

**PROMOTING MORAL VALUES AMONG  
TERTIARY INSTITUTION STUDENTS  
THROUGH SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION:  
CHALLENGES FOR NIGERIA'S CENTINARY**

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Abstract

This paper examines promotion of moral values among tertiary institution students, through Social Studies Education. The ways by which youth and students of tertiary institution behave in their campuses, at home and in the society as a whole portrait that there is moral decadance in the society. This has been reflecting in these youth's interaction with the elderly ones and even with their colleagues. It reflects in the kind of behavior they put on in every nooks and crannies even when they are away from the parents. It was brought into focus from the paper that some youths and tertiary institution students lack moral values in their life and that moral values are being wiped away little by little in the society and that the teaching of moral values is not given priority in our tertiary institutions. Based on the above the paper therefore recommended among other things that parents should rise up to the task of giving home training to their wards right from the elementary level. Also the teaching of moral values through social studies education should be made compulsory in all the levels of education and be given priority from the elementary school to the tertiary institutions.

Key words: Centenary, Moral values, Social Studies, Tertiary Institution, Nigeria.

### Introduction

The saying 'good conduct or behaviour begat a man' is a truism for the sustainability of man and which can never be played with in the contemporary world. It is a symbol of national development. This is because when the populace exhibit positive behaviour and attitude the social system will work normally and effectively and all forms of social vices and behaviors such as certificate racketeering, examination malpractices, corruption and the likes found among the tertiary institution students will not be there and thereby bringing development into the society and the country at large (Adefabi, 2012). In the past, religious studies and moral teaching were given priority in the school system to compliment the home training and with that there was the fear of God in the life of people and social problems was reduced to minimal. With what is obtainable globally, one could see that there is moral decadence among the youths and tertiary institution students. In the past, youth received moral values in all facets of life right from their formative years such as from father, mother, uncles, brothers, sisters and other siblings and from the religious bodies. Today that moral values are not there in the life of the youth and tertiary institution students any more, compare with the past period properly because of western education received, civilization and modernization in the society (Fadiye, 2011) for instance the issue of yahoo boys is part of moral decadence in the society. Also you see some male youth plaiting their hair like Sango worshipper some putting on earring which are meant for the female youths, we can see that all this behavior being put on by these tertiary institution students could be termed to be moral decadence.

Adeyinka (2000) quoting Majasan (1975) on the concept of "Omoluwabi buttressed the point that in the African traditional society a person who behave well was known to be an "Omoluwabi" a child of Noah or child born by Noah or his descendants. On the other hand, a child who was not given proper training at home was called "Abiko"

while one who refused to take to correction or accept training was referred to as *Akoogba* and this will be reflecting in the life of such an individual.

Before the advent of colonial master, African has gotten the system of their own ways of life, their cultural values, moral values and so on. It was when the colonial master came with their doctrines and ways of lives termed to be civilization and world of internet that things began to change for worse.

Katayeyanjue (2004) reiterated that moral decadence are on the increasing level mainly because parents have little or no time for their wards in this present dispensation in giving the moral values training, instead, they have much time for their work and businesses. Quarcoopome (2004) corroborated the assertion when he said that less religious and moral teaching at home, in schools and every worship places enhance moral decadence to the highest level. With the high rate of moral decadence among the youths and tertiary institution students, hence it is the believe that social studies education when introduced would be of solution to moral decadence because of the right values and attitudes which social studies education teaches and which could be of benefit when impacted into the life of the youths and students of tertiary institution. This would better transform our society from moral decay and morally bankrupted to a morally valued and better oriented society which we were known before and in which other countries of the world will begin seeing good things about the country Nigeria.

### Background of Moral Values

Moral value is a universally accepted ethical principle that governs the day to day living of people. The principles are important to maintain unity, harmony and honour between people. Moral values are usually communal and shared by the public in general, thus if there is no agreement among community members, no moral values could be established. Moral value as a concept has been in many ways – moral values are the standard of good and evil, which govern an individual behavior and choices. It defines the principles and standards which determine the extent to which human action or conduct is right or wrong. They encompass a wide range of universally

accepted character traits such as humility, love, compassion and kindness (Igbalajobi, 2002). Moral values could be gotten in religion, government, society and from self. Because the society is dynamic in nature and it keeps on changing from time to time moral values gotten from the government and the society may also change.

Igbalajobi (2002) opined that, moral values are the highest among all natural values purity, truthfulness, goodness, humility of man rank higher than genius, brilliancy, exuberant vitality, than the beauty of nature or of arts, than the stability and power of a state. Amosun (2006) corroborated the assertion by saying that what is realized and shines forth in an act of real forgiveness, in a noble and generous renunciation is a burning and selfless love, is more significant and more noble, more important and more external than all cultural values.

