THE 'NWA ỌHA' VALUE SYSTEM IN IGBO: EXPLORING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMUNAL PARENTING IN SELECTED TEXT.

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Abstract
The topic of this study is, 'The 'Nwa ọha' value system in Igbo: Exploring the significance of communal parenting in selected text. This study is prompted by the deteriorating state of moral values and the alarming rate of the acts of irresponsibility, waywardness, disobedience and rascality amongst the new generation. Igbo individuals, both males and females, have degenerated their behavior to a sorry state. This has become a cause for concern. The problem is traceable to lack of communal parenting. The objective of the study is to examine some of the functional units of the society. It aims also at evaluating the extent of the application of the tenets of the functional units in moulding the children. Specifically, the study has the objective of also examining the degree of the use of 'Nwa ọha' value system of the Igbo in shaping the behavior of the children of nowadays. The study also looks at how the value system can go a long way in moulding children into responsible adults in the Igbo society. The study adopts the narrative research method as its methodology. The theoretical framework that guides this study is the structural functionalism theory. It is discovered that if every sane adult would see every child as his or her own and guides accordingly, the menace in the society would reduce. Therefore, the study suggest that raising a child should be a communal effort and not for the parents alone. This study will be beneficial to the society, mostly parents and intending parents as it throws more light on the need for parents to allow others to partake in training their child/children.

Keywords: communal parenting, nwa ọha, functionalism, interpersonal skills, family.

1.0 Introduction

'Nwa ọha' in Igbo land simply means 'the child of the people' or 'the people's child'. It can be given as a name thus 'Nwa ọha' or as a phrase 'Nwa ọha',

however the usage, it means the same thing. This also suggests that naming a child in Igbo land does not happen by chance rather it takes a well organized and deep thinking for such, because of their belief that a child's name guides the child. It also shows the Igbos belief in communal parenting. They believe that even though a man and a woman come together to procreate, once their child is born, he or she seizes to belong solely to the parents, rather to the entire community. What this means is that, anybody in the community can teach and guide the child whenever need be. Sandtrock (2006:5) is of the view that some parents only have parenting skills passed down to them from their parents, which includes the favourable and unfavourable skills, the result is that the same favourable and unfavourable skills continue to thrive in the society because one can only give what one has. In the African setting, parenting is seen as a task which may take so many forms all in a bid to make the child a responsible adult. These forms may include flogging, food denials, giving the child excess house chores to do and so other forms of punishments.

One may ask, with the wave of moral decadence in the society today, is it proper to allow ones child to be taught or guided by a stranger all in the name of communal parenting? This study tries to handle this question by x-raying the life of Enyi the chief character in the selected text, who lost his parents at a very tender age and was left with no other option but to live with his paternal uncle. As Santrock (2006:15) says 'parenting requires interpersonal skills and makes emotional demands', parenting is tasking. The demanding nature of parenting may interfere with the way a parent behaves towards a child that is not his or hers. Once a child looses his or her immediate family, father and mother, the survival of that child solely depends on the communal effort of the people or the extended family. In describing the family Degbey (2012) says, the family is usually the major source of the basic necessities of life and health, the love and tenderness, food, water, clothing, shelter and sanitation which are made possible by the socio- economic cultural and environmental conditions. These basic necessities were denied Enyi and he ended up becoming a terror to the community and society at large, a problem which would have been avoided had his uncle and wife taken up the responsibility of training him like their own child to help him become a responsible adult. This study will also point out the implications of neglecting the child on the street with no one to direct him or her. A child like this, if not trained becomes a bad influence and comes back to the society that neglected him or her and begins to wreck havoc. To this, the study suggests that every responsible adult in the society that every responsible adult in the society should impact and live positively because when one teaches someone is watching. The child is watching. It is believed that the study would help in expanding the need for everyone to get involved in training every child.

2.0 Literature Review

Parenting has always been a topic that has no definite approach to it. It appears that while one formula works for 'A', it may not work for 'B' thereby making it a bit different for scholars to agree to a particular definition of the term. However, this study examines the view of some scholars, while some believe that extended families should be involved in training a child, others are of the view that it is solely the job of the biological parents. However, this study shall examine these thoughts in this section. Larson (2014:10) says,

> The pressure and pace of modern life have made parents and children stressed and miserable. With the rise of dual-earning families, mothers and increasingly fathers are struggling with work-life issues, forcing many to lean in or opt out. But is it truly modern life that's at fault or is it our expectations that two people-whether hetero or same sex- can do it alone and do it well…?

