



## INFLUENCE OF MORAL EDUCATION ON SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' MORAL DEVELOPMENT IN IKA NORTH EAST OF DELTA STATE: IMPLICATION FOR CURRICULUM PLANNERS

By

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### Abstract

*The study investigated influence of moral education on secondary school students' moral development in Ika North East Local Government Area in Delta North Senatorial District of Delta State. Descriptive survey design was adopted. Four research questions were formulated for the study. The population for the study includes all students in public secondary schools in Ika North East Local Government Area. A total of one hundred respondents were selected from five secondary schools through simple random sampling technique. A twenty-item structured questionnaire titled Influence of moral education on students' moral development in secondary schools in Ika North East Local Government Area (IMESFNDINED) was administered. The instrument was validated by two experts in the Department of Christian Religious Studies, University of Delta, Agbor. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using the Cronbach Alpha analytical technique which yielded 0.83 reliability coefficient. Data collected were analysed using numerals and percentage techniques. The findings of the study suggests that moral education has a significant positive influence on students' moral development. It was recommended that government, school administrators and curriculum planners should ensure that moral education should be made a compulsory and core subject in secondary schools.*

**Keywords:** Moral education, students, secondary schools, national development, Delta North.

### Introduction

Moral education can be regarded as the process of guiding the character development of an individual in the society in order for an individual to do what is right or just (Jacobel, 2017). It is true that most, if not all school subjects have some contribution to the moral development of school students but the contributions of religion is greater than others.

Christian religious studies (CRS) otherwise called moral education is one of the subjects offered in many secondary schools in Nigeria. In Ika Local Government Area (LGA) of Delta state, it is offered as a compulsory subject at the junior secondary school level (JSI III), because of the importance the government attaches to Christian Religion. For this reason, there is need for all concerned with the organization and teaching of moral education in Nigerian schools and Delta State in particular to pilot the teaching process in such a way that students benefit optimally from the subject.

The value of having the subject taught at all levels of our education system cannot be over-emphasized. Such value has been stated by Bowe, (2012) when he asserted that:

*The real value of moral education lies in the fact that it helps man to live; it helps man to know his true position as a man created by God; and what are his duties (p. 76).*

From the above observations, it is understood that moral education is not only a subject to be learnt, but is also a way of life. The researcher is aware that there are few professionally trained moral education teachers teaching the subject. Omar(2015) opined that there are few trained moral education scholars and Mallams in Nigeria and some of them had brought social problems than religious piety.

Amorka (2016) stated that moral education teachers are not in any way significantly different from others in the society in their reactions to and involvements in embezzlement of public funds, bribery, corruption and other vices in the society. According to Amorka, such indifference calls into question the





relevance of moral lessons in inculcating moral values and proper conduct in the Nigerian society. It is apparently in recognition of the above that the National Policy on Education (2004) recommends that religious education be taken as one of the core subjects. The reason that informed this the following:

- i. The inculcation of right attitudes and values in students while at school;
- ii. National consciousness and national unity; and
- iii. The training of the mind in the understanding of world around.

According to Ojo (2019), there have been changes in educational methods and materials due to technological advancement. These changes throw challenges to education in particular in order to fulfill needs of the changing society. Due to shortage of moral education teachers, the subject is hardly given the necessary attention like other subjects. The result seems to be that students are involved in immoral behaviours without caution. Moral education teachers in Delta State, particularly in the secondary schools and teacher training colleges have great responsibilities not only to their subject but also to the students at large.

Moral education teachers according to Sato (2015) have to develop in their students clear thinking, correct perception of relationship and care for further reading through religion textbooks. Some teachers who are trained in other disciplines teach moral education in some rural secondary schools in Ika North East Local Government Area of Delta State. Nigerians probably cannot avoid situations such as these in developing countries like ours, but the ultimate improvement of the subject depends in the will of such teachers and the encouragement they can get from inspectors who understand the situation.

According to Okoh (2017), the importance of moral education is to produce good citizens for national development, who are useful to God, their nation, neighbours and themselves. This can only be achieved, if such students are morally sound and of good character. Perhaps, moral education as a subject can help us best achieve this sound morality. It is a subject that teaches the will of God as well as the good and evil in contemporary society. When an individual is educated without religion, he/she is made a clever devil.

