freely and willingly told lies and engaged in dishonest practices to get one form of favour or the other. These attitudes and frame of thought influenced the values that were dominant in the heart of Nigerians after the civil war. As a result, negative values of cheating, lying and falsehood which were abhorred in the pre-civil war era in Nigeria became part of the normal way of life of the people.

The government that emerged after the civil war was founded on lies, deceit and dishonesty. Sadly, this valueless government took over schools from missionaries and introduced new values contrary to the previous ones. The government at this point was not effective in the management of schools, hence, negative values of absenteeism, indiscipline, and embezzlement of school funds, non-commitment and looting became entrenched. This practice also played out in all government offices where staff members were no longer punctual and regular to offices. Elendu (2012) added that the hospital became a place to buy card and consult the medical doctors, the market or roadside kiosks were the places to buy drugs. What is even more, the sales and abuse of hard drugs which was not a common feature of pre-colonial

and pre-civil war Nigeria became common. Hence drugs like cocaine, heroin and cannabis gradually found their way into the country. Today, drug abuse has become a major driving force of value erosion especially among youths in the country.

In fact, because the education system was hit the most by these adverse values, scholars have in no small measure documented their discontent on the subject matter. For instance, Osuji (2004) opines that; in our schools, students find it difficult to prepare for examination as their teachers were frequently absent and “not on seat” where present, they are unqualified for the subject they were expected to teach. Thus, cheating in examinations surfaced as students who were ill-prepared had to procure the question papers and tried to answer or recruit mercenaries to write their exams for them. The scale of malpractice was so large because school principals and teachers were all involved in an environment where honesty and morality collapsed completely.

The sad truth of all these is that knowledge which is known to be a product of hard work became undervalued, rather, certificate racketeering became the order of the day. In the same vein, students lost confidence in government and resorted to group formations which led to the emergence of cultism in tertiary institutions and later secondary schools as well as streets and communities. Cult groups became strong magnetic points of youthful association with their major activities ranging from stealing to murder. Sadly, they became the instruments of political actors or politicians who only felt obliged to use them for selfish gains.

Today, the situation is even worse because of the increasing nature of the value placed on material wealth in the country. Youths no longer see hard work as rewarding; instead, the get -rich-quick syndrome has overtaken hard work as youths can do anything for money including involving in ritual killings, armed robbery, militancy, kidnapping, illicit crude oil refining, assassination, among others. However, the most troubling amongst these negative behaviours is the situation where government and some section of society create enabling conditions that reward illicit behaviours rather than reinforce positive values (Raimi, 2017) As a result of this, even those who still strive to maintain positive values are viewed as the abnormal persons because of the deep-seated social anomalies in the society.

### **Promoting Value Re-Orientation in Nigeria**

With the level of social wrongs currently being witnessed in Nigeria, the need for value orientation has become even stronger than before. This is mostly because there is a chance that if this is not done, we may likely witness a situation where our society will wither away. By this we mean the disintegration of the country. As a result, value re-orientation is essential in all spheres of our social life if Nigeria is to make any meaningful progress either nationally or internationally. Nkechi (2011) asserts that value re-orientation is simply re-educating person(s) on the principle about what is right or wrong to enable the person(s) to have an idea of what is important in life. This implies that what is important or worthwhile, should be inculcated in individuals through education whether through formal or informal means.

