

Human Education in the Third Millennium: Problems, goals and values of education and democracy in Africa

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Ours is a globalized postmodern world characterized by an immense interest in techno-scientific advancements. This leaves little or no room for human social values such as love, empathy, affection, compassion, harmony, tenderness, kindness, and especially happiness or human flourishing. Our capitalist driven educational system we have followed for long has created a world which prepares students to become agents in the multiplication of money and wealth while treating the human being as a means towards their acquisition. This form of education has left us in an emotionless mechanical and robotic world characterized by a joyless quest for pleasure, an unhealthy and an incessant competitive desire to have more, as well as an insatiable desire for conflict over resources. This definitely is not the kind of world we need to pass on to posterity.

What we need is an education that places the human being at the centre. A transformative education that seeks to change, transform and reform the hearts of our students so as to lead to a complete transformation of the society. As plants are shaped by cultivation so too are human beings shaped by education. the purpose of education is to enable humanity to develop and to improve. Our children can only become more humane by education. Human education is about self-development and empowerment. There is, therefore, the urgency to resolve the tension between the need to have more and the aspiration to be more fully human. Hence, the dignity and well-being of the human being must be at the centre of all education. Man must therefore be the end or finality of all education. But human beings are social beings. Education, thus, has a social role to play. Human education comes in handy to transmit human social values to the students who would subsequently lead to a positive transformation of the society.

Finally, there is a need for a new mentality, aided by an African based scientific revolution that would take into consideration our African realities. Only a proper education focused on critical thinking and problem-based-learning can user in this African-based scientific revolution. The scientific revolution, in the West, brought in a new cosmology, a distinct state of mind, a new view of the world. Thus, we must move from understanding and valuing human

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beings for who they are to being creative and able to use our available resources to transform our societies.