Larson (2014) believes that people are stereotyped already. The traditional belief that a man and a woman gets married and produce children makes them the children parents alone and no one else has a parenting right over the children. This, to a large extent is one of the many problems the 'today child' is having. With the unstable economy, the decaying society, differences in religious beliefs and political battles, parents find themselves struggling daily to 'meet up' at the expense of the their children. What is important to them is to earn enough money to live the life they need. To Larson (2014), the fact that both parents are always out trying to make money is not enough to allow children wander off on their own. He believes this is a problem because people already are programmed to believe that you are only comfortable and happy when you have enough money. Therefore, he is of the opinion that this is where extended family comes in.

Generally, in raising kids, mothers are always at the fore. They do a better chunk of the job. This act goes back to time immemorial and often ther reason some kids are heard saying 'I grew up with my grandmother'. It would be right to say that women have childrearing in their DNA.

Larson (2014)goes further to add,

> Despite the belief that monogamous male-female bonding is how mothers and children were supported and thrived… it was actually female cooperative breeding or alloparenting 'sharing and caring derived from the pooled energy' of a network of grandparents, aunts,

> uncles, siblings distantly related kin and non-kin' that shaped our evolution.

This gives credence to the fact that women do more of the job in childrearing than men. However, it is still a fact that once there is an established marital institution, there is bound to be relatives here and there and it becomes less easy to control who tells the child what. The most important part of this statement is the mention of 'kin' which the Igbo man would call 'umunna' and 'non – kin' (kinsmen) which means people who are not even related to the child. For instance a child who goes to live with a total stranger to work as a domestic staff or for apprenticeship is expected to undergo a specified training. Even though the child may have an agreed period of time to stay with his employers or master, yet he or she is expected to be obedient because for that period of time, the employer or master is the child's parents. In her argument still went further to say, '...Rather than leave childrearing solely in the hands of one or two people, it would help if we approached it more along the lives of the old African proverb, 'It takes a village to raise a child'.

This is one of the major approaches the Igbos believe concerning parenting and it has been working for them. It takes a whole village indeed to raise a child which means it takes more than one or two persons to raise a child. Africa which the Igbo nation is part has strong belief in their culture, which also is mostly oral. One may often hear one's parent saying 'my father once told me…, my mother once told me…' This is clear evidence that some parenting skills in Africa at large, and in Igbo land in particular is passed down from one generation to another.

Santrock (2006:10) supports this when he said that most parents learn parenting practices from their own parents. A good example is the folktale telling in Igbo nation. The elderly sits on a small low chair and have the children sit on the ground around him in such a manner that they get to watch his every gesture as he tells the tale. In the process, he passes down knowledge and wisdom to them, which in turn helps them become better adults. This child grows to become a parent someday, having the lesson of the folktale told to him in his mind and allowing it shape him into a better person, passes down the same knowledge down to his or her child and the chain continues. This is totally parenting skills passed down from generation to generation. To this belief, Amos (2013:20) addes thus,

> In the African system, parenting is again perceived to take a lot of forms which is able to lead the child to be a responsible adult. Though there are various parenting

> styles, there are ways in which the African parents bring up a child in order for the child to imbibe the cultural values of the land and also be a responsible adult. Some of these forms of parenting are through story telling (folktales) the extended family…and mother's care, attention and love.

Parenting therefore involves every process and efforts put in place to make children responsible adults. The most important factor here is that the child is led to become a better adult. This means that all the factors of the society, which the child is part of must be functional. Every sector of the society, must be part of the child's training. Amos (2013)goes further to add,

> ... Parenting is the process of taking care or supporting a child from birth to adulthood involving the physical, emotional, social and intellectual capabilities… the process or state or being a parent. In fact one can be a parent both to the biological or non biological children.

It is this premise that this study will try to discuss the importance of communal parenting and danger of child negligence.

2.1 Igbo Culture and the Nwa ọha Value System

During child birth celebration (ọmụgwọ) in Igbo, Nzeako (1979:37) discloses the nature of the songs that feature in the occasion. The song, in itself, has a major refrain, "whoever hears the cry of a child should hurry to attend to the need of the child, because a child is a public property" (onye nụrụ akwa nwa mee ngwa ngwa, Na otu onye enweghị nwa).

