

An Exploratory Study of Modeling as an Educational Tool for Adolescent Moral Development

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Abstract

The problem of immorality among the youth population is of universal consequence. The youth population refers to adolescents, teenagers, young adults and working-class population. Adolescents are still in the formative years and could be positively influenced towards moral uprightness. Consequently, several authors have attempted to uncover factors associated with immorality and the possible interventions among the youth. Some of the proposed interventions include parental instructions, sermonizing, inclusion of moral instructions in the school curriculum, adverts on media networks, punishment for wrong doing, rewards for uprightness and outstanding virtues among others. However, these studies did not consider the use of modeling as an educational tool for curbing immorality among the youth. Although several policies were also formulated to ensure adolescent moral development, however, none of these policies highlighted the importance of modeling; hence the problem has continued to escalate across many developing countries like Nigeria. It is on this note that this review article was conceived. The article utilizes data from secondary sources to: (i) explain the genesis of immorality among teenagers; (ii) deliberate on developmental tasks involving adolescents' moral development; (iii) discuss factors that engender moral development through modeling; and (iv) illustrate facilitators of modeling with the aims of making plausible clarifications to parents, teachers, religious leaders and policy makers on how to reduce escalation of immorality to the barest minimum in developing societies like Nigeria.

Keywords: Exploratory; Modeling; Moral; Development; Educational; Tool; Adolescents.



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1. Introduction

The popular quotation of Isaac Newton: "if I have seen further than others, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants" (Brainy Quotes, 2018) may be considered a point of reference in all spheres of life in developed and developing societies. However, it appears that its engagement for moral development among adolescents, mostly in developing societies, has not been seriously considered. Instead, most adolescents see themselves as a new generation youth who should be allowed to exercise unlimited freedom which modernity has accorded them in spite of its connectivity with immoralities.

Immorality could be regarded as the quality of not being in accord with standards of right or good conduct (Online Collins Thesaurus, 2018). Although, studies have shown that the problem of immorality among the youth population is of universal consequence but differences can be drawn between countries concerning its nature and rate of occurrence. While its nature and rate of occurrence among adolescents in developed countries is on the high side, it is on the low side in developing countries. Nonetheless, most scholars of development are not taken aback on its high rate of occurrence in developed countries because factors responsible for its escalation did not only emanate from there; such factors are accepted as parts of their culture. However, the emergence of immorality, its escalation

and the negative effects it portends on adolescents' moral development in a developing country like Nigeria, not previously known for high level of immorality, could be considered as a strange occurrence that demand immediate attention.

Generally, some level of indiscipline is expected from youth because of their age and the level of their development in life. Thus, it is the belief of the Yorubas in the Western Nigeria that a child who exhibits such uncultured behaviours is displaying the normal characteristics of adolescence "*omode lo n se*", meaning such a child is suffering from the plague of childhood, and when such a child gets older he or she outgrows antisocial behaviours. However, in contemporary Nigeria, it appears that most youth no longer outgrow antisocial behaviours, they grow with it to adulthood, despite the increase in the number of educational and religious institutions which ought to have strongly influenced morality and decent ways of life. This goes to corroborate Oyedepo (2010) who contends that 'playboys of yesterday are playmen of today'. Probably, the advent of modernity, acculturation and westernization has eroded moral values inculcated into children to make them behave decently at adulthood in traditional societies. It seems to have also rendered the influence of education on a decent life style among adolescents ineffective (Auwal, 2015; Ejinkeonye, 2013).

As a result, quite a number of studies have examined problems associated with the escalation of immorality among adolescents (Abba, 2015; Bishop *et al.*, 2018; Inyang and Inyang, 2013; Iversen and Eady, 2014; Vasudevan, 2013). Omonijo *et al.* (2014), as imperative as they are, most of these studies focused on causes, consequences and solutions (Nguyen *et al.*, 2016; Shalom, 2015) but ignored modeling as a character transformation tool which could play a significant role in moulding adolescents' personalities. Even, studies that have examined solutions to the problem of adolescent immorality focused only on parental instructions, sermonizing, inclusion of moral instructions in the school curriculum, adverts on media networks, punishment for wrong doing (Abdullah *et al.*, 2018); amongst others etc. and neglected the engagement of modeling as a strategy. Besides, scholars such as (Adegoke, 2015; Igbo and Ikpan, 2013; Omoniyi, 2017; Oyafunke-Omoniyi, 2014) have argued that efforts listed above have yielded little or no positive results in improving the escalation of immorality among adolescents because of poor implementation by all stakeholders.

