

Child-Raising in African Context: The Urhobo Perspective

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Abstract

The challenge of raising a child holistically to meet societal standard is becoming difficult in the 21st century and this poses a great concern for social and cultural stability, a situation where there seem to be moral and ethical decay. This paper seeks to present the African way of raising the child as a model to curb the growing challenges in parenting. This will however be discussed within the Urhobo cultural perspective. Thus, the aim of this paper is to showcase some of the Urhobo ways of child raising as a model for enhancing a fairly balance moral society. The historical and phenomenological approaches were adopted. The research discovered that foreign cultural practices possess existential challenges to the Urhobo and African cultural heritages. Also, it discovered that there is the abandonment of cultural discipline, culture of hard-work, societal norms and values to adoption of western culture. The paper concludes that proper parenting and child-raising is cardinal to having a better future and society. Our cultural and traditional institutions should be the basis to enhancing this process. The study recommends that parents, society and government should take child-raising a priority and see to it that cultural values and heritage are in still in the Urhobo children.

Keywords: Child-raising, African Context, Urhobo Perspective

1. Introduction

Child raising in earlier times did not exert the kind of pressure on the family structure as it is being witnessed in many African societies. In Urhobo and for example, right from the pre-colonial days, respect for constituted authority and adherence to traditional norms were emphasized and appropriate sanction measure were put in place for those who breached traditional values. However, in the present time, emphasis on societal values have shifted, placing emphasis on individualism and personal expression. This shift has led to a more assertive and independent generation of children who are ready to question or challenge authority. Closely related to this is that, there are challenges in balancing work and family life, managing screen time and technology usage and as well navigating digital risks like the various shades of cybercrime and drug abuse among youths. These issues are further exacerbated by the increasing financial burdens, cultural shifts and the negative effects of divorce which has added to the complexities of modern parenting.

Therefore, the world will not be balanced and keep its existence and form without the children who are the “the gifts of God”. The discoveries of today are the products of the children of yesterday. The scientist, engineers, lawyers, entrepreneurs, doctors, leaders and religious leaders were children of yesterday and the children are the once who shall take over the baton of leadership. Therefore, it is duty bound to invest on the children in other to have a better tomorrow.

Furthermore, over the years, it has been observed that society is morally declining in instilling good values such as respect, diligence, decency, hard work, discipline, moral living, sanctity of human life, fairness, and the fear of God. These vocabularies seem to have been extinguished and replaced with



new vocabularies of indiscipline, disrespect, immoral to mention but a few. A world where justice has been replaced with lawlessness, order with disorderliness, peace with violence, love with hatred, where selfishness has taken the centre stage in the affairs of humans.

2. Methods

This study adopted a historical and phenomenological approach in its review of existing literature on child-raising practices, with a specific focus on the Urhobo cultural context. The historical method was employed to trace the evolution of parenting practices among the Urhobo people, highlighting the traditional norms, values, and disciplinary systems that have shaped child upbringing over time. This involved consulting ethnographic records, oral traditions, and earlier scholarly works on African and Urhobo cultural heritage.

In addition, the phenomenological approach was applied to understand the lived experiences and perceptions surrounding child-raising within Urhobo communities. Relevant qualitative studies, cultural narratives, and sociological reports were analysed to capture how parents, elders, and community structures perceive their role in nurturing children. Literature examining the effects of Western cultural influence on African parenting patterns was also reviewed to identify shifts in values, attitudes, and practices.

The combination of these two approaches allowed for a comprehensive understanding of both the historical foundation and the present realities of child-raising among the Urhobo. This methodological framework provided the basis for evaluating the relevance of Urhobo traditional parenting systems as a potential model for addressing contemporary challenges in raising morally balanced children within the broader African society.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. The Concept of Child-raising

Generally speaking, there are various dimensions to the concept of child rising. Child-raising promotes and supports the physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and educational development from infancy to adulthood. It refers to the intricacies of raising a child and not exclusively for a biological relationship (Brooks, 2023). In addition, child raising and or upbringing is a generic term which refers to the upbringing of children by providing them with basic amenities such as food, shelter, and clothing and encircled with socialization to shape their personality, character, talents, and moral values, cultural and emotional well-being. In most cases, the key actor saddled with the task of contributing greatly in the development of the child includes father, mother, guardian and social institutions (Shaharban & Aranha, 2023).

