



Mitochondrial Eve

Journal of Humanities Post Graduate Studies Imo

State University, Owerri, Nigeria.

Vol. 1 No. 3 September, 2024

<https://mejhpqs.online>

Curbing Moral Decadence in Contemporary Nigerian Society through Moral Education; A Socio-Religious Approach.

Nwaeboh Paul Uchechukwu

Abstract

The topic of this work is titled curbing moral decadence in contemporary Nigerian Society; a socio-religious approach. Right from the colonial invasion and conquest up to the present day, Nigeria has witnessed progressive degeneration of morality. Before the colonial era, the Nigerian society was characterized by the existence of norms that were pivotal to the running of the society. However, in recent times, all the prohibitions that aided the maintenance of high moral standard and disciplined society have been relegated to the background and abandoned due to the influence of western culture mainly brought about by colonial invasion. Its manifestations are seen in different dimensions of immoral activities in the society. There is therefore the need for moral reorientation. The aim of this paper is to examine how moral decadence can be curbed to the barest minimum in contemporary Nigerian Society through Moral Education and religious approach. Decline in parental authority and domestic values, influence of science and technology, media influence, materialism, poverty, and the collapse of discipline in our schools, etc, were identified as the major causes of moral decay in Nigeria. The paper maintains that Moral Education and religious approach in schools and other institutions are the panacea to current moral decay in our society.

Keywords: Education, Morality, Nigeria, Religion, Society.

Introduction

The Nigerian society is at a moral crossroads as the country is in a serious moral conflict. Right from the colonial invasion and conquest up to the present day, Nigeria has witnessed progressive degeneration of morality. From one corner of the nation to the other, one can easily notice the fact that the erstwhile social order and character of the traditional Nigerian Society, which guaranteed honest living and maximum security of lives and property have dwindled and given way to a situation of suspicion and distrust. The contemporary Nigerian Society is riddled with family disorientation, divorce, marital infidelity, child abuse, high cost of living which have led to the escalation of other crimes such as ritual killings, child kidnapping, armed robbery, bribery and corruption. These vices have become the order of the day in Nigeria. Hence, Ugwu (2002) opined that “the Nigerian society is in a state of moral, social, political, economic, legal and educational decay” (p. 16). The brazen display of immoral behaviours in the society.

Today is a clear indication of the high level of moral degradation in the society. To this end, the issue of moral decadence in the Nigerian society requires an urgent attention. The thrust of this paper is to examine how moral decadence can be curbed in contemporary Nigerian Society through Moral Education.

1. Characteristics of Moral Decadence in Contemporary Nigerian Society

Contemporary Nigerian Society is plagued by several immoral behaviours which are considered inimical to the society. Such immoral life-styles include: bribery and corruption, robbery, cultism, and examination malpractice.

1.1 Bribery and Corruption: Bribery and corruption are two of the prodigious factors that have derailed Nigeria from the path of progress. They have also hindered the citizens from harnessing their potential. According to Corruption Perception Index reported by Transparency International, Nigeria is currently the 154th corrupt nation out of 180 countries sampled. The principal index used for the ranking has to do with how corrupt the public sectors of the countries ranked were perceived to be. The index brought into the limelight the gravity of the damage done in the public sector, which is key to development.

From the scratch, corruption usually starts from homes where children are born and brought up. Just to cite a hypothetical case of corruption at the family unit, when a husband gives money to his wife for the upkeep of the family, the wife deducts some amount and gives it to the senior son or daughter. The elderly ones also take more before finally delivering it to the junior ones. This chain of mistrust and cheating becomes a habit, thereby turning into actions amongst family members whereby there is great difficulty in the family to handle or share money fairly. Then as the children grow, they extend it

to their peers.