Positive moral values are the focus of the world, negative moral values, the greatest evil, worse than suffering, sickness, death or the disintegration of a flourishing culture. This fact was recognized by the great philosophers such as Socrates and Plato who continually repeated that it is better to suffer injustice than to commit it. According to Lomboroso (2007) moral values are always personal values. They are only inherent in man and can be realized by man. A material thing such as stone, sand or a building cannot be morally good or bad, just as moral goodness is not possible to a tree or an animal. In the like manner, works of the human mind such as scientific book, works of arts, discoveries cannot properly be counted to be bearers of moral values, they cannot be faithful, humble and loving. They can only at the most indirectly reflect all these value as bearing the imprint of the human mind. Man alone as a free being responsible for his actions and his attitudes, for his will and striving, his love and his hatred, his joy and his sorrow, and his super-actual basic attitudes, can be morally bad or good. For, far above his cultural accomplishment, rises the importance of the man's own being a personality radiating moral values, a man who is humble, pure, honest, truthful and loving.

Galloway (2008) pointed out the following moral values (i) Honesty (ii) Hardwork (iii) Cooperation (iv) Kindness (v) Compassion (vi) Forgiveness (vii) Respect for others. Moral values can be derived or imbibe from the following places serving as an agents of socialization

(Olowofoyeku, 2006).

Religion is one of the sources of moral values, most religions have built-in lists of do's and don'ts, a set of codes by which its adherents should live. Individuals who are followers of a particular religion will generally make a show of following that religion's behavioural code. It is interesting to note that these codes may widely vary, a person whose religion provides for polygamy will experience no guilt at having more than one spouse while adherents to other religions feel they must remain monogamous.

Moral values could also be derived from within one's own self. This could be demonstrated in the behavior of older infants and young toddlers. If a child has been forbidden to touch or take certain object early on they know enough to slowly look over their shoulder to see if they are being observed before touching the said object. There is no need for this behavior to be taught. It is instinctive. Once any form of discipline is applied to modify the child's behavior, the child now gains the capacity within himself to distinguish his right behavior from his wrong behavior. The child can make correct choices based on his own knowledge. The choices that are made by an individual from childhood to adulthood are between forbidden and acceptable, kind or cruel, generous or selfish.

### Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that is in line with this paper is Kant's hypothetical and categorical goods theory. Immanuel Kant is the proponent of this theory and he greatly influenced moral philosophy. He shared the view that moral value should be unique and universally identifiable property, and as an absolute value rather a relative value. He showed that many practical goods are good only in a state of affairs described by a sentence containing an "if" clause, e.g. in the sentence, sunshine is only good if one do not live in the desert. Further, the "if" clause, often described the category in which the judgment was made i.e. either in art, science etc. Kant described these as hypothetical goods and tried to find a "categorical" good that would operate across all categories of judgment without depending on an "if then" clause. Kant was trying to say that the idea of a good will be as the only intrinsic good.

Furthermore, Kant saw a good will as acting in accordance with moral command the categorical imperative. Act according to those maxims that there could be universal law, but should not be confused with the ethic of reciprocity or golden rule. Example of this could be seen in the bible in Matt 7 verse 12, whereas the golden rule states that, one should treat others as one would like others to treat oneself. The relevance of this theory to this study is that moral value habit should be inculcated into the life of every individual right away from the childhood to adulthood.

In addition, the theory is relevant to this study in the sense that the theory confirmed that human being should be good naturally and that it should not be conditional i.e. the natural goodness should not be based on certain conditions.

#### The Place of Social Studies in Developing Moral Values among the Students of Tertiary Institutions at Hundred

Social studies was introduced in Nigeria in 1976 when it became clear to every stakeholders in education that the type of education given by the colonial master hundred years ago did not inculcate, the right social values and attitudes into the lives of every Nigerians, students of tertiary institutions not an exemption. The education provided hundred years ago was totally out of Nigerian culture and does not take the immediate environment of the learners into consideration which was criticized for being narrow, parochial and socio-culturally irrelevant content to Nigerian children and students who were trained to memorize facts, principles and generalization. They were not trained in reflective and critical thinking.

The National Policy on Education (2013) edition was important and crucial in the development of education in Nigeria. The policy spelt out the goals of education in Nigeria. The national educational aims and objectives to which the philosophy is linked are:

- (a) The inculcation of national consciousness and national unity.
- (b) Inculcation of the right types of value and attitudes for the survival of the individual and the Nigerian society.
- (c) The training of the mind in the understanding of the world around, and

- (d) The acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities and competencies both mental and physical as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to development of his or her society.

The objective of social studies education were also derived from the national objective of education in primary, secondary and tertiary institution which are as follows (Ogundare, 2006).

- (i) To create an awareness and understanding of the evolving social and physical environment as a whole in its natural man-made, cultural and spiritual resources together with rational use and conservation of these resources for natural development.
- (ii) Develop a capacity to learn and to acquire basic skill, including not only of listening, speaking, reading and writing and of calculation but also those skills of hand and head together. With those observation, analysis and inferences which are essential for the forming of sound, social, economic and political judgement.
- (iii) Ensure the acquisition of that relevant body of knowledge and information, which is an essential pre-requisite to personal development as well as to a positive personal contribution to the betterment of mankind.
- (iv) Develop a sympathetic appreciation of diversity and interdependence of all members of local community, and the wider national and international community.
- (v) Develop in students positive attitude of togetherness, comradeships, cooperation toward a healthy nation, the inculcation of appropriate values of honesty, integrity hardwork, fairness and justice at work and play as one's contribution to the development of the nation and
- (vi) Encourage learners to appreciate that all the things they have learnt are interrelated. Though social studies, it is possible to present knowledge as a whole instead of series of specialized fragment (Adaralegbe, 1980).

