

## *Original Paper*

# Sociology of Moral Education: The Context of Nigeria

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### **Abstract**

*For there to be peace and harmony in a society, people have to conform to standards of behavior that conduce to social well-being. This necessitates teaching of the values and norms of society to the younger generation. The paper used the method of philosophical analysis to explore some sociological issues in moral education and some notable ethical theories that are related to moral education. The paper critically appraised the efficiency of social institutions such as the family, media, peer group, religions and formal educational institutions in fostering moral development of an individual in the contemporary Nigerian society. It is shown that variety of social relationships that exist within each of the institution of society in differing ways contribute to moral education of the child. The paper, however, underscored the unique place of the school system in moral education of individual and development of society. The paper prescribed that teachers of all subjects should contribute to the moral development of learners.*

### **Keywords**

*society, sociology, morality, moral education, Nigeria*

## **1. Introduction**

The questions “how should we live?” and “how should I live my life?” at the collective and individual levels respectively, are critical ethical questions that call for constant intellectual examination. In the opinion of Brenda (1990), individuals need help as regards the second question especially when they are still growing up so that, when they attain adult status, they are able to contribute to the solution of the wider social question. This role falls within the purview of ethics and moral education. However, there appears to be less interest in ethics as an academic study in our times. Logical positivism insists on a necessary divorce between facts and values, so any knowledge without a stamp of scientific authority is not taken serious. This trend is aptly summarized by Michael (1990, p. 13) thus:

*... a period of increasing disinterest in ethics beginning in the 1920's and stretching into the 1960's. The bust affected different institutions in different ways. The public schools gave up "moral education". Philosophers became increasingly preoccupied with question about the very possibility of deciding moral question. The social sciences not only became increasingly value neutral they also lost interest in studying them.*

This trend has resulted in a decline in the social sensitivity to values and moral questions. In the words of Sri (2009, p. 13) while commenting on the moral health of the human family:

*In every country in the world, in every nation and race in the human family, we see today lack of integrity and of true morals in daily life. Every human heart is in conflict with the head; thought and speech are hardly in harmony; and this inner disintegration manifests itself in wrong types of outward actions, in low standards of morality and selfish interests on the physical plane.*

It follows from the above that decline in people's sensitivity to moral values is a global problem. However, recent developments in Nigeria underscore the need for moral rebirth and value reorientation of Nigerian in order to stem the tide of negative social values such as dishonesty, irresponsibility, corruption, and general lack of integrity in business, basic human relationship, and conduct of government businesses. This is evident in the 2019 Transparency International's corruption perception index which places Nigeria as the 146<sup>th</sup> out of 180 countries surveyed. The country scored 26 out of 100 and places it as the second most country in West Africa. While the government has berated the credibility and objectivity of the report, every discerning observer of the socio economic configuration of the country could sense that there is need for moral and value reorientation of citizens. In this regard, the role of education cannot be overemphasized. At the moment, the education system seems to be lopsided towards cognitive development of learners while the affective domain in appears to be left to chance. In order to overcome the ethical crisis facing the nation, there is the need to give a pride of place to moral education of the coming generation of Nigerians especially at the basic education level. For there to be a society, people are bound to relate with one another and the relationships need to be guided by certain principles. These principles are what we call morality. In the opinion of Omoregbe (1993), moral issues are related to man by virtue of his rational and social nature. If man were not a rational being, he would not be accountable for any of his actions. A lunatic, for example, is not morally responsible and therefore is not liable for any wrong doing because he has lost his rationality. Man is at the same time a social being because he cannot be totally independent of other human beings as he needs others to overcome and make up for his weaknesses and improve on his strength. As observed by Ekanola (1999), societies are formed in order to overcome individual inabilities and enhance individual contributions towards the realization of common goals. This interdependence calls for interaction and social relationships. Hence, an issue or an action is moral when it benefits or harms other people in the society and when the actors in question are rational. For example, a man's choice of breakfast menu would not constitute a moral problem but whether he or she performs his or her duty as a school teacher or not would be a moral issue because the options that are open to him will invariably

touch the lives of other people.