Right now, cases of bribery and corruption cut across all facets of our lives. Shockingly, bribery and corruption have found their way into schools. We now see that when students find some courses difficult, or are unable to pass their tests or examinations, they, most of the time, opt to pay specific amounts of money to lecturers or invigilators. Presently, there is an institution where some lecturers tell students that want to pass to pay, aside from registration fees. Any student that refuses to pay ends up repeating certain courses. There are also reports that some ladies in higher institutions of learning have graduated through sex-for-grade practice. Imagining that youths who are seen as future leaders now rely heavily on bribing to excel rather than earning knowledge and certificate through sweat is very depressing.

Bribery and corruption also manifests among law enforcement agents. Coming across checkpoints when one is travelling by road is frightening as law enforcement officers extort money from drivers. Some commuters worsen the situation by encouraging drivers to give or offer bribes purposely not to spend a long time or not to be delayed. Bribery has led to the killing of innocent people by security officers. For instance, in 2019, a truck driver operating along the Akure-Owo Expressway was shot dead following his refusal to give N50 bribe to a police officer at a checkpoint. Likewise in 2020, along the Bauchi-Jos Road, a security

agent shot a driver and he died instantly just for declining to give bribe. After the incident, other drivers plying the road blocked it for hours, seeking justice for their dead colleague (*Kobi*, 2023).

The fact that security agents extort money from drivers means that law enforcement officers are poorly remunerated. Therefore they should be well paid, enough to solve their family demands, and their salaries, as well as allowances, should be paid to them promptly. These will ginger them to perform optimally and shun bribes.

1.2 Armed Robbery: Armed robbery involves stealing, during which force and violence or the threat of violence are employed. Armed robbery is as old as mankind itself, and it characterizes all known societies (both developed and developing societies. However, variations exist not only from society to society but also from time to time, as well as from strict enforcement to none (Okolo, 2002). In Nigeria, daily newspaper reports, Television news headlines and radio announcements have shown that the activities of armed robbers are increasing at an alarming rate. Both the rich and the poor are always in a perpetual state of fear because nobody really knows where and when they will strike. According to Neuback (1979): There is a larger increase in the incidence of robbery than for any other index offense... Half the robberies known to the police are committed on the street, the remainder occurred within households and

business establishment. Victims are unlikely to know the law violators and it is relatively easy to get away with the crime (p. 301).

Armed robbery is a social problem that continued to undermine the progress of the Nigerian society since the end of the country's civil war in 1970. In response to this hazardous condition, the Nigerian military Government of General Yakubu Gowon promulgated a decree in 1970, the first ever on armed robbery in Nigeria, which stipulated and recommended death sentence by firing squad. This was followed by increase in number, size, and standard of the police force, courts and prisons. Successive Governments in Nigeria have launched different campaigns and programs such as “operation sweep”, “Operation scorpion”, “operation flush” etc aimed at reducing the activities of armed robbers. Despite all these measures, the activities of armed robbers have been on the increase.

Armed robbery is a prevailing social phenomenon that negatively affects the lives and social functioning of a significant number of people in contemporary Nigerian society. One of the enormous effects of armed robbery in Nigeria is that of insecurity of lives and properties. In various robbery incidences, innocent citizens are killed, maimed to suffer while people's lifelong savings and sweat are lost within a twinkling of an eye. According to Yecho (2010):

A successful robbery entails the direct loss of

property on an individual. Such property is transferred from the rightful owner to another Person. Most violent crime also leads to the loss of productivity through the incapacity of the victims. Most of the victims of violent crimes are incapacitated, thereby denying the society of their contribution to the output of the nation (p. 22).

Another significant effect of armed robbery is on the reduction of the rate or level of development. As a result of high prevalence incidences of armed robbery in Nigeria. People are always in a perpetual state of fear because of constant robbery attacks. Thus, many foreign investors are afraid of committing their resources to operate in industries that would employ many millions of the unemployed Nigerians. This consequently retards the development of the Nigerian society. In addition, armed robbery causes unemployment because robbing of industries and other government establishments (companies) results to retrenchment of workers because of the inability to pay workers salary.

1.3 Cultism: According to Denga (1991), cultism is a system of religious belief and practice or an ideology. Orukpe (1988), defined secret cult as a group who share and propagate peculiar secret beliefs divulged to members. In addition their initiation procedures often involve secret rituals like swearing by some deity, human blood and other procedures, which send shivers down the spines of most people.