Therefore, as a wide variety of studies have been conducted on the problem of immorality among adolescents outside the engagement of modeling as an instrument of transformation, there is a serious need for a study of this nature in a country like Nigeria where there has been a rising concern for teenagers' moral development (Christopher, 2015). This is not to say that adolescents are bad children: they "are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from Him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are children born in one's youth" (the Bible in Psalms 127: 3-5). The crucial point to note is that their bad behaviours are expected to be worked on through the instrument of modeling in order to bring the best out of them.

Thus, the role that modeling play in developing teenagers into morally sound individuals, for the transformation of the society may not be easily ignored, bearing in mind the trend of criminality infiltrating every geopolitical zone of Nigeria in which most teenagers are actively involved. This has increased the numbers of juvenile offenders and also led to over the congestion in Nigerian correctional institutions (Bamgbose, 2013; Dumbili, 2013; Folayan *et al.*, 2014; Strohlic, 2014). Modeling could be used as a strategy for moulding such teenagers' character not only to prevent the escalation of juvenile cases but to transform them for the betterment of the society (Price-Mitchell, 2016).

This study is structured into three sections: Section one covers introduction while section two deals with literature review and section three deals with conclusion.

2. The Concept of Modeling

Online Psychology Dictionary (2016) posits that modeling ensues when behaviours are deliberately displayed by a role model to a learner or an observer who may adopt the behaviour. Thus, it could be regarded as a learning process in which adolescents observe good conducts from their mentors with the purpose of behaving in the same way or improving on those behaviours for greater results in the nearest future.

In another development, modeling could be viewed as a special informal school designed for personal advancement. Modeling is not only essential for adolescents' moral development, it could also be considered suitable for persons who are regarded as novices irrespective of age. Moreover, individuals who desire to be groomed usually subscribe to this school themselves while others may be strongly persuaded to subscribe to it by their peers. Also, evidence abound that many parents, more often than not, do persuade or advise their wards to subscribe to modeling because they cherish the virtues of models they want their children to model.

Models could be teachers and godfathers in school environments, clergy men in religious settings, parents, guardians, family members (Uzoehina and Nwankwo, 2017) and politicians in the larger society. Such persons possess enviable qualities necessary for mentoring or grooming the younger generations in order to attain greatness in life.

Models could be advantageous in areas of development and support. Development consists of models assisting their mentee to advance within an organisation by availing mentees with sponsorship, coaching opportunities and assignments among others. Also, models can assist their mentees to gain exposure in life. The support role which models offer consists of providing counseling and guidance for mentees.

Previous studies have demonstrated the usefulness of modeling in all areas of life. In education for instance, Edinburg University Student Association (2017) submits that it involves production of renowned professors in all fields of human endeavours; as mentoring research has constantly shown that mentees benefit from having proficient

mentors who avail them with career and personal supports (Kram, 1985), (Ortiz-Walters and Gilsonb, 2005; Yaakop *et al.*, 2018). Based on experience, modeling can be categorized into the following two parts in contemporary Nigeria: positive and negative modelling.

