

CHAPTER EIGHT

SOCIAL VALUES, NEGATIVE ATTITUDES AND CONDUCTS IN NIGERIA

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INTRODUCTION

The Meaning of Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is an unlawful arrangement to move people, usually children and women from their homes to other places, with or without their consent. The purpose is to make money for the trafficker and the agents. The children are mostly engaged in degrading domestic works or child labour. The women are engaged in forced labour and prostitution (Owen, 1968).

Factors that Encourage Trafficking in Children and Women

1. **Poverty:** Most of the people that are illegally taken away from their homes are children and women from very poor families. Sometimes, parents willingly give out their children for mere financial gain. Women who are jobless or not meaningfully engaged in trade or education are promised good employment opportunities, but at the long run, they are subjected to various forms of inhuman treatments, such as forced labour and prostitution. Families that take adequate care of their members do not expose them to the dangers of human trafficking.
2. **Illiteracy:** Lack of proper education contributes so much to the problem of human trafficking. Some parents out of ignorance and greed give away their children to rich people, who in turn use them for negative engagement. Most young girls who dropped out of schools are deceived with promises of riches and good life in faraway lands, only to end up in prostitution and other inhuman engagements. According to Mboho (2020), girl child education contributes significantly to the socio-economic growth in Nigeria.
3. **Corruption:** The prevalence of corruption in our society today has made a lot of people to look for money at all costs and without regard to ethical and moral values. The desire for quick wealth has made some people to regard

their less privileged fellows as articles of trade for money making (Owen, 1968).

Consequences of human trafficking

The society has nothing to gain from trafficking in children and women. The consequences are classified into:

1. Physical
2. Psychological
3. Social consequences

1. Physical consequences

Children and women are often brutalized and debased. Some victims are tortured, assaulted and sometimes killed. Women are usually sexually abused and rendered useless by traffickers. The family and the society are the losers.

2. Psychological consequences

One of the major psychological consequences of human trafficking is human degradation. Human beings are turned into article of trade with little value. The dignity and worth of human beings are destroyed, while the victim feels inferior and develops the slave mentality.

3. Social consequence

The social consequences of human trafficking are: increase in criminal activities, depopulation, and brain drain, economic loss to the family and the removal of women from their responsibilities in the home. It can lead to the spread of dangerous diseases such as HIV/AIDS through prostitution. Children are introduced to forced labour early in life which deprives them of love, affection and parental care. The most unfortunate consequence is that children are deprived of education and good moral upbringing. This eventually leads them into anti-social behaviours, and in the long run, they become a problem to the society (Ekpenyong, 2014).

Ways of Preventing Human Trafficking

The concern by the Federal Government for the problem of human trafficking led to the establishment of the agency called NAPTIP- National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking in Person. The NAPTIP is doing a good job through the arrest and prosecution of human traffickers. We however recommend the following measures against human trafficking:

1. Family employment
2. Public enlightenment and education
3. Advocacy and legislation

1. **Family employment:** Most families that fall victims of human trafficking are usually poor or low income earners. They can be empowered through increased social security, like the provision of good employment opportunities and poverty alleviation efforts. Micro credits should be given to low income earners and other poor persons to set up meaningful trades that can sustain their families. This is a form of economic empowerment. Education should be made compulsory for women and children. Education helps to conquer poverty which makes people vulnerable to human trafficking.
2. **Public enlightenment and education:** People should be well informed about the activities of human trafficking. The dangers and problems of human trafficking should be exposed through the media, schools and religious organizations. People should be made to understand that human trafficking is evil and should be condemned. Schools should form anti human trafficking clubs, so that women and children will be sensitized about the negative effects of human trafficking on the society (Effiong, Mboho and Wordu, 2018).
3. **Advocacy visits and legislation:** Officials of relevant government agencies should engage in seminars, workshops and tours of public institutions, market places and villages to create proper awareness of the evil nature of human trafficking. This should be backed by adequate legislation in the National and State Assemblies prescribing very tough and punitive Sanctions against human trafficking.

Harmful Traditional Practices

Meaning of Harmful Traditional Practices

Harmful traditional practices are practices that are backward in nature, debasing in character and discriminatory in approach. They include female genital mutilation or female circumcision, the Osu caste system of Igbo land, killing of twins and gender discrimination (Chitamber, 2008).

Examples of Harmful Traditional Practices

Female Circumcision:

This is the circumcision of the female child. The practices are based on the assumption that if a female child is circumcised, it will reduce the tendency of the child becoming promiscuous or sexually uncontrollable. Female circumcision may be carried out under unhygienic conditions. At times there is excessive bleeding that might lead to the death of the child. Diseases may be contracted through the use of unsterilized instruments. Modern medicine condemns it, and refers to it as female genital mutilation.

The *Osu* Caste System:

The *Osu* system is a system which discriminates against persons on ground of birth. Some families believed to be dedicated to deities are treated as outcasts. Members of such families are not expected to marry or be married by free born “diala”. They cannot take traditional titles in the land. They cannot own traditional land. People born into such families are treated and regarded as outcasts in the society. In Igbo land, the caste system was very strong. But the missionaries and their religious doctrines have done so much to eradicate the *Osu* caste system. The Christian religion preaches against it, because it is against the teachings of the Holy Bible, that all men are equal before God (Otite 1978).