The origin of the phenomenon of cultism in Nigeria tertiary institution is traceable to the formation of pirate confraternity at the University of Ibadan in 1952 by Wole Soyinka and members of his group mainly as lobby group of students. One of the objectives of the group was to inspire patriotic sentiments and to check the neo-colonialist mentality spreading among the nation's educated class due to western education. At that time, violence was not said to have manifested in their conduct. Nevertheless this initially peaceful group later snowballed into esoteric gangs whose members were highly steeped in ritualism and voodooism. From there, the phenomenon of cultism became pronounced in almost all the tertiary institutions in the country and the secondary schools. Secret cult groups are now dreaded on the campuses.

Because of their secret activities and ascribed mysticism and power, members enjoy an aura of fearsomeness especially from non-members. Some of the most noble of these secret cult groups include the Sea dog, Black Axe, Aiye, Vicking, Amazons, White Angels, Black Brassieres, Buccaneers, Confraternity, etc.

Cultism leads to outbreak of violence on campuses and its attendant destruction of lives and property. The frequent outbreaks of cult in some campuses have generated feeling of fear and social insecurity among students and lecturers. The unhealthy rivalry among secret cult groups often intensify acts of terrorism and

hatred among students on campuses. These sometimes result in the closure of tertiary institutions for quite a long time, which has negative effect on implementation of academic programs.

Proper moral upbringing of children and wards by parent and guardians is recommended as a remedy to cultism in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The youth should be properly counseled on peer group relationship. An innocent child can easily be transformed into a dangerous fearful young man if he is allowed to make friends indiscriminately.

1.4 Examination Malpractice: The history of examination malpractice in Nigeria is not recent. It dates back to the colonial era. According to Kpangban et al (2008), “the first examination malpractice in Nigeria was reported in 1914, when there was a leakage of question paper in the Senior Cambridge Examination” (p. 223). Since then, the incidence of examination malpractice has been on the increase. Ama (1997) noted that the West African Examination Council (WAEC) reported leakages of its papers in 1963, 1967, 1970, 1973, 1974, 1977, 1979, 1981, 1985 and between 1986 and 1990. This shows that the problem of examination malpractice has lasted long in the country. However, Onuka and Amoo (2011) noted that “examination malpractice existed at minimal and in simple unsophisticated forms in the earlier years, but became more pervasive as from the 1970s” (p.

2). It must be noted that in the recent past, the incidence of examination malpractice was not limited to final examinations conducted by public examination bodies alone.

It occurs in school assessment, and this is carried over to external examinations especially the ones conducted for certificates or for admission purposes.

The incidences of examination malpractice are common everywhere and every examination season witnesses the emergence of new and ingenious ways of cheating. The alarming rate of examination malpractice in secondary schools is witnessed in public examinations such as the Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE). Thus Onyechere (2004) noted that “it is almost a routine for students to cheat in both internal and external examinations” (p. 1).

Examination malpractice takes different forms and can take place before, during and after the examination. Hence, Adewale (2011) categorized examination malpractice into three, namely; Pre-examination, examination and post-examination malpractice.

The phenomenon of examination malpractice is influenced by many factors. According to Ivowi (1997) lack of confidence as a result of inadequate preparation, peer influence, societal influence, parental support and poor facilities in school are some of the factors responsible for examination malpractice. Writing in the same

vein, Badmus (2006), Nwadiani (2005), Okafor (2006) and Ayua (2006) identified school programs, teaching and learning environment, the teacher, the students, overvalue of certificate and parental support as some factors responsible for examination malpractice in Nigerian educational system.

