

## **Inadequate Human Formation and the Challenge of Societal Disorder**

**Eribo, Nosakhare Monday**  
**Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma.**  
**Faculty of Arts**  
**Department of Philosophy**  
**P.M.B. 14**  
**Email address: ribnosa24(@)gmail.com**  
**Phone number: 08053305471**

### **Abstract**

Every society has at least a collection of ideas upon which the human person are raised up in order to attain a stable and orderly society. Some raised up persons on the basis of an individualistic model of child grooming while other in the divide did theirs on the basis of communal value systems. The first favours our present 21<sup>st</sup> century model of child upbringing, the later tends to reflect the Africa old communal ways of child ie. Human person grooming which allows for the inculcation of communal values in the person, instead of allowing the person to chose the path of values for himself as he grows up thereby becoming the lone, isolated or atomistic personality possessing all traits of individuated human person having no adequate community sense in himself. The answer to which type of up bringing can bring about an ideal society where social order is sustainable leads Leapold Sedar Senghor to advocate for a communal social system. Senghor believed in a mutual or a symbiotic relation between the individual and the community. He fines a harmony than a parasitic relation between the individual. And the community. Senghor felt that the individual fines a meaning only as he lives in the community and outside it, life is meaningless.

This paper attempts to unveil why Human should be raised up in a proper manner for the purpose of attaining social cohesion and advocated for the inculcation of communal values for an adequate human formation as the only surest means to achieve a corporate human personality requisite for societal order. To realize this the paper concluded that moral mix should be innociated and inculcated on Human persons for an adequate formation and training else the human society will slide into the Hobbean state of nature where life is brutish, nastic and short. This goal the paper argues, will come to place through corporate personality. Corporate personality is achieved only in communal social arrangement. The paper uses the critical analytic method of inquiry.

### **Introduction:**

The Human person is not only a biological product rather is constitutive of several other factors like social, psychological and environmental. This informed Iroegbu's view that: African version of the person, in other words concept of man, is synthesized into three definitional components, they are:

- i. Relatedness: The essentially communicational and existential networks of relationships of the person with his fellows.
- ii. Basic self-possession, the recognition of the authentic being of the individual who is responsible on his own rights.
- iii. Dynamism, which keeps the person in a continuous openness to his community, other communities and to the fullest possible development of his personality(Irogbue,1996:158). This portrays that in the formation of man these properties of the Human person must be taken account of in the quest of man's

relationship with one another in the community and the desire to achieve a good human community where humans cohere without rancor and near state of nature. A person is constitutively a relational being. The network of relationship is total and has concrete expression in all aspect of existence and organization. This means in the act of raising up a human being a series of relationship that are obviously socio-political and moral are involved and these determine the person's identity or personality. An individual is first and foremost a member of a particular community as such he is raised in a community of persons and he learns and cooperates with the community doctrines. He is a product of the community. The individual is shaped, mold and taught by the community. This informed John Mbiti's position that:

**Only in terms of other people does the individual become conscious of his own being, his own duties, his privileges and responsibility towards himself and himself and towards others people. When he suffers, he does not suffer alone but with his kinsmen, his neighbours and relatives whether dead or alive. The individual can only say. "I am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I am". This is the cardinal point in the understanding of the African view of a man(Mbiti, 1969:108-109).**

To be a person (Human being) in this sense according to Kwasi Wiredu, is to be an adult who works hard, thinks judiciously and is capable to support a conjugal household as well as fulfill a range of obligation to his extended group of kinfolk and to the civic community at large.(Wiredu, 1992:84). In an African traditional thought therefore a normal human being has three levels of existence; firstly as an individual; secondly as a member of a group; and as a member of a community.(Wiredu, 1992:75) This shows that in the formation of a human being the proper upbringing shows a communal spirit because the person is believed to continually be in a social relation with others (both dead and the living) and cannot exist outside the society though we realize that person is community determined, it is only partly so; because he has his own individualistic values not so determined. According to Kwame Gyekye:

Besides being a communitarian by nature, the human person is, also by nature, other things as well. By other things, I have in mind such essential attributes like rationality having a capacity for virtue and for evaluating and making moral judgments and, hence, being capable of choice. It is not the community that creates these attributes; it discovers and nurtures them (Gyekye, 1984:35).

Expressing this, there is room for individualistic tendencies and potentialities Benezet Bujosays succulently that:

The individual may not blindly follow the group. Life in community demands alertness and the maintenance of one's own individuality in other words, the discernment of spirits must be preserved even in the context of friendship and community. (Bujo, 2003:118-119).

