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| MORAL VALUES ORIENTATION AND STUDENTS' INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP IN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA | |  | Humanities |
| | | Keywords: secondary school students, undergraduate students, social relations, interpersonal relationship, examination malpractice, moral values, teacher's beliefs, students' perceptions, beliefs, etc. | |
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| Abstract | | | |
| <p>The study investigated the influence of moral values on secondary school students' interpersonal relationship in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. The design adopted was causal comparative design. One research question and hypothesis was posed to guide the study. A total of nine hundred and fifty-seven (957) students were drawn from multi-stage sampling procedure. The instrument for data collection was Moral Values Orientation Scale and Interpersonal Relationship Questionnaire (MVOSAIRQ). The instrument was validated by Three (3) experts in Educational Psychology and Measurement and Evaluation respectively. Cronbach Alpha reliability estimate was used to determine the internal consistency, ranging from 0.6 to 0.86. The data were analyzed with One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The result revealed that moral values orientation has significant influence on interpersonal relationship among secondary school students. Based on the findings, it was recommended that Parents, teachers and significant others should teach and inculcate moral values orientation to enhance effective interpersonal relationship among secondary school students.</p> | | | |

Introduction

Interpersonal relationship is crucial in every level of human development because it is central to social adaptation and happiness. Secondary school students are at a level in their development where identification and a sense of belongingness are obtained through cordial relationships within their peer groups. The interpersonal skills learned during the school years are fundamental in maintaining healthy and satisfying social relationships.

The researchers have observed with utmost dismay on a close examination that many students in Calabar Education Zone manifest poor interpersonal relationship in many ways: they lack communication skills that are inevitable for positive interpersonal relationship. They find it difficult in getting along with members of their families, let alone peers and school mates and teachers.

The above was reinforced by Lebel Chafanleans and Sugari in Orji (2013) as they confirmed that shift in behaviour that is most sensitively troubling to teachers are engaging in talking back, arguing, non-compliance, task refusal, social endemial and yelling. They added that if these behaviours are not controlled, prevented and stopped easily enough, they might become potent destruction to the future wellbeing of students, growth of the school system and the development of the society at large. The above authors seem to be addressing the scenario in

Calabar Education Zone. There is therefore need for what should be done. The foregoing actions have other latent consequences.

These consequences are not farfetched. Eyo (2002) rightly pointed out that such students are weak in many areas of school life including learning, social relations with teachers and other students, inability to partake in school co-curricular activities. Most of them participate minimally in school activities and even spend more time outside the school. They are most likely to go through a wide range of emotional suffering, feeling of depression, anxiety, dissatisfaction and seclusion.

Over the years, school authorities and various interest groups and Government have been taking steps to ensure students have good interpersonal relationship, through co-operative or group learning, inter-house sports, school clubs, competitions in the areas of quiz and debate, inter-school competition, cultural days, children's day, religious activities in school. Despite all the efforts made by these various stakeholders, poor interpersonal relationship still exist among secondary school students in Cross River State in alarming rate. Hence the researchers seek to determine if moral values orientation has a significant influence on interpersonal relationship among secondary school students.

Moral values orientation is the principle that governs the reason of practical behaviour of people in relation to moral demeanor. Dietrich-Von (2009) defines "moral value as a universally accepted ethical principle that governs the day to day living of life." Interpersonal relationship is the life of interaction that occurs between two or more people. It involves student-students and student-teacher's relationships in a social setting. People engaged in interpersonal relationship may interrelate face to face, covertly, overtly or even anonymously.

Literature Review

Studies were conducted by Ishiene and Shayn (2012) on the influence of moral values orientation and social adjustment of college students. The instrument consists of moral values Inventory and student's social adjustment inventory. 538 undergraduate students were used. High (30%), middle (40%), and low (30%) scores on moral values scales were compared on students' social adjustment. Results indicated that moral values had significant reverse relationship with social adjustment; that is, the lower the moral values, the higher students' level of adjustment in social adjustment than low level of student's moral values.

