

FUNCTIONAL PEDAGOGY: A TOOL IN PROMOTING VALUE FORMATION, VALUE RE-ORIENTATION AND CITIZENSHIP SKILLS AMONG 21ST CENTURY LEARNERS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES

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ABSTRACT

Educational landscape of the 21st Century, is rapidly changing with unprecedented challenges. Educational system must not take only cognizance of students' achievements in schools but must also prioritize learners' value formation, value re-orientation and citizenship skills that are essential in fostering responsible, active and citizenship engagement. 21st Century educational settings globally and Nigeria in particular should also be addressing continuous moral decline, political and civic irresponsibility, apathy, decline in patriotism, social disintegration among other values neglected among the learners. Traditional pedagogical skills emphasize on rote learning, cognitive development and knowledge acquisition at the detriment of value formation of learners and development of citizenship skills such as critical thinking ability, problem solving ability, digital citizenship, civic engagement and participation, ethical and moral reasoning, cultural awareness, leadership and responsibility, integrity among others to live in the global competitive world. Functional pedagogy which emphasizes practical learning, critical thinking skills, problem solving ability, application of real world and also engagement in communities will foster positive values among the 21st century learners such as hard work, empathy, integrity, honesty, responsibility, tolerance and civic participation among others. Functional pedagogical approach will enable learners internalize societal norms and cultivate civic competencies in the 21st Century classroom. This work advocates the adoption and implementation of functional pedagogical strategies as an approach to promote value formation and value re-orientation; and development of citizenship skills among the 21st century learners.

Keywords: 21st century learners, Citizenship skills, Functional pedagogy, Value formation and re-orientation.

INTRODUCTION

The 21st Century, is an era that is characterized with so many challenges in education majorly in aspects of morals, character behaviors and societal value system. These challenges have shown itself in aspects of moral decadence, social disintegration, civic apathy, lack of empathy, bribery and corruption among others. This era has marked a complex social reality, characterized by high rate of globalization, technological development and cultural diversities. Despite these developments, the era is accompanied by corruption, moral decay, decline in patriotism, civic irresponsibility, social intolerance, dishonesty, lack of empathy, insensitivity, bribery and corruption, social unrest, banditry, robbery, rape, embezzlement of public funds, “yahoo boys and girls” and so many negative values in this 21st Century and also among the 21st Century learners.

Over the years, traditional pedagogical strategies were used in formation of learners in the three educational domains; the cognitive, the affective and the psychomotor domains (the Head, the Heart and the Hand 3Hs). These seem not to be adequate due to its nature of rote learning with emphasize mainly on the learners' cognitive development, (the Head) with less emphasize on the development of the other domains, the affective (the Heart) and the psychomotor domain (the Hand). The development of values and skills among the learners are greatly declining. Most people in the society in this era and also among the learners have abandoned the accepted values such as dignity of labor, respect for elders, integrity, respect for human life and blood, self-reliance, religious tolerance, hard work among others; and have wrongly embraced negative values due to the trend in the society. The consequence is that the younger and the present generations are denied of the appropriate value system from the family, the school and the society at large. Therefore, the learners need to be reoriented in positive value formation and proper citizenship skills acquisition which will enable them to live in a competitive global world.

It becomes pertinent to theoretically examine functional pedagogy as a tool to promote positive value formation, value re-orientation and acquisition of citizenship skills among the 21st Century learners. Thus, this work is anchored on social learning theory to help portray the importance of collaboration, role play, interactive, experiential and problem-solving pedagogical strategies in promoting positive and cherished values of honesty, integrity, responsibility, tolerance, empathy, civic responsibility and participation, respect for diversity, responsible digital engagement which can all be nurtured through collaboration, critical thinking skills and dialogue among the learners in the 21st Century era.

Theoretical background

Social learning theory and its relevance

This theory developed by Albert Bandura (1977) gives insight to strong foundation of understanding how learners acquire and internalize values and behaviors through observation, imitation and modelling. This is based on the ideas that learning occurs within a social context that learners learn not only through direct instruction but also through observation and the consequences of the actions of people around them. They imitate the actions of the people around them and those people equally serve as their models. This

theory emphasizes the importance of modeling, social interaction, reinforcement in shaping the beliefs, attitudes and behavior of adults in their environment. Learners are in a society where negative values are condoned as a way of life, they observe influential people as their model, parents, teachers, relatives, peer groups and thus imitate them. In Bandura's prepositions, he identifies that learning process is made up of four components; attention, retention, reproduction and motivation. Learners observe a model, retain the experience, try to reproduce what they have observed, practice it and be motivated to continue the behavior which is influenced by rewards, approval or satisfaction. The learners look up to their teachers, parents, peers and influential people in the society as models from whom they observe, imitate and acquire social and moral behaviors.