It is the researcher's opinion that every moral education teacher not only in Delta state but all over the country should bear in mind the need for moral impartation on their citizens for national development. The question then arises: Are moral education teachers actually impacting the right knowledge through character, in actions and words? Are there trained and competent NCE/B.A (Ed) religion teachers to actually teach the subject?. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to investigate the influence of moral education on students moral development in secondary schools in Delta North Senatorial Districts. Specifically, the study aims to:

- i. Determine the extent to which moral education is being taught in school;
- ii. Determine moral education teachers' influence on the behaviour of the students;
- iii. Examine the extent the home/family sharpens the moral values of the child.
- iv. Examine the relationship between moral education of the students and national development.

### Statement of Problem

Religious education is an area of study in Nigerian schools both at the junior and senior levels. In Delta North, Christian Religious Studies (CRS) also known as religious education is one of the core subjects required for the junior school certificate. Although moral education (CRS) has been given a position of pre-eminence in the effective teaching and learning of the subject in secondary schools, the character and moral reformation of the students has not reflected in their behaviours.

### Research Questions

1. To what extent are students taught moral education in secondary school?
2. How effective are teachers teaching moral values in secondary schools?
3. To what extent do schools and families play important role in shaping your moral values?
4. What is the perceived influence of moral education on national development in Nigeria?

### Theoretical Framework of the Study

The study is based on the social cognitive theory, which posits that behaviour is shaped by personal, environment and behavioural factors' (Bandura, 1986). In the context of moral education, this theory suggests that individuals develop moral values and behaviour through a combination of personal factors such as cognitive processes, beliefs, attitudes environmental factors such as social norms and cultural





values. According to Bandura (1986), individual learn through observation and modeling of the behaviour of others, particularly those who are perceived as authoritative or influential. In this context of moral education, this suggests that the behaviour of teachers, parents, and peers can have a significant impact on the development of moral values and behaviour in young people.

### **Concept of Moral Education**

Moral education is the process of guiding the character development of an individual in the society in order for an individual to be able to do what is right or just. Again, it can be regarded as the teaching or attempt to teach standards of right or wrong as well as their application to individual lives at home and the family (Peter, 2016). Education generally enhances the development of good moral conduct in the society. It is also the responsibility of moral education to strengthen the idea of morality as an important foundation for social order. Moral rules are the same throughout, the whole world. It is for this reason that moral rules are referred to as being general or universal. The reason for this is that morality throughout the whole world is against cheating, stealing, fornication, adultery and so on.

### **Concept of National Development**

National development refers to the sustained improvement of economic, social and political well-being of a nation's population. It encompasses various aspects of a country's progress, including economic growth, poverty reduction, improved living standards, increased access to education and healthcare, enhanced infrastructure and social cohesion (Onu, 2020).

National development involves the mobilization of resources, both human and capital, and effective utilization of these resources to achieve sustainable development goals. It also involves creation of an enabling environment for investment and entrepreneurship, effective governance and public institutions and the protection of human rights (Oraino, 2018). In conclusion, according to Onu (2020), national development seeks to create a society that is prosperous, equitable and sustainable and where all citizens have the opportunity to fulfill their potential and contribute to the development of the country through moral education.

### **The place of Home/Family in Moral Development and character reformation of student**

The home should provide the basic need for the child, provide a stimulating environment that will motivate the child to learn, instill in the child moral and religious lesson. Above all, the home should be a good model for the child to copy (John, 2020).

### **The place of School in Moral and Character Reformation of Students**

The school must have adequate educational materials to teach the students. According to Okoh (2017), the school should include in its curriculum moral and religious education for the students, the environment should be conducive to enhance learning. Students should be taught how to be good and loyal citizens to their country in order to ensure national development. Schools should motivate students to organize various programmes that promote moral discipline amongst students.

### **The place of Society on the Moral Education**

The society should teach the students its rules and regulations, provide for their needs, and encourage the child on how to organize religious bodies for evangelism.