3.2. African Model of Child-Raising

African cultural heritage and values facilitate moral upbringing and all-round development of the child and model the child in a well-behaved manner at home and in the larger society. So, until these cultural values are sustained and promoted the society shall continue to have a failed society as a people. Also, African cultural values and identity as well acknowledge should be the bedrock for advancing and transforming our social sectors, agriculture, educational system, religion, security and architectures. However, this should be done in synergy with other culture where necessary. Mbiti (1970), noted that Afro-centric cultural values are envisaged throughout the continent of Africa and these values are

predicated on the sayings, norms and traditions established through the elders as received by the ancestors (fore-fathers).

Adichie (2009) agitated that Adichie, C. N. (2009, July). The danger of a single story.. This model employs warmth, responsiveness, and clear boundaries, enabling the child to develop positive outcomes through the exhibition of social and emotional stability. On the other hand, authoritarian parenting relies on strict rules and punishment, which often lead to negative behaviours such as increased aggression and decreased self-esteem. In Addition, permissive parenting model involves showing of leniency and lack of boundaries and thus, making the child to exhibit difficulties in self-regulation and impulse control. In the context of this study, some of the African cultural ways of raising children and preparing them for adulthood with great responsibilities, honour, dignity and brotherhood, bonded with love and mutual respect are:

1) Unconditional Love

The attitude of African people towards the arrival of a new born child into the family is of complete love. The child receives the attention of the family, beginning with mother's warmth, the parent's caring attention, the extended family's affection and the community positive response. The child enjoys varieties that come from the entire family and community regardless of the birth background intense of economics stand. The child is raised and surrounded with love that strengthens its emotional development. Carothers (1953), argued that African infant's experience compared to the Western Europe seems to be ideal as the child is surrounded by many mothers, grandmothers, fathers, grandfathers, uncles and aunties who are fully part of his/her upbringing.

2) Language

Language plays vital role in sharpening human cultural value. In other word, the value for Africans' indigenous language is cardinal in the upbringing of the child and it is non-negotiable. The first thing is to teach children when growing up is their dialect, which is consistent with the environments. Agbaw (2009) opined that the use of an ethnic language at home is simply a way of preserving one's cultural heritage. Main while, it is evidently shown that the inculcation of indigenous languages in recent time has been on a steady decline in many African societies due to various factors. In an international Igbo conference of the 7th annual sessions Adichie (2009) notes that; the use of indigenous language in African households is slowly fading with parents embracing foreign languages. She went further to say she speak her Igbo language to her children. An estimated 2000 languages are spoken across the African continent but in educational institutions, English, French, German and Portuguese are the major languages used.

3) Domestic shore

African parents are obligated to teach their children to do some domestic shore, such as how to cook which is not limited to the girl child alone but also the boy child. Parents knew then that food and good meal bound the families together. All of our rich African food and meals are gone replaced by fast-food, canned food and junkies. How many of our children today can mention the names of native food let alone cook them?

Children are also taught how to sweep the compound, how to wash their clothes and dishes. Also, how to clean the environment of grasses, how to fetch fire wood and how to farm.

Older children are taught to take care of siblings even bath them and feed them. This rich heritage is now left in the hands of nannies that most time careless and are after their pay. Some parents feel that using the child to do some domestic chores is child abuse and tantamount to suffering the child. This is not correct. Child work refers to work in which the main objective or emphasis is socialization, which is the bringing up of the child according to the dictates of the African culture which helps the child to develop capacity. Child work is paramount for the development of the child and can also help to stimulate a child's physical and psychological wellbeing. Lack of these values, have given birth to lazy adults and irresponsible adults.

4) Moral Upbringing

One of the beams of African culture is moral living. Even before the arrival of Christianity African parents are duty-bound to bring up their children with moral values. Children were taught how to greet elders and accord them with respect. Their dressing code depicts decency and uprightness. Criminal looking clothes or clothes revealing body and hair cut with a look of a criminal are highly frowned at. What is not yours is not brought to the house and stealing was a taboo.

Moral values were upheld by the parents and transmitted to the children. A look at the parents' eyes at that time gives a message without the child talking. Just looking at their eyes you understand what they meant. The omission, disintegration and lack of preparing the children are issues that ought to be addressed urgently (Cunningham, 2006).

5) Communal Responsibility

It is important to note children are seen in African cultural context as everyone's child. A child does not belong to the parents alone but to everyone in the community. Bringing up a child was a team work and community as well as cooperate affairs. Kayode (2024) noted that the sense of community togetherness gives confidence to the safety of the child within the environment because; support and protection will always be forthcoming from other members of the community. This is where elders and adults play a critical role in joining the parents in sharpening the children's behaviour to conform to the moral and social values of the society.