Veugeler and Vedder (2003) argued that "all values are essentially moral values since they involve a notion of what is good and what is bad. However, they get a real meaning in contexts. Thus, for example, political or cultural values can be seen as conceptualized moral values". "There is a well-built agreement in the educational literature that values are intrinsic to instruction as a moral doings" (Enrich, 2010; Hensen, 2001). "Teaching is described as essentially a moral undertaking because educational goals cannot be disentangled from wider consideration and ideal

pertaining to personal moral development. Moral values can be expressed in any action teachers undertake in the classroom, for example the way they address pupils and each other, the way they dress, the language they use, what curricular content they focus on, who they pay attention to, where they stand while talking with students, with and without teachers being aware of such expressions” (Hensen, 2001). They also opined that “teachers’ lack of awareness of implicit moral magnitude of teaching can be hazardous since modeling the values might be more crucial in shaping attitudes and behavior” (Veugeler & Vedder, 2003).

Tonya (2011) carried out a study on “the relationships among moral values, examination malpractices, achievement motivation and academic success in a Turkish tenth grade high school. Sample consists of 510 participants, 257 (52.4%) of whom were females and 243 (47.6%) were males. The data collected by the Turkish version of Test on examination malpractice Inventory, moral values Inventory and Self-Evaluation Inventory. Students’ G’A was accepted as the indicator of their academic success. Small but significant correlations were found between the worry subscale of TAI scores and academic success ($r=-.18$, $P<0.01$) and between the SHS scores and academic success level ($r=0.15$, $P<0.01$). Moral values and examination malpractice were associated positively with academic success”.

Don-Broke (2010) revealed that “the tender-adolescent interpersonal association is even more essential for adolescent result”. Examination is a potent instrument for judgment of knowledge or competence in every human endeavour especially in educational institutions. For examination to be adjudged, to be free, fair and devoid of partiality, valid and reliable, it is necessary to urge that our educational institutions must endeavour to conduct examinations with all the seriousness it deserves, lest the entire nation is saturated with incompetent or half-baked and confused professionals who may bring disaster to our future development. Today, institutions in Nigeria are perpetrated by folks who are anxious to pass and obtain certificates. Today, there is an unpleasant, unholy plot to aid and support examination misconduct by school leaders, supervisors, teachers, students, parents, and “mercenaries” whose intention is to make quick cash rather than authentic love for the examinees.

Obot, Sunday, Odey, Ogodo and Agwanyang (2020) in Steryen (2004) carried out a research on “the social adjustment of morally stable adolescents as compared to the unstable adolescent. The independent t-test statistic was used to analyze the data. The subjects comprised of 177 adolescents between the ages of 13-19 years. He found out that adolescents who are stable morally can withstand, which such adolescents are capable of treat regard of self and others, and are able to cope better with stress, conflicts and developmental tasks. The morally stable adolescent is better adjusted and overall is characterized by mental flexibility, emotional resilience and an ability to relate and think positively”.

Onyejiaku (2011) equally asserted that morality is highly valued in any society since the beginning of human race. A man is moral when his or her behaviours are socially accepted as being right. He or she is immoral when his or her behaviours are judged as being wrong. Moral

issues are the central tendencies which distinguished human kind from the world of lower animals. The first man and woman on the face of the planet earth lost not only God-given paradise but also communion and fellowship with Him due to their failure on the moral standard set forth for them.

One who is highly moral is naturally friendly, peaceful, caring, honest, faithful, obedient, honouring, respectful, loving, tolerating, forgiving, hospitable, and sociable, all their virtues connote good interpersonal relationship which enhance and aid achievement in every human endeavours. Iwe (2003) posits that “it is for the fact of morality, that man is universally recognized as a moral being, in other words, being conscious of the nature and value of his action in terms of propriety and impropriety, honesty or dishonesty, fairness or unfairness or injustice. This is so depending on what he or she chooses to do or belongs, either moral or immoral”.

According to Iwe (2003), “God expects moral consciousness in all human beings, having made all capable of perceiving the fundamental general principles of morality as: evil is to be avoided and good is to be pursued; innocent should not be punished, respect the right of others, one must live reasonably, do not do to others that which you would not want to be done to you; treat others as you would want to be treated; no one should be victimized, and others in that manner. Interpersonal relationship calls for relating with others warmly, cordially and tolerating and going along with others. It is only possible through highly moral orientation”.