### **Implication for the Curriculum Planners**

For moral education to be properly rooted in secondary schools the following factors are very crucial:

- a. Inclusion of moral education in the school curriculum.
- b. Awarding scholarship to teachers of moral education.
- c. Giving prizes to the best behaved schools at local government levy annually.
- d. A credit pass in moral education 'may be made a condition for the award of either a Primary School Leaving Certificate or West African Examination Certificate.
- e. Like English and mathematics; a credit pass in moral education could also be made a condition for admission into tertiary institutions.





- f. A very special allowance should be given to the teachers of moral education in order to serve as a kind of motivation.
- g. Curriculum planners should sponsor teachers who are willing to write books on moral education for the use of school children, students and teachers.
- h. Religious leaders should always be invited by schools to talk to the students about the importance of morality.
- i. Provision should be made in the curriculum for students visitation to prisons, hospitals and motherless homes among others.

### Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive design of the survey type. This design is deemed appropriate because it is effective in providing both quantitative and numeric description of the stakeholders on the issue of interest in the study. The participants of this study are selected from the population of students in public secondary schools in Delta North Senatorial District.

A total of 100 respondents were selected from five secondary schools in Ika North East Local Government Area from Delta North Senatorial District through simple random sampling technique.

The schools are;

1. Owa-Oyibu Mixed Secondary School, Owa-Oyibu,
2. Ika Grammar School, Boji-Boji, Owa
3. Ede Grammar School, Umunede.
4. Ute-Okpu Secondary School, Ute-Okpu
5. Owa-Alero Secondary School, Owa-Alero.

The research instrument for this study was a twenty (20) item questionnaire which was distributed among the students. Data collected was analyzed using simple percentage. Fifty percent (50%) was used as the bench mark for decision.

### Research question 1

To what extent are students taught moral education in secondary school?

**Table 1**  
**Showing Percentage Responses of Moral Education Being Taught in Secondary School**

S/N	Statement of items	Suggested Responses	No. of Responses	Percentage of Responses
1	Moral education as a subject should be included in the curriculum of our school.	Yes	100	100%
		No	0	0%
			100	100%
2.	Teachers in our school emphasizes the importance of moral values	Yes	28	28%
		No	72	72%
			100	100%
3	Our school provides opportunities for students to engage in moral education.	Yes	20	20%
		No	80	80%
			100	100%
4	Moral education is integrated into various subject areas in our school.	Yes	0	0%
		No	100	100%
			100	100%
5	There is dedicated class for moral education in our school.	Yes	20	20%
		No	80	80%
			100	100%



Table 1 response shows that 100% responded that moral education is included in curriculum of the school as shown question 1. Item 2 shows 72% negative responses of teachers non-challant attitudes toward moral values. Items 3-5 indicate that moral education is not integrated into various subject areas.

### Research question 2

How effective are teachers teaching moral values in secondary schools?

**Table 2**

**Showing Percentage Responses of Students' Perception of Teachers Teaching Moral Values**

S/N	Statement	Suggested Responses	No. of Responses	Percentage of Responses
6	My teachers model good moral behaviour	Yes	15	15%
		No	85	85%
			100	100%
7.	My teachers explain the importance of moral values clearly	Yes	10	10%
		No	90	90%
			100	100%
8	My teachers create a supportive and respectful classroom environment	Yes	12	12%
		No	88	88%
			100	100%
9	My teachers use real -life examples to teach moral values.	Yes	0	0%
		No	100	100%
			100	100%
10	My teachers uses a variety of teaching methods to teach moral values	Yes	0	0%
		No	100	100%
			100	100%

Table 2 shows that 85% responded negatively that teachers do not model good moral behaviour as seen in items 6 and 7. Items 8-10 also indicate 100% responses that moral education teachers do not use variety of method in cause of their teaching.

### Research question 3

To what extent do school and family play important role in shaping your moral values?