In the early era, it was part of the community's responsibilities and obligations to see to it that other people's children do not derail. It was believed that failure to do so will bring indecency which will lead to the rise of deviant behaviour. In other words, the community was the check and balance for the raising or upbringing of the children who lived in the community (Dunst et al., 2006).

6) Educational Parenting

Education is a major factor in the training and equipping of a child and educating the child is vital in his upbringing. It is imperative to note that education has been the integral part of the African people far before colonization and western influence. Kayode (2024) opined that, Africans have traditional ways of educating the child before the spread of formal education. It was interaction between parents and their children, where roles are clearly stated, responsibility and expectation prescribe.

It should be clearly noted that over the years, oral tradition has been the mouth piece of elders by which they transfer knowledge, character formation and handwork (skill) from one generation to the other. The African people through interaction with the environment developed knowledge capacity and learnt skill (Leakey & Harris, 2003). This is done every day and they also learn from their mistakes and as well strengthen themselves and improve on new skills by correcting their errors. In another vein, Vanga affirms that African people as a result of wandering in the bush knew the environment such as river, hills and other characteristic, (McCulloch, 2011). It is quite surprising to assert that it was Mongo Park who discovered river Niger, whereas African forefathers lived by the river.

Also, to presume that Africans did not have an educational system is a fallacy. They possessed inherent scientific knowledge that was bequeathed to them by nature. For instance, Africans have long used various herbs, processing and applying them to treat ailments such as malaria, as well as in food preservation and processing, like turning cassava tubers into garri and starch for human consumption. This stands as a testament to the fact that education has always been an integral part of African society. Similarly, producing palm wine, both sweet and fermented, demonstrates their ability to transform raw materials through observation, experimentation, and refinement over time. Such practices reflect the presence of a practical and experiential form of education deeply rooted in African culture, Emeagwali (2006) and Sunal (1998).

The mentor-mentee was the approach used by the Africans to educate their children. Elders were teachers (mentors) who taught members, new members who joined either by birth, marriage, and migration or captured persons (mentees). They share knowledge and skills with the mentees. The African used traditional institution to educate their children. Young adults were taught secrets and formulas in a systematic manner through traditional schools undertaken by elders (Schepera, 1938).

The abandonment of African's traditional institution in pursuance and advancement of foreign educational institution has done a great blow to African uniqueness. Thus, African traditional institution was sacrificed on the altar of western education (Boateng, 1983). Intellectual and manual labour were combined in impacting African cultural knowledge to the mentees. But this was modified from time to time, to motivate and strengthen the trustworthiness amongst the African communities to showcase that life is a process of teaching and learning (Koma, 1976). This was collaborated by Gbadegesin (1994), who noted that though pre-colonial African did not have formal schools in modern sense, this did not mean that young people and children were not educated: they learnt by living and doing, essentially through practical training.

Bray et al. (1986) affirmed that, indigenous education in Africa tends to reflect the values, wisdom and expectations of the community and wider society as a whole. Additionally, it is not knowledge and character reformed one but, the engagement of children in various activities such as agriculture, sculpture and sport activities tend to strengthen the overall interest of the child for the future.

3.3. Child-Raising in Urhobo Context

The Urhobo people are found in Delta State, Nigeria; they are rich in cultural heritages to equip their children for a better tomorrow. For concise sake, we shall discuss this heading under the following:

1) Character Development

Urhobo traditional culture places considerable emphasis on character training and indeed it is the corner stone of Urhobo character training. Here, parents, siblings and other members of the community participate in the raising of the child. Everyone desires the child to be sociable, honest, courageous, humble, persevering and to be well spoken of at all times. It is through this process that the child built up his or her code of conduct and morals.

2) Respect for Elders and Constituted Authority

One of the cultural values of the Urhobo people is the culture of respect. The Urhobo people in still the culture of respect for elders and constituted authorities into the life of the children; this respect for elders and authority is deeply valued and cherished. As well, respect for adults and elders are like respect to once father or mother and every adult is accorded with the same respect as that of one's father or mother. The Urhobo people nurture their children to respect elders and train the children to know their place in the society, when to talk and when not to talk.

They do not talk back at elders rather; it is a deviant character to behave rudely to elders. Such act is deemed as disrespectful and not tolerated. The value of respect by the Urhobo people across all sphere of activities. Respect for authority is promoted by the Urhobo people and on the other abusive and vile languages are frowned at.