Bandura opines that learning is a social process, shaped by interaction, observation and participation in an environment. It is an avenue where people learn not only through direct observations but also through observing the actions of others and the outcomes of those actions. Learners acquire new behavior by watching others that is models and imitating their actions (observational learning), teachers, parents peers or influential individuals serve as models whom the learners imitate (modeling), as the learners observe the consequences of others behavior, if a model is rewarded, the learner is more likely to imitate the behavior. Thus, Bandura proposes that behavior is influenced by personal factors and environmental factors. Learning depends on focusing on the model, remembering the observed behavior, performing the behavior and having a reason to imitate that which is reward or recognition. (ARRM Attention, Retention, Reproduction and Motivation)

The relevance of this theory to functional pedagogy value formation, value re-orientation and citizenship skills is that the theory portrays foundation for functional and participatory teaching and learning, the classroom will be transformed into a value oriented and skilled based which in turn will promote learners value formation, value re-orientation and citizenship skills among learners in the 21st era.

Conceptual clarification of terms

The concept of value

Values are principles that guide people in their day-to-day activities. They direct our daily living, guide our behaviors, decisions and actions. Values matter in one's life because it determines the kind of person one is and would be. Values are those things we cherish, appreciate and treasure, things that really matter to individual or a society. Value therefore is a key factor in learners' behavior and development. The value system of a given society is the acceptable way of doing things which is shown in their beliefs, ideologies, ethics, what the society considers right or wrong also, the value system of any society determines the way learners in that society learn.

It is worthy to note that value determines the acceptable social behavior. Values are principles or standards of behavior, ones' judgment of what is important, beneficial in life which individuals or community have a high opinion of. Enu and Esu (2011), see values as those beliefs and attitudes in the society that are worthy and guides peoples' everyday life.

The widely decline in the values among the 21st Century learners need to be tackled to restore the value system of Nigerian society and the global world at large. Values is linked to beliefs and attitudes which guides human behaviour (Nwosu, 2013, Okere & Ofoego, 2019). The image of Nigeria as a giant of Africa has been drag to the mud due to anti-social and criminal tendencies, high rate of corruption in all areas of the economy. The decline in the value system of Nigerian society has reached unacceptable level. The educational system has deteriorated and it is regrettable that the agents seen as instrument for value transmission, transformation and empowerment for the learners has become part of the agents that impart negative values in the mind of the learners in the 21st Century era. The Nigerian educational system has also failed in their primary duties of helping in inculcating positive values to the young ones at all levels of education.

Different forms of corruption exist in the various institutions of higher learning; examination malpractice, exploitations of students, embezzlement of funds by people in authority in the school system, financial malpractice between students and their teachers, and teachers taking advantage of students due to their vulnerability. Thus, this behavior has led to the decay of positive moral values among learners in various school systems. Essien etal (2021), noted that values promoting correct behaviors were not adequately respected by the young people, therefore the problems arising from undesired behaviors have increased. The authors further maintained that, the goal of teaching humanitarian values such as respect, justice, responsibility, honesty, tolerance etcetera; can produce people capable of addressing many problems, with adequate critical thinking skills, problem solving ability, responsibility and others. Anakwue, Idika, Okeke etal (2024), blamed the family as one of the agents of value promotion and re-orientation who have failed to inculcate right attitudes and good values on their children upbringing. They went further to state that this inability of the family to perform their duties has continually cause low moral standard and also contribute to academic failure of the learners. Also, Ushie, Okeke, Etta etal (2021), argued that the parents, the school authorities and the society contribute to the formation of the students' negative values which they identify in their work as social vices. The authors see vice as a bad habit or immoral activities which are common among the youths both male and female learners.

Functional pedagogy

Functional pedagogy is a teaching strategy that lays emphasizes on practical teaching, activity-based teaching and learning and problem-solving learning experiences that enables the learner acquire knowledge, attitudes and behaviors that are applicable to real life. It is a student-centered teaching approach that emphasizes purposeful and context relevant This approach of teaching and learning is more learner-friendly and uses skilled-oriented teaching method which takes education away from being theoretical but functional, relevant and transformative. This approach focuses on learning by doing that which involves learners in more practical way than theoretical approach. It moves away from rote memorization, teacher-centered to more student-centered learning approach. Instruction here is simply learning by doing (Kolawole & Olaseni 2024). The learners understand not only **what** to learn but **why** they learn. It aligns with social learning theory and constructive learning

theory which believes that learners learn through observation, imitation and model while constructivist learning theory believes that learners construct knowledge through experience, interaction and reflection. Functional pedagogy develops all round learner who have the complete (3Hs), that is, it aims to develop the learner in cognitive, affective and the psychomotor domains unlike the traditional approach that concentrates in the learners' cognitive domain only. No wonder the attitudes of the learners in this 21st century is devoid of positive values.