The positive aspect of modeling involves grooming adolescents by models who possess good virtues, worthy of emulation. In Nigeria such has been recorded in Christian religion (the grooming of Pastor E. A. Adebayo under Papa Akindayomi of the Redeemed Christian Church of God); politics (the grooming of Chief Lateef Jakande, late Chief Michael Adekunle Ajasin, late Chief Bola Ige etc. under the leadership of the late Chief Obafemi Awolowo). In academia and other areas of human endeavours, studies have shown several cases of such modeling for transitional leadership (Abdulrasheed *et al.*, 2016). Other examples of positive modelling in Nigeria can be seen in the entertainment industry where raw talents have been identified and nurtured through different platforms like star quest, project fame among others. In the educational sector programmes like cowbellpedia and who wants to be a millionaire? These are strategies used to encourage intellectual development among gifted children. Another example is the Knorr Quest, a programme sponsored by Unilever Plc to identify and nurture cooking talents among the youth population. Certain individuals in Nigeria have also served as models to the youth population in different fields of endeavors. Such individuals include Joke Silva, Funke Akindele, Tony Elumelu, late Tayo Aderinokun among others. These individuals have served as models in creative arts and business, nurturing talents and entrepreneurial endeavors among Nigerian youths.

In other words, positive modelling could be viewed as imparting adolescents with basic things (needs) that are essential to their success in life and not what they want. Wants are outside needs and unrestricted access of children to them could be detrimental to their success. This is because life is in stages and people are in sizes. Thus, every stage in life should be commensurate with sizes of people in that stage. For instance, people want sex because of several factors, but sex is only good for married adults. Hence, an adolescent desiring sex may be exposing himself or herself to problems associated with teenage pregnancy, abortion, baby motherhood, premature death etc. Such an adolescent, mostly female may end up being a single mother and not enjoy a successful marital life. Also, cars are very essential for mobility and most people would want cars irrespective of circumstances at hand, but permitting teenagers access to driving is more or less granting him or her license to premature death. Therefore, driving should be delayed till maturity.

On the negative aspect, modeling involves grooming of adolescents by dubious persons who engage in questionable activities for a living. These include local and international prostitution (Godwin, 2016; Osazuwa, 2016); smuggling (The Economist (2016)); political godfatherism (Ogbonmwan (2015)); human trafficking (Etchingham, 2015); terrorism (Global Terrorism Index, 2015; Ukpong, 2015), cultism, examination misconduct (Omoniyi-Oyafunke *et al.* (2014) and others. In negative form of modeling, adolescents could be granted unlimited access to wants rather than needs. Although, negative modelling is common to all families in all societies, it thrives better in developing societies, such as Nigeria, where value is no longer placed on moral integrity as a life style but dubious ways of acquiring wealth with impunity (Popoola, 2014).

2.1. Other Differences Between Positive and Negative Modeling

The differences between positive and negative modelling can be observed in the following ways:

Firstly, while positive modeling could be associated with principled and disciplined persons, who have zero tolerance for antisocial behaviours, negative modeling could be associated with persons of unprincipled and undisciplined persons who deal in dubious activities. Principled and disciplinarians who engage in positive modeling could be very few in number compared with those who indulge in negative modeling in the society.

Secondly, positive modeling is always targeted at imparting on mentees / 'modele' positively for societal development. Studies have shown a number of positive results and career upshots with positive modeling (Dreher & Cox, 1996 cited in Ortiz-Walters and Gilsonb (2005) while negative modeling aims at selfishness, destruction of others and the larger society. The escalation of Boko haram insurgency, militancy in Niger delta, kidnapping in Eastern Nigeria, (Kediashi and Akande, 2015; Nweke, 2013; Olofinbiyi *et al.*, 2016) could have a strong link with negative modeling. Also, the current wave of herdsmen atrocities across Nigeria could be strongly connected with negative modeling.

Thirdly, it appears only a few adolescents subscribe to positive modeling while many mentees tend to fall in love with the negative aspect of modeling because disciplinarians who are usually involved in positive modeling are often perceived wicked. Thus, such persons do not enjoy the patronage of many youth. Although, the tendency of some youth realizing the importance of such models could later be comprehended but it could be too late for such persons to amend their lives. The perception of disciplinarians as wicked persons has gained ground among Nigerians because most people, even adults perceive evil as good and good as evil (Parkin, 2016). The idea has further injected the Machiavellian principle-'the end justifies the means' into the hearts of many Nigerians with the evidence of the 'survival of the fittest' syndrome prevailing in all sphere(s) of life (Kaplan and Schroeder, 2013; Odunfa, 2004). Consequently, negative modeling is usually preferred to positive modeling by many teenagers.

