

THE IMPACT OF SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION ON THE NIGERIA SOCIETY

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Abstract

Sociology as a field of discipline is generic and umbrella in nature as it deals with the totality of human interaction and examination. It is a systematic study of social behaviours and human groups. It delves primarily into the influence of social relationships on people's attitudes and behaviours and on how societies are established and changed. To a nonprofessional, sociology is the study of man's interaction within the society but it extends beyond that as it deals with the organization and control of man's behaviours and attitudes within the society. This work aims to examine the impact of sociology of education on the Nigerian society. The researcher employed the use of only primary sources. The research started giving general description of the study. Problem also stated and solutions proffered through findings.

KEYWORDS: *Impact, sociology, Education, Society, Interaction, Social Relationship*

Introduction

To this end therefore, Elekwa and Okanezi (2013: 18) asserts that education is simply the different experiences that people go through in life which help in the nurturing of their personal growth.

In addition, Ezewu cited in Elekwa and Okanezi (2013) holds that without education there is no society. In the same vein, Swift (1969) cited in Elekwa and Okanezi (2013) posits that education is all that goes on in society, which involves teaching and learning.

A better conclusion to this segment is to bring to mind the etymology of the concept, which is two Latin words "*educare*" and "*educere*". The former meaning "process of forming", "molding" or "making from nothing to something", the latter stands for "nurture", "guide", "uphold", "lead out", "build", thus regarding education as a process of bringing to fruition the inbuilt potentials of the individual for his or her personal development and to a large extent societal development.

The sociology of education is the study of how public institutions and individual experiences affect education and its outcomes. It is mostly concerned with the public schooling systems of modern industrial societies, including the expansion of higher, further, adult, and continuing education (Gordon, 1998).

Education has often been very much as seen as a fundamentally optimistic human endeavour characterized by aspirations for progress and betterment.

Before further discussions, it is pertinent to give definitions to the term "education". However, it is also worthy of note that education has no one agreed upon definition, and as such definitions vary on the scholar. Consequently, there is thus, no consensus as to what the true meaning and definition of education is (Ochoma, 2015:2).

Sociologically therefore, education being a vital part of human existence is an indispensable part of an individual and societal life. People become useful and civilized if they are better educated.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

The study objectives include the following:

1. To identify the sociological perspectives of education
2. To trace out the historical development of sociology of education
3. To evaluate the impact of sociology of education on the Nigerian society.

Significance of the Study

Many students in Nigeria have little or no idea what sociology of education entails. Some perceive it to be similar to just education. The government of the nation, although enacting various education reforms have not been very successful in its bid to make education for all a reality. Parents and guidance also do not have the necessary knowledge of the relationship between education and the child. In this light, this work would provide relevant information to the government at all levels and the general public on the need to provide the children with basic and affordable education.

Furthermore, this work will expose the dangers of not educating the children and the need for redress by government at the education level.

Statement of the Problem

It is obvious that many do not know that public institutions and individual experiences affect education and its outcomes, the how is also not known.

Government do not pay much attention to the common notion of "educate the child, educate the society". Parents and guardians are also culpable of this.

Furthermore, lack of infrastructures in the educational sphere in most parts of the nation. Thus, the researcher is intended in finding out the impact of sociology of education on the Nigerian society. This will bring to the knowledge of the government and parents, the importance of education.

Research Questions

The following research questions were developed as a guide to our study:

1. What is the relationship between sociology and education?
2. Is there any relationship between education and social value?

Sociological Perspectives of Education

From the days of the founding fathers of sociology such as Auguste Comte and Emile Durkheim in France, or Karl Marx, Max Weber and Georg Simmel in Germany, sociologists have struggled with the question of interpreting social life and social phenomena. There is no avoiding the fact that in the years since Durkheim published his "The Rules of Sociological Method (1895/1964), commitment to the development of sociological theories of society has become a new scholastic orthodoxy. On the one hand, there are thinkers such as Parsons and Merton, who with Durkheim assert the primacy of society over the individual. They stress the paramount necessity of external constraint for both societal and individual wellbeing hence, the notion of a social system which, though created by people, nonetheless, enjoys an

independent and external existence while at the same time acting as a constraining and conditioning influence upon individuals (Dawe, 1970; Meighan, 1986).

On the opposite side, and at every level in conflict with the system theorists, thinkers like Max Weber, Mead, Cooley and Blumer reject the notion of a social system or the view that human action is a response to that system. The key notion of the action theorists is that of "autonomous man" who is able "to realize his full potential and to create a truly human social order only when freed from external constraint" (Dawe, 1970). These latter thinkers have tended to emphasize the ability of individuals to create meanings, constitute social situations and, in effect, control the social and natural world (Meighan, 1986).