Killing of Twins

The killing of twins was practiced in Nigeria before the advent of colonialism in most parts of southern Nigeria. It was considered evil for a woman to give birth to twins. The twins were killed or sacrificed to the local gods. People believed then that the birth of twins was an evil omen that would usher in disaster to the family. This was a harmful traditional practice which is no longer allowed. The situation has changed, the birth of twins bring joy and happiness to most families. A missionary known as **Mary Slessor** fought hard to eradicate the killing of twins.

Gender Discrimination

This is a traditional practice which discriminates against persons based on gender (Sex). The practices include punishing women at the death of their husbands and denying them access to their husband’s wealth or property. Sometimes, women are unjustly accused of killing their husbands by the husband’s relatives, with the motive of depriving them of their husband’s property. It also includes denial of education to women based on certain customs and traditions. Gender discrimination is a feature of backwardness and primitive culture. It looks down on women and regards them as inferior to men. Women are not expected to participate in certain occupations and engagements as their male counterparts. However, gender discrimination which was common in traditional society has drastically reduced in modern day Nigeria as a result of western education and socialization (Ekpenyong, 2014).

Consequences of Harmful Traditional Practices

Social: Harmful traditional practice contradicts the law of the equality of all men before God. Discrimination against persons based on birth or gender is socially evil and unprogressive, it makes the persons feel unwanted and worthless. It denies them a sense of belonging in society and deprives society their contribution to nation building.

Economic: To deny women education and certain basic rights is to relegate and reduce them to mere existence. This retards their development and chances of

attaining greater heights. It makes them dependent on the men for any meaningful life. All forms of discriminatory practices are anti-social and against natural justice.

Psychological: The Osu caste system reduces the image and dignity of the victims and portrays society as an association of beasts, victims are psychologically distressed. Nothing can be more in- human than to accuse an innocent woman of killing her husband. Nothing can be more cruel and in human than to deny a widow access to her husband's property or wealth, at least, to cater for her children.

Ways of Preventing Harmful Traditional Practices in Nigeria

1. **Public enlightenment:** People should be properly informed about their rights, especially women. There should be public enlightenment programmes to educate people on the effects of harmful traditional practices.
2. **Provision of education:** Everybody should have right to education. Most of the people who champion the practices are not educated and are aware of the evil they are committing. Women should be made to go to school for self-development. If we educate women, we emancipate society from backwardness, because women play major roles in child upbringing and child socialization.
3. **Legislation:** Laws which can be enforced should be made against the "Osu" caste system, female genital mutilation and gender discrimination. Offenders should be prosecuted without fear or favour. This will in turn reduce or eradicate harmful traditional practices in our society (O' Donnel, 1981).

Examination Malpractice

Examination malpractice takes place in schools, in the primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. Most schools in Nigeria today have recorded over 90% incidence of examination malpractice.

Meaning: Examination malpractice is an act of indiscipline, which involves cheating in an examination either by the students or the teachers. Cases of examination malpractice range from:

1. Bribing of teachers to secure unmerited results.
2. Buying or obtaining examination question papers before the examination.
3. Obtaining undeserved marks from the teacher to pass an examination.
4. Bringing into the examination hall already prepared answers to questions.
5. Copying from text books or from fellow students during an examination.
6. Fighting the invigilator or supervisor during an examination.

Causes of Examination Malpractice

1. Lack of adequate preparation by students before examination.

2. Absenteeism and truancy by pupils/students or teachers.
3. Ineffective teaching and learning in schools.
4. Non-provision of teaching aids materials like school furniture, textbooks, laboratory equipment and libraries.
5. Employment of unqualified teachers which affects teaching and learning.
6. Poverty is a major cause of examination malpractice. Students who cannot afford school fees, boarding fees and other levies in school are sent out from the school. This makes it difficult for them to cope with their studies. They are likely to resort to cheating in order to pass examination.
7. High level corruption in the society has also aided examination malpractice. Some students see all forms of cheating as a way of life. Thus, they see nothing wrong in cheating to pass an examination.

Effects of Examination Malpractice

Examination malpractice is one of the most serious acts of indiscipline in our schools today. It is one of the major problems facing the educational sector in Nigeria.

The effects include:

1. It establishes the culture of cheating among students.
2. It promotes bribery and corruption in the society as money is used to purchase results.
3. It promotes laziness and discourages hard work among pupils and students.
4. It leads to lack of concentration, apathy, unseriousness in teaching and learning among pupils and teachers. This leads to the production of half-baked students and graduates.
5. It leads to lack of respect and disregard for teachers who encourage examination malpractice.
6. It lowers the educational standards and breeds morally bankrupt citizens. This is dangerous to the society.
7. The aim of producing citizens who are found worthy in learning and character is defeated by the frequent occurrence or incidence of examination malpractice.

How to Control Examination Malpractice

1. Expulsion of students caught in the act of examination malpractice.
2. Outright cancellation of such examinations or result.
3. Change the existing method of administering examination to prevent leakage of examination papers.
4. Mass sensitization of the citizens on the destructive effects of examination malpractice.
5. Seizure of certificate of students found guilty of examination malpractice.

6. Termination of the appointment of teachers and principals found guilty of aiding students in acts of examination malpractice.
7. Effective supervision of schools by education authorities to ensure that teachers perform their duty.
8. Provision of conducive environment for effective teaching and learning by school authorities.
9. Formulation of effective laws, rules and regulations that can be enforced.
10. Reward for schools and teachers who do not engage in examination malpractice.
11. Proper counseling of pupils, students and teachers on the damaging effects of examination malpractice on our society.

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