Also, Onyejiaku (2011) added that in any human society, the moral judgment and behaviour of individual citizens constitute the cornerstone on which the healthy and smooth functioning of the society rest. The better the moral judgment and behaviour of the individuals are, the greater the happiness, stability and security of the society. There is bound to be social instability insecurity in any society in which most of the citizen are morally bankrupt. Furthermore, in terms of interpersonal relationship, the nature of one’s social attachments influence the rate of delinquent acts. It is true that bad company corrupts good manners. Peer group good-moral-relationship contributes to the members’ moral behaviour. If a child associates with delinquent children, he may internalize criminal behaviours and continue in such a life because he finds it difficult to earn livelihood in socially approved manner.

Moreso, Jesus, the paragon of morality was written about by John in I John (3:16-18) arguing strongly that love in action is the evidence of good interpersonal relationship. He wrote “This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us; And we ought to lay down our lives for other (brothers and sisters); if anyone has material possessions and sees his brother or sister in need, but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him; Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth”. However, sometimes we see war, hatred and division and bitterness, spring up from the fanatics among the moralist and the “holier than thou” ones against those who do not belong to their religion or faith or belief or sect.

According to Paul, the apostle of the Bible in (I Corinthians 3:3-4) who observed that morality causes somewhat poor interpersonal relationship, of course Paul frowned at them, calling such actions and extremity unspiritual, worldly, childish or low moral value orientation.

Steffen (2007) posits that “religious or moral fanaticism comes not from deep faith, but from lack of it. The fanatic is convinced that just believing in God and living a moral life is simply not enough. The fanatic feels compelled to engage in behaviours that demonstrate his faith. He believes that the magnitude of those behaviours must be commensurate with the strength of his faith. The more he believes, the more he has to do to show it. It is also a matter of degree, because every religious person feels he has to do something, and it is only a question of how much. The fanatic believes that simple faith in God is not enough. He must do more. And if there is nothing reasonably more to do, he will invent something”.

Pantic and Wubbels (2012) conducted a research on “teachers’ moral values and their interpersonal relationships with students and cultural competence. The study explored whether and how teachers’ beliefs about moral values are reflected in the student-teacher relationships (that is, levels of control and affiliation in teachers’ and students’ perceptions of this relationship), and in teachers’ cultural competence. A positive association was found between teachers’ paternalist beliefs and their own perceptions of control. A negative association was found between teacher’s liberal beliefs and students’ perceptions of affiliation. Positive associations were found between teachers’ liberal beliefs and the metacognitive and motivational components of cultural competence”.

Furthermore, Davis (2011) found out that, students who were high on moral values orientation were better in their social relationship than those low in moral values. Also Ayop (2013) and Feyombo (2010) found that high moral values orientation is associated with negative interpersonal relationship. In another study, Shunk and Hadan (2011) carried out a study where interpersonal relationship of college students was correlated with the students’ perceived poor parenting style and their personality. High moral values orientation was connected to all interpersonal relationship variables (arrayed from -.24 to (-.74) with each organization showing poor relationship. Moral values were more strongly associated with poor individual-emotional subscale for women (-.65) and for men (-.74).

Maliki (2013) conducted a study “to examine the differences between interpersonal relationship behaviours, perceived social and civic obligations, background variables and academic achievement among senior secondary school students in Bayelsa State of Nigeria. The survey research design was adopted in this study. The sample consisted of 228 male students and 222 female students, all senior secondary three randomly selected. The findings revealed that there were significant differences in students ‘measure of interpersonal relationship behaviours and perceived social and civic obligations based on sex, fathers’ educational attainment, number of siblings, age of father and academic achievement. Male and female students whose fathers had higher educational attainment, as well as those from large families, who had older fathers and

those with higher educational attainment were on the average in their interpersonal relational relationship behaviours and social and civic obligations than their male counterparts, whose fathers were less educated, had fewer number of siblings, had younger fathers and lower achievement scores”.

