



Covenant University

Raising a new Generation of Leaders

HUMANITIES EDUCATION AND THE QUEST FOR LIFE

A Broadcaster's Perspective

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Background

- **What is humanities?**
- **How do we understand the humanities?**
- **Why is the study of humanities so important?**
- **Language is the key component of the humanities**
- **A good example of the deployment of humanities education is in broadcasting**
- **Living in the millennium has reinforced the importance of the humanities education**

Introduction

- **What is humanities education? Well, it is described by the – Stanford Humanities Center of Stanford University as ‘the study of how people process and document the human experience. Since humans have been able to learn, we have used philosophy, literature, religion, art, music, history and language to understand and record our world’. So, studying these courses puts you in the humanities. Some even include all of the social sciences and law in the humanities since they also deal with the human beings and their experiences.**
- **It is that kind of education that provides us with the skills to make us better humans with a view to understand ourselves better and be able to relate with fellow humans and the environment better.**



Introduction cont...

- **The key point here is the capability to understand the environment and the society better in order to be able to function better.**
- **The best way to do this is to study the culture and tradition of the people and seek to understand the totality of their way of life. This is the focus of the courses under the umbrella termed ‘Humanities’.**
- **Such understanding can help in grounding the knowledge about a people’s view of life.**



The Humanities Education

- **Why is this kind of study important?**
- **There is no other academic area that best prepare you for such holistic study of a people but the humanities. In such study, you learn about the humanity of the people and what makes them who they are by virtue of their experiences and their environment.**
- **The humanities education helps you to develop the ability to think logically using language; language is a fundamental prerequisite to learning about a people and their way of life.**



The Humanities Education contd...

- **The humanities education provides one with an enhanced capacity for — language in order to translate our understanding into what others could comprehend and appreciate. (Without language no communication can take place; so, whether you study law, archaeology, or any of the science courses, you must learn the language first. No wonder English is a key subject in learning in any Nigerian university given that English is the official language of the country; you can neither gain admission nor graduate without satisfying the proficiency requirement in English language).**
- **Every humanities' Discipline prepares the students to develop such attributes in order to be able to blend into the society and interact effectively with fellow humans. Even a science oriented student/person must learn to interact with other humans in order to be able to apply the research findings.**



Language as a key Component

- **As noted above, language is a key component in the communication system; and in every society, there is an acceptable language of communication which is necessary for all members of the society to acquire. For example, in Nigeria, English language is the acceptable/official medium of communication.**
- **One of the fundamental aspects of contemporary society is the broadcast media; communication is its lifeline and language is its soul.**

Humanities and the Broadcast Media

- **The holistic education offered by the humanities is an important tool in the hands of the broadcaster. It is a key point in the activity of the broadcaster; whether as a news reporter who gathers news, news reader (who must pronounce names properly), programme producer (who must understand the sensibility of the listener in the catchment area of his/her broadcast), interviewer (who must understand his/her subject well before asking questions) or the presenter (who must understand the host society well enough to be sensitive to their interests and dislikes).**
- **Even when the focus is on science broadcast, a humanities perspective is fundamental, in order to foreground the message as audience based. (E.g. Iraqi war, Syrian debacle on CNN.) It is the millennium's unique way.**

Humanities and the Millennials

- According to Wikipedia, the Millennials are those group of people demographers have put their birth range between early 1980s and 2000. They are the generation after Generation X; they have been studied extensively by humanists for identity highlights.
- Time Magazine of May 2013, in a story titled ‘The Me Me Me Generation’ describes the Millennials as ‘...narcissistic, lazy, coddled, even a bit delusional’. It claimed that the study is backed up by a decade of sociological research.
- A study of this phenomenal generation can only be captured by a research in the humanities rather than science, since we are analysing humans and not objects

Humanities and the Millennials contd...

- **Such incisive and enlightening analysis could only provide a deep understanding of the generation and the way of life so described.**
- **Humanities contains a variety of approach through which it studies and understand the complex and varied examination of human history.(Socio-political, economical, philosophical, historical etc.) This is why it is the only academic scholarship that can undertake a significant study of human history.**

Humanities Education and the Quest for Life

- **The truth about the contemporary life is that it is a globalised system where one issue in a corner resonates across the globe. Therefore, to be a part of the global community, you cannot remain ‘at your corner’; you must be able to understand a little about other places and relate your ideas with other contemporary ones.**
- **Actually, we live in a world of inter-disciplinarity; there is no isolation of thoughts or ideas anymore.**

Humanities Education and the Quest for Life

- **To succeed in the contemporary world, you must learn to network and to engage your experiences. It does not matter whether you are in the sciences, commercial or humanist field. So, for those in the humanities already, well, it is a great advantage that must be harnessed.**
- **The quest for life requires a zest that only experience and inter disciplinary ideas can build up.**
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My Humanities Education

- **Literature is life; it helps me to ‘see’ the life of other people and to compare them with mine and connect the dots of our humanity. I look at life holistically and I am able to engage the experiences I have had and connect it with others for a clearer understanding of my society.**
- **This is why I could transit from my study of Literature in English to the broadcast industry where I worked and made a mark as a producer of programmes; to the business world where I successfully export African goods abroad; to the development sector where I set up an NGO working with women groups across West Africa in the strive for female empowerment; to the Internet world where I run a specialised and interactive website for women; and now to the academics where I try to engage all these experiences in my pedagogy.**

Conclusions

- **It all started with my education in the humanities. I am glad that I had this wonderful, engaging knowledge as the foundation of my academic life. I could not have received a better education for such exciting life.**
- **Humanities education particularly related to the official language in Nigeria - English language - was the bedrock of all my engagements as I needed the language in all those endeavors - such language education is meant to open up endless possibilities for us as language is invariably involved in virtually all human engagements - so there is no place that is beyond us after a study of English language - the broadcast media, the print media, the new digital media, advertising, public relations, teaching, civil service, public administration, etc. - just every human endeavor requires the services and contributions of the expert in language - what is required is to ask yourself - how good am I in what I say I have studied? - do I have the necessary drive? - do I possess the key imagination? - could I explore and utilize the latent networking value of the education in English language?**



Conclusions

- **When we have all these, then we would realize that one of the best education we could have would be this wonderful education in English language which would prepare and allow us to fit into virtually all kinds of endeavour in life. Therefore go out there and conquer the world brandishing this unique education and expertise in the official language in Nigeria which also happens to be the official language of the world!**



End

- **In the quest for an all round, engaging and interesting life, the humanities is the bedrock of your search.**
- **If you have chosen that path, you can never miss your way; if you have not, you still have to make a detour through that path for a successful and satisfying career. (Think of Sidney Sheldon –doctor)**
- **Tell me, if you are a doctor, engineer or you are a professional in any of the natural sciences, can you relate with your patient or client without communicating? To be successful in any field, can you relate with your clients without a little understanding of who they are? - would you not be needing an understanding of who human beings are and mastery of language to make maximum impact in your field?**
- **It is inevitable, we all need the humanities and perhaps a quality education in English language!**

Close