This communitarian, normative conception of the person according to Kwame Gyekye has some implications for the formation of a human being. These implications are that:

- i. That the human person does not voluntarily choose to enter into human community, that is, the community life is not optional for any individual person;
- ii. That the human person is at once a cultural being;
- iii. That the human person cannot.... perhaps, must not live in isolation from other persons;
- iv. That the human person is naturally oriented towards other persons and must have relationship with them;
- v. That social relationships are not contingent but necessary and
- vi. That following from (iv) and (v), the person is constituted, but only partly... by social relationships in which he necessarily finds himself (Gyekye, 1984: 37).

This is the reason why Africans place high premium on communal values which in extension requires that in raising human person in the society there is need to inculcate communal values in the person. Communal values are those values which appreciate the importance of the community and communal spirit. The internalization of these communal values make a person to be a Norman human person who is orderly as he or she respects communal social values such as respect for elders, observance of communal services-like clearing of community properties e.g schools, market places, shrines, roads and the river paths etc. this helps to nurture human beings in the right value system that enable the community and the individuals to cohere without turbulence. Where these are not in place the human person would have been inadequately formed which by extension would lead to social disorder.

The internalization of the communal values through which the human person is trained will ensure the right attitudes, behaviours and good conducts which ensure social order or control in the community this informed Imafidon's view that:

**Normatively speaking, one cannot be a person without a community. This also implies that personhood can be more or less, not the same at all times; it can be acquired and lost in time one who acts irresponsibly would be a non-person logically (Evis, 2014:9).**

This implies that when an individual is not adequately trained in community values there is the tendency that his or her attitude towards life will be inimical to the community, hence the disorderliness which this will bring to bear in the larger society This paper attempts to show that the reason why there are unsustainable. Social order in human society is as a result of inadequate human formation; that if humans are adequately formed ie groomed up through the moral mix of inculcating communal values the human person will attain corporate personality requisite for the attainment of social order or control.

In the Spirit of articulating adequate value on human person for social order Bauber Martins' I and thou relationship is a lucid thesis for our inquiry. Buber's main proposition is that we can address human relational existence in two distinct ways.

1. The attitude of the "I" towards "IT" i.e. towards an object that is separate in itself.
2. The attitude of the "I" towards "thou" in relationship in which the other is not separated by discrete bounds(Buber, 1996:47)

The main thrust of Buber's work is that human life finds meaningfulness in relationships. In his view, all our relationship brings us ultimately into a relation with God, the eternal thou.

To Buber there are two pairs of relationship which are the I-it relationship means that of the world as we experience it. By contrast the I-thou relationship describes or refers to a living relationship which is sustained in the spirit and mind of an "I" that emphasizes spirituality not physical sensual bound. The spiritual relation is bound with the love intimate love which does not permit hatred-a process of sharing unity of being.

Closely related to this is Senghor's negritude. Although negritude is designated as a whole complex of civilized values, the characteristic of these values emanates from social realms (Senghor, 1964:72) Senghor believed in a mutual or a symbiotic relation between the individuals and the community; he felt that the individuals find a meaning only as he lives in the community and outside it life becomes meaningless. To him, therefore, the community makes people to fulfill their own destiny. Because where the community withdraws its "productions" to the individual, the individual is left without anything hence, he dries up and dies off. Life is drawn to self-consciousness to the desire for community. This is amplified in Senghor's maxim that: the community moulds and shapes the individual. Unlike the Cartesian aphorism *cogito ergo sum*. "Senghor's is rather, 'I feel, I chance the others, I am (Senghor, 1964:73). This is inline with Buber's I and thou relationship, which signifies oneness, togetherness and solidarity; cooperation and collectivity in social life. This is exemplified in African extended familyhood. Also in tune to our desire in this paper is Plato's prognosis in his *Republic* when he draws the relationship which exist between the individual and the community to be an ethical one (Plato, 1974:324) to him the state will be happy and virtuous when the individual and the community are to be an ethical one (Plato, 1974:324) to him the state will be happy and virtuous when the individuals will be happy and virtuous (Plato, 1974:325).

Additionally, Aristotle developed a communitarian thesis for social order which he initiated by his discussion of the nature of man. Aristotle said man by his nature is a political animal. Man is both a social and rational being. Man needs friends to fulfill himself. He needs the society to realize his potentials in his politics, Aristotle says, nature intends man to live in society. Subrata and Sushila summed up their assertion of Aristotle thus:

Aristotle was convinced of the individual's innate sociability and the natural desire of congregate and remain in society, by virtue of the fact that a human being enjoyed a unique capacity for moral choice and reasoned speech not only did reason distinguished humans from other social species, but they alone had a perception of good and evil, right and wrong (Subrata and Sushila, 2007:105-100). This implies that man orbits into a community for the self preservation, security and perfection of his physical existence but also, it is only in the community that we have good life by control of its by law and justice. To this end, the state function is to promote the good of the citizens.