The central factor responsible for examination malpractice in the country is the high level of moral decadence in the Nigerian society. Examination malpractice is one of the features of a society that nurtures cheats and mediocre and turns them into celebrities. Contemporary Nigerian society places great emphasis on success goals without equivalent emphasis on institutional means of attaining these goals. The society is characterized by a heavy emphasis on success and wealth without a corresponding emphasis on legitimate means and avenues to be used in achieving success. Hence according to Ndibe, cited by Ojerinde, (2004);

The country is bedeviled with social and economic ills such as cultism, embezzlement, social qinjustice, corruption, and has become a society where the custom is to decorate miscreants, knaves, scam artists and violators of national trust with national honours and appoint them to exalted

public offices (p. 5).

The social vices bedeviling the society have permeated the entire segments of the education sector. The manifestations are cultism, indiscipline and examination malpractice, which have become endemic in the education system of the country. The moral decadence in the society has made both students, parents, teachers and others to be involved in examination malpractice. Students and parents are involved because they want good grades; teachers and others are involved because of the financial, material and other intangible gains.

2. Factors Responsible for Moral Decadence in Nigerian Society today

Moral degeneration is a universal phenomenon which is negatively affecting many societies, including Nigeria. The Nigerian society, with specific reference to family, school and public life is experiencing serious moral crises. The media is constantly reporting cases of moral breakdowns which are evident in social ills such as a general lack of discipline, violence, promiscuity, vandalism, corruption, high crime waves and the likes. Not a few seems to be wondering about the causes of this moral decay, and its negative effects on the Nigerian society. Here are some of the varied causes of moral degeneration in the Nigerian society.

2.1 Decline in Parental Authority and Domestic Values

The family is universally acknowledged as the fundamental and indispensable cell of all human societies. The family may be regarded as the cradle of civil society, and it is in great measure within the circle of family life that the destiny of the state is fostered. The larger society, the nation, derives its moral tone fundamentally from that of the family. Hence, the strategic importance of domestic life in the moral life of the nation cannot be over looked. However, in recent times, the family and its traditional influence and values are under serious stress in Nigeria.

According to Iwe (1987), the paterfamilias, the head of the family, is steadily losing ground and influence. His headship or authority is no longer unquestionable. The loyalty of his wife and the piety of his children are not easily taken for granted and assured nowadays. In many homes, many fathers have ceased to lead by exemplary lives. Some have become over-indulging and permissive towards their children, to whom they have unwittingly issued tickets of indiscipline and licentiousness. Others have passively succumbed to the unedifying prodding and claims of their spouses. Today the weak, irresponsible and indiscipline paterfamilias have become a domestic liability of serious social concern. The materfamilias or house wives are traditionally and normally the cornerstone of domestic stability, the symbol of domestic loyalty, and patient serenity, the inspirer of domestic thrift and economy,

industry and peace. Today in our midst, the opposite is fast becoming the case. These have created serious moral lapse in most families, thereby creating a state of moral decay in the society.

2.2 Influence of Science and Technology

The world has witnessed a giant leap in science and technology. Science and technology has contributed a lot towards making lives better and worth living, however, the rise in science and technology has negatively influenced human morality, especially in Nigeria. Despite other positive uses of internets in areas of research and communication, negative and immoral practices are also learnt from the internet. For example, many pornographic sites abound in the internet. A lot of Nigerian youths patronize these sites which glorify sex and sexual activities. Like the internet, increased access to electronic gadgets like televisions, compact discs, digital video discs and mobile phones, have also contributed to the cause of immoral behaviours among Nigerians today. Through these media, most Nigerians have learnt and embraced cultism, gangsterism, drug abuse, prostitution and violence. When people begin to practice what they learnt from the internet and those electronic gadgets, moral decay becomes the order of the day as we are witnessing in Nigeria today.

2.3 Media Influence

Media influence is used here to refer to both electronic and prints including information dissemination intermediaries. The influence of media just like technology has greatly and negatively impacted on the Nigerian moral standards. The electronic media for instance through the channels of Cable Networks, foreign movies, nollywood home videos, has consistently debased sex and sexual activities, promoted cultism, rituals, kidnapping and other vices through their programs. Music, other video chips and even some product adverts, have so much glorified sex, nudity and rascality and made it look like all-comers affairs. The effects and consequences are equal to moral degeneration in the society today.