Functional pedagogy equips learners with life skills, citizenship values and problem-solving skills needed in this 21st century period (Ogunleye 2022). Functional pedagogy encourages collaborative learning, participatory learning and community-based projects. This approach of learning is characterized by being learner-centered, experiential in nature, it is problem-solving oriented, relevance to real life, value based and it is collaborative and reflective in nature. These strategies can be used when applying functional pedagogy in teaching and learning: project-based learning, inquiry-based learning, discussion and debate, role play, simulation and service-learning strategy. Functional pedagogy focuses on competence, transferability and authentic application of subject matter instead of rote memorization. The learning activities is directly linked to real-world tasks, life skills and social roles. It is problem-based, competence-based, project-based, socially-based etc. This approach helps in bridging the gap between school learning and real world, thereby enhancing critical thinking ability which is needed in this era. Functional pedagogical approach promotes and enhance value formation and moral development among the learners. It is a well-defined manipulable instructional approach that emphasizing authentic, competence-oriented learning.

Thus, functional pedagogy is essential in the school system and can promote citizenship skills for it helps to build citizenship and leadership skills which prepares learners for world challenges and sustainable living. Therefore, citizenship skills are the attitudes, values and competencies that help individuals to be active, responsible and effective in civic, political, social and environmental life which enables the learners become responsible citizens and members of the society who are capable of promoting peace, justice, equity, fairness, integrity and sustainable development. Rather than learners who practice the opposite of the values mentioned above and are bent on cheating in examination as a shortcut to success (Okeke & Edom 2019).

Merits of Functional Pedagogy

1. It improves transfer of learning. The students apply knowledge to realistic tasks which helps in transfer of skills outside the school but in the real world's situation.
2. It helps in the development of higher-order skills. This is because functional pedagogy involves critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration and communication skills strategies.
3. It increases learners' motivation and engagement due to real tasks performed by the students.

4. Functional pedagogy is relevant to 21st century competencies. Learners are prepared to civic roles, life-long learning and workplaces.
5. It creates stronger links to community and stakeholders through partnerships and contextual understanding.
6. It encourages holistic development in affective and social outcomes that is in values and citizenship not only content development.
7. It was portfolio and performance task to give richer feedbacks than standardized tests because the feedback is formative in nature and assessment actionable.

Functional pedagogy and Value Formation

Value formation is the process of instilling and developing positive values in individuals such as honesty, responsibility, empathy, respect, integrity, compassion, kindness. It refers to the process by which learners are aware of ethical standards and develop moral awareness which guides their behavior and decisions. Learners engages in reflective discussions, real life case studies through experiential learning and community-based education. This thus encourages learners to relate abstract principles to practical life experiences. If learners are engaged in environmental sanitations, it will encourage them to have empathy, be responsible and be patriotic, always ready to serve the nation. This is a complex process influenced by family, education, peers, cultural surroundings and personal experiences. Values can also be formed through genetic and environmental factors like culture, parental influence, teachers, friends, peers. They serve as standards for behavior and help with decision making. Personal values differ between culture and helps a person's character. The manifestation of value means the public display of emotions or feelings. When values are formed, it is manifested at both individual and societal level. Individual values are displayed in ones' actions, attitudes towards others while at the societal levels it is manifested by the collective actions of the people in the society.

Functional Pedagogy and Value Re-Orientation

The re-orientation of values in our society and the school is an important call and it is a search for national culture that would reshape national character and image of the society. Values re-orientation would promote critical thinking ability among learners, collaboration and thus promote national and international image of the society and educational institutions. Societal life has been taken over by many social ills, learners at various educational level do not understand the importance of hard work, patriotism, integrity, they pursue certificate without character. Also in the society, many citizens go for pleasure without conscience, business without morals, worship without sacrifice, politics without principles and science without humanity at heart. The learners according to Bandura's social learning theory (1977), that learners acquire new behavior by watching others that is models and imitating their actions, this is exactly what happens in the society. The learners observe, imitate their teachers, parents, peers and influential people in the society and behave alike.