### **Clarification of Basic Terms**

- i. Inadequate: the Oxford advanced learner's dictionary defined the word inadequate as something or somebody that is not good enough.
- ii. Human: This means a person rather than an animal or machine.
- iii. Formation: the Oxford advanced learner dictionary defines formation as particular arrangement or pattern.
- iv. Societal disorder: this means improper pattern in which human society is; that is not good enough to bring about orderliness.

Therefore inadequate human formation: The bedrock of societal disorder means wrong upbringing of a person which has wrong implications in the arrangement of human society. This implies that there is a way in which a human person is to be raised up that is generally

accepted standard below which could be regarded to as a wrong arrangement in the processes of bringing up a person in human society that can entails adequate formation.

### **African Descriptive and Normative Meaning of a Person**

There are two basic approaches to the African concept of a person the descriptive and the normative. The descriptive concept of a person in African traditional thought system is the analysis of the component parts (physical and non-physical) of the human person as held in an African culture with their functions or significance in the scheme of things. There seem to be no singular agreement in the constituent parts of a person in an African culture simply because there are various views regarding the component parts among the different communities in Africa.

KwasiWiredu opines that a person in the Akan culture, the descriptive basis of personhood, and its components are okra-the life principle and the source of human personality. The sunsum the principle of charisma. The mogya-the blood or kinship principle. The nipadua- the physical body, and the ntoro-the patrilineal which is the basis of an individual membership.

The African descriptive approach to the concept of a person can be summarized in Kwame Appiah words thus.

**A person consist of a body made from the blood of the mother, an individual spirit, which is the main bearer of one's personality; and a third entity okra. The sunsum derives from the father at conception the okra, a sort of life force that departs from the body only at the person's last breath: is sometimes as with the Greeks and Hebrews, identified with breath; and is often said to be sent to a person at birth, as the bearer of ones nkrabea, or destiny, from Nyame. The sunsum, unlike the okra, may leave the body during life and does so, for example, in sleep, dreams being thought to be the perceptions of a person's of sunsum on its nighty peregrinations (Appiah,2004: 23).**

In a short form, the descriptive concept of a person reveals the ontological status of a person.

### **The Normative African Concept of a Person**

Normatively, personhood is not something one is born with. It has to be acquired through internalization of the societal values. This simply implies that a person is not just any human being rather He is that who has attained the states of a responsible member of the society (Evis, 2014:9). The normative conception of a person evolves from the understanding of man's relationship with other beings in the world. The African traditional thought conceive man as a communal being; this in contra-distinction with the Eurocentric beliefs like those of Freudian, Descartes, Fromun's theory of human nature. It is on this ground Mbiti expresses the communal relations of the African thus:

**Only in terms of the other people does the individual become conscious of his own being, his own duties, his privileges and responsibilities toward himself and other people. When he suffers, he does not suffer alone but with the corporate group; when he rejoice, he rejoices not alone but with his kinsmen, his neighbours and relatives whether dead or alive. The individual can only say. "I am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I am". This is the cardinal point in the**

### **understanding of the African view of man (Mbiti, 1969:108-109).**

Africa communal life existence is encapsulated in constant interaction and inter-penetration one person with the others. Hence their world is world of being-with-others. The normative conceptive of a person therefore reveals the social status of the individual. For a proper formation of the human person therefore there is need for the combination of both concept in forming a standard human being-the person's individual status must be balanced with that of the relational or social status to have well-formed human person else we have and inadequate not good enough person who will become a clog in the development of the larger society.

#### **Quest for Moral Formation of the Human Person**

In the quest for a balanced individual, there is the urgent need to inculcate moral values which are foundational in nature for a proper upbringing of an individual are numerous some are listed in this discourse. They are viz:

- a. Respect for elders
- b. Honesty
- c. Trust-worthiness
- d. Empathy
- e. Contentment
- f. Hospitality
- g. Kindness
- h. Faithfulness
- i. Purity
- j. Sanctity of human life
- k. Industry
- l. Moderation
- m. Perseverance
- n. Discipline
- o. Accountability

All these values, which are normative in nature are virtues which can be injected into individual persons while growing up to become standard for life when grown up. They become virtues for adequate human formation because as they are inculcated in our young ones, they serve as springboards to achieving correct human behaviour, attitudes and right human conducts requisite for good human community. This will help to stop improper attitudes and conducts in human society consequent upon which is a good or well-ordered society. AS matter of fact, the effective application of all these values in the lives of our young ones will go a long way in eliminating or transforming the demented acts or corruption from our socio-political and economic life. We must all know that it is only a morally sound youths that can grow into a morally sound adults. A morally sound youths will become accountable to the people and selfless in service when they assume leadership position tomorrow. A stitch in time, they say, saves nine!