The rational and social nature of man enable him to understand that his life is best lived in a community, and a community life is peaceful and harmonious when its members respect the life and interest of others, when they keep agreements and when they are friendly and kind to one another. This is premised on the assumption that man can be educated to understand that following the moral law is consistent with his social nature and is necessary for his long-term well-being. Therefore, apart from saying that certain actions are good because they are God's will or because they are commanded by God, human beings can understand moral laws as being part of the kind of being part of human make up. Hence, in moral education, it is more save to rely on man's rational and social nature than any kind of supernaturalism.

## 2. Theoretical Review

Ethical theories refer to viewpoints which provide directions with respect to decision - making on what is right and what is wrong. Different ethical theories emphasize different decision rules in determining what constitutes morality and what constitute immorality. Virtue ethics is one of the three major theories in normative ethics. The other two being deontological ethics and consequentialism. Virtue ethics holds that the cultivation of moral character and inculcation of virtues as the essential issues in ethics rather than the establishment of rules based on duties (deontological ethics) and consequences of actions (consequentialism). It has its roots in the traditions of Plato and Aristotle. Thus, in the ancient Greek and medieval periods, virtue ethics was the prevailing approach to ethical thinking (New World Encyclopedia, 2008). It, however, fell out of favour during the early modern period with the advent of Kantianism, utilitarianism and classical republicanism. Virtue ethics returned to prominence in Western philosophical thought in the 20th century. Contemporary works that brought about this revival can be traced to the British philosopher. Anscombe who argues that duty- based conception of morality is based on an idea of "a law without a law-giver". By this, she means that duty –based ethics fails to pay attention to the personality of the moral agent who is to make moral judgements and act on them. She recommends a return to Aristotle's ethics which ground morality in *eudemonia* (human well being). Other contemporary philosophers who subscribe to virtue ethics are: Alasdair MacIntyre, Philippa Foot, Paul Ricoeur among others.

Immanuel Kant, a leading scholar in the deontological tradition, contends that moral statements are a priori synthetic. This is because he thinks that we cannot prove what an individual should do empirically and so moral statements are a priori. In agreement with David Hume, Kant assumes that experience only tells us what has actually been observed and not how things must or should be. Therefore, he ultimately argues for an a priori basis for morality. Kant holds that man can only act morally and an action can only be moral when it is consistent with the categorical imperative, that is, when the action can be universalized without contradicting itself. As such, deontological ethics as exemplified in Kant judges the morality or immorality of an action on the basis of its conformity with

rules and principles.

Emile Durkheim (1961) advanced a sociological theory of moral education that brings a slightly different dimension to deontological and virtue ethics. Durkheim holds that for a society to work, there is need for members of the society to agree on how to behave and what is important and of value. This is called value consensus. He also emphasized that formal education is a critical agent of socialization which should teach the younger generation the norms and values of the society. As opposed to a priori approach to ethics, Durkheim emphasized a naturalized study of society which focused on two social facts namely, social pluralism and rapid social change (David, 2002). Social pluralism requires that people live in multiple communities with different beliefs and values, however, they retain a sense of consistency and integrity across the different contexts. Social change implies that people have to be able to adjust and reconsider their beliefs as society changes. Durkheim's relative view of ethics argues against the idea of a universal and eternal human nature. To him, ethics and moral education should be for a particular people at a particular time. It is noteworthy that contrary to Durkheim's view, there are moral principles such as honesty, respect, integrity, cooperation that are universally accepted to be desirable for the well – being of society. It is true that the values can be held by other values in the application in daily living. Cooperation can be held by the need to uphold ones integrity as it will be immoral to cooperate with others in acts that are inimical to overall well – being of the society. As such, application of moral principles to discern when to act in specific circumstances is critical in moral education.