This song is common among the Igbo, a child-birth-celebration song. And the refrain is a big reminder that any child at all is a public property and not a personal one. Another meaning is that when any Igbo hears or understands that a child is in any danger anywhere, he or she should hurry to go and help the child or children.

Echoing this view of Nzeako (1979) is Ekwealor (1998:40). He reveals that it is when a child starts to learn how to walk that the Igbo belief that "a child is a public property" (ọha nwe nwa) manifests itself in the main. According to him, this is the time for all to ensure that such a child does not walk into any danger. That is, the child remains in the care of all.

Ekwealor (1998:41) says that the raising of any child is the responsibility of in-laws, kinsmen, relations, neighbours and friends. It is also the duty of the grown up in the family (Ịzụlite ụmụ aka bụ ọrụ dịịrị ikwu na ibe, ndị agbataobi na ndị enyi). He goes further to enumerate the means and processes the Igbo use to show the public concern in the molding of the character of Igbo children. Such means are as follows: membership of various needful associations like age grade, masquerade cult, etc. Through all these, children learn various societal norms and the culture of the Igbo. He also includes the sending of children to good families or school teachers for a periodic or temporary residence and training.

From all these processes, it is easy to understand that it is already enshrined in the Igbo culture that any child is 'owned' by all. In other words, anybody can partake in the training a child. Any child is a property of the community. This means that they rejoice with the child when he/she behaves positively and correct the child or be angry with him/her when the child behaves negatively.

2.2 Literature as the teacher of cultural norms

Using the words of Obichukwu (2009:12), literature is oral or written works of art in which the writer or the narrator tries to explore life with a view to trying to explain th various experiences that influence, inspire and determine the life of a people in a society to the reader or the audience".

Literature, as Duru (2014) maintains, is so significant that it helps to expose the realities of human existence. It helps to teach about human life in all ramifications. It provides students or children with a rich and qualitative humanistic education. Through literature, we can learn the cultura norms of our people and even other people.

It is through it that we appreciate the purpose, lessons and driving forces of any given writer. And it follows, therefore, that it mirrors the Igbo society for us and helps the Igbo to learn how any child is believed to be the property of the community.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

In other to have a better understanding of the subject being treated, it is best to adopt the structural functionalism framework or functionalism as part of social (sociological) theory that originally attempted to explain social institutions as a collective means to meet individual biological needs to approach the subject of this paper. This theory is mainly dependent on the society's independent struggle to achieve a common goal. Every member of the society is involved in achieving a common societal goal. This also means that if one part of that

society fails in its duties, the entire society is affected. The main contributors for this concept are Spencer and Durkheim who believe that the society is like the human body. To him, just as the whole parts of the body work together towards making the body function properly, same way every part of the society work together for the society to be stable. Durkheim further explained the clear stability and the society's internal closeness, necessary to ensure that the society exists for a long time. While Spencer coined the phrase "survival of the fittest", Durkheim was bothered about how societies maintain internal stability and eventually survive, this is called solidarity. This framework came to light in the 1930s.

2.4 Limitations of the Theory.

The major limitation of this theory is its inability to account for social change. This is because its major focus was on social order and equity in the society. For instance, in the present Covid-19 pandemic the whole world is facing, some countries used their stadiums, schools, churches as isolation centers as most countries had higher number of cases and less hospital beds. The facilities used as isolation centers no longer serve their initial functions, which means that schools and churches no longer provide services that make the society stable. This is a big blow to structural functionalism. In other words, once there is a change in one sector of the society, the whole system collapses. These systems help to guide a child, who is also a member of the society to become a better adult. Once the system fails, the child is left to fate to succeed.

3.0 Data Analysis.

Once 'family' is mentioned, one thinks of the father, mother, siblings, aunts, uncles, grandparents and relatives. These are the people one runs to in times of danger. They are also the people every child depends on to survive. Degbey (2012:25) believes that family is usually the major source of the basic necessities of life and health. Gyekye (1996:30) agrees that when one speaks of the family in an African context, one is referring not to the nuclear family, but the extended family. It is clearly difficult not to mention family when discussing parenting. Degbey (2012) and Adinlofu (2009) both agree that the extended family provide emotional needs to all the members of the family. However, Adinlofu (2009:18) adds further that the extended family ensures procreation of children and provides for the early care and training of the children.