These sociological perspectives persist today. They affect not only the sociological scholar seeking to preserve viewpoints, which radically separate him from his colleagues, but virtually every student of sociology as well. Sociological researches are approached from different theoretical perspectives ranging from structural functionalism, marxism, interactionism to feminism each affecting not only the way the researcher seeks to explain what constitutes the problem under study, which radically separates him or her from the others, but also the recommendations that he or she makes for redress.

The three main sociological perspectives, which are represented, by the three groups of theorists enumerated above namely, consensus, action and conflict perspectives would be examined in order to see what it is about these sociological theories that has made them so different from each other. In doing so, we must also look at the meaning and scope of sociological theory. We must clarify what is a sociological perspective and the assumptions upon which a given perspective bases its analysis and interpretation of social life. From that point, we must further ask what conclusions about the nature of sociological perspective follow from our definition, and how the different perspectives enumerated above can intersect with the study of education.

Historical Development of Sociology of Education

Emile Durkheim was the first sociologist to come up with the idea of sociology of Education as a subject matter. Due to the deteriorating trends in modern industrial society which witnesses Series of wars and industrial revolution Durkheim was prompted to develop the idea of the subject.

He recommended in particular that education should be reorganized to provide for the improvement of social life and deteriorating moral life of the French Society through such activities as the development of community and other projects similar to most communities today. Examples of such projects are Adult Education, Community Health Centre, Education for the citizens, Farm Settlement Co-operative Farms etc.

Another key figure who contributed immensely to the development of the subject was John Dewey - an American Educational thinker. At the beginning of the 20th century John Dewey observed that village life was breaking down, people were moving to the cities, social structure changing and both the school and the religious institutions had done a little or nothing to make the child aware of the new society growing up around him forgetting that the child was an essential part of society. With this in mind, Dewey aimed to help promote a social spirit of co-operation and mutual aid between school and home and provide within the school itself, the situations in which such co-operation might be elicited. As a result, he felt the school must be in closer relationship with the home and general life of its neighborhood. He saw the school as a place which reflects the larger society and sought to improve it.

In other words, sociology sharpens education and forms a vital force in the entire framework of education. This is because the whole superstructure of education has depended

upon social forces, needs and demands. This includes the expectations and aspirations of a changing society which are reflected through the educational system of a nation. Society is dynamic, it grows and changes and as such these social changes must not only be reflected in education but also must affect it. The sociology of education is therefore the consciously controlled process whereby changes in behavior are produced in the persons and through the person within the group. It focuses upon the social force through which the individual is developed and the social relation by which the individual gains experience. The sociology of education is therefore both the influence and relationship between the education system and other social and cultural, systems of the nation - social cultural, political and economic.

The Impact of Sociology of Education on the Nigerian Society

Learning is a process that takes place throughout life. It includes the social and personal experiences that: alter one's knowledge, behaviour and attitudes. But no society leave such experiences to chance. One of the oldest social institution is education the formal direction of learning experiences. The educational institution serves certain basic social purposes The most familiar of education is socialization or the transmission of cultural knowledge, value and beliefs. Another purpose is social control, whereby schools regulate the way in which people behave.

By helping people choose and learn social roles, the educational institution attempts to ensure an adequate supply of trained people to fill needed occupation in an effort to match peoples talents and abilities with the needs to specialized occupational roles, school channel children into different areas of study and place them at distinct academic levels.

The socialization function of education goes far beyond merely reaching values and norms, however, schools are also expected to convince their students that it is necessary to behave according to these principles.

Indeed students are graded not only on how well they cooperate, how orderly they are and even how clean they keep themselves. In early years of schooling these are the only kinds of things on which they are the given marks. If children do not behave according to certain norms by the time they enter the 3rd or 4th grade they will have had time no matter how well they perform in academic subjects. Thus through the process of socialization schools are directly engaged in social control. This includes instilling loyalty, obedience to authority.

Schools promote social control by teaching the children to idealize nation's leaders. People in power are presented in such a way that it is not easy to question their authority.

Second schools serve as custodial institutions for nations young, keeping children off streets for many hours of the day. Schools also try to channel youth into socially approved activities and jobs when children show interest in disapproved areas or are identified as having behaviour problems the school may keep close watch over them for years.

Conclusion

In conclusion, sociology is the scientific study of man's behavior in his social group relationship. Just like in other branches of Sciences, Sociologists of Education Employ Scientific Method and Studies in Group Behavior. Education on the other hand can be as all that goes on in the society which involves teaching and training.. The child is expected to develop individual identity, cognitive skills and self-control, and appropriate attitude. Adult socialization is that which occurs beyond childhood

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher puts forward the following recommendations:

- a. Government, parents/guardians and policy makers should put more effort in the creating of available educational policies for the betterment of the child and the society.
- b. There should be awareness to the public, for them to realize the relationship between education and the society, and as such put value on education.

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