### **3. An Appraisal of the Influences of Major Socializing Institutions on Moral Development of Individuals**

The home as the first agent of socialization has a strong formative influence on moral life of an individual. Morality in the sense of knowing and doing what is right from what is wrong develops right from when an individual is very young. Lawrence Kohlberg cited in Jeremy and Lawrence (2010) identified six stages of moral development which he grouped into three major levels. The first level, the pre-conventional level, is characterized by egocentric behaviour because the individual at this stage does not consider the interest of other people in making decisions. At later stage in the level is the emergence of moral reciprocity in which the focus is on the instrumental value of an action. At this stage one follows a rule when it is to one's immediate interest. This starts from the age of two to seven years. The family plays a key role of disciplining of a child's emotions by initiating him or her to culture of reconciling his own interest with the interest of others. At this stage, when a child acts in ways that are inimical to well - being of others, it behoves the parents to correct him or her by way chastisement, reprimand and other forms of negative reinforcement such that such pattern of behavior would be discontinued. When the home fails in this regard, the child tends to grow to recognize such behavior as the norm. In the context of traditional Nigerian society, this responsibility is extended not only to immediate members of a family, but also neighbours who are also in a position to guide and

correct child whenever an anti – social behavior is exhibited.

It is noteworthy that the family system in contemporary times has undergone some changes which have not positioned it to contribute significantly to a child's moral development. Factors such as increased divorce rate, extreme poverty, insecurity which leads to dislocation of families, increase in working mothers and poor parenting have reduced the impact of family in initiating the younger generation to the path of moral rectitude. The home, which is supposed to be the foundation of child's moral development has in contemporary times been destabilized by changes in the social, economic and cultural ways of life. A UNESCO (1999) report cited by Udefi (2010) has it that, the family is being threatened both in its form and in its substance as a result of the changing social, cultural, scientific and demographic trends nationally and internationally. Some of the indicators of these changes include: increase in the number of illegitimate births by adolescent girls, increase in the number of divorces, urbanization, and displacement of persons especially women and children during wars and advances in biology and medicine which have brought about gene manipulations and human cloning.

As an individual proceeds to the second level, conventional stage where he or she tends to see morality as acting in accordance with what society approves, having a basic understanding of societal norms and conventions becomes necessary in order to uphold society. Individuals at this stage tend to define what is right in terms of what is approved by close relatives as for example, what it is to be a good brother, mother, teacher and the like. At a later stage, the definition of what is right shifts to terms of the laws and norms established by the larger society. This takes place from the beginning of adolescence to full adolescence. At this stage, the peer group also plays a remarkable role. Peer group refers a group of individuals who associate closely with each other and who are approximately of the same age range, status and have common social interests. Peer group includes classmates, friends, and colleagues. An individual's character could be influenced by his peer group through democratic living, cultural awareness, taking up of social roles and leadership positions. As strong as the socializing influence of family is, its strong hold on the child starts to diminish as the child reaches adolescent stage. The urge for acceptance of peers is so intense in the adolescent such that without any form of authority or coercion, an individual readily picks social values as a result of mutual exchanges among peers. It is not uncommon to find adolescents going against parents' instruction in order to satisfy and get the approval of peers. In a study conducted by Goodlad reported by Ornstein and Levine (2008), students' response to the question, 'What is the one best thing about this school?', the most frequent response by far was "my friends" 37% with the least frequent response being "teachers" 5%. This underscores the tremendous influence peers can have on an individual. However, the influence of peers on moral education needs to be moderated and regulated as "peer culture" especially among young people is not always positive. It can sometimes be inimical to social good when not properly guided. With the advent of the new media, parents, schools and the adult world can hardly monitor or regulate the peer influence. This is in terms of the scope and the content of interactions that can be involved when people interact on the internet. The new media which the internet represents and conventional media which