According to Ubesie (1974) Enyi the chief character in the selected text was orphaned at the age of four. His father was convicted of murder and was executed while his mother died mysteriously. He was eventually handed over to his uncle Ebuzo to train him. The author stated that his uncle's wife, Nneka

had natural hatred for him the moment he stepped into their house. This he attributed to mere 'women, jealousy' (P.9). One would ask, if there is a special type of jealousy known only to women? The author is merely trying to portray women as the specie with innate jealousy traits. This in every sense is wrong and goes a long way to negate the popular belief that women pay huge price in childrearing.

Nneka's hatred towards Enyi was one of the biggest reasons he turned out the way he did. She had four kids, all girls, and treated them like queens while he treated Enyi like an outcast. The author noted, 'o nweghị mgbe ọ bxla obi na-adi ya mma' 'there was never a time he was happy' (p10). This was his first journey towards emotional denial. The society, which is the family he depended on for survival failed him emotionally. The result would be loss of self worth, low self esteem and inferiority complex. Rather, on the contrary, Enyi toughened up. The author cited thus, "nke a mere o ji sie ike ka nkume', 'This was why he became as strong as a stone' (p 10). Instead of loosing his self worth, he became stronger for himself, knowing that all he had was just himself. Again the society denied him protection. Amos (2013:30) says that the extended family is a cohesive unit which ideally provides economic, social and psychological security to all its members.

Enyi was denied these forms of security, so he became older than his age by doing all sorts of unimaginable things kids of his age couldn't have tried., to survive, from fishing even when he could not swim (p11), to climbing trees in search of food, and then petty stealing. The fishes, he smoked them with his friend Nwokeabia, and fed on it. Yet his uncle's wife was still not satisfied as she finds every reason to beat him mercilessly. Starving him was a normal thing for the woman. Then one day, Enyi decided enough was enough and ran away, thus;

> 'Enyi si na be Nneka gbapụ, bido biwe ndụ onye enweghị be. Ndụ ya ugbua bụ ụbọchị a hụrụ erie, ụbọchị ahụghị, a kwụrụ agụụ. Ebe ọ bụ na o nweghị onye na-enyere ya aka, o bidoro nyewere onwe ya aka' (Enyi ran away from Nneka's house, started living like the homeless. His life now is the day he sees what to eat, he eats, the day he does not see, he goes hungry. Since he does not have any helper, he started helping himself) (p18),

And this was the beginning of this child's breakdown. Note the mention of 'Nneka's house- be Nneka'. In the beginning of the text, the author mentioned that Enyi's uncle took him to live with him, ' … Ebuzọ kpọọrọ Enyi laa be ya… (pg8). One would wonder why and how the house suddenly became Nneka's

whereas he mentioned it was the uncle, Ebuzo, who took Enyi home. This is another way the author supports the popular Igbo maxim, 'mgbe nwa dị mma, o yie nna ya, mana ọ dị njọ, o yie nne ya' which means 'when a child turns out good, he resembles his father, but if bad, he resembles his mother'. Enyi did not need to resemble anyone, all he needed was care.

At this point, the society failed in its duties to provide for the child. The extended family also failed to care for him. One significant thing in the text was the fact the Enyi's uncle was not mentioned again throughout the text. Raising his four daughters and Enyi was entirely left for his wife, Nneka, to do. This gives weight to the discussions earlier that woman play more role in childrearing and then also supports the fact that raising a child takes more than one person, because if his uncle had taken part in the affairs of the children, it would have yielded a better result.

After he left his uncle's house, Enyi began to fully fend for himself. He moved from one street to another looking for food, especially fruits to eat which normally created a major problem between him and the house owners as Ubesie cited;

> Mgbe ọ nọ na-elu osisi mango, ndị nwe ụlọ hụrụ ya, sị ya rịda, ma ọ jụrụ ajụ…odibo onye ọcha wee kpọrọ nkịta bekee, kpọsa n'ukwu mango ka o chewe ya nche. Mgbe ụkwụ ya na-emetụ ala… nwoke ahụ hụrụ ya tie Bingo Bingo Bingo…mgbe nkịta ahụ na-eru nso, Enyi kpooro aja kpoba ya n'ọnụ… nkịta ahụ nọ ebe ahụ nwụọ…ndị uwe ojii bidoro chọgharịwa Enyi ebe niile ma o nweghị isi.(p.22) .