Also, Nazneen and Manika (2012) conducted a research on “a comparative study related with moral values, social maturity and life satisfaction amongst male and female college students. Ethics and morality is an essential principle in every individual life, it is also found that life satisfaction is dependent on both moral values and social maturity of the students. Since they are the pillars of our future generation their value pattern and social maturity reflects in their behavior, so the present study intends to correlate between these 3 variables and explore their relationship with each other with their environs to understand better adolescent's behaviour and their back ground in highlighting the reason”.

In their study, Niemi and Young (2007) conducted research that “has established robust diversity in the extent to which different moral values are endorsed. Some people focus on values related to caring and fairness, whereas others assign additional moral weight to in group loyalty, respect for authority and established hierarchies, and purity concerns. Five studies explore associations between endorsement of distinct moral values and a suite of interpersonal orientations: Machiavellianism, prosocial resource distribution, social dominance orientation, and reported likelihood of helping and not helping kin and close friends versus acquaintances and neighbours. They found that Machiavellianism (Studies 1, 3, 4, 5) (for example, morality, controlling and status-seeking behaviours) and social dominance orientation were negatively associated with caring values, and positively associated with valuation of authority. Those higher in caring values were more likely to choose prosocial resource distributions (studies 2, 3, 4) and to report reduced likelihood of failing to help kin/close friends or acquaintances. Finally, greater likelihood of helping Acquaintances was positively associated with all moral values tested except authority values. The current work offers a novel approach to characterizing moral values and reveals a striking divergence between two kinds of moral values in particular: caring values and authority values. Caring values were positively linked with prosociality and negatively associated with Machiavellianism”.

On his point, Thomas (2007) carried out a study to “examine the norm conformity and value perceptions of Malaysian secondary school students. To measure adherence to value-based social norms, a values or behaviour questionnaire was administered to approximately 400 Malaysian adolescents. The results showed a self-reported high degree of conformity to social norms. In order to increase understanding of the moral dimensions of schooling, semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers and students which gave ‘voice’ to teachers and students as moral agents. The results indicate that some students view school rules as too rigid and undermining the moral development schooling is trying to promote. The research also shows that the implicit values of respect, justice and fairness are central in Malaysian students' relationships

with their teachers. This research shows teachers and students as active constructors of moral meaning”.

Taking another dimension, Rachael (2001) states that, “study of morality is moulded by an intricately linked set of tangential issues each of which has a unique effect on moral development. Friendship and peer groups in particular play an indisputable role in helping to shape the path of moral development in children and adolescents. In evaluating various philosophical and psychological perspectives on morality, two principal arguments emerge concerning the link between friendship and moral development: in the first argument, friendships act as a positive force in fostering moral development, as they provide a background upon which children can formulate their own moral rules and values. In direct contradiction, the second argument espouses friendship and morality as inherently antithetical, relying heavily on the idea that friendship encourages subjectivisms and impartiality.

The potential negative influence of peer influence on moral development is perhaps most clearly manifested in the prevalence of aggression and violence in the lives of many children and adolescents. In studying the link between friendship and moral development, then, it is crucial to consider both the positive and negative consequences that peer relations can have on a child’s struggle to develop his own individual sense of morality”.

Materials and Methods

The research design adopted for this study is the ex-post facto design.

Subject

A total sample of 957 students was used for the study (Male 521 and 436 Female). Multi-stage and stratified simple random sample techniques were used in drawing samples of schools and subjects. Southern Cross River State was stratified into 7 zones, based on the seven local government areas that make up Southern Cross River State namely: Akpabuyo, Akamkpa, Bakassi, Biase, Calabar Municipality, Calabar South and Odukpani Local Government Area respectively. 20 schools were used for this study.

Data collection

An instrument captioned Moral Values Orientation Scale and interpersonal Relationship Questionnaire (MVOSIRQ) was constructed by the researchers and used for data collection. The instrument had 3 sections. Section A elicited from the respondents’ demographic information such name of school, sex and age. Section B was designed to measure moral values orientation of students. This section consisted of five (5) items. While Section C was designed to measure interpersonal relationship. This section consisted of twenty five (25) items Likert-type scale with 4 alternative responses.

RESULTS

Hypothesis 1:

Moral values orientation does not significantly influence students' interpersonal relationship. To test this hypothesis, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used. The results obtained from the analysis are as presented in Table 1 and 2.

