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INFLUENCE OF MORALITY AND DISCIPLINE IN ENHANCING SOCIETAL VALUES AMONG UPPER BASIC EDUCATION LEVEL STUDENTS IN USHONGO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF BENUE STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated influence of morality and discipline in enhancing societal values among upper basic education level students in Ushongo Local Government area of Benue State with the purpose to determine influence of morality and discipline in enhancing societal values among upper basic education level students. Two research questions guided the study and two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of 6023 students from all upper basic education level students in the study area. The sample of the study was made up of 378 respondents out of the population of 6023 students using simple random sampling technique. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire constructed by the researcher titled "Influence of Morality and Discipline on Societal Values Questionnaire" (IMDSVQ). Data were collected by the researcher with the help of research assistance. Frequencies and percentages were used for socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. Mean Scores and Standard Deviations to answer research questions and Chi-square (χ^2) test of goodness of fit to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. It was found out that, morality and discipline have positive role in enhancing societal values among upper basic education level students. It was also found out that contentment, obedient, dedication, honesty, tolerance and courage are necessary for revamping the low level of morality among upper basic education level students. It was concluded and recommended that others that guidance and counselling services should be strengthened and forums formed whereby continuous orientation will be given to students to enable them acquire appropriate societal values.

KEYWORDS: Immorality, indiscipline, societal values

INTRODUCTION

The society cannot function effectively unless there is some agreement on what is right and wrong. If the individual obeys the rules and laws of the society, the person is considered morally upright. Sometimes an individual may not agree with the rules and laws of the group, but the person conforms

to them because this is the only course opened to him. In other words, people chose to do the right things because it is rewarding to do so. Musa (2000) asserted that if the individual acts according to the rules and laws of the society because of controls from within, then, the individual is known as a morally mature person. This author submitted that the immoral person is the one who fails to conform to groups expectations as defined by rules, customs and laws. This person does not conform not because of ignorance of these expectations, but rather because of feelings of no obligations to the group, and neither does the individual agree or accept of the standard of behaviour expected by the group.

There are different levels at which people understand the meaning of the word discipline especially as it appears in common use. According to Ukwueze (2010), sometimes a very strict person is seen as a disciplined person. For others, if a person conforms to or obeys rules and regulations in a given system such a person is also considered as a much-disciplined person. For the children parents who do not allow their children to socialize with their peers and prefers them to remain indoors are described as much disciplined parents. Auger (2004) defines discipline as an intervention to stop misbehaviour. It implies social control based upon imposed conformity or obedient to authority maintained by external restraining authorities such as parents, teachers or representatives of the law. Indiscipline is the opposite of discipline and it refers to non-conformity to group norms and values, In the school set up, cultism, sexual irresponsibility, drug abuse and examination malpractice are disciplinary acts exhibited by students.

Lack of discipline seem to be the most serious problem facing the ration's educational system as many school administrators and students are also concerned about disorder and danger in school environment. Anger and Tyav (2006) opined those problems such as drug abuse, examination malpractice, insubordination, truancy and intimidation in school environment results in countless classroom disruptions leading to suspension or expulsions. In addition to these school disciplinary issues, Nigerian classrooms are frequently plagued by other kinds of behaviour, which disrupt the flow of classroom activities and interfere with learning. As such, most of the classroom time is taken up with in disciplinary activities other than instruction, and discipline problems are responsible for a significant portion of this loss of instruction time.

In recent times, indiscipline and immorality characterized by religious intolerance, truancy, examination malpractice, aggressive behaviour, drug abuse and sexual harassment, indecent dressing in educational institutions appear to be on the increase. Thus, Obiabo and Leke (2004) observed that students in schools are involved in secret cults, armed robbery and drug abuse. The authors also noted that increasing members of the society across the ideological spectrum believe that our society is in deep moral trouble, characterized by the breakdown of family cohesion, the deterioration of civility in everyday life, the abandonment of moral values and indiscipline. This is a source of worry to the society. The importance of morality and indiscipline cannot be over emphasized.

Oladunni (2000) defined morality as moral behaviour and ability to act in the manner expected to all persons by the society in any given situation. It refers to the behaviours or actions that are considered by most members of the group to be right. Ukwueze (2010) holds that an act is said to be moral if it falls within the preview of behaviours that can be analysed by use of principles of right or wrong and that which complies with set standards or principles of good or right behaviours. The author said that, man is seen as a moral agent because of his rational nature; to be free and rational is to be subjected to the moral law and any person that acts along the above lines is said to be benevolent, virtuous, human or kind. The view concluded that, moral conduct is voluntary and affects the basic direction of our living and that it cannot judge a man's actions as wrong if the person carries it out under duress, torture, threat of death or insanity.

Anikpo (2010) defined societal values as the acceptable or the right way of doing things in society. These are also qualities which members of the society are expected to have in order to ensure that society survives and develops. Every society needs courageous men and women. The society needs people who would support what is good and condemn what is bad; judges who would uphold justice without fear, politicians who would stand for the truth without asking for bribes; citizen who would defend their rights without being afraid of the government, and agencies and institutions that would defend public morality. Oladunni (2000) maintained that, no society will develop without such citizens of courage. Nigeria today needs many of such men and women who are disciplined, courageous and morality upright.

