

APPRAISAL OF RELIGIOUS AND MORAL EDUCATION AT THE SECONDARY
SCHOOL LEVEL IN ITESIWAJU LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA
OF OYO STATE

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ABSTRACT

The researcher's interest on solution to the current moral decadence among secondary school students propelled him into investigating the causes with a view to finding possible solutions to this problem. The study was intended to find out the cause of moral decadence in secondary schools, the relationship that exists among religion and morality, and what model(s) could be used to teach religious and moral instruction in order to enhance the moral life of secondary school students in Itesiwaju Local Government. Area. The study used descriptive survey design which aimed at describing current moral situation of students, the status of religious and moral studies in the schools and how best to teach religious and moral instruction to achieve a desirable result.

Five out of the secondary schools in the local government area were used as case study where 250 questionnaires were administered to students and teachers as respondents. The instrument used for data collection by the researcher was questionnaire, designed by the researcher using descriptive statistics to determine the validity and reliability of the instrument, thus the correlation coefficient between responses from test and pretest is 0.929. This implies that the research instrument (questionnaire) is reliable, hence the results of the analysis are valid.

Findings among others are: There are no sufficient trained teachers to handle religious and moral instructions in the secondary schools. It was also discovered that religious and moral education is not well handled. Parents are contributors to students' immoral acts during examinations. Also, government system of rewarding teachers is one of the factors that contributes to examination malpractices. This study recommends that government should employ trained teachers on religious and moral education and that religious books and novels that teach morality should be made available. Religious leaders should be involved in the Parents-Teachers Associations in the secondary schools and that religious leaders should make themselves available whenever they are called upon. Also, teachers should employ methods of teaching that would help students reason by themselves; they should not be indoctrinated. Thus, Kohlberg's theory of cognitive moral development is advocated. It was also discovered that, if morality will be inculcated, religious instruction should be made a core course in the secondary schools.

Conclusion

The study has shown that moral depravity of secondary school students is at an alarming rate. It was revealed from results that status of religious and moral instructions in the secondary schools is discouraging. Also, research has shown that both government, students and parents are contributors to moral decadence in the schools. Government failed to employ trained teachers. Students' attitude to studies is poor, they are concerned about social events in the community other than their

studies. Parents' behavioural attitude, support for examination malpractices and not allowing their parents to be disciplined are few of those things earlier discussed in this work.

Religious institutions shared in the blame of students' immoral lapses. Results showed that religious leaders less emphasize moral codes in their religions. Research has proved that religion is and has been the primary source of spirituality and morality in the sense that the leaders of the world religions such as Christ, Krishna, Muhammad and many others are among the most influential people influencing the past and present day morals.

Recommendations

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

1. Government should employ trained teachers on religious and moral education into all secondary schools.
2. School authorities should make available religious books and novels that teach morals.
3. Religious leaders in the community should make themselves available at any school programmes they are invited.
4. Religious institutions should awake and teach their members moral codes in their religions so that youths in their organizations could be morally brought up.
5. Teachers should employ methods of teaching that would help students reason by themselves, they should not be indoctrinated. Thus, Kohlberg's theory of cognitive moral development is advocated for by this writer which allows students reason by themselves.

6. Parents-Teachers Associations of schools should involve religious leaders in the community in their meetings.
7. Religious and moral instructions should be core courses in the secondary schools and not to a few that are willing.
8. All stakeholders in the training of generations to come should endeavour to fulfil their responsibilities. Moral development of adolescents is not to be left in the hands of school authorities alone.
9. Multi-faith religious studies should be allowed in the schools and be embedded in religious and moral education curriculum.
10. Parents-Teachers Associations should be a forum to address moral issues of students
11. Religious leaders, parents and teachers should be models for their children.
12. Discipline should be encouraged on any erring student in a corrective manner.