

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION AND RELIGION IN THE PROMOTION OF DECENCY AND MORAL UPRIGHTNESS IN NIGERIAN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract

The condition of things in Nigerian Institutions regarding morality and display of virtues is nothing to write home about. Every day, through our print and electronic media, we hear and read about very nauseating news of immoral behaviours such as prevalent promiscuity, examination malpractice cultism, violent destruction of lives and properties by students. Many Nigerian girls have turned themselves into prostitutes as a result of lack of contentment, and the desire for academic success at all cost even when gyration is their main pre-occupation. They have become murderers of innocent babies and seducers of men. The news are really disturbing hence, the paper identified very closely this social vices, their general, academic as well as spiritual implications and how to successfully stamp them out of our campuses through the efforts of the government, the school authority and religious bodies.

Introduction

Nigerian society is presently going through a period of the highest occurrence of features of moral bankruptcy. News heard makes one's heart bleed and shows that the main fabric of morality as already broken down in our society. Moral decadence is not limited to the government circle in form of corruption. Our institutions of higher learning are also full of several heart-breaking immoral activities.

The God of the whole universe who created man for His pleasure is equally uncomfortable with these myriad immoral behaviors (Heb. 12:14). Decency and moral uprightnes, which upholds man's life and entrenches a solid relationship with the Almighty God, have been eroded. Our female students have turned themselves into propellers of immorality. To build a decent and morally upright society, our campuses will have to be sanitized not only for the sake of the preservation of human race but also to promote a solid, sound and concrete relationship with one another and with God who will judge all immoral acts in the world beyond. (Heb. S:27)

Analyzing the nature and existence of man, some metaphysicians like Plato, Augustine and a lot of others explained affirmatively that man has a dual existence. He is said to be spiritual (having a soul) and physical (he possesses a body). The physical aspect of man's development, which includes the intellectual aspect of man's life, has always superseded the spiritual aspect. However to fully eradicate the kwashiorkoric development engulfing our society as a result of the laize-faire attention paid to man's spiritual development our schools and religious bodies will have to look into various ways by which spiritual values can be injected into our youths.

Neglecting our social and spiritual values will continue to encourage the production of monsters. This paper, apart from considering some key concepts used in the body of the paper and the features of indecency and moral bankruptcy in our institutions of learning and their consequences, looked into the aims of higher educators in Nigeria, God's attitude to indecency and immorality as well as how

decency and moral uprightness can be promoted in our tertiary institutions through the effort of the college / university authorities and our religious bodies.

Definition of Key Concepts

Decency - Decency according to the Longman dictionary of contemporary English refers to acceptable behaviors, especially moral and sexual behaviors. It also means to behave in a way that follows the basic standard of acceptable behavior.

Moral uprightness - Means behaving acceptably. Always behaving in an honest or decent ways. When someone is said to be morally upright, he is in essence living and behaving according to moral standard of the group or society or God.

Aims and Objectives of Higher Education in Nigeria

According to the National Policy on Education (2004 ed) higher education in Nigeria should lead to the following:

1. The acquisition, development and inculcation of the proper value orientation for the survival of the individual and society;
2. The development of the intellectual capacities of individuals to understand and appreciate their environment,
3. The acquisition of both physical and intellectual skills which enables an individual to develop into useful member of the society:
4. The acquisition of an objective view of a local and external environment.
5. The dissemination of existing and new information, and
6. The pursuit of service to the community e.t.c.

The above objectives apart from the number one goal have been fully pursued in our institutions of higher learning. The aspect of re-establishing our old and new values worth of sustaining the nation as expressed by Adaralegbe (1985) has not really been given enough attention in Nigerian schools. For instance, Nigerian society attaches great importance to respect and preservation of human life, our society as part of our old values attaches great importance to dressing decently, avoidance of sexual immorality, abortion, and cheating e.t.c. Unfortunately these anti-social behaviors have engulfed our institutions of learning. Hence, as far as the number one aim of education stated above is concerned, one can say that our institutions of learning have failed.

Features of indecency and moral bankruptcy in Nigerian higher institutions of learning

The social and moral behaviors prevalent in Nigerian tertiary institutions include the following: examination malpractice (cheating in examination) - this has since become a social menace bedeviling our tertiary institutions. Both male and female students have severally flouted the law guiding examinations and they are also sometimes aided by shameless teachers who are expected to be role model for students to emulate.

Sofola (2004) identified some reasons for the increase in the incidence of examination malpractice which include:

- (a) fear of failure.
- (b) lack of confidence

- (c) inadequate preparation for examinations
- (d) laziness etc.

Cheating in examination takes various forms or methods such as bringing into the examination hall prepared notes, (in brazier, pockets, written on babies) textbooks, materials written on palms or thighs. DHL (prepared answers smuggled in through the windows when scripts are being submitted) giraffing, impersonation. ECOMOG (students arranging with some other people to help them write the paper.) etc.