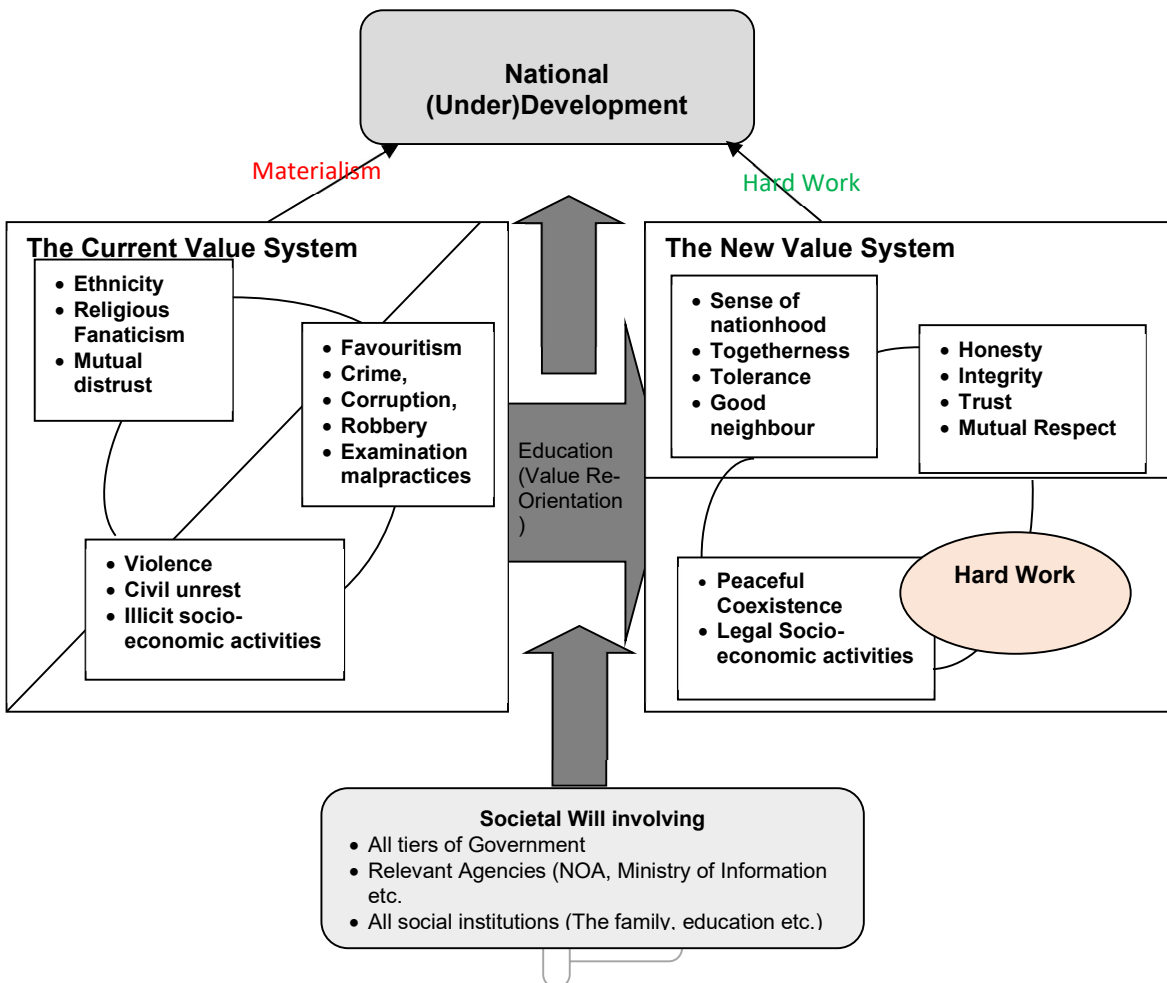
Nigeria as a nation is blessed with enormous mineral as well as human resources which, if well managed, would have positively blown our international ranking either economically or socially. It is important to mention at this juncture that our cherished and desired values such as patience, humility, honesty, integrity and honour which have been jettisoned for negative values should be revisited, especially through a sound re-orientation framework. This indeed will help the country to regain its image locally, regionally and internationally.

It is important to note that the government of Nigeria already knows the values that are required for a sound society. This is perhaps why in the National Policy on Education (2004), the following core values were emphasized:

- (a) The inculcation of the right type of values and attitude for the survival of the individual and the nation in general.
- (b) The acquisition of appropriate skills and development of mental, physical and social abilities and competence to achieve these goals.
- (c) Moral and spiritual principles in interpersonal and human relations and respect for the dignity of labour and hard work.
- (d) Shared responsibility for the common goal of society.
- (e) Honesty, reliability, trust, discipline, perseverance, truthfulness, integrity, hospitality,

chastity, sharing and caring, strong pride for family and national identity (NPE, 2004).