include television, radio, newspaper, magazines, books, journals, films, cinema, and the like exert a remarkable role on young people globally. Through these media, people learn what is happening around them, and in other parts of the world (foreign cultures), they enjoy one form of entertainment or another through mass media and all of these positively or negatively influence their moral dispositions. Religion is another institution that has a strong hold on the moral development of Nigerian people. Most Nigerians are adherents of either Islam or Christianity, while a few subscribe to traditional religions. It is evident that moral education programmes in Nigeria have been largely inclined towards religions. Many school administrators and teachers would easily concede that moral education is being taught in their schools because Christian Religious Studies or Islamic Religious Studies are taught in such schools. It is noteworthy that religious education and moral education are not synonymous and they are separable because the two are different in their aims, theory, practice and logic of approach. While religion is largely concerned with linking an individual to the divine, morality is essentially meant to develop the sense of humanity and ability to make rational decisions in learners. Again, morality is not all about conformity and obedience as the case may be in religion. Morality, in the sense of behaviour according to certain standards of right and wrong, can exist without religion. Conversely, religion can exist without what we normally recognize as morality.

The above is not to deny the possibility of religion reinforcing morality in an individual but to show that merging the two can present some contradictions. For example, the rise of positivism and scientific thinking has made many to be skeptical about religious postulations and merging the two could bring about a collapse of the moral structure as a result of religious doubts. In the opinion of Bull (1969), the prevailing scientific outlook of our times thinks in terms of cause and effect, and is only convinced by proof. It asks the reason “Why”? and in the moral field, “Why shouldn’t I”? It is no longer enough to quote authorities, divine or human, or to lay down deductive laws as sufficient reasons for moral behaviour. Furthermore, religion especially as it applies to Nigerian society has not been very efficacious in raising the moral life of the people. Despite the upsurge in religious agencies, we continue to witness an upsurge in the incidence of immoral behaviour. As observed by Olupona, (2011) conversion of Nigerians to Christianity and Islam and an increase in public professions of spirituality seem not to have succeeded in structuring public life and citizens’ obligations to their community. Moreover, in view of the multiplicity of religious beliefs in Nigeria and the attendant multiple interpretations of scriptural injunctions even within the same religion, using religion to justify morality or content of moral education could be problematic because of the divisive and disintegrative tendency of religions in a heterogeneous society like Nigeria.

However, religions does not seem to have a significant influence in the moral life of Nigerians There has also been a considerable change in the role of religious agencies in promoting moral education in Nigerian. People appear to be more concerned with solving peoples’ social and emotional problems than with inculcating moral values in believers. Akinpelu (1987) observed that many people attend syncretic religious houses for social reasons, to cope with their emotional problems or to occupy idle

hours.

The third level, the post-conventional level is where Kohlberg submits that individuals' moral reasoning starts to be based on principles that underlie rules and norms and are likely to reject uniform application of a rule or norm. At the last stage, individuals become fully committed to their self-chosen principles. Rules, norms and laws are evaluated in terms of their coherence with the principles of fairness and justice rather than upheld simply on the basis of their existence within an existing social order. The school has the following roles in socializing a child. This is the real moral level. Individuals may not be able to advance to this highest level without a deliberate effort by the society to educate them morally. While the role of the family, media and religious institutions may be recognizable, the efficacy of the school as an agent of moral education still remains very relevant because all these agencies have been destabilized in one way or the other as shown earlier. As such, they cannot justifiably be trusted solely with the moral education of the young. It is noteworthy that the school itself is in the very tight grip of the larger society as the teachers are also part of the adult world. It appears very difficult to separate the school from the society, but there appears to be no alternatives than to fortify the school and organize it in such a way that it can discharge its role of moral education.

According to Akinpelu (1987, p. 6):

*In spite of these, the school, I am afraid, still remains a formidable agent of moral education and from all indications promises to be perhaps the most stabilizing influence on the future moral development of children.*

The influence of the school in moral education will continue to be significant as school life in Nigeria, gets extended to the very early years through day care centres, nursery and kindergarten schools. Despite its many "weaknesses", the school can provide a uniform and standardized criterion of what is morally right and wrong in view of the widely divergent moral standards and practices. Since schools are better structured and systematized, and being a formal and planned social institution with rules and regulations, they are better placed to offer moral education to the younger generation. Against the backdrop of the argument that learners spend more time at home than in schools, it is important to note that learners spend more time at home sleeping than in engaging in other activities. This further shows that they actually spend most of their active time in the school. Therefore, whatever goes on in the school can have a far-reaching effect on their lives.