The above illustration means that (when he was on the mango tree, the house owners saw him and told him to come down but he refused… the white man's steward left an English dog at the foot of the tree to guard him. When he got down… the man saw him and shouted Bingo Bingo Bingo…once the dog got closer, Enyi parked sand into its mouth…the dog died there…the police mounted a hunt for him, but to no avail.). He later graduated to working as a labourer in motor parks and living there as well, 'o bidoro jewe n'ọdụ ụgbọ ala Enugu, malite ọrụ onye buru' 'he started going to Enugu garage, and started working as a labourer' (p.24). According to the author, this was how he started mingling with thieves. He started stealing minor items from shop owners, to robbing banks and eventually becoming the leader of a notorious robbery gang. Now, it is important to note here, that, Enyi's dive into the dark did not just happen. It took a process. Within that period, it was still possible to save him assuming a member of the society took interest in his affairs. He and his gang tormented the society. The same society that failed to protect him, also got the

reward of its negligence. This study earlier mentioned that if a society fails in its duty to shape a child's life, the same society will suffer for it. The trend in the society today is the issue of everybody minding his business, making sure that his or her children get the best even before they are born. These set of individuals, unfortunately, control the part of the society that should cater for the child on the street. With them at the helm of affairs, the structural functionalism framework is at risk. They are the reason some parts of the society are not functional. They are also the reason the society will continue to be corrupt until they are replaced with people with the right frame of mind.

Enyi represents every kid on the street, especially the homeless, the orphaned, the less privileged and their likes. None of them begged to be born not to talk of being born in a society with no plan for the child. If Enyi's uncle, his wife and every members of the eụtended family had treated Enyi exactly the way they treated their own biological kids, he would have turned out just fine. On the other hand, if any members of the society had picked him up and gave him the protection he needed, he also would have turned out a better adult. The philosopher; Gheaus (ND) once said, '…If childrearing became more of a communal obligation, all children, whether subject to disadvantaged socio-economic background or just bad parenting, would benefit. More people would have invested in their lives and the children would be exposed to a variety of opinions and lifestyles that would enhance their budding autonomy.

If Enyi had such luxury of being looked after even though he had no parents, he would not have felt so lonely and would still turn out to be a fine and useful adult. Amos (2013: 30) said that …it is even said that even when parents are dead, a child would always have 'parents', this is because the extended family is there to cushion or parent the child. In Enyi's case, his only hope of having biological parents died with his parents and it had a huge negative impact on him. If he could judge the society he found himself in, he would say that it offered him nothing, instead of making him, it marred him. The likes of Enyi is littered all over the society today, causing serious damages to all the sectors of the society and there seem to be no hope for the tomorrow children.

Members of the various cult groups, robbery gangs, rapists, assassins, terrorists and the likes are all 'children' born and raised by someone or some people. One would ask, what went wrong? While some were actually raised by someone, some of them are also kids left to raise themselves like Enyi and the best way to do that would be to mingle with the wrong crowd and as such loose focus in life. But, does it mean that every child who lost his or parents at a tender age turns out bad? In as much as this may not be the case, it should be noted that every individual has his or her unique nature, which makes or mars him or her.

While some people are naturally tough and can survive even the hardest of times and still turn out fine on their own, some are naturally soft and can easily be swayed by the slightest circumstance. This means that while some kids loose their parents early in life and still turn out as responsible adults, some end up devastated and frustrated in life and turn out to be nuisance in the society. This paper targets the soft hearted ones who invariably depend on the society for survival.

3.1 Adoption as Part of Communal Parenting

Another silent aspect of communal parenting is adoption. Adoption is the creation of a parent-child relationship between individuals who are not naturally so related. The adopted child is given all rights, privileges and duties of a child and heir by the adoptive family. It is a legal process of becoming a non-biological parent. Furthermore, it is a legal proceeding that creates a parent-child relation between persons not related by blood; the adopted child is entitled to all privileges belonging to a natural child of the adoptive parent which also includes right to inherit any property of the adoptive parent. Adoption may happen because a child has no parents, has lost self worth, abandoned or a victim of circumstance, whatever the case, the most important thing is to give the child a better chance to live. Most people all over the world, have opted for adoption. Some, because they feel it is a way of reaching out to the most vulnerable kids, some, because they do not have a child of their own. Some, because the child was abandoned, while some adopted because the child, though has biological parents, but lacks what he needs to survive. Celebrities like Diane Keaton, Nicole Kidman, Sandra Bullock, Sharon stone Angelina Jolie, (source: Google) all Hollywood actresses, have all adopted one or more kids. Angelina Jolie, has been described as a serial adopter as she has adopted a total of three kids, two boys and one girl, all from different countries during her philanthropic works to these countries. Surprisingly she raises these kids as a single mum since she divorced her husband Brad Pitt over irreconcilable differences. These adopted kids no longer feel the pain they were supposed to feel as vulnerable kids and the society is saved from the menace and nuisance they would have caused were they left to struggle in penury.