3) Decency

Another cultural value of the Urhobo people in raising the child is the sense of decency. Parents in Urhobo land take the issue of decent dressing seriously and trust their male and female children to restrain from clothing themselves with pants or dresses exposing their nakedness. Whose boy sags his trousers and is left to walk around like that? The Urhobo culture upholds the values of proper dressing and moderation. Girls are taught that certain parts of their bodies are sensitive and should be treated with dignity, which underscores the need for proper dressing. Any act of improper or indecent dressing is strongly frowned upon and regarded as immoral.

The rate at which some girls and boys, women and men dress naked on social media and on the street in the name of modernization and civilization is a call for serious concern. Girls and most especially married women are taught to dress properly and thus in most cases bring praise to them and pride to their parents and husbands. There is a certain stage that a child is expected to bath and run around with nakedness, he or she is expected to dress properly as he or she grows.

4) Sexual Purity

Right from the age adolescent, the Urhobo people teach the children sex education to enable them maintain sexual purity. Pre-marital sex is not allowed but, attracts discipline because it brings reproach to the family. Hence, they are taught to keep themselves until

marriage. It was a shameful act to impregnate a girl without marriage rites, but today there is a paradigm shift in today's society because there is high level of immorality. More worrisome is the issue of baby mama a trend that has become a way of life in the society, a situation where young girls give birth to celebrities and rich men without marriage, provided they are financially funded and their children bearing their names. Another worrisome trend in the society is baby factory, where young girls get impregnated and give birth to the child and sell the baby. In another vein paid to be pregnant, which means have random sex, get pregnant, give birth and give the baby to the one who paid her salaries and benefits during the period; this practice is alien to the Urhobo culture.

5) Respect for Human Life

Life is so sacred to the Urhobo people hence; it is preserved with great responsibility. Life was sacred then but to some persons today life means nothing and the sacredness of life has been slaughtered on the altar of the love for money; men killing fellow men for money, young boys and girls involving in all manners of human sacrifices for the purpose of material things without working for it. Ofuafo (2017) noted that, the Urhobo people value the sacredness of human life because it came from God. They believe it should be respected and honoured. This was the view of Oluwabamide (2013) citing Bradbury who opined that Urhobo people believe that life comes from God, and it has God's existence in it. Thus, the act of taking someone's life is strictly forbidden, reprehensible, deemed as barbaric and attracts maximum punishment.

6) Value for Hard Work

The Urhobo traditional and culture emphasize the dignity of labour and from childhood parents teach their children skills most especially family trade. Laziness is frowned at by the Urhobo people and hard work is seen as great sense of pride and responsibility. Working hard is applauded by the Urhobo people hence from childhood the child is taught to take responsibility. Among the Urhobo people's cultural value hard work is celebrated and believe that laziness should not be accommodated. Because, they believe that any lazy person who refused to work should not eat. As a member of a family if you are not contributing your quarter in bringing food to the table, whether you contribute money, you watch the pots and plates, fetch firewood, fetch water, or go to the market you are not allowed to eat.

7) Discipline

The Urhobo people believe that it is the task of parents, guidance, social institutions and community to raise a child. Thus, once any child is acting contrary to the norms and values, such a child should be disciplined and corrected by anybody. Tough love is cardinal points for raising children but, discipline is an important element in Urhobo religious tradition to the extent that if it is removed the religious and traditional values will be imbalanced. To enforce morality among the people the Urhobo put in place measures and sanctions to help individual and group to align his or her life in accordance with the norms in order not to be found wanting. In addition, as a disciplinary measure, sanctions such as fine and public chastisement are carried out and those who breached community rules and regulations are required to do community service, barn to talk, relate, buy or sell to other for a period of time and possibly

banishment which is the last option are various measures put in place to tailor members of the society towards making a better society.

3.4. Challenges in Urhobo Context of Child-Raising

The following are some of the challenges affecting the Urhobo perspective of raising the child.

1) The Concept of Individualism

This concept was trending but, now declining because, Urhobo cultural heritage and Africa in general have collective responsibilities of raising the child. This concept promotes the moral worth of an individual, the independence of the individual, the value or lifestyle of the individual over and above the collective group, be it family member, society, religion and government or institution. This concept was championed by Adam Smith (1723 – 1790) but now predominate in the west and finding its way into African and rapidly growing and negating the collective cultural ways of raising the Urhobo child. With the concept of individualism parent raised their children the way and manner it pleases them regardless of what the community, traditional institution and religion thinking entails. No one can challenge them if they choose to plate the hair of their son, it does not matter. It should be noted that no one is saying that you do not have rights but it should be in respect to the overall good of the society. Right to dress should be in consonant with social norms and values of the culture which is embodied in decency.