#### **4. Moral Education in Nigerian schools**

The first section in the National Policy on Education (2013) starts with the statement of the overall philosophy of Nigeria which is to live in unity and harmony as one indivisible, indissoluble, democratic and sovereign nation founded on the principles of freedom, equality and justice and to promote inter-African solidarity and world peace through understanding. The document further identifies the five main national goals which have been endorsed as the foundation for the policy.

These are building of:

- (a) a free and democratic society,
- (b) a just and egalitarian society,
- (c) a great and dynamic economy,
- (d) a united, strong and self - reliant nation,
- (e) a land full of bright opportunities for all citizens.

The policy goes further to list values that the educational enterprise should seek to inculcate and these are:

- (a) respect for the worth and dignity of the individual.
- (b) faith in man's ability to make rational decisions,
- (c) moral and spiritual principle in inter-personal and human relations,
- (d) promotion of the physical, emotional and psychological development of all children, and
- (e) acquisition of competencies necessary for self-reliance.

The above underscores the fact that the national policy on education recognizes that fact that moral values are necessary for the survival of the individual and the society at large as the national aspirations for the individual and the society are only attainable in an environment of social values such as honesty, responsibility, trustworthiness are upheld by a good number of the citizens. When a good number of the citizens are not honest, trustworthy and reliable the society would not achieve any significant development. Therefore, for education to be an instrument for national development, it should foster the development of moral values in learners.

Much as it is important that education should equip learners with knowledge and skills for solving various human problems, it is critical that it also disciplines and ennobles the learner's mind such that he will be disposed to use his knowledge to benefit himself and others. In other words, the extent to which learners' would be able to deploy intellectual knowledge to the service of humanity would depend on the mindset with which both the teacher and the learner have approached the learning in the first place. This should inform why we study the various subjects in the curriculum. Teaching and learning of academic subjects are not supposed to be just for storing up information but also to give learners the disposition to use knowledge beneficially. Peters (1972, p. 11) says of the concept of education,

*an educated person is someone who is capable of delighting in a variety of pursuits and projects for their own sake and whose pursuit of them and general conduct of his life are transformed by some degree of all round understanding and sensitivity.*

It follows from the above that, knowledge, skills, and efficiency if not complemented with a favourable disposition and attitude to use them for the improvement of the individual and his society would not be worth-while. Frankena (1975) also submits that education is a process of fostering dispositions (belief, knowledge, habits traits, values) in the learners using an acceptable method. He presents this in his famous matrix that: X is fostering or seeking to foster in Y some dispositions D by method M where:

X = those doing the educating



Y = those being educated

D = the disposition that is desirable Y should have

M = the method that is satisfactory

A social science concept of education ordinarily adopts the society as the one to determine the desirable disposition and the satisfactory method. Frankena and many philosophers however, condemn the social science concept of education for taking too passive a view of the role of those being educated and for encouraging a 'conformist' way of looking at education. This is premised on the idea that the issue of the disposition that is desirable and the method that is satisfactory should be left as open as possible to giving room for constant intellectual interrogation of what are the worthwhile dispositions and the satisfactory method of cultivating them in the learners.

Applying this to Frankena's matrix, those doing the moral education on behalf of the society, are the teachers and all practitioners in the process of education. However, there is usually the need for political will on the part of the government for this to be achieved. Aristotle observed in his *Politics* contends that moral education is the main purpose of the political community. In his view, the main function of politics is to develop qualities of noble character in the citizens so that they are disposed to engage in noble actions. This implies that whether moral education would occupy a pride of place in the curriculum is more of a political issue than an educational issue. The political leadership has a critical role to play towards ensuring that moral education is given a pride of place in the national policy on education. Furthermore, political leadership has a key role to play to ensure that the teachers who are supposed to educate on behalf of society are adequately empowered to carry out this important responsibility.