TABLE 1
One-way analysis of variance of moral values orientation and students' interpersonal relationship

| Variable | Category | N | Mean | SD | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|--------|-------------|-------|-------|
| Gender Relationship | Low | 185 | 1.5405 | .63394 | | |
| | Moderate | 386 | 1.5855 | .63180 | | |
| | High | 370 | 1.7459 | .63357 | | |
| Non-teaching staff relationship | Low | 185 | 1.4649 | .62564 | | |
| | Moderate | 386 | 1.6140 | .62727 | | |
| | High | 370 | 1.5784 | .64229 | | |
| Student-student relationship | Low | 185 | 1.8324 | .79333 | | |
| | Moderate | 386 | 1.8135 | .70355 | | |
| | High | 370 | 1.9703 | .78377 | | |
| Stud Teacher Relationship | Low | 185 | 1.5676 | .54874 | | |
| | Moderate | 386 | 1.5492 | .62328 | | |
| | High | 370 | 1.6486 | .61667 | | |
| OVERALL interpersonal relationship | Low | 185 | 1.6270 | .79832 | | |
| | Moderate | 386 | 1.6503 | .74865 | | |
| | High | 370 | 1.7973 | .75761 | | |
| | | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| Gender Relationship | Between Groups | 7.130 | 2 | 3.565 | 8.900 | .000* |
| | Within Groups | 375.744 | 938 | .401 | | |
| | Total | 382.874 | 940 | | | |
| Non-teaching staff relationship | Between Groups | 2.817 | 2 | 1.409 | 3.517 | .030* |
| | Within Groups | 375.733 | 938 | .401 | | |
| | Total | 378.550 | 940 | | | |
| Student-student relationship | Between Groups | 5.141 | 2 | 2.570 | 4.523 | .011* |
| | Within Groups | 533.048 | 938 | .568 | | |
| | Total | 538.189 | 940 | | | |
| Student -teacher Relationship | Between Groups | 2.004 | 2 | 1.002 | 2.722 | .066 |
| | Within Groups | 345.294 | 938 | .368 | | |
| | Total | 347.299 | 940 | | | |
| Overall interpersonal relationship | Between Groups | 5.431 | 2 | 2.716 | 4.675 | .010* |
| | Within Groups | 544.847 | 938 | .581 | | |
| | Total | 550.278 | 940 | | | |

* Significant at 0.05 level of significance, $df = 2, 938$; critical F-value = 3.00

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze the data. The result is presented in Tables 1 and 2. As shown in Table 1, each of the calculated F-values is greater than the critical F-value of 3.00 at 2 and 938 degrees of freedom, at 0.05 levels of significance for gender relationship; non-teaching staff relationship; student-students relationship and overall interpersonal relationship while for students-teacher relationship the calculated F-value of 2.72 was less than the critical F-value of 3.00, $p > 0.05$. With these results, the null hypothesis that, moral values orientation does not significantly influence students' interpersonal relationship was rejected.

This implies that moral values orientation has a significant influence on students' interpersonal relationship in gender relationship ($F = 8.900$, $p < .05$); non-teaching staff interpersonal relationship ($F = 3.517$, $p < .05$); student-students' interpersonal relationship ($F = 4.523$, $p < .05$) and also for overall interpersonal relationship ($F = 4.675$, $p < .05$).

Since there was a statistically significant influence of moral values orientation on some students' interpersonal relationship, a post hoc test was performed using Scheffe post hoc procedure. The results as presented in Table 2 show that subjects with low level manifest gender relationship were statistically different from participants with high level manifest ($MD = .205$; $p < .05$); moderate level manifest were statistically significantly different with high level manifest ($MD = .160$; $p < .05$).but there was no statistical difference between subjects in the low and moderate groups ($MD = .044$; $p > .05$).

Also, for non-teaching staff relationship, subjects in the low group significantly differ from subject in the moderate group ($MD = .149$; $p < .05$); but there was no statistical significant difference between subjects in low and high groups ($MD = .113$; $p > .05$) and moderate and high groups ($MD = .035$; $p > .05$).