Just recently, a young Nigerian celebrity, William Uchemba, posted on social media (Facebook @williamuchemba) how he went to a furniture store to make some furniture and met a smart eighteen year old smart boy working as a furniture maker. Out of curiosity, he asked the boy why he opted for furniture making instead of going to school and the young boy said that he would have loved to attend the university to study Economics but for lack of a sponsor, a decided to keep his mind busy by engaging in furniture making. Uchemba ended up adopting the young boy as he promised to sponsor his university

education. Interestingly, Uchemba in his middle twenties, is of Igbo tribe while the young boy, Damola, is of Yoruba tribe. Yet, it did not deter him from doing the right thing.

In Damola's lineage, if checked well, there are people who are well off enough to put him through school. He must have gone to these people for help and must have been turned down severally. If Uchemba did not find him, maybe he would not have the opportunity to ever attend the university and become a responsible adult and be useful to the society. When he eventually gets frustrated with his condition, he will turn to the society that neglected and failed him and become another reason the society would cry. Adoption does not only give the child protection and every other good things of life, it offers the child an opportunity to draw from the adoptive parent's well of wisdom. In Uchemba's words, 'I decided to adopt Damola not only to put him through school but to mentor him with knowledge and other information that has made me who I am today, till he becomes the man God destined him to be…' This is a typical example of communal parenting, giving the child a chance to shine in his or her own light.

Uchemba is not a governmental or non-governmental body. He is just a private individual who has his own private source of income. He did not go out scouting for people to adopt rather he allowed his conscience to guide him. People walk by vulnerable children every day, without taking a second look to really 'look' at the person he or she just walked by. Uchemba may be a private individual, but, he is part of the society. By adopting Damola and agreeing to guide him accordingly, he has saved the society from the havoc Damola would have wrecked the society in future had he not been saved. Who knows what would have happened to him if Uchemba did not rescue him? Maybe he would have turned out a fine furniture maker without education, or a frustrated person who did not find satisfaction in his acquired skill, desires for more through negative means and ends up getting himself in trouble, but for the timely intervention, Damola is saved, the society is saved.

4.0 Importance of Communal Parenting

Communal parenting helps the parents and the child too. It eases the pressure on parents especially parents who are always out making money to take care of the family. The child should not suffer for this dedication. Therefore, it would be in the interest of the parents if they have a sane adult, either family or not, around to watch and guide the child. The child on the other hand would have the opportunity of having diverse ideas about life. It will give the child the chance to experience another view of life which will help him/her in the journey to adulthood. It does not take away the face that the people assumed to be 'sane' adults may turn out to be, in fact, devil personified; yet, it is safe and better to

have faith in someone, for the child's sake. It is also important that parents teach their children aright so that when they find themselves alone in the society, they would be able to make the right choices. Larson (2014) supports this approach to raising a child when she said, thus;

> Rather than leave childrearing solely in the hands of one or two people, it would help everyone if we approached it in the line of the old African proverb, ' it takes a village to raise a child', … quality and trained care giving that is shared, continuous and most importantly, mandatory.