Bercowitz (1997) identified four psychological foundations for a wholesome moral education. These are: self-control, self-esteem, social orientation and compliance with external standards.

While self-control and self-esteem are self-related, social orientation and compliance with external standards are other-related. Self-control has to do with the development of the learners' the capacity to resist temptations, suppress their impulses and delay gratifications. People can compromise their moral standards when their appetites rebel against reason and they are unable to bring appetite under the control of reason. When learners' intellect and reasoning ability are well cultivated, it could be possible though not definite that they would be able to bring their appetites and desires to cooperate with reason. Therefore, academic subjects should be taught to enrich learners' intellectual development and their disposition to make morally justifiable decision when they are faced with challenges or moral dilemmas so that they are able to take moral decisions in the light of reason. Self-esteem is closely associated with the virtue of pride. An individual with proper self-esteem has a sense of honour and it is more likely that he or she would avoid actions that can bring him or her to dishonour and disrepute. . The social orientation of learners has a lot to do with enabling learners develop interest in taking part in social interactions and relationships. This is critical because morality develops from showing concern for other people. Cultivating virtues such as honesty, fairness, sensitivity and the like are central to

moral development of an individual as they stem from having concern and being sensitive to issues that relate to others. In this regard, traditional African world – views that seem to emphasize social relationships, communality and togetherness can be articulated in the educational process. Compliance with external standards also implies other-related virtues. A moral person is beneficial to society not because he is so principled that he becomes an island to himself but because he also adheres to external controls which promote social harmony. To achieve reconciliation of the “self” with “others” it is pertinent that the process of education involve application of necessary external controls especially before learners’ master self-regulation.

In order to address many social problems facing humanity, there is need to pay attention to the moral education of the citizens. A number of approaches have been advanced by different moral educators. There are those who believe that morality can only be taught by teaching religion. Proponents of the position are of the view that there is no need for separate curriculum for moral education as long as religious studies are being taught in schools. This position is widely used in Nigeria. It has been criticized earlier for being dogmatic and for having the potential of being problematic in a multi religious society like Nigeria.

There is also the indoctrinative approach advanced by Berkowitz (1997) which embraces teaching of content. It involves highlighting a list of values or virtues that serve as the core of the curriculum. The highlighted values are then taught as specific topics. The approach has been termed indoctrinative because there is tendency to teach the selected values as absolutes, thereby preventing learners from questioning them or thinking of situations when such values may not be workable especially when they are held by other values. It may also suggest that moral education should exist as a separate academic subject in which the identified and selected values are taught. This approach to moral education would be inadequate because some situations may demand that an individual is able to apply his practical wisdom to figure out what to do in specific, concrete situations.

There is also the romanticist or value clarification approach which considers content to be idiosyncratic and to be latent in the individual. Here, there would be no content to teach but an attempt to develop the capacity of learners for moral reasoning. Value clarification involves raising moral issues and discussing real or hypothetical cases on which learners are allowed to freely make contributions. The teacher uses learners’ responses to know their level of moral development and then help them to move to the next higher level. The approach can be productive if it is not implemented in a value free way as proposed by some of its proponents. Learners should ultimately be guided as to the moral way to behave. Value clarifications without the inculcation and modeling would however, not suffice for education for sound moral education. The competence of the teacher to effectively coordinate the discussions and guide the learners to discover what is moral and what is immoral is also critical for value clarification to be productive.