Fourthly, positive modeling may not guarantee immediate rewards unlike the negative aspect. For instance, Christian literature demonstrates that reward of modeling was obtained by Elisha at the end of his model's (Elijah) ministry. On this note, the process of positive modeling could be very difficult for 'modele' at the initial stage because mentees are not allowed to do whatever they like but what is right irrespective of the situation at hand but it is highly rewarded on the long run. The legacy of the model will be elongated while the destiny of the 'modele' will blossom for the advancement of the society (Nkwede *et al.*, 2014; Ogbonmwan, 2015).

2.2. The Concept of Adolescence

The concept of adolescence could be regarded as a complex phenomenon. Apart from the fact that it is being used interchangeably with teenage hood by many scholars, there is an unresolved disparity in the age groups allotted to them among scholar as indicated in Table 1.

Table-1. The Scholastic Classifications of Adolescent Age

SN	Scholars / Organisations	The Commencement Stage of Adolescent	The Ending Stage of Adolescent
1	American Psychological Association (2002)	9	26
2	World Health Organization (2000)	10	19
3	Bandura <i>et al.</i> (2017)	11	15
4	Miller-Keane (2003)	11	19
5	Hall (1904)	12 or 13	25
6	Ihonybere (1989)	15	24
7	The African Youth Charter cited in Briggs (2008)	15	35

Source: Compiled by the authors of this work.

Probably, it is on this ground Nsamenang (2000) contends that scholars and researchers have failed in giving the true position of adolescents in the global context. However, it may be very difficult to apportion blame to scholars in this regard due to the fact that adolescence as a transitional stage is characterized by uncertain restrictions (Atwater, 1992 cited in Mwale (2010)). Therefore, scholars may find it intricate to categorically determine the actual age in which adolescence begins or ends.

The foregoing is an indication that only chronological criterion was used to describe adolescents while biopsychosocial variables which are also very vital were clearly ignored. Although, the importance of chronological terms in describing teenagers cannot be easily waved aside in academia, at it could be used to determine people's behaviours. In Southwest geo-political zone of Nigeria, for instance, if somebody misbehaves, it is generally assumed that the person is suffering from the plague of childhood. This is an indication that certain behaviours are regarded as teen's behaviours and it could be tolerated to some extent at childhood but if such behaviours emanate from adults, it is generally regarded as a problem that should be tackled with all seriousness.

In spite of this however, a definition of adolescence based exclusively on chronological age is inexcusable and impracticable (The Canadian Paediatric Society, 2003). Hence, priorities should also be given to a well-designed definition of adolescence based on the biopsychosocial inclinations of youths to enter the stage of maturity. Thus, Atwater (1992) cited in Mwale (2010) argues that adolescence is a transitional stage marked with uncertain boundaries such as biological, emotional, cognitive, interpersonal, social, educational, religious, chronological, legal and cultural and they can be used to describe adolescents.

With respect to Biology, at the commencement of adolescence, children begin to develop certain features physically. For a female child, her breast begins to shoot out, she begins to menstruate, her body begins to change with armpit and pubic hairs etc. These features show that she is gradually becoming of age and it could affect her emotional and interpersonal relations as well as her social thinking and a change of behaviour positively or negatively, depending, most especially on her background.

In the light of the above, the combination of both biopsychosocial dispositions and chronological benchmark in describing the adolescence stage for proper insights on matters affecting adolescents could be a reasonable idea in any academic presentation. Adolescents are regarded as one of the greatest assets of any nation. Apart from the fact that they are the future leaders of every existing society, they constitute a significant proportion of the population more than the middle-aged and the aged groups (UNFPA, 2014). And more importantly, the future development of any nation depends on them. Thus, concerted efforts are needed in curbing teenagers' antisocial behaviours so as to ensure "the prospect of a better, safer, a more prosperous" and low crime rate in Nigeria (Kudirat, et al., 2010 cited in Adegoke (2015)). One of such efforts is located in modeling as an educational tool for their moral development and it could make this study very significant.