The print media on the other hand, has flooded our nation with pornographic materials like photographs and other graphic arts designed to stimulate sexual activities. Such sexually explicit materials are sexually arousing to both adults and adolescents. Such materials are usually watched or read in the secret by the youths and thereby learning and exhibiting decayed moral behaviours on daily basis. Smith (2007) stated that;

Teenagers are exposed to sexual materials on TV, in movies, magazines and other modern pornographic devices. Most sexual behavior on television takes place between unmarried adults and ignores the potential negative consequences of sexual intercourse. Thus exposure to sexual contents on media apparatus can lead to more

permissive attitudes (p. 48).

The media promote not only product, but moods and in a sense what is and is not important. This has really eroded the social morality the society is expected to exhibit and in turn enhanced more pre-marital and other negative sexual behaviors in the society.

2.4 Materialism

There is a tremendous negative change in the Nigerian economic spheres. Certainly, today the texture of the average Nigerian economic life is excessively materialistic. In the present dispensation, the only convincing logic that is significant and universally accepted to every Nigerian from North to South, East to West is that of excessive material acquisitions and consumerism. The mentality of making money and becoming somebody (the richest man) through corrupt means of acquisition of money and material wealth has invaded and permeated every aspect of Nigerians' moral life. **Agha (2019)** viewed Materialism as the acquisition of material wealth at the expense of others. He noted that it has been treated as an enemy by the church and the moralists.

This singular factor explains the daily frantic race of the jobless in the town, the shouting of the double faced traders in their deceitful attempts to cheat their customers, the mounting of makeshift toll-gates by legitimate and illegitimate law enforcement agents, the attempts to steal votes from the electorates to

seize political posts, the daily scouting for contracts by ghost contractors, the siphoning of public funds by those in power, the eager expectations of office clerks for a tip before they carry a file from one table to the other, and many more forms of immorality in our public and private lives in the society. The nation is embroiled with an excessive materialistic ideology that portends doom to our collective morality. The destructive acquisitive instinct of the western capitalism has colonized the Nigerian mind such that the dominant philosophy is to acquire money by all means.

2.5 Poverty

There is a high rate of poverty in the society owing to lack of social justice, as a result, people tend to indulge in immoral activities, just to make the ends meet. Tutu (1999) asserted that people become poor due to oppression and injustice brought about by unjust social structures. Stott (1984) postulated that the poor are deprived of the opportunity of having access to food, clothing and shelter. He maintained that the poor constitute a group of powerless people who are socially and politically oppressed. O' Donovan (2000) said that poverty is responsible for the high rate of crime in the urban cities. Poverty is one of the major causes of stealing, prostitution, drug addiction, armed robbery, militancy, kidnapping and crisis in the society. As a result of poverty, some young girls have taken to prostitution as a means of livelihood. The after-effects of prostitution have resulted to

some young girls contracting AIDS and other venereal diseases while others have met their premature deaths owing to abortion. This accounts for the rapid spread of AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases in the society.

2.6 The Collapse of Discipline in our Schools

Discipline implies self-control, willingness to learn and function in an acceptable and ordered manner. Thus an atmosphere of discipline is characterized by sense of duty and responsibility, and of self-control and loyalty. Formal teaching and learning as well as any other form of serious socialization requires naturally and normally such an atmosphere. Unfortunately an atmosphere of discipline has been conspicuously lacking in many Nigerian primary and secondary schools. Although, the considerable increase in school enrolment and the gross inadequacy of material resources and personnel have contributed to indiscipline in schools, the most cardinal factor of indiscipline, is in the area of administration, supervision and control. Indiscipline in schools manifests in the following forms: lateness to school, teacher absenteeism, poor environmental sanitation and dirty class rooms, shabbily dressed teachers, strained teacher-headmaster relationship, disrespect for school heads, poor pupil-teacher relationship, and lack of personal professional commitment to duty. These symptoms of indiscipline and disorder assume greater dimensions among the secondary schools, where financial and other exploitation of

students, uncontrolled youthful passions, and insubordination abound.