TABLE 2
Scheffe post hoc test for significant mean difference

| Variables | Groups | Groups | Mean diff. | Std error | Sig. |
|------------------------------------|----------|----------|------------|-----------|------|
| Gender relationship | Low | Moderate | -.04495 | .05660 | .730 |
| | | High | -.20541* | .05699 | .002 |
| | Moderate | Low | .04495 | .05660 | .730 |
| | | High | -.16045* | .04605 | .002 |
| | High | Low | .20541* | .05699 | .002 |
| | | Moderate | .16045* | .04605 | .002 |
| Non-teaching staff relationship | Low | Moderate | -.14912* | .05659 | .031 |
| | | High | -.11351 | .05699 | .138 |
| | Moderate | Low | .14912* | .05659 | .031 |
| | | High | .03561 | .04605 | .742 |
| | High | Low | .11351 | .05699 | .138 |
| | | Moderate | -.03561 | .04605 | .742 |
| Student-students' relationship | Low | Moderate | .01896 | .06741 | .961 |
| | | High | -.13784 | .06788 | .128 |
| | Moderate | Low | -.01896 | .06741 | .961 |
| | | High | -.15680* | .05485 | .017 |
| | High | Low | .13784 | .06788 | .128 |
| | | Moderate | .15680* | .05485 | .017 |
| Overall interpersonal relationship | Low | Moderate | -.02323 | .06815 | .944 |
| | | High | -.17027* | .06863 | .047 |
| | Moderate | Low | .02323 | .06815 | .944 |
| | | High | -.14704* | .05545 | .030 |
| | High | Low | .17027* | .06863 | .047 |
| | | Moderate | .14704* | .05545 | .030 |

* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Similar result is observed among groups when assessed for student-students' relationship, subjects in the moderate group significantly differ from subjects in high group ($MD = .156$; p

<.05) but there was no statistical significant difference between subject in low and high groups (MD = .137; $p > .05$) and moderate and low groups (MD = .018; $p > .05$).

For overall interpersonal relationship, there was statistical significant difference between subjects in low group and those in high group (MD = .170; $p < .05$); moderate and high group significantly differ (MD = .147; $p < .05$) but there was no significant difference between those in low and moderate groups (MD = .023 $p > .05$).

Discussion

The hypothesis stated that moral values orientation does not significantly influence students' interpersonal relationship. The analysis of this hypothesis reveals that moral values orientation has a significant influence on students' interpersonal relationship in gender relationship; non-teaching staff interpersonal relationship; student-students relationship, individuals who were high in moral values were better than their counterparts who were either moderate or low in interpersonal relationship.

The results show that moral values orientation has significant influence on students' interpersonal relationship. Also, the student-teacher relationship is statistically significant. The reason for the student-teacher interpersonal relationship result, could be attributed to poor interpersonal relationship, that is, they have little or non-warmth, close relationship between them. Moreover, students may not be friendly with their teachers nor close enough to receive their teacher's assistance.

The present findings exposed that moral values orientation significantly influence all the proportions of students' interpersonal relationship. The significant influence of moral values orientation on interpersonal relationship is that, moral values maintained by people direct their dealings regarding the way they interrelate and provide accommodation for one another. It could also be that a morally oriented person is aware of the rights and wrong of the society, and so struggles hard to exist in a way that will not endanger the concern of others. This character helps to build up the aptitude to live in harmony and socialize positively, since moral behaviours are learned.

The result supports the findings of Guan and Patrizia (2007) who revealed that "self-transcendence values which are moral values have a direct effect on the management of interpersonal relationships". The finding is in line with Gibbs (2003) in his study, revealed "a significant influence of moral values orientation on social interaction. This means that individual's basic moral values do not differ in his interpersonal relationship or some relationship. Moral thought deals with individual reasoning to justify moral decision. A person makes choices regarding his moral life in line with his moral value system."