Therefore, a child as the gift from God belongs to the community and it is the collective responsibility of the community to ensure that he lives a lifestyle that conforms to the share culture and values of the land.

2) Lack of Responsibility and Duties

Children are indeed a blessing in all culture of the world and most especially to the Urhobo people; it is a thing of joy not only to the immediate family but to the society at large. The arrival of child is highly welcomed with great joy and love. It is highly cherished and received as God's gift. Base on this premise children are well taken care of at childhood which also span to some degree even up to adulthood. A Child upbringing and socialization practice requires children to be provided for emotionally, physically materially, protectively by parents and guardians. Little wonder the rate of crimes such as kidnapping, robbery and other crimes alongside with is consequential effect such as, teenage pregnancy; prostitution, school dropout; early marriage, sexually transmitted diseases (H.I.V, staphylococcus) and drug addiction are on the rooftop.

3) Lack of Discipline

Discipline means appropriate punishment melted on the offender to serve as a deterrent and a caution to others who will want to have such tendency. People should take responsibility for their actions; this is where discipline and chastisement described in the scripture come in. "Do not spare the rod; if you do, you spoil the child" (Proverbs13:24). The Bible underscores that discipline is pivotal in character transformation of a child and this approach is the same with the Urhobo people and lack of discipline has given birth to indiscipline adults. Too much of

pampering and overlooking of offences by parents have been a great deal in raising unruly children who are now adults. African believes in whipping a child but, it be done in moderation. In other words, discipline ranges from one level to the others; it could be whipping, made to clear a portion of land, skip a meal or made to do some domestic chores. The Urhobo cultural value advocates that every offender or acts of indiscipline be it a child or adult should be made to face the consequences of his or her action.

Therefore, children are to be raised with firmness mix with love and compassion as part of discipline. And failure to discipline when he or she errs will make the child to develop deviant attitudes such as criminality, smoking, drug addiction, stealing, armed robbery, human trafficking and the likes.

4) Lack of Exemplary Living

Be it at home, society, school and religious settings, good morals and exemplary living is important for the social and moral development of the child's upbringing. An observation of the society in terms of good moral behaviour shows that, role models are very few for the up growing children and that some parent, clergy, society figures and traditional institution are not showing good morals. In some cases, what is been displayed for children to see are people who make money without hand-work, education, and hard-work, who are celebrated on the pages of all papers and raising questions such as; why do I need hard work, school and hand-work?

Also, the display of affluence and pleasures poisons the conscience and morals of the society and thus, inspires the child to think of quick way of making money. It is noticed with dismay that, some elders and social institutions are not concern about this ugly trend rather; they are more interested in making wealth by all means and destroying the potentials of the next generation of youths and adults. To raise a morally upright generation, adults, elders and leaders of the society should braise up and show the children examples of good morals that hard work and dignity pays and that integrity is valued than money; decency is better than indiscipline; that education and skill acquisition is the way to the top; that sincerity is part of our life and sanctity of life is sacred, else, we shall keep having children who will become violent and irresponsible adults and leaders.

5) Child Abuse and Neglect

Siegel (2013) revealed that, human abuse encourages the victims to use aggression as a technique for tackling issues, keeps them from feeling sympathy for others, and decrease their capacity to constructively manage stress. Child abuse is the maltreatment that occurs to a child under 18 years and this abuse includes physical and emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, commercial exploitation, and negligence. According to World Health Organization, six in 10 children or 400 million children under 5 years of age regularly suffers physical punishment and psychological violence at the hands of parents and caregivers (UNCEF, 2004). Parents are duty bound to create a conducive and hearty environment to foster parent-child relationship, this will help in raising the child.

6) Economic Hardship

Some parents are faced with enormous constraints and one of such constraints is limited resources to care for their children. This is not different from the Urhobo parent. Gennetian et al. (2010) opined that, family's economic resources strongly in one way or the other has impacted on the children's moral, social, psychological and educational developmental. None availability and or scarcity of finance can affect the child nutritional needs, educational opportunity and health care. Brooks (2023) noted that lack of resources and chronic stress associated with poverty can create an environment that impedes children's overall development. Thus, the economic challenges faced by the Urhobo parents are obstacles to the Urhobo context of child-raising.

