

Morality as Bedrock in Sustaining a Society

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Abstract

The aspect of morality is very important in any given society. The maintenance of morality is the responsibility of all members of the society. The study examines the various definitions of morality, factors influencing moral behavior, causes of immorality, the relationship between religion and morality. The significance of morality in the society, solution to moral problems in our society has been proposed with a view to reduce such problems to the minimum, level in order to improve the quality of social life.

Keywords: morality, sustaining, society

1. Introduction

Morality has no single universal definition because of the diversified human customs, social and religions concepts, it is not surprise for one to find what is acceptable in community as morality is may be opposite in another, Standard English Dictionary defined "morality as ethics conduct or attitude judge from moral standard point". In else where explain that morality deals with issues concerning habits, customs, way of life especially when accessed, as good or bad, right or wrong Lacy (1978).

But according to the Dictionary of Philosophy (1981-11) Miscow as a form of social institution that regulates peoples conduct in all spheres of social life without exception Yola (1425AH).

With the above definitions one can understand that morality means the observance of the principles of right and wrong conduct. Therefore the yardsticks of measuring or judging what moral or immoral is dependent on the culture and believed of a particular society Liman (2005). Although morality be argued that there is no universal morality, it is equally necessary to note that, the societies do not differ on what specific or activities constitute a moral behaviour. This point is where society differ, is also a place where socio economic, culture and religion backgrounds differ from one social to another. But the concept of morality is at least the same

within the same groups, Yola (1987). However one finds the concept of truth, honesty, keeping promise, to give each and every individual from Immoral to moral behaviours to be transformed to a society characterized by ethical conduct worthy of emulation.

- a. Individual factors: An individual would sometime come to across different situations in different occasions in which eventually come to affects his behaviours. These are many factors in this direction that accelerate the influence. These include personal values moral family factors, peer group and morals.
- b. Family factors: The family is the immediate environment where individual meet. It plays a great role in shaping the ethical standards of an individual. An individual starts to form ethical standard right from home, as Islam recommended. The implication here is that children are likely to develop high moral standard if they perceive other family members consistently adhering to high a moral standard. Further more, they develop good moral behaviours when they see that family members are reward for a moral behaviours demonstrated and also punished for doing immoral behaviour

such as being untruth, stealing etc.

- c. Peer Group: This is also another factor that greatly influence moral behaviour of an individual. A child is in most cases be influenced by peer group he interacts daily. Thus, if the child's peer group engages in activities that are highly moral he may equally act the same. But if it is otherwise, then he may also set the same.
- d. Life experiences: Indeed life experiences whether positive or negative influence of an individual, and determine his moral belief and behaviours as happens to Malcolm- X, Beckon (1417AH) quoted him narrating his experience while on Hajj which later had a strong impact on his later years as a Muslim. He said:

There were thousands of pilgrims from all over the world. They were all colours from blue-eyed blonds to black skinned Africans. But we were participating in the same rituals, displaying a spirit of unity and brotherhood that my experience in America had let me to believe never could exist between the white and non white..... you may be shocked by my words coming from me. But in this pilgrimage what I have seen and experienced, has forced me to re-arrange much of though - patterns previously held, and toss aside some of my previous conclusions.

- e. Personal values and Moral: An individual value and morals influence his moral behaviour or standard, for instance, a person who observes honesty in his life always respects people's property and he always behave differently from person who does not respects people's property because of lack of honesty in his life.

2. Causes of Immorality

A number of sociologist have move "anomie strain theory" what is called "removed of positively value stimuli". These includes loss of beloved one. Husband, wife or son or daughter, serious illness, of a friend, moving to a new school district, divorce separation of ones parents and suspension of child from school. The other forms of which lead to immoral behaviour involves unpleasant experience such as child abuse and neglect, criminal victimization, physical punishment and problem with parents or peer. These problems are said to cause frustration, fear and eager, which in turn leads to immoral acts such as theft, aggression and drug abuse, Alex (2010).

Some sociologist believe that when you find out what brings about conformity in the society, so when it lacking, immorality will come. They also affirmed that people will likely become immoral if they associate more with individual who holds immoral ideas.

Freudian in Valsiner (2007), stressed that people naturally inclined to commit immoral acts and will do so unless they are properly controlled, and finally arrived at the absence of social control causes domain.

Travis (19G9) assumes that all of us are endowed like animals with the ability to commit immoral acts but because of the strong bond to society we don't take the advantage, in other words our bond to society made us not to behave as animals. This is to ensure our conformity. He stated four (4) ways for people to bond themselves to society, as follows:

- Attachment to conventional Institutions, commitment, involvement in conventional activities and belief,
- i. With the attachment to conventional people and institution, in this case they should love their parents, making friends with conventional peer, linking school, and working hard to develop intellectual skills,
 - ii. On commitment: Individuals invest their time and energy in conventional types of education, holding a job, developing an occupational skills, improving professional status, building up a business or acquiring a reputation virtues,
 - iii. His involvement in conventional activities, he simply keep himself, so busy doing conventional things that he do not have time for per taking in immoral activities or even about them.