2.3. The Genesis of Immorality Among Adolescents

Studies have shown that the problem of immorality among adolescents is a global issue of concern. Its origin and prevalence in developing societies is traceable to the contact of the traditional societies with western culture and the poor management of the contact by the elite' class (Maathai, 1995). Although the contact could be commended for opening traditional societies to civilization (Warren, 1980) but it was ethnocentric (Sachs, 2016). Unfortunately, the elite class in traditional societies failed to uphold their good culture and replace barbaric cultural practices with modern culture (Inyang and Inyang, 2013; Onah and Nche, 2014) that would have ensured national development

The major effects of the foregoing in social institutions cannot be over emphasized. In the family institution for instance, a change in the role of women has seriously affected child upbringing. In traditional societies, women were exclusively saddled with the responsibility of child upbringing. The time which they spend in work organisations in contemporary times was devoted to caring for the children and the aged. Hence, children were better managed in traditional societies than the contemporary times. Although, the inroad of women to paid jobs was a good idea as it enables them to develop their potentials for national development (Rahman *et al.*, 2018) but it would have been

better to properly manage work and family life to avoid any of them being affected negatively. Unfortunately, the concept of work-life balance is not in existence in many organizations and where it is in existence, it is not well structured to favour women. Consequently, most parents find solutions in nannies and house helps for child upbringing which has not been too helpful (Anofienem, 2007) due to several problems associated with their engagement (Ewherido, 2015). Such children, mostly from rich backgrounds, are more often exposed to internet, satellite dish and television programmes where they copy immoral behaviours they watch. When parents are not available to censor children's exposure to ICT gadgets, they become addicted to them and it influences their behaviours negatively (Bats *et al.*, 2013; Zakari, 2015).

Besides, several studies have associated the problem of marital instability with increase in adolescents' immorality (Nnabugwu, 2014; Tolorunleke, 2014). The problem of broken homes, separation, single parenting, divorce, common features modern families has left many children without care (Ju Chen *et al.*, 2018; Laoye-Balogun, 2015; Olaniyi, 2015). Such children, more often than not, become street children (Ekpiken-Ekanem and Ayuk, 2014) who sleep under the bridge and uncompleted buildings (Aransiola *et al.*, 2009) across Nigeria. This can greatly hinder the growth and progress of many children and homes in modern society (Adegoke, 2015; Budogo *et al.*, 2018; Omoniyi-Oyafunke *et al.*, 2014).

The culture of marrying many wives has been adding fuel to the fire of marital instability in contemporary Nigeria. Instead of helping to build a strong economic base of the family institution, just like the traditional society (Fagbade, 2016); it seems to have assisted in destroying the peace in most families through unearthly rivalry via competition over family resources. In such homes, wives and children view themselves as enemies and more often than not engage voodoo for victory but with great consequences on the family members and the society at large.

The failure of the religious institutions to raise God-fearing children is a contributing factor. In respect of the Christian religion, the escalation of moral decadence in spite of the Church proliferation is alarming (Irekamba, 2015). Irekamba (2015) argued that though the ultimate aim of Christianity is to produce virtuous members as much as possible, the Nigerian society has witnessed the opposite. The same situation abounds in Islamic religion. The wanton destruction of lives and properties via the menace of Book Haram is evident in the literature (Gillespie, 2017; Njoku and Nwachukwu, 2015; Otoo, 2015; The Economist, 2016) and is yet to be tackled completely by the Nigerian government. The focus and the teaching of many religious institutions which downplayed holiness and righteousness, seem to have been responsible for the waywardness of adolescent in recent times (Lindner, 1999; Rice, 1999).

The poor quality of education in contemporary Nigeria could be identified as a strong correlate of adolescent moral decadence. The discipline embedded in education that made students studious in the past is no longer obtainable. Most tutors in educational institutions are no longer materials for imparting knowledge but business transaction as education seem to have become 'cash and carry'. Education, which could be compared with light that illuminates darkness is now seems to have become the facilitator of darkness because it appears that many educated persons are not better than illiterates due to the high level of evil they perpetrate on a daily basis.