7) Effect of Divorce

Research has shown that divorce is associated with a range of negative outcomes for younger children and adolescents across various domains (Amato, 2010). The alarming increase of broken marriages all over the world is threatening the family and societal stability and those who suffer most are the children. Parental divorce or separation disrupts the behaviours of the children, as well as their educational performances, emotional sensitivities, difficulties to adapt to change, irresponsive to social activities, and prone to anger. This rise in the rate divorce among couple has posed grave challenges for the Urhobo nations; to the extent that parental roles in the moral and educational development of the child are disrupted.

In addition, the social and emotional trauma children face as a result of parental divorce affects nearly their entire life. Thus, an environment of marital crisis affects the emotional, social, psychological and spiritual well-being of the children. According to Arugu (2014), divorce causes children to lack parental love and affections, which can cause discontinuity in their emotional and intellectual development and resulting into high rate of juvenile crime in society.

3.5. Negative Effect of Technology

Technology's influence on child rearing is of both positive and negative outcomes. As important as technology in enhancing learning, creativity and social interaction, its abuse can be detrimental to the social and moral development. Excessive use of the social media and screen time can impact negatively on the child (Temur, 2017). While the important of technology cannot be overemphasized, its abuse cannot be overlooked either. Also, while it is for children and teens to develop an aptitude for technology after all, they will use computers throughout their lives, an abuse of its use can have negative impact on the child's mental health and physical well-being (Mustafaoğlu et al., 2018).

The inability of parents to balance work and also give quality attention to their children has given impetus of the children to have full range into social media and its likes. In fact, many of the social ills and recruitment of teenagers and young people in militias' activities, sexual exploitation and social bullying are done through screen or social technology. It is the over-use that is the pitfall and when it is not checked by parents, children are exposed to harmful online content and sexual exploitation. This poses challenge to Urhobo perspective of raising the child. Many immoral things they see and listen to and spent much times on are foreign to the rich cultural heritage and cherished values of the Urhobo people and this makes it more

difficult to align them to cultural values and norms. In another dimension, parents are also found wanting, gloom to social media; spend much time on screen, and making them to fail in their parental responsibilities.

3.6. Negative Peer Group Influence

Peer groups can significantly influence child's moral and social development, particularly during teenage, adolescence and young adulthood. This can occur in several ways:

- a. Conflict and rebellion: Peer groups can encourage children to challenge parental authority, leading to conflict and rebellion.
- b. Negative peer pressure: Peer groups can exert negative pressure, encouraging children to engage in risky behaviours, such as substance abuse, delinquency and internet fraud.
- c. Emotional distance: Children may become emotionally distant from their parents as they spend more time with their peers and develop their own identities.

4. Conclusion

There is growing evidence of poor child-raising practices among modern parents, leading to a decline in discipline, respect, and moral values. Once, parents raised courageous and disciplined children; now many raises entitled and unruly ones. Fear of consequences, respect for parents, and firm guidance have faded, giving rise to a generation that mocks values and chases vanity. This decline is not because evil grew stronger, but because parents grew weaker and abandoned their responsibilities. To reverse this trend, parents must reclaim their primary duty of shaping their children's character, morals, values, and discipline. Elders and adults should redirect their energies toward guiding the younger generation, while parents must lead by example, embodying respect and integrity. Upholding African cultural practices, through oral teachings, taboos, norms, and the guidance of traditional institutions like the elders' forum, men's forum, women's forum, and youth forum, remains vital to preserving societal values and building a morally balanced future generation.

The study recommends a multifaceted approach to improving child-raising practices within the Urhobo and broader African context. It emphasizes the need for parents, society, and government to revisit and revitalize African cultural values in children as a means to promote and sustain a morally balanced society. Community-based involvement should be encouraged to reinforce the notion of child-raising as a collective responsibility, while parenting education and support programs can equip parents with effective strategies and techniques. Furthermore, the study advocates for promoting balanced technology use among children by ensuring that parents monitor and regulate screen time to prevent overexposure and support healthy development. Addressing socio-economic challenges such as poverty and economic hardship is also considered vital, as these factors often hinder effective parenting. In addition, strengthening traditional institutions like elders' forums and community organizations is crucial for preserving cultural values and fostering social cohesion. Lastly, the study underscores the importance of mentoring and role modelling by stakeholders, urging adults, elders, and community leaders to set positive examples that can inspire and guide children toward desirable values and behaviours.

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