### The Need for Moral Values in our Tertiary Institutions

As a stakeholders and parents, we need to advocate for the teaching of moral values in the tertiary institutions Omolewa (2008) gave the following reasons.

- (i) To prepare the youths for future roles in society:  
The primary goal of education should be the one that would enable students, youths to gain knowledge and moral values that they needed to prepare them to become a good parents, good ambassadors, good citizens and individual in the society.
- (ii) There is too much violence and dishonesty in the society:  
Nearly all the youth and adult students are exposed to violence, dishonesty and other social problems either in the media or in the real world. Many times have we heard about shootings at school among the tertiary institution students. Many times we have head student caught cheating in the examination. There are many social vices exhibited by some of these students such as fighting between gangs of secret cult, stealing, involvement in money rituals and engaging in armed robbery etc. If more values were taught in our schools starting from primary school level to tertiary institutions, we would have fewer of these problems or not at all.
- (iii) Many parents failed to teach moral values  
Some parents failed to teach their ward right from the childhood to adulthood. Had it been that parent perform their functions as at when due to high rate of moral decadence among the youths would have been reduced to minimal. Some parents were busy on their work and businesses here and there thereby having no time for their ward hence the need for teaching of moral values in our various school levels.
- (iv) Inability to lay emphasis on religious and moral teaching in the school system

Before the advent of colonial master, more emphasis was laid on moral teaching. But this day there is nothing like that of moral and religious teaching and this has caused a lot of social vices because of lack of fear of God in them.

- (v) To counter bad influence in society unfortunately some of the young's and adults are setting bad examples. This ranges from sexual promiscuity, advocacy of violence, degrading of women, condoning of dishonesty and so on.

### Categories of Moral Values

Having discussed about the objectives of social studies. It is pertinent that certain right, values and attitude would be taught to the learners right from the elementary to the tertiary institution level and this would be of help in moulding their lifes positively. Such right values are as follows.

- (i) Value of honesty: Social studies education teaches value of honesty right from elementary school to tertiary institution level and from childhood to adulthood and the moment school children imbibe this right value that is what would be helping them through their lifes.
- (ii) Value of hardwork: Through social studies education, the value of hard work could be taught in the school system starting from elementary to tertiary institutions. This value of hardwork could be likened to what is in the scripture Holy Bible Gen. 3:19 in which it was told that out of our sweat we shall eat. A lazy individual cannot have good things in life.
- (iii) Respect for others: Through social studies education, the right value of respect for other could be taught to the students. Respect for others include respecting different religions races, ideas, sexes and life styles.
- (iv) Value of cooperation: Through social studies education, value of cooperation could be taught at every level of the school system and which can be of help to learners and become part and parcel of their lifes.

- (v) Value of kindness: Values of kindness could be taught to the students to equip them that one need to be good and kind to every human being and this value could be learnt from childhood to adulthood.
- (vi) Value of fairness and justice: Just as it has been said that one need to be good to everyone, social studies education teaches the value of fairness and justice and this is pointer that one should be nice to everybody.
- (vii) Value of forgiveness: Social studies education teaches the right value of forgiveness which is in line with one of the Jesus sermon on the mount which say forgive and ye shall be forgiven Mathew 6 verse 12 – 14.
- (viii) Value of dedication: Social studies education helps to mould the life of individual through the inculcation of skill and value of dedication into such life. It is pertinent that when the value had been adapted and adopted and every individual would be dedicated to his or her life and this will enhance national development.

### Conclusion

This paper examines promotion of moral values among tertiary institution students through social studies education – challenges for Nigerian's centenary. It was revealed that moral decay and social vices that are rampant among the tertiary institution students and the society at large is as a result of lack of moral values that are lacking in the life of the students and this is also lacking among the citizenry due to the fact that religious and moral teaching were not taught in the school before the colonial master came into the country.

Based on this, there should be re-awakening of the teaching of moral values in the schools starting from elementary to tertiary institution level and from childhood to adulthood. It is hoped that those right moral value when taught will be of help in moulding the life of the students and modify their behavior.

### Recommendation

The moral decadence and increasing in social-vices in the society has led to the writing of this paper. It was revealed that moral values

are lacking among the tertiary institution students and in which something very urgent need to be done to avert the bad and ugly situation. Based on this, the following recommendations were made.

- i. Government should encourage the more, the teaching of moral values in the various schools right from the elementary to the tertiary level, from childhood to adulthood.
- ii. Both moral and religious teaching should be more emphasized in all the school starting from primary to tertiary institution level.
- iii. Parent should teach their ward to have the fear of God in them by taking them to the places of worship such as the church, mosque etc to hear the word of God.
- iv. Students of various level should be discipline.
- v. An adage says charity begins at home, parent should give proper and adequate home training to their ward.

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