4.1 Limitations of Communal Parenting

In as much as every parent would appreciate the help of another person looking after and guiding his or her child while he or she is out earning money to take care of the family, it would be appropriate to put certain factors into consideration before adopting the idea. First, it is difficult to find anyone who is trustworthy in the society today. People are afraid of the person next to him or her. Even close family relatives are not left out. In the past, parents release their kids to visit relatives on long vacations and the kids go and come back in one piece armed with new ideas and positive knowledge. Sometimes, parents call the relatives to commend their effort in teaching their children positive ideas which they must have noticed their children exhibiting upon their return. These days, mostly, the reverse is the case. Some kids end up being raped to death by their relatives. Recently, there was a report of a five year old Kadijah who was raped to death by his cousin (source: Facebook). She and her eight year old sister had gone to visit their mum's younger sister. It was reported that the cousin first raped the older sister, his mother found out and covered it up and then administered first aid on the little girl. The boy, noticing that his mother covered his crime, raped the younger sister (Kadijah) multiple times. His mother again, covered it up and started treating the little girl but when she could not handle the case anymore, she took her to the hospital, unfortunately, she died and that was when she decided to inform her sister that her daughter had been sick. She even wanted to bury the little girl but the little girl's father insisted that her daughter's corpse be brought to him. Autopsy showed she was raped multiple times before she died (Facebook). This was how a parent lost a child in the hands of a relative. Had the opposite been the case, she would have come back home with useful knowledge and ideas that will make her a better person. Unfortunately, this is the case today. Parents are no longer sure who to leave their kids in their care, but for a better result, parents just have to find that person they can trust. That way, the burden will be better, the kids saved and the society safe.

Another factor is selfishness. This is an innate attribute of humans. At some point, voluntarily or involuntarily, it comes to bare. It depends on the person involved, who will then develop a way to handle it. Ebuzo's wife, Nneka, may not just have hatred for Enyi, she is also selfish. In so many ways, she showed she wanted her own kids to have the best of everything instead of Enyi having those things. For instance, the author cited,

> Nneka sichaa nri, o kunye nke ụmụ ya iche, kunyere Enyi nke ya iche. ụbọchị sọrọ ya o tinyere ya nnukwu nri, ma ofe ọ ga-etinyere ya agaghị ezuru ya okpoko nri abụọ. ụbọchị ọ chọrọ ikunyere ya ofe, nri ọ ga-etinyere ya agaghị agaghị eju ya afọ… Enyi atabeghị anụ e ji sie ofe, dị ka ụmụ Nneka si ata. Nke a kpatara na I lee ya anya, ahụ na-ajụ ya oyi mgbe ọ bụla. (Pg.9)
>
> After Nneka must have finished cooking, she dishes her children's food separately and same for Enyi. Sometimes she would give him fufu and not much soup to go with it. On some other days that it pleased her to give her soup, there would not be enough fuf to go with it… Enyi has never ate meat used to prepare soup the way Nneka's children eat. This means that when one looks at him, he is always dull.

Ordinarily, Nneka may not treat Enyi this badly had his parents been alive but because she knew that he had no one to speak for him, he maltreated him. Mothers in particular tend to satisfy their children first before considering even themselves. It takes only a special kind of somebody to accommodate another person's child and treat the child accordingly. That is what this paper is trying to promote. To guide every child one comes across, regardless of who the child is. That way, the society will be safer.

4.2 Findings

- At the end of the text, the author stated that Enyi eventually repented after spending years in prison and became a farmer in his village. This made the villagers happy and made him realize that he had wasted his useful years doing useless things. It was observed that;
- Once the society fails to fulfill its obligation, one way or the other it would still receive the effect of its negligence just as Enyi terrorized the city and his escapades disturbed and gave the highest police officer sleepless nights.
- When one engages in activities that are not positive for a long time, it also takes a long time to retrace one's steps if not checked on time.

- If every sane adult tries to teach every child, biological or not, the society would be better.

5. 0 Summary

The society, as one of the agents of socialization, is at the receiving end of any measure taken to shape a child because every child is all members of the society. Whatever is put in the child, good or bad, the child manifests in the society. It is therefore safe to say that the most effective form of parenting is communal parenting. This is because, the society is very demanding. Parents go out every day to earn money to feed their family leaving the children behind. Parents should as a matter of importance, entrust their children in the care of either extended family members or any other sane adult. The goal is to make sure that there is someone watching the child. Even though parents may be apprehensive of someone hurting their child in their absence, this is also why it is important to leave the child in the care of a trusted fellow. There must be one or two things the child will learn, especially if the said adult has child of same age with the child. The society also owes the child a better future. It is vital that the society the child belongs to provides the child with everything the child needs to become a reasonable adult.

5.1 Suggestions

- If every sane adult would see every child as his or hers and provides the necessary guidance when needed, the society would be better.
- Adopting a child may give that child hope, mould him into a responsible adult, this will in turn make the society safer.
- For communal parenting to be more effective, the immediate family, parents, should devote more time in teaching their children positive values of life. This way, they are armed with the right information to be able to discern when they are being deceived when eventually they enter the society.

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