- iv. With regards to belief: in this case individual has a strong moral belief that they should obey the rules of conventional society, with these individual is likely to get struck in conformity Alex (2010).

Further more a part from the above mentioned it has been observed that there are some which may likely casuse immoral behavior to an individual, these includes family background, family is the first and immediate school for an individual whenever a child grew up in a family in which giving good training to their children is not much given concerned, there may be likely the children of that family would have immoral behaviours in their mind as well as in their activities.

3. Religion and the Control of Human Behaviour

Philosophically, religion provided human beings with stable, effective and extensive frame for living along history, both internal and external world, nominative and behaviour have been its constant influence, Vaisiner (2007).

Although in the Western psychological literature, religion is mainly found in clinical contexts, suggesting that it is more related to pathology and psychological abnormality, and certainly yet religion can certainly not be ignored as a relevant empirical psychological fact in cultural normality, because even in the West 60% of North America pray at some time, of whom 97% believe their prayer to be heard and answered, and 86% believe their prayer make them better Valsiner (2007).

Such presence in religion practices this suggest that. In order to understand the human psyche, it may be more advantageous to include prayer and religion in psychological normality Vygoisky (1989). In this case religion is playing better role in a human being an also can be use as an instrument in controlling human behaviour for the better especially in Nigeria where the majority of it's are followers of either Islam or Christian religions.

4. Islam and Morality

The Islamic notion of morality is connected with the good of human life on the earth and it is part and parcel of its approach to life. The position of Islam is that the entire universe is created and sustained by Allah (SWT) and that man is appointed to serve as Allah's vicegerent. Therefore the right order of an ethical life for man is live in absolute obedience to him, in accordance with the requirements of the Shari'ah Dalhatu (2010) the idea of man being Allah's vicegerent on earth and accountable to Him in the life hereafter provide the creation by which a precise single of life behaviour is assessed and characterized as moral or immoral. Even the Islamic concept of human vicegerent and accountability provides a typical standard for judging what is good and bad, Islam does not give freedom to man to defined the limit of good or bad purely on the bases of his thinking. Islam affords man with a defined source for determining what is moral and immoral. This source is the Shari'ah, which stipulates a standard of moral behaviour imunitable and all embracing.

5. The Significance of Morality in the Society

The position of morality in the society is not like that of the man of pleasures and luxuries, from which indifferent may be possible. But Islamically, morally is the name of the principle of life which the religion must adopt and must care for the respect of its standard bearers, both Islam and Christianity has Innumerate all this virtues and principles and has encourage their followers to make them part of their life one after the other, they also make the morality as part of their security, way of assisting one another, purifying soul etc.

In Islam the main aim of prayer, therefore is purification of soul from all types of evils and immoral acts, Islamically if ones prayer does not prevent him from committing evils such as adultery, gambling, telling lies, backbiting, indecent talks, therefore one needs to check his prayer by improving the method of its conduct.

Rich individuals should take care of the poor people in the society, so that there should be peaceful and

stable society, with these, divisions, hatred murders, robberies and all forms of immoralities may be reduced. It is well known that the prohibition of taking alcohol by both religion (Islam and Christianity) is to protect sense and reasoning as well as the prohibition of adultery which destroys the basis of the family, it works against the interest of children born or to be born, it also loosens the permanent bonds of society.

Therefore society without moral value is bound to collapse, some of the effects of immorality are: insecurity of lives and properties as we are experiencing in Nigeria today. Injustice, dishonesty, telling lies, hypocrisy, slandering, deception and cheating in its various forms when dealing with others.

6. The Way Forward

Controlling evil acts in the society is not the responsibility of a particular group of people in the society, it is the responsibility of all, to change for the better. More so, there are five categories of people who have a better role to play in controlling evil acts, in the society these are: religious leaders, political leaders, community leaders, parents and teachers

- i. Religious Leaders should be sincere in their speeches, teachings and utterances and to put into practice whatever they are preaching to their followers.
- ii. Political leaders should be committed in whatever brings about the development of the society such as creating job opportunities to unemployed individuals to provide small skill industries to keep our youth busy and others, they may assist in controlling immorality in our society,
- iii. Community Leaders: Should work towards enlightening their community about the effect of immorality in the society,
- iv. Parents/Family as mentioned above, is the immediate environment for any individual, parents should take care of their children, in whatever direction to give them good training for the better, v) Teachers are expected to be sincere worthy of emulation, they must be characterized by dignity, gravity and to be high minded, and to avoid anything which is not accepted by the society.

7. Conclusion

A variety of methods can be used to either eradicate some of the problems or reduce them to the minimum level. Government should adopt the policy of screening all literatures: films, video and audio cassettes coming from outside for the consumption of the citizenry whenever anything found to be detrimental to the morality of our children should be prohibited from circulation. Religious studies should encourage your society and to sincerely put into practice whatever is learned. Religious leaders, political leaders, community leaders and parents, school teachers, each should discharge his responsibility in giving good moral training. The moment anything undesirable is detected, immediate steps should be taken to stop it from further escalating. Leaders, parents and teachers should also exhibit exemplary conduct to be imitated by the rest of the members of the society.

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