Paying serious attention to studies and hard work are almost totally played down in our institutions of learning. Gyration galore is the major preoccupation of many because they know that they can easily pass their papers through various methods of examination malpractice

Promiscuity (sex related misbehaviors) Nigerian tertiary institutions are full of harlots or prostitutes selling their bodies to whoever has the cash clamored for incessantly by the female students. it is sad to say that one does not need to browse the pornographic sites on the internet because such sites are in our campuses. The sites include our hostels, classrooms etc. all of which are operating through the hell- designed dresses put on by many female students

This hell - designed dresses include, fish skirt, hip stars, v-necks palazzo pants, miniskirts, cussy tops, triangle tops, strappy tops, bell-buttons etc. all these are put on by the female students to seduce men all over the places. the results have been premarital sex, pregnancies and abortion

it is sad to say that Nigerian institutions of learning which are supposed to be citadels of learning have turned into theatres of fashion parades, sexual immorality and the like provocative and crazy dresses are worn by shameless ladies net necessary to cover the body but to distract the attention of male students and staff

cultism: undoubtedly on me problem of cultism. Nigerian higher institutions have become lion's dens where fierce-looking and blood-sucking animals in human garments are residing. Fellow students are stabbed and mutilated like ordinary animals.

Fadare (2003), Molagun (2003) and Otubelu (2003) all listed some of the secret cults operating in nigerian institutions of learning. Female students are members of virtually all the cults especially the daughters of jezebel and amazons. Others include black cats. The ostrich. Black beret, The scorpion and several others.

Several innocent lives were lost in 1996 at Kwara State Polytechnic as a result of clashes that ensued among the different cultists (forerunner. august 29th 1996) similar heart breaking cases have since been reported all over the nation.

The above and several other social vices have engulfed Nigerian tertiary institutions, undoubtedly, they have grave consequences on our nation, the family

system and of course our educational development. What are some of these consequences?

Consequences of indecent behaviors emanating from our tertiary institutions

Addressing the issue of loss through lust, Kumuyi (2004) listed ten consequences of promiscuity. They are:

1. Loss of valuable time, which could be invested into serious study.
2. Loss of self-respect: (after the immoral act, ladies involved are likely to become a laughing stock especially from men or students who used and dumped them).
3. Loss of sense of purpose for living.
4. Loss of sense of direction in life (confusion can set in thereafter)
5. Loss of Peace, (the lady's conscience is likely to be bartered after the immoral act has been committed)
6. Loss of Innocence before God: (it amounts to sinning before God.)
7. Loss of Beauty: Promiscuous life leads to loss of natural beauty. The lady is likely to become an empty vessel and no cosmetics can take care of such loss.
8. Loss of Health: Sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS can be contracted or other venereal diseases leading to death
9. Loss of favor from God and Man It can lead to disaffection and anger from God and a closed door to favor from men
10. Loss of Opportunity. Those who are to assist the lady in life may begin to see her as useless, worthless and good for nothing.
11. Loss of One's Life: Those going out as prostitutes can be picked up by ritualists or be involved in an accident.
12. Loss of Heavenly Blissful Relationship with God: the individual lady can eventually end her life in hell a place reserved by God for all who are immoral (Rev. 22:15) outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons, murderers and everyone who loves and practices lying.

Examination malpractices lead to the following:

1. Perpetual condemnation of oneself
2. The family is embarrassed especially when examination malpractice leads to placing of names on the notice board, repetition or expulsion.

Cultism: Leads to guilty conscience later in life. The cultists see themselves as murderers especially if lives have been terminated.

Fear: Anxiety and other emotional disturbances are brought upon the lives of innocent students within the campus.

Academic programmes are equally disrupted as schools are closed down as a result of cult activities: Chances for receiving sound education is therefore truncated. God's Attitude to Indecency and Moral Bankruptcy (from Christian Perspective)

The holy Bible has much to say on indecency and moral bankruptcy. Sexual sins are forbidden by God who is Holy in all ramifications. God's attitude to such sins are expressed in the following Biblical verses –

1. Pre-marital sex (Fornication)-Deut:22:13-21 says. Those found fornicating are to be stoned to death.
2. Prostitution - Deut:23:17-18- it is forbidden to God.
3. Homosexuality or Lesbianism-1Cor 6:9-11. 1Tim:1:10, Rom.1:26-27 speak against these vices
4. Transvestism - (Females wearing male's clothing) Deut 5: 22 say it is an abomination to God
5. Bestiality – (mating with animals) which is done by some ladies to earn dollars in and outside Nigeria Deut:20.25-16 says that people doing such should be put to death.
6. Lust and indecent dressing (wearing provocative dresses that are seductive) Rom 1: 21 Eph 4: 17-21, Tim 2: 9-10 etc. frown against giving oneself over to any or such impurities Women and ladies are to dress modestly and discreetly
7. Indecent songs - (sexy songs)- Gal.5: 19. Eph 4: 31 abhor such songs.
8. Cheating of all kinds including examination. Prov. 1.10-19 says that when one is enticed to do so he/she should not consent.
9. Murder-(including abortion and those carried out by cultists) in Exodus 20 13 and Gal. 5 19. God commanded his people not to murder and that the end result is hell fire.