Such qualities and acceptable behaviours are called societal values. They are also known as mutual values because in some ways, they are similar to religious doctrines or principles. Otten (2000) said that societal values constitute a wide range of acceptable virtues. Some of these acceptable virtues include; honesty, integrity, chastity, modesty, tolerance, self-discipline, humility, truthfulness, patience, industry and perseverance. It implies that these are quite laudable virtues that every society if properly inculcated and internalized would help produce discipline and morally groomed individuals. This study is therefore set out to determine the influence of morality and discipline in enhancing societal values among upper basic education level students in Ushongo Local Government Area of Benue State.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is sad to note that the quality of product (students) from secondary school today seem not to meet the societal expectation due to the menace of social vices like cultism, examination malpractice, drug abuse and sexual irresponsibility. In recent years, report on the poor performance of students in the secondary school's examination in Benue State appears to be an issue of great concern (Benue State Examination Board, 2020). Secondary schools have increasingly become plagued with occasional outburst of student's militant approaches towards resolving problems that seem to threaten their welfare. This is evident in some secondary school students in Mbagwa in Ushongo Local Government that resisted to be punished when late in school and in turn started singing songs around the school

premises which disrupted academic programme for the day. Violent assaults on teachers, fellow students, and school administration: gang warfare, extortion and destruction of schools and public property are becoming too common in our society today. At Lessel in Ushongo Local Government Area, some students ganged up and beat their teacher; when asked, the students said the teacher use to be harsh in school. How then can morality and discipline enhance societal values among upper basic education level schools in Ushongo Local Government Area? This is the issue, this research is set to address.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research is to determine the influence of morality and discipline in enhancing societal values among upper basic education level schools in Ushongo Local Government Area of Benue State. Specifically, the research was design to achieve the following objectives:

1. To determine the influence of morality in enhancing societal values among upper basic education level students in Ushongo Local Government Area of Benue State.
2. To determine the influence of discipline in enhancing societal values among upper basic education level students in Ushongo Local Government Area of Benue State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the influence of morality in enhancing societal values among upper basic education level students in Ushongo Local Government Area of Benue State?
2. To what extent does the influence of discipline enhance societal values among upper basic education level students in Ushongo Local Government Area of Benue State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 significance level:

1. Morality has no significant influence in enhancing societal values among upper basic education level students in Ushongo Local Government Area of Benue State.
2. Discipline has no significant influence in enhancing societal values among upper basic education level students in Ushongo Local government Area of Benue State.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The area of the study was Ushongo Local Government area of Benue State. The population of the study consisted of 6023 students from all upper basic education level students in the study area. The sample of the study was made up of 378 respondents out of the population of 6023 students. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample size. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire constructed by the researcher titled "Influence of Morality and Discipline on Societal Values Questionnaire" (IMDSVQ). The instrument was validated by three experts. The reliability was ascertained through a trial test using Chronbach Alpha. Data were collected by the researcher with the help of research assistance. The data

collected was analyzed using Mean Scores and Standard Deviations to answer research questions and Chi-square (χ^2) test of goodness of fit to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Analysis of Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic characteristics of respondents is done according to gender, age, and occupation.

Table 1: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent. (%)
Male	256	54.2
Female	122	45.8
Total	378	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Table 1 shows that majority of the respondents represented by 256 (54.2%) were male while the rest 122 (45.8%) were female. This means that, male respondents dominated the research.

Table 2: Age Demographic of Respondents

Age bracket	Frequency	Percent. (%)
11-14	80	24.8
15-18	200	50.0
19-22	98	25.2
Total	1139	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Table 2 reveals that, majority of the respondents represented by 200 (50%) were the age bracket of 15-18 years. Those between 19-22 years had 98 (25.2%) while age bracket of 11-14 years was represented by 80 (24.8%).

Table 3: Occupation of Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percent. (%)
Students	378	100
Total	1139	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Table 3 reveals that all the respondents represented by 378 (100%) were students.

Analyses of Research Questions

Research Question One:

What is the influence of morality in enhancing societal values among upper basic education level students in Ushongo Local Government Area of Benue State?

Table 4: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of the Influence of Morality in Enhancing Societal Values Among Upper Basic Education Level Students in Ushongo Local Government Area of Benue State

S/no	Items	N	Mean	SD
1	Morally groomed students obey authority to avoid punishment	374	3.67	0.66
2	A moral individual considers the interest of others	374	3.19	0.67
3	Morality can lead to modesty in one's way of life	374	3.35	0.87
4	Morality creates a crime-free environment	374	3.24	0.87
5	Morality groomed students who do not involve in exam malpractice	374	3.10	0.95
6	Morally groomed students do not involve in drug abuse	374	3.09	0.98
	Clusters	374	3.47	0.86

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Result from Table 4 range from 3.09 to 3.67 which are all above the cut-off mark of 2.50. In fact, a cluster mean of 3.27 with corresponding standard deviation of 0.86 is indicative of positive influence of morality in enhancing societal values among upper basic education level students.