The result supports the works of Dietrich-Vou and Hildebrand (2009) which revealed that “high moral value is a universally accepted ethical principle that governs the day to day living. They believed that these principles are important in maintaining unity, harmony and honour between people. Moral values according to them are usually communal and shared by people or public in general, thus if there is no agreement among community members, no moral values will be established. Furthermore, they believed that moral values cannot be attained by nature like the beauty of one’s face, intelligence, or a lively temperament can only grow out of conscious, free attitudes; man himself must essentially cooperate or relate with others for their realization. The result is so because moral values are the highest among all values-goodness, purity, truthfulness, humility of man, rank higher than genius brilliancy, exuberant vitality, than the beauty of nature or of art, than the stability and power of a state”. According to Dietrich, “those who are high in moral values, relate well and better, shine forth in act of real forgiveness, in a noble and generous renunciation; in a burning and selfless love, more significant and more noble, more important and more eternal than all values. Positive moral values are the focus of the world; those who are low in moral values, perpetuate the greatest evil, worse suffering, sickness, death, and disintegration of a flourishing culture” (Dietrich Von, 2009).

The results also support the opinion of Onyejiaku and Onyejiaku (2011) who asserted that morality has been valued in any society since the beginning of human race. A man is moral when his or her behaviours are socially accepted and being right; he or she is immoral when his or her behaviours are judged as being wrong. According to them, moral issues are the central tendencies which distinguished human kind from the world of lower animals. The first man and woman on the face of the planet earth lost not only God-given paradise but also communion and fellowship with Him due to their failure on the moral standard set forth for them.

The book of Genesis (3:8-9) reported that God in His transcendent morality had interpersonal relationship with the first man and woman, in which He evidenced by his constant visit, interaction, fellowship with man and woman. God went ahead to discover man/woman problem, fall and weakness, then gave His love, mercy and grace to save them. Biblically, morality portrays the image of God (Genesis 1:27). Morality is the attribute of God. According to Exodus (15:11) “who among the gods is like you, O Lord? Who is like you – majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?” Like God, anyone who is highly moral, is loving, kind, relating in righteousness. Anyone who is highly moral bears the fruits of God such as good interpersonal relationship by observing the golden rule in Mathew (22: 37-43). One who is highly moral is naturally friendly, peaceful, caring, honest, faithful, obedient, honouring, respectful, loving, tolerating, forgiving, hospitable, and sociable, all their virtues connotes good interpersonal relationship which enhances and aids achievement in every human endeavours.

The result is in line with the finding of Iwe (2003), who revealed that “God expects moral consciousness in all human beings, having made all capable of perceiving the fundamental general principles of morality as: evil is to be avoided and good is to be pursued; innocent should not be

punished, respect the right of others, one must live reasonably, do not do to others that which you would not want to be done to you; treat others as you would want to be treated; no one should be victimized, and others in that manner. Interpersonal relationship calls for relating with others warmly, cordially and tolerating and going along with others. It is only possible through highly moral orientation”.

The study also agreed with the results of earlier research carried out by Campbell(2004), Veugeler and Vedder (2003), who argued that “teachers’ lack of awareness of implicit moral dimensions of teaching can be risky since modelling the values might be more important in shaping attitudes and behaviour than the content of their messages”. Similarly, the result agreed with a study carried out by Ayops (2013). In his study, he found out “the influence of moral values orientation on interpersonal relationship of lecturers and students that moral values was found to have the highest correlation value ($b=.695$).”

The result also does not corroborate with the finding of Davis (2011) who found out that “students who were low on moral values orientation were better in their social relationship than those high in moral values. He revealed that high moral values orientation is associated with negative interpersonal relationship”. The finding of Shunk and Hadan (2011) is supported by the study. They carried out a study “where interpersonal relationship of college students was correlated with the student perceived parenting style and their personality. The study revealed that moral values orientation was related to all interpersonal relationship variables (ranging from $-.24$ to $(-.74)$ with each association showing poor relations. Moral values were more strongly associated with poor personal-emotional subscale for women ($-.65$) and for men ($-.74$). It could be in such study area the students have different meaning for values orientation and interpersonal relationship.”

Conclusion

Based on the results and findings of the study, the following conclusions were reached. Moral values orientation significantly influences interpersonal relationship.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made: 1. Parents and teachers should commit students in religious deliberations and actions that will aid them create acceptable religious values; 2. Teachers and non-academic staff should make themselves easily accessible to students in order to establish the needed rapport for positive relationship. It will also provide an enabling environment for students’ proper interpersonal relationship or socialization; 3. Parents should educate their children on moral values to enhance interpersonal relationship.

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