The above shows that God abhors indecency and all forms of moral bankruptcy. Anything that is unacceptable to both man and God should be combated with all seriousness.

Recommendations

Since the level of indecency and moral decadence in Nigerian higher Institutions has become embarrassing some steps should be taken for the extinction, hence, the following recommendations inter alia are hereby made

For Parents

1. To counsel their children and wards on the dangers associated with cultism, promiscuity etc
2. To serve as role model to their children in all ways. Mothers are to dress decently for their daughters to emulate.
3. To take adequate care of their children.
4. They should amicably address factors leading to broken homes, which lead many children into wrong associations when in schools
5. Parents, and guardians should be made to sign an undertaking on behalf of their admitted children for non-membership of secret cult

School Authorities

1. There should be the establishment of functional counselling centers in our Higher Institutions of learning
2. Admission of students should be based on merit and the level of Candidates' moral uprightness.

3. On indecent dressing, all authorities of our tertiary institutions should borrow a leaf from the steps taken recently by the authorities of Lagos State University (LASU). The university has adopted what they regard as accepted dress code for female students.

According to Olokudejo. Dean of Student Affairs of the university (punch, Jan. 31.2004). Whatever is put on by the female students must cover the breast, chest, stomach, buttocks, thighs and clothes won should not be transparent. Such strict measures should become a law to be kept by all female students on our campuses.

4. Meaningful orientation exercise should be carried out for freshers to intimate them with what is expected of them on campus.
5. Authorities should organize regular seminars and workshops for the purpose of sensitization of youths. A similar programme was organized on June 27th 2005 by Women in colleges of education, (WICE) Kwara State College of Education chapter Ilorin for all the female students This was done to curb the prevalent promiscuity being witnessed in the college
6. There should be expulsion of indiscipline students to serve as a lesson to others
7. List of students dismissed from an institution of learning should be published in the dailies and they should not be offered admission in any of the Nigerian tertiary institutions.
8. People of proven integrity should be employed as security men and porters in our higher institutions of learning.
9. Information on the ills of all indecency and moral decadence on campus should be displayed through porters, handbills. e.t.c. For all students to read and imbibe.
10. Teachers should do their work with all diligence to minimize the occurrence of examination malpractice.
11. Teachers should ensure that students are engaged fully so that they will not have time to think about cultism or other social vices.

Students

1. All students should shun all immoral behaviors
2. To dedicate their lives to GOD and fear Him
3. Should be self disciplined
4. To work hard and shun exam malpractice cultism and promiscuity etc.
5. Should not run after material things, which lead many of them into prostitution and cultism

Religious Bodies (Organizations)

These bodies are regarded as God's representatives on earth set up to draw the hearts of men to God himself hence, they are to take the following steps towards the sanitization of Nigerian campuses and the society at large.

1. Teach and preach the fear of God to all who are under their spiritual custody.

- 2 Emphasize the need for the confession of all sins committed (pre-marital sex, abortion, cultism etc)
- 3 Emphasize the need for youths and all men to depend on God's grace to be able TO overcome all immoral ways on a perpetual basis
- 4 Let people see the need to close their eyes to sinful habits just like Joseph in Exod.37 39
- 5 Teach their followers to follow the lives men and women of good characters found in the Bible we have the examples of people like Esther, Mary, the four daughters of Philip who were virgins and prophetesses in Acts 21: 8-9.
- 6 They are to teach their followers to turn against the lives lived by several immoral men and women in the holy Bible such as Jezebel (2 kings9) and Portiphar's wife (Gen 39).
- 7 Encourage their followers to seek counsel from Godly men
- 8 Teach their followers about the essence of sex. They should let them know that sex is for married couples
- 9 They should make known to their followers the importance of the holy bible, the need to read, digest and follow after what is read
For instance, as spelt out in psalm 119 the Bible stands for

B - Best
I - Instruction
B - Before
L - Leaving
E - Earth

- 10 Finally, the result of all immoral acts or behaviors should be laid bear before the members of each religion. Hell and the place of accountability after death should be stressed on regular basis.
- 11 Religious leaders should lay down good examples for the followers especially the youths to emulate
- 12 They should become more involved in the crusade against all social vices through seminars and conferences.

The Government

1. Teaching of religious and moral education should be made compulsory by our government up to tertiary level of education in Nigeria.
2. Teachers of religious education should be encouraged to emphasis the moral lessons behind the topics handled in the classes Emphasis should not always be on passing religious studies at credit level in SSCE.
3. Standard and functional libraries should be built in our schools. This will help our students to effectively utilize their leisure time.
4. Stricter laws should be promulgated to curb cultism and display of nasty dresses on the television and on our campuses.

Conclusion

Moral uprightiness brings promotion to individual and societies. Any nation where indecency is the order of the day will hardly witness any appreciable progress. What we have been experiencing in our institutions of higher learning is not complementary at all moral decadence as earlier explained has taken over the entire Nigeria campuses. However full consideration and adoption of the

solution suggested *above will help to a large extent towards the sanitization of our campuses and the entire Nigerian society*

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