3. Consequences of Moral Decadence in Contemporary Nigerian Society

The state of moral decay in Nigeria has some negative impacts on the country, families and individuals. The following are some of the effects of moral decadence on the Nigerian society:

3.1 Loss of integrity among international community: This is one of the major effects of moral degeneration in Nigeria. The involvement of Nigerian leaders in corruption and other immoral acts has dented the image of the country in the international community. Ituma, (2008) painted the picture thus: The image of the country in the international arena has become so battered that every Nigerian should psychologically feel a scorching hurt inflicted on his individual psyche. The dent has gone so far that everywhere in the world Nigerians are said to be generally dreaded like mad dogs and criminals, cautiously approached like dangerous snakes, and avoided like lepers (p. 37).

3.2 Socio-Economic Problems: Financial crimes harm both the nation and individuals. It is on record that about 90 percent of monies looted from public treasury are stashed away in private foreign accounts (Uko, 2007). Such lootings have become a recurring decimal in underdeveloped countries, Nigeria inclusive.

These are monies that should have been used to build industries and create job opportunities for the teeming population. Instead, unemployment has become the order of the day and people are suffering in the midst of plenty. It has the dual effects of boosting the domestic economies of the custodian of the loot and worsening of the economies of the countries from where the money was stolen. The result of the practice is that the gap between the rich and the poor widens as it happens in Nigeria.

Furthermore, vices negate progress in any life, system or organization but it becomes a thing of worry when the teeming population of youth is plagued with this predicament as they are the future leaders. Apart from that, the youthful stage is the most active stage in the life of any human being. The workforce of the youth is undoubtedly the driving force of any economy and nation. Any country whose workforce is characterized by a youthful population involved in social vices will amount to an erroneous, erratic, vain and corruption-ridden society (Achor, 2015). When the vast majority of youths are involved in vices, there exists a great probability that the leadership and governance will decline as so many find their way in these leadership positions and effect negative changes to suit their vicious appetite. This is exactly the case with Nigeria where the get rich quick syndrome is the guiding principle of average Nigerian.

Again, the moral degeneration in the Nigerian

society has undesirable effects on family, schools, politics and the economy. According to Louw (2009), moral decay inhibits the prosperous growth and development of the country. The implications of this moral decay include the collapse of family and community life, the collapse of a culture of learning and teaching in schools, negative attitudes of the new generation in thinking that they are entitled to success and riches without working for it, dishonesty and lack of integrity, lack of self-discipline, crime, violence and corruption.

4. Teaching Moral Education to Curb Moral Decadence in the Society

Moral Education is the teaching of respect, responsibility and other values to citizens for good character development and for the health of the nation. Moral Education influences an individual on how he thinks, feels and acts regarding issues of right and wrong. It is very important to gradually tutor children on how to make the right choices from the beginning of their life, and help them to exercise their freedom in a responsible manner. Moral Education also helps them to begin to appreciate common values such as honesty, liberty, justice, fairness and respect for others. When children imbibe these virtues they will be able to live good lives and at the same time become productive to the nation. Furthermore, Moral Education aims at developing in children and youth a strong conviction of the worthiness of moral behaviour and a sense of moral

responsibility. It influences them to take moral obligation seriously and caring deeply about doing them and at the same time to possess the will power to execute moral judgment into effective moral action. Above all, moral education is about conscience formation. According to Okwueze (2003) conscience can be viewed as the application of the principles of the moral order to our actions. Man created in God's image cannot be properly formed without reference to God. God endows man with a conscience so that he can easily know the general principle (good must be done and evil avoided), and to be able to determine what is good or evil in concrete situations. To be able to achieve this, the conscience needs continuous formation. This can be achieved through Moral Education both at home and in the school.

