

OUR CHILDREN, OUR FUTURE

In the course of my job during my service year in a secondary school, I had the privilege of being in an office where parents came around for one reason or the other. Amongst all the reasons why these parents visited, one particular reason caught my attention, as a matter of fact it is the primary reason why some parents take their kids to school in the first place. It then became very pertinent that I asked this question, "Whose responsibility is it for the moral upbringing of a child"?

While in the school, some parents approached me asking for a special surveillance watch to be placed on their wards so as to keep them in check and at the same time discipline them effectively when they err. It wasn't bad enough for me that mothers came often but it was rather unfortunate and also disappointing that a father would also carefully transport himself all the way to the school just to beg the school disciplinarian to specially discipline his stubborn kid. A father once said that he is tired, fed up and no longer strong enough to control his own biological 15 year old son. It was really appalling!

I hereby ask you my fellow Nigerians this question, is it the primary responsibility of schools to make sure that a child is morally brought up? I personally don't think Yes is the answer. It is said that the mind of a child comes into the world "Tabula Rasa" making the parents of the child the very first people to write on that blank mind. So when something good is written on it, it stays, and vice versa.

This then implies that it is the job of parents to ensure the moral, spiritual, upright and social upbringing of their children. Parents should not be too lax on their children, they should not hesitate to use the rod (after all this is still Africa) when it can still be used to correct the child, they should not over pamper their children and then begin to beg other people to handle them when they become too stubborn.

However, it doesn't take away the place of schools in the moral upbringing of children too. Schools should also put serious measures on ground which will put children in check, not necessarily through the traditional method of flogging or other forms of punishments but through counseling (both academic and moral counseling).

Our children need to be counseled and advised, a lot of these children don't get them at home. Some come from broken homes, others from single parenting while many are from homes where their parents are either too busy, always away or just don't see it as a necessity to always counsel and admonish their children to follow the right path. This is where schools should come in and do the needful.

I want to sincerely urge parents and intending parents to imbibe the culture of admonishing their children into doing the right thing, charity we say begins at home. Teach your children norms, teach them your traditional values, teach them your dialects, create quality time for them and make sure you imbibe in them the good traits you wish to see them portray so that when they grow up they won't depart from them.