#### **Corporate Person for Social Order**

Corporate personality as used in the context of this discourse means the ability or quality of a person to have regards for others and allow the community spirit to overshadow him by having love and care for the others. This is the situation whereby taking others first is

essential. Corporate personality can only be achieved in a communally arrangement. This is substantiated by Grisez's words when he said.

**Corporate personality is partly explained by paradigmatic character of the family for all common in biblical terms. A family has natural solidarity. Children are extension of their parents who do act for the family as a whole. But corporate personality also must be understood in light of the reality of communal choices and their power to constitute communities, this reality means that a community is not merely a collection of individuals but an existential unit. It also means that someone really can act in and through him or her. Corporate personality is thus not as mysterious as it appears to those who regard society with modern individualistic bias. (Germain, 1994:57).**

This means that we cannot achieve corporate personality from our modern individualistic society that is couched in self-centeredness, "mine me syndrome, egoistic, atomistic and isolated individualism of the western orientation. But corporate personality is only attained in a communal setting where collectivity is the paradigm for social life. This is expressed in Egbeike Aja's words thus.

**The first element that impinge on the case of traditional African is the ability of the members of the community to trace their origins to the same blood. This explains why in the thickening and thinking senses of the social action, there is also a deepening and weakening sense of loyalty and commitment. The corporateness of the community means that somebody belongs to the next higher unit of the community on the basis of his membership of the next smaller unit. (Aja, 2004:309).**

What corporate personality entails in civil society that is communally based are interdependence, mutuality, belongingness, altruistic quality and corporation without which there may not be tranquility, peace and harmony, progress and above all comprehensive development which modern society requires.

### **Conclusion:**

In this discourse we have been able to establish that the concept of the human person can be explained from a descriptive and normative perspective and these conceptions aid the formation of the human person as both meanings help in the quest to achieve adequate and proper grooming of the person requisite for the establishment of a good human community; through effective application of those communal values (virtues) in the lives of our young ones by eliminating or transforming the demerited acts of corruption from our socio-political and economic life. This means that we can only achieve corporate personality from our modern individualistic society if we can eschew individualistic orientation and embrace communal life style with its rich communal ethos of interdependence, synergy, cooperation, mutual aids, mutual confidence and belongingness which have implications for an adequate formation of the human being requisite for an orderly society. With this in mind we should help to groom our young ones through communal virtues and the concrete concept of a person inherent in our African thought system as such thoughts are very essential at this moment where the society is experiencing disorderliness in all spheres of the societal life to equip us

with the proper norms and values that are to be internalized for the attainment of social order in human community which our communities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are missing.

### **References**

- Aristotle (1984). *The politics: A great classic of political theory* in barnes, jonathan (ed) Princeton J: Princeton University Press
- BenezetBujo, (2003): *Foundation of an African Ethics: Beyond the Universal Claims of Western Morality*, Kenya; paulines publications Africa.
- Egbike Aja, (2004) "Individuality in an African Communal Universals", in Oguejiofor Obi (ed.), *African Philosophy and Public Affairs*
- Grisez Germain, (1994). *Christian moral principles vol.1*, Illinois,
- Imafidon Elvis Imafidon, (2014). *The Concept of Person in an African Culture and Its Implication for Social Order*. Lumina, vol. 23, No. 2, ISSN 2094-1188
- Iroegbu Pantaloon Iroegbu, (1996). *The Kpimof Politics, Communalism: Towards Justice in African Politics*. Owerri: international university press ltd.
- Kwame Appiah, (2004). "Akan and euro-American concepts of the person" in lee M. Brown (Ed.), *African philosophy: new and traditional perspectives*, oxford; oxford university press.
- Kwame Gyekye, (1984). "The Akan concept of a person", in Richard A. Wright (ed.), *African Philosophy: An introduction*, Lanham, University Press of America.
- Kwasi Wiredu, (1992). "Death and Thereafter in African Culture", in Kwasi Wiredu, Kwame Gyekye (Eds.), *person and community: Ghanaian philosophical studies 1*, Washington: council for research in values and philosophy.
- Martin Buber, (1996) "1964" I and thou" in Kaufman's trans. Touch stone edition.
- Mbiti John, (1969): *African Religions and Philosophy*, London: Heinemann publishers
- Plato (1974). *The Republic*, middle Soc. England: Penguin books.
- Sedar Leopold Senghor, (1964) *African socialism*. New York: Prayer Books.