At home, the parents serve as the moral educators. Parents do this by providing the necessary affective relationships and extensive interactions that facilitate moral development. Hence, Oladipo (2009) noted that "parents are vital in the moral development of the children because they are the first teachers and role models that young people have" (p. 153). In the same vein, Ezeanya (1988) noted that the home is more appropriate for education in the virtues. It is the natural environment for initiating human beings into solidarity and communal responsibilities.

In the school, the shortcomings of the home should be taken care of. Teaching Moral

Education in the school also basically reinforces the values practiced at home and in society. Ukeje (1979) cited by Eneogwe (2005) noted that:

Schools are generally called upon to assist in the development and perpetuation of the acceptable national character, that is, those attitudes, habits and ideals considered necessary and desirable for national survival (p. 20).

That is to say that if we want to develop morally sound citizens, Moral Education should be intensified in schools. Moral Education therefore is the bedrock of any society that wants to move forward in socio-economic and infrastructural development. Therefore, every child should be taught moral instruction from the first day in school to the last days of his higher degrees (Chijioke, 1981).

There is high level of moral decadence in the Nigerian society hence various efforts geared towards curbing this problem seem to have yielded little dividends. There is therefore the need to intensify the teaching of Moral Education in schools especially at the basic levels. Moral Education is essential for bringing up morally sound children. The required good character for a crime free society must be instilled in the people at an early stage. Moral Education ensures that the people know what is good, desire what is good, and do what is good. This attitude should be instilled in our youths right from the primary school to the secondary school.

Quality education recognizes the whole person and promotes education that involves the affective domain as well as the cognitive. Values such as peace, honesty, forth rightness, dedication, diligence are cherished and aspired by the world over. Such values are the sustaining force of human society and progress. What children and youths learn is later woven into the fabric of the society. So, positive values should be passed on to the school children. This will produce a generation of citizens who will not only shun immoral malpractices because of the fear of the punishment but because of the internalized values acquired through Moral Education.

Teaching Moral Education to curb moral decadence in the society is catching the children young. It can solve the problem of immoral malpractices in the society from the root.

Through Moral Education, students can cultivate the habit of doing the right and avoiding the wrong no matter the situation thereby ensuring a morally sound society.

For a successful Moral Education, teachers can employ fascinating ways such as storytelling, to convey the required values. According to Oladipo (2009) stories are potent conveyor of moral values and children of every age love to hear a good story. Story books with stories of characters who through simple righteous acts became heroes worthy of emulation are good for teaching Moral Education in schools. Teachers should also create and utilize music

for the teaching of moral lessons. Some religious and non-religious groups alike have produced excellent recordings, which employ catchy tunes, and repetitive lyrics that keep moral values on the tips of children's tongues. This should be further explored and employed to teach Moral Education to the younger generation.

5 . Recommendations

In order to address the moral degeneration in the country, the following recommendations are made:

- ❖ The family is the first church where moral, religious and cultural values should be inculcated in the life of the young ones. To be able to achieve this, parents, guardians and upright elders of the community should do everything possible to teach and encourage the young ones of the importance of virtuous living.
- ❖ In our schools and colleges Moral Education should be reintroduced and made a compulsory subject, to be consciously taught and practiced.
- ❖ Outside the schools, religious leaders should be in the forefront of repairing the damages already done; and educating our people on how to live decent moral lives.
- ❖ Educators should form partnership with parents, the mass media, the courts, civic, ethnic and religious groups to create a social and cultural context that supports the school's efforts to develop morally mature

citizens.

- ❖ Schools should make sure that moral education efforts are extended beyond the cognitive domain to include the affective and the psychomotor. It must go beyond simply knowing what is good to doing what is right or good.
- ❖ Nigerians should do away with the teaching and practice of secular humanism and revert to our pre-colonial value system that highly placed and cherished good moral standards.
- ❖ Government and other relevant agencies should monitor and regulate the type of information on our print and electronic media as well as other morally debasing materials circulating in our society today with the view of saving the younger generations from moral decay.