A closer examination of the core values highlighted above would reveal that the nerve of the country's value system is to ensure a healthy community life where Nigerians would live together and for each other. Fagade (2017) posits that attitudinal re-orientation has for long been recognized as the best way to address the myriad of societal problems confronting Nigeria. According to him, successive administrations have articulated and pursued re-orientation programmes in one form or the other, but despite all the attempts, nothing seems to have changed. The question then becomes, how do we promote value re-orientation in Nigeria? To answer this, a new value re-orientation framework is provided below:



**Fig. 1.2: Value Re-orientation Model (Source: Urquhart, 2001:10; adopted with modification from Raimi, 2017)**

To promote a successful value re-orientation programme in Nigeria that would reposition her for a healthy national development trajectory, the education sector must take the centre stage. Much as this is the case, is as reflected in Figure 1.2 above. It is easy to see that in the quest to move from the current adverse value system underlined by materialism and fueled by ethnicity, religious extremism as well as mutual distrust which obviously leads to underdevelopment, a sound education system must be developed through the same process of re-orientation. Now the education system here includes both the formal and informal dimensions. As a result, the family, the religious, economic and education systems must first be repositioned and this can only be done if the political system is manned by people who are willing to rebrand Nigeria and make her competitive globally. If this is done, the country will now begin to witness a shift from behaviours that support favoritism, criminality, corruption, exam malpractices, violence, civil unrest and illicit socio-economic activities (Schaefer, 2008; Saale, 2018; Raimi & Michael-Olomu, 2020) among others to a new value system enabled by hard work. This new value system shall as a matter of necessity, be driven by a sense of nationhood or collective conscience devoid of ethnicity and religiosity, togetherness, tolerance and good neighbourliness among other positive values. As a result, we will begin to witness a rebranded Nigeria that rests on values such as honesty, trust, integrity, mutual respect and love for one another, etc. The end result will become a Nigeria that is driven by hard work, peaceful coexistence with minimal or zero violent conflicts, legal socio-economic activities and so on.

However, it must be noted that this can only be achieved when the general societal will is present especially a willing government that has the support of the masses. When the political will is assured and widely accepted, all that is required would be to enable the relevant agencies such as the National Orientation Agency, the Ministry of Information among others, to drive the process.

From the Figure under reference, it is crystal clear that education is fundamental to a successful value re-orientation process in Nigeria. This is because education is the bedrock for social cohesion in all known human societies. For instance, in traditional societies, there were structures for ensuring the development and maintenance of good moral values through informal education structures carried out by the family, peer groups, the village, the clan and above all, the society. This was the standard in traditional society of the time. As Achebe (in Okwueze, 2004) captured it, the family is the first unit of analysis in terms of child upbringing. Parents and family relations are placed with the responsibility of inculcating right values into their young ones. To carry these moral obligations, both parents and relatives have to be morally upright too in order to be able to impress on their younger ones the necessity and usefulness of orderly behaviour.

Similarly, the family in modern society has to live up to expectations and ensure that the fundamental socialization process for young ones is tailored towards meeting standard acceptable values of the wider society. At the societal level, there are rules that guide behaviours. The society through its institutions especially the legal and other correctional agencies, have more power and authority to sanction defaulters more than that of the family. If all institutions are functioning in the manner expected of them, the chances that positive values will be inculcated in young ones for society to be on the right track of peaceful coexistence and development will be undoubtedly high.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

In this paper attempts have been made to examine value re-orientation as a basis for peaceful coexistence, growth and development in Nigeria. In view of this, education howbeit formal or informal has been identified as the critical platform and or medium through which value re-orientation can be achieved as a way of rebranding Nigeria and ensuring that positive values driven by hard work, honesty, integrity and love for one another are inculcated into young people. This process will help citizens to value their way of life and adhere to the principles and standards prescribed by the society.

It is the belief that when the procedures highlighted especially in Figure 1.2 in this paper are followed, Nigeria would certainly achieve a healthy re-orientation process that will reposition the country on the right pathway to economic growth and overall development. By extension, the nation will become more competitive globally with a rebranded image that displays positive values rather than negative ones.

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