Research Question Two:

How does the influence of discipline enhance societal values among upper basic education level students in Ushongo Local Government Area of Benue State?

Table 5: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of how Influence of Discipline Enhance Societal Values Among Upper Basic Education Level Students in Ushongo Local Government Area of Benue State

S/no	Items	N	Mean	SD
1	A disciplined student may adhere to rules and regulations	374	3.69	0.65
2	A disciplined student may excel in all his academic endeavours	374	3.15	0.63
3	Discipline can bring about honesty and truthfulness	374	3.12	0.97
4	Even when instructional materials are not used for social studies	374	3.01	1.04
5	Discipline can lead to enhance and perseverance	374	3.06	0.98
6	Disciplined students are found to be obedient	374	2.92	1.03
	Clusters	374	3.16	0.93

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

In Table 5, the result ranges from 2.96 to 3.69 which are all above the decision point of 2.50. This means that the cluster mean of 3.16 and a corresponding standard deviation of 0.93 are indicating a high influence of discipline in enhancing societal values among upper basic education level students in Ushongo Local Government Area of Benue State.

Test of Hypotheses

Test of hypotheses is done in line with the hypotheses formulated using chi-square (χ^2) for hypotheses 1-2 and t-test for hypotheses 3 at 0.05 level of significance. Where $P < 0.05$, the null hypothesis is accepted but where $P > 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected

Hypotheses One:

Morality has no significant influence in enhancing societal values among upper basic education level students in Ushongo Local Government Area of Benue State.

Table 6: Chi-Square Analysis of the Influence of Morality in Enhancing Societal Values Among Upper Basic Education Level Students

	Value	Decision
Chi-square	296.507 ^a	
Df	15	Sign.
p-value	0.0001	

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Result from Table 6 shows a chi-square value of 296.507 which is significant. This is because the p-value of 0.0001 is less than 0.05 ($0.0001 < 0.05$). The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that there is significant influence of morality in enhancing societal values among upper basic education level students in Ushongo Local Government Area of Benue State. That is, morality has positive influence to play in enhancing societal values among upper basic education level students.

Hypotheses Two:

Discipline has no significant influence in enhancing societal values among upper basic education level students in Ushongo Local government Area of Benue State.

Table 7: Chi-Square Analysis of the Influence of Discipline in Enhancing Societal Values among Upper Basic Education Level Students

	Value	Decision
Chi-square	372.900	
Df	15	Sign.
p-value	0.0001	

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

From the Table 7, the result shows that a chi-square value of 372.900 is significant because the p-value of 0.0001 is less than 0.05 ($0.0001 < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant influence of discipline in enhancing societal values among upper basic education level students.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The research was set out to achieve two major objectives. In the first objective majority of respondents strongly agreed with the view that, morality can promote and enhance societal values among upper basic education level students in Ushongo Local Government Area. The null hypothesis was rejected because the p-value of 0.0001 is less than significant value of 0.05. This is in line with Ukwueze (2010) who stated that the society cannot function effectively unless there is some agreement on what is right and wrong, if the individual obeys the rules and laws of the society, the person is considered morally upright. Sometimes the individual may not agree with the rules and laws of the group, but conform to them because this is the only course available. In other words, people chose to do the right thing because it is rewarding to do so.

Musa (2000) also asserted that if the individual acts according to rules and laws of the society because of controls from within himself, then, he is known as a orally mature person. The author posits that the immoral person is the one who fails to conform to group expectations as defined by rules, customs and laws. The person does not conform because of ignorance of these expectations, but rather because of no obligations to the group, and neither does he accept of the standard of behaviour expected by the group.

In the second objective, majority of the respondents strongly agreed with the view that discipline has positive influence on the development of societal values since the p-value of 0.0001 is less than 0.05. Anikpo (2010) is of the opinion that, the security of a society depends very much on the discipline of its citizens; disciplined citizens appreciate things like punctuality, law, rules and commitment to duty, cooperation, hard work and dignity of labour. Discipline encourages creativity, initiative, innovativeness, inventiveness and resourcefulness. A disciplined people respect orderliness, procedures and evaluation of means to ends. The author stated that discipline should not aim at

immediate results or conformity under force or coercion. The ultimate aim of discipline is what becomes of the individual when they grow up to adulthood or old age, when no one is there to guide them. When an individual is self-directed and does that which is right voluntarily, consciously and habitually, he would turn out to be a disciplined person.

CONCLUSION

It is important to note that from the study carried out on the perceived role of morality and discipline on enhancing societal values among secondary school students, it was established crystal clear that morality is very relevant because it helps to enhance societal values among students, while discipline has articulated role to play on enhancing societal values and can help students to act in a manner that is approved by the society.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to make morality and discipline more oriented to students, the following recommendations have been made:

1. Guidance and counselling service should be strengthened and forums formed whereby continuous orientation will be given to students to enable them acquire appropriate societal values.
2. Parents should take into consideration the development needs of their children, especially their educational and social needs.
3. Teachers should be committed to their task of training the learners by interacting with individual learners without discrimination so as to inculcate good virtues into them.

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