Value re-orientation is the redirecting learners' attitudes, beliefs, behavior, character towards socially desirable behaviors and norms. Value reorientation means restoration or a change of attitude towards a number of things that have been identified as wrong actions or wrong

attitudes. This is the principles of right and wrong that is accepted by individual or a social group. Value re-orientation is necessary in the family, educational institutions and the society in general. This will facilitate the re-positioning of the learners where they ought to be in future. The learners are to be consciously imparted through functional pedagogical strategies that promote problem solving ability, critical thinking initiatives to be a complete learner who will be adequately equipped with citizenship skills to live in the society. In a society where there is decline in peoples' morals, corruption has become a way of life there is need for educational intervention to redirect learners' attitudes and norms. Functional pedagogy will help in facilitating value re-orientation by promoting moral reasoning and participatory learning experiences through collaboration, debates and so on. Njoku (2015), stated that the crisis of value system in Nigeria suggests that the growth and progress of the society is being retarded in many aspects through outburst of materialistic tendencies of our youth. He further maintained that the materialism has taken over the government, political institutions, traditional and cultural institutions, even the church is more materialistic than the secular society.

Values crises has made Nigerian society so open that anything goes without minding the repercussion and the negative effect it will cause on the learners. This scenario is affecting the learners at all levels of education (the youth) because they observe the environment, look up to the models and equally imitate them. The scenario in the society results in the misplacement of value that led to misunderstanding of the purpose of human life (Njoku 2015). The learners have no sense of community relationship, no leadership skills, not patriotic among other ills. Hence all agents of socialization are to collectively join hands together in order to produce a wholesome learner. The family, being the primary unit of inculcating values should step up in re-orientation of the children through parental roles, values, manners, morals and social behavior that influence the children. The parents should teach and guide the behavioral aspects of their children, sensitize their moral consciousness, monitor their activities and impose disciplinary measures where and when appropriate. Anakwue, Idika etal (2025), carried out a study to find out ethical relationship between teachers and learners in terms of honesty, hard work, integrity, empathy and respect for elders. It was found out that the positive r-value indicates higher ethical relationship in terms of honesty, hard work, integrity, empathy and respect for elders and vice versa. The authors maintained that values children are taught today determine their behaviour when they are adults.

In the school system, value re-orientation should be nurtured and entrenched in the school processes. Teachers should be role models who are intellectually competent, with emotional stability, good moral standards and unquestionable character (Njoku, 2006, Njoku 2015 Mathew & Obijekwe 2022). Good teacher produces good students and great nation. This also conforms with the work of Anakwue, Idika etal (2025) who maintained that parent and teachers ensure that they set a conducive environment at home and in school for the children look up to them. The mass media as an agent of socialization should enlighten the learners on the importance of hard work, diligence and law-abiding citizens, this will go a long way in curtailing negative values and re-orientating and re-positioning the positive values among

the learners. There is need for value orientation and continuous value re-orientation among the learners. Kluckhohn, (2025) sees value orientation is an organized and generalized concept, influencing behavior, nature, humanity, human relations with others high moral intelligence and entrenchment of strong values for the development of people in a given society.

Asobie (2012) opined that, value re-orientation is a transformation, a fundamental shift and deep change of a person or the society in a new way, actions which are now possible but were not possible prior to the transformation and change. Hence orientation is the change of moral character positively through changing of the innermost nature of a person. Thus, re-orientation is the act of changing, adjusting, aligning or realigning something in a new or different reaction, and re-orientation becomes the deliberate attempt to change the direction of the learners' attitudes, beliefs and behavior in a new direction. It is the restoration or change of attitudes towards a number of things that have been identified as wrong actions or wrong attitudes. Therefore, value re-orientation emphasizes moving away from ills in the society like examination malpractice, dishonesty, corruption, political intolerance and moving towards honesty, patriotism, hard work, fairness and other good virtues. Thus, value re-orientation can help the learners to be more focused and also, the general society will equally be re-oriented. Therefore, functional pedagogy can go a long way in achieving this purpose among the 21st Century learners. Therefore, there is need for change of attitudes, behavior and value re-orientation is crucial for it will help learners to be armed with societal ideals and values necessary for societal living.