**Table 3**  
**Showing Percentage Responses of the Home/Family/School in Shaping Moral Values**

S/N	Statement	Suggested Responses	No. of Responses	Percentage of Responses
11	My family discusses moral values with me regularly	Yes	21	21%
		No	79	79%
			100	100%
12	My family sets a good example by practicing moral values	Yes	30	30%
		No	70	70%
			100	100%
13	My home encourages me to act in accordance with my moral values	Yes	11	11%
		No	89	89%
			100	100%
14	My home instills a sense of responsibility towards me.	Yes	10	10%
		No	90	90%
			100	100%
15	My family helps me understand the consequences of my actions in terms of moral values.	Yes	7	7%
		No	93	93%
			100	100%

From table 3 above, items 11 shows 79% out of 100 response of family not discussing moral issues with their children while items 12-15 shows that 70%, 80% and 93% of the home does not encourage moral values.

**Research question 4**

What is the perceived influence of moral education on national development in Nigeria?



**Table 4**  
Shows the Percentage Responses Between Moral Education and National Development in Nigeria

S/N	Statement	Suggested Responses	No. of Responses	Percentage of Responses
16	Does moral education impact the development of emotional intelligence to national development?	Yes	100	100%
		No	0	0%
			100	100%
17	Can moral education be used to promote peace building and national development?	Yes	100%	100%
		No	0	0%
			100	100%
18	Can moral education be integrated with other subjects in the curriculum to promote holistic education and national development?	Yes	100	100%
		No	0	0%
			100	100%
19	Does moral education impact the development positive attitudes and values for national development?	Yes	90	90%
		No	10	10%
			100	100%
20	Does moral education contribute to the reduction of corruption and unethical behaviour towards national development?	Yes	60	60%
		No	40	40%
			100	100%

In table 4, items 16-18 indicate 100% that moral education has impact on the promotion of peace building and national development. Questions 19-20 indicate that moral education contributes to reduction of corruption and unethical behaviours towards national development.

### Discussion of Findings

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of moral education on students moral development in secondary schools in Ika North East Local Government Area in Delta North Senatorial District. The study sought to answer four research questions. The findings of the study reveal that 100% of the respondents agreed that moral education should be included in the school curriculum. This is in line with Bowe (2012) who asserted that the value of having the subject taught at all levels of our educational system cannot be over-emphasized.

Table 2 reveals that 85% of moral education teachers do not use variety of teaching methods in course of their teaching which is in line with Sato (2015) who said that moral education teachers have to develop in their students clear thinking, correct perception of relationship and care for further reading through religion textbook.

Table 3 findings shows that 70% responded that families do not set good examples by practicing moral values, while 90% agreed that the home does not instill a sense of responsibility towards behaviours





of their children which is in agreement with Peter (2016) who opined that to teach the standards of right or wrong should be applicable to individuals lives at home and the family.

In table 4, 100% responded that moral education has relationship on peace building and national development which according to Onu (2020) said citizens can fulfill their potentials and contribute to the development of the country through moral education.

### Conclusion

The study investigated the influence of moral education on students' moral development in secondary schools in Ika North East Local Government Area in Delta North Senatorial District. The findings suggest that moral education has a significant positive influence on students' moral development. Furthermore, curriculum planners should develop a comprehensive and coherent curriculum for moral education that align with the needs of students and the expectations of the society.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Teacher training: Teachers should be trained on effective methods for teaching moral education in the classroom, including storytelling, role-playing, and discussion.
2. Curriculum development: Curriculum planners should develop a comprehensive and coherent curriculum for moral education that aligns with the needs of students and the expectations of society.
3. School culture: School administrators should prioritize moral education and create a school culture that values and supports it.
4. Parental involvement: Parents should be encouraged to play an active role in their children's moral education by reinforcing the values taught in school.
5. Policy development: Policy makers should prioritize moral education in the national education agenda and allocate resources for moral education in school.
6. Research: More research should be conducted on the effectiveness of moral education interventions in secondary schools, with a focus on evaluating different teaching methods and approaches.
7. Continuous assessment: Regular assessment and evaluation of moral education programs should be conducted to ensure their effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.
8. Integration: Moral education should be integrated into other subject areas, such as social studies, language arts, and health education.
9. Community involvement: Communities should be involved in promoting moral education in schools by providing resources and support, and collaborating with schools to create opportunities for moral education outside the classroom.
10. Awareness campaign: A public awareness campaign should be launched to increase the understanding and importance of moral education in promoting personal and societal development.

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