In view of the inadequacies associated with social institutions such as the family, religion, media, peer group, schools need to be strengthened to discharge the role of moral education of the coming

generation. To effectively discharge this role, this paper proposes an Integrative Moral Education Model (IMEM) in which moral values permeate the entire life and culture of the school system. The model makes use of programmes of learning, programmes of activities and programmes of guidance to deliberately expose learners to moral experiences in order to inculcate in them specific character qualities, and through innovative, moral laden teaching approach to teaching of academic subjects, develop their capacity for objective moral reasoning and decision-making. With respect to programmes of learning, moral values can be integrated by way of:

- Contents that contribute to development of moral knowledge, sensitivity and moral judgement of learners through incorporation of moral issues and values.
- Pedagogical orientation of teachers to use discussion, value clarification, drama, storytelling etc. in stimulating learners to think and reflect about moral dilemmas.
- Learning materials that are value laden, for example, English language textbooks can use stories to teach reading and comprehension and at the same time teach moral lessons.
- Learning activities that foster cooperative, social, and service learning.
- Classroom climate that foster positive social engagements and relationships and that is devoid of treats, anxiety, injustice.

Programmes of activities refer to the hidden curriculum of the schools such as:

- Extra - curricular activities of the school that foster inculcation of “self” and “other - related virtues”
- Excursions to places and institutions that can develop moral sensitivity of learners, for example, correctional centers
- School reward policy that reinforces exemplary moral behaviours.
- Grading policy that incorporates moral development of learners.
- Roles and relationships that foster inculcation of values and virtues.
- Norms and ethos of the school that promote pro social attitudes and behaviours.

Programmes of guidance of the school may integrate moral values by way of:

- Morning assembly to inculcate positive social orientation.
- Special assemblies to communicate positive social values.
- Valedictory services to celebrate excellent moral behaviours.
- Counselling services to help learners that have specific moral and social challenges.
- Teachers’ personality that fosters exemplary role modelling.

The model relies heavily on the training and retraining of teachers to enhance their capacity to serve not only as teachers of academic subjects, but also as moral agents of the society. It would be more rewarding if all teachers of every subject are empowered and educated in such a way that they see themselves as moral educators. Although some countries like Korea and Japan have departments of ethics education in their schools and faculties of education where they specially prepare moral education teachers (Beongwan, Jangho, & John, 1996) research findings have revealed that best results

are achieved when every teacher of every subjects is made to be aware of the contributions he or she can make towards moral education. In the opinion of Timothy (2010), mere inclusion of a special subject in ethics would not be able to permeate the entire life of the school and bring about all round character development.

There are a number of possible objections and challenges to school - based moral education. Firstly, the school is intricately interwoven with the rest of the society. As such, the learner is influenced significantly by the home to which he returns after school, the peer he relates with, the type of values being amplified in the media and the adult world. If it is from this perspective that any attempt to use education as an instrument of social change can be challenged. Again, there is the problem of the core curriculum. In most countries Nigeria inclusive, curriculum is organized around subject areas which are expected to give learners knowledge, fact and information. These learners are expected to be able to master, retain and reproduce a lot of this knowledge, facts and information by passing both internal and external examinations. Failure to achieve this often attracts a vote of no confidence in the learners' ability as well as the teachers' competence. Hence, both the teachers and the learners are focused on mastery of the core curriculum. The prevailing examination-oriented system may give little or no time and attention for the kinds of programme of activities and programmes of guidance being proposed in the model. Related to this is the challenge of how the effectiveness of the programme can be evaluated. While it is easy to evaluate cognitive learning, moral learning is not easily evaluated by pen and paper tests. As examination bodies do not usually test moral and affective aspects of learning, teachers and learners may not be motivated to pay attention to the moral dimension of subjects.

In conclusion, the decline of peoples' sensitivity to moral values globally and in the Nigerian society, moral education of the younger has become an imperative. There is the need to pay a closer attention to the affective domain of learner as much as the cognitive domain. Social institutions such as the home, religion, peer group, media and the like play crucial roles in moral education but contemporary social changes such as high divorce rate, insecurity, poor parenting, poverty have destabilized them such that the formal school system needs to be repositioned to contribute to learners' moral development. A comprehensive and integrative moral education approach is suggested and it is recommended that teachers, irrespective of their subject areas should be oriented and empowered to serve as moral educators.

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