Functional Pedagogy and Citizenship Skills

Education in the 21st Century has moved beyond academic literacy, it now extends to social responsibility, ethical conduct active and participatory citizenship. The era is characterized by technological transformation, globalization, moral pluralism. The learners are greatly influenced in their behaviors, values, perceptions and beliefs. Therefore, educational institutions do not only serve as places for intellectual development but also a center for moral and civic training. Functional pedagogy is the best option in promoting citizenship skills among learners in the 21st Century era. It is an instrumental approach that is learner centered and it uses practical teaching approach that links classroom learning to real-life applications, emphasizing that the knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors learnt in schools are applied in solving societal problems. Functional pedagogy encourages critical thinking skills, problem solving skills, participatory behavior etcetera. This is so because functional pedagogy focuses in wholistic learner development in cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. This strategy fosters moral consciousness in learners and enhance civic engagement and responsibility which are needed among learners in the digital world. The 21st century learners are to be adequately equipped with various skills because they are not only trained in rote memorization but a wholistic development of the head, the mind and the hand. These skills acquired by the learners will shape provoke entrepreneurial mindset in them, thus reducing unemployment among the youths. Idika and Okeke (2017), maintained that youths can engage in various skill acquisition such as fashion designing skill, catering skill, hair dressing, which thus indicates the good use of the hand by the youth. Acquiring these

skills is a potent tool for reduction of chronic unemployment and poverty. The authors maintained that these skills acquired will empower learners to exhibit creative mind, be self-reliant, innovative, knowledgeable, resourceful, dynamic thinking, take risk, have initiatives, hardworking, be self-confident and persistent; these are what is needed by the learner in the 21st century era. These skills acquired thus, makes the learner to be civic responsible.

Educational experiences are aligned with social realities, value systems and civic responsibility. Adeyemi and Eze (2023), opined that civic competence is necessary in Nigerian secondary schools for desired outcomes are manifested among the students. Functional pedagogy and citizenship skills are important agents of modern society. The instructional approach provides teaching frame work for active, experiential and relevant learning experiences while citizenship skills portray the desired outcomes that prepare learners into productive, active and responsible citizens, who can face any form of global challenges (UNESCO, 2021). Pedagogical practices that promote functionality, civic responsibility and ethical participation should be encouraged in the school system, because such education enhances positive social changes and contributes to good value formation and value re-orientation which would lead to sustainable development (Akpan, 2021, Ajayi, 2020). Functional pedagogy supports development of citizenship skills; civic responsibility, social participation, critical thinking and leadership competence. This approach supports the development of these skills through democratic classroom practices which enables learners to express themselves, participate in decision making processes .and collaborate in solving problems (Idika & Okeke 2017). Functional pedagogical approach in teaching and learning involves project-based learning, simulation of civic processes and civic education workshops equip learners to be active, participate in governance, help in ensuring environmental sustainability which promotes nation building (UNESCO, 2021, Ormrod, 2020). Hence, functional pedagogy is an important approach in acquiring citizenship skills.

Importance of Citizenship Skills in the 21st Century

1. Citizenship skills promote peace, justice and human rights which are necessary in the family, community, national and the global world.
2. It enables democratic participation and civic leadership; the learners will be adequately prepared for leadership roles in the society.
3. Citizenship skills enhance the use of technology responsibly, that is digital citizenship.
4. It enables learners to cooperate across cultural and ideological divides thereby encouraging cultural diversities
5. It contributes to sustainable development of the society and the global world.

Conclusion

Education system should integrate functional pedagogy to develop learners who possess lifelong competencies to function effectively in a digital global world that is fast evolving. To be able to survive in the 21st century era where technology has taken the space, the learners have to be adequately equipped with functional skills due to complex challenges

faced in the world today. Challenges of climate change, digital misinformation, corruption, social inequality, decay in moral standards and other ills that have engulfed the society. This requires responsible, ethical and innovative learners that would be active as critical thinkers, problem solvers through collaborations, discussions and other skills that is necessary for learners to be able to adapt in the everchanging world. These skills would enable learners analyze societal issues and contribute to democratic decision-making processes. This culminates and transforms education into a tool for cultivating civic identity, ethical consciousness among learners, appropriate value formations since 21st century demands that schools produce not just literate persons but transformational learners who would be able to adapt favorably in the dynamic global society. Therefore, teachers should adopt functional pedagogical approaches that go beyond traditional approach but fosters and enhances self-awareness, social empathy, civic consciousness and responsibility to promote peaceful society where corruption and societal ills are minimized or totally eradicated.

Way Forward

1. The government and curriculum planners should redesign and strengthen the school curriculum, positive values such as respect, hard work, discipline, honesty, morality, co-operation with functional pedagogical strategies to enhance value formation and re-orientation among learners.
2. Effective workshops and seminars should be adequately organized for teachers to be role models in the school system and the classroom for the learners observe and imitate them.
3. Values should be taught in the schools to help the learners to make decisions that are morally and ethically right.
4. Reward should be given to learners who portray these positive values.
5. The parents, the teachers and influential people the learners look up to or imitate should live up to expectations by living an exemplary life of positive value and attitude.
6. Curriculum innovations and policy frameworks should institutionalize functional pedagogy as a standardized practice for value and citizenship education.

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