6. Conclusion

This discourse has highlighted the current moral lapses that are evident in all spheres of the Nigerian society. The paper took a look at the different dimensions of moral decadence in the Nigerian society. It also took a critical look at the causes and effects of moral decay in the country. It is the belief of the author that all hope is not yet gone in correcting the moral degeneration in the Nigerian society today. Before the colonial era, the common characteristics of the Nigerian society was the existence of norms that were pivotal to the running of the society. However, in recent

times, all the prohibitions that aided the maintenance of high moral and disciplined society have been neglected and abandoned due to the influence of western culture mainly brought about by colonial invasion. Moral Education based on Christian morality and the application of it in our societal lives is the panacea to current moral disorientation and abuse in our society.

References

- Achor, E.E. (2015), *Education as an Indispensable Tool for Youth Development*. Ankpa Press.
- Adewale, G. (2011), *Examination malpractice: A stigma on school effectiveness in Nigeria*. www.naere.org.ng/journal.
- Afuge, A. (2015), "Moral Decadence in Tertiary Institutions": *Journal of Educational Studies*. Vol. 6(13) (pp. 234-245).
- Agbu O. (2003), Corruption and human trafficking: The Nigerian case. *West African Review*.
- Agha, A. U. (2019), *Religious experience of materialism in contemporary Nigerian society*. <https://raadaa.com>.
- Ayua, I. A. (2006), *Confronting legal issues in examination malpractice: The law, prosecution, and judicial processes*. Abuja.
- Badmus, G. A. (2006), *Accountability in teaching learning environment and examination malpractices*.
- Denga, D. I. (1991), *Nigerian Education: Proposals for a smooth voyage to the year 2000 and beyond*. London Rapid

Education Publisher.

- Echeta, O.C. (2007), *Still In The Shadow of Death*. Amazon's
- Iwe, N. S. S. (1987), *Socio-ethical issues in Nigeria*. Peter Lang Publishing Inc.
- Kpangban, E. et al., (2008), *Sound moral values and development of right attitudes as panacea to examination malpractice in Nigeria*. *Journal of Social Sciences*. Vol. 17 (3) pp. 223-131.
- Louw, J. M. (2009), *The Socio-educational implications of the moral degeneration of the South African society: Towards a solution*.
- Neubeck, K.F. (1979), *Social Problems*. Foresman and Company.
- Nkwo A.A. (2024), *Leadership Newspaper*. January 4th 2024.
- Nwachukwu, E.C. (2017), *Socio-Economic Implications of Moral Decadence on The Students of Ebonyi State University Abakaliki* - Azikiwe Press.
- Nwadiani, M. (2005). *Curbing examination malpractice in the Nigerian educational System*. University press.
- O' Donovan, W. (2000), *Biblical Christianity in modern Africa*. Paternoster Press.
- Okolo, G. U. (2002), *Social Work: An Introductory Analysis*. University Press.
- Oladipo, S. E. (2009). Moral education of the child: Whose responsibility? *Journal of Social Sciences*. Vol. 20 (2), pp. 149-156.
- Onuka, A. &, Amoo, S. A. (2011). *Examination malpractice and act 33 of 1999*. <http://naere.org.ng/journal>.
- Onyechere, I. (2004). Cheating: A world-wide problem comes at least 33 ways. *All Africa.com*.
- Orukpe, T. (1998). "Secret cults and the law". *National Concord Newspaper*, Thursday, December 17, Lagos Nigeria
- Otakpor N. (2000), *The Moral Crisis in Nigeria*. Enugu: Delta Publications Ltd.
- Smith, D. J. (2007). *A culture of corruption everyday reception and popular discontent in Nigeria*. University Press.
- Ugwu, C.O. T. (2002), *Corruption in Nigeria: Critical perspectives*. Chukka Educational Publishers.
- Uko, J. I. (2007), Corruption and sustainable development. In A. O. Edegbo (Ed), *Contemporary issues and challenges of sustainable development in the new millennium. The Nigerian experience*, pp. 37-45. Same Artrade.
- Yecho, J. I. (2010), Violent Crime Wave in Contemporary Nigeria: The Case of Benue State. *Benue Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 3 (1), pp. 20-26.