The foregoing is an indication that adolescents' moral development in contemporary times has been a growing concern in the world of research (Hart and Carlo, 2005; Martinez, 2016; Matthew and Goodman, 2015). This is because teenage hood is seen as the foundation for maturity. Thus, diverse issues accompanying the stage usually attract the attention of scholars across the globe. In most societies, developed and underdeveloped alike, the pictures that enthusiastically come to mind when 'an adolescent' is mentioned in many occasions are negative. These include: wild, irresponsible, immoral, violent, etc.

Activities involving adolescents in such societies usually reflect one or two or all of these factors because their age is characterized by these features. Thus, for generations now, the intensity of disquiet and the level of fear about adolescent characters seem unfathomable in the present age than in the traditional settings because most of the prevalent anti-social behaviours in modern societies were not in existence in the past. The incursion of western culture or modernization into the traditional ways of life through colonialism and acculturation seems to have played a prominent role in adolescents' high level of immorality in the present age. Consequently, all the machineries put in place to ensure morality in the traditional society became obsolete after acculturation and western way of life became prominent among Nigerians.

The aim of moral development is to guide adolescents' behaviour and acquaint them with rules and regulations guiding a successful living in the society (Omonijo *et al.*, 2018). It is a continuous progression that happens in social institutions in man's society. As youth begin to decide on what step to take and establish their own assessment system as well as ways of life, the influence of other people on them emerges both in a positive and in a negative ways. The negative influence, more often than not, prompt them to take unwise decisions which could affect their lives and the progress of the society.

Thus, an important aspect of the process of maturity involves moral development. Teens that develop a reliable moral compass are more likely to make positive decisions. Such teenagers are also less likely to be lured into nefarious activities. On the other hand, adolescents who fail to inculcate morality into their lives are more likely to make poor decisions which often contravene the laws of the land with stringent penalties prescribed by the State. To avoid such an unpleasant situation, it is necessary to encourage moral development among teenagers but the question arises how can moral development be enforced among adolescents in contemporary Nigeria? This question leads us to the next section of this paper.

2.4. Channels of Enforcing Moral Development Among Adolescents

Dwelling on the work of Agha [Ikechi-Ekpendu et al. \(2016\)](#) "No society can live without morals". In other words, morality consists of uncompromising standards of deportment which reasonable human beings accept and enforce to foster personal and national development. In the past and in recent times, several articles have attributed the backwardness of Nigeria to depravity, most especially corruption among the policy makers ([Sagara, 2018](#)). The situation of immorality has reached an alarming dimension in which efforts have to be intensified in inculcate moral education in the adolescents who serve as the leaders of tomorrow. The channels of enforcing moral education among them are briefly discussed below:

2.4.1. Family Members

Every child is expected to be born into a specific family which, at least consists of two or more persons. Therefore, it is not a one man show or affair and it will never be till eternity because the conception that results in child birth is never a one man business: it involves a man and a woman. Except where a child does not know his or her family members (motherless and fatherless babies), he is expected to have people to interact with and also ensure his or her moral development.

Family is the first contact for children and it plays important roles in shaping their characters. In a well-organized family, it is the responsibility of parents to train up their children. [Oyedepo \(2010\)](#) fathers and mothers are trainers and co-trainers in the family respectively. The obligation of raising children rests on both the mother and the father. In this respect, the emotional and psychological support of the mother are usually combined with the high highhandedness or discipline of the father to raise children. When the father fulfills his part, the mother will also perform her own portion of the training. However, the training of the mother in several contexts is usually different from that of the father; it is softly and painstakingly done. While the father could take strict disciplinary measures on his children, the mother will step in gently and let the children know that the father does not hate them but he wants them to succeed in life.

Moreover, siblings, uncles, aunts, and relations are also contributing to children moral development. While most children are being trained economically and academically by their siblings, distant uncles, cousins, aunts and other relations usually help in instilling moral discipline on children.

2.4.2. Peer Groups

Peer groups influence teen's moral development. Although, the positive effect of peer groups on youths moral development is commendable but it happens in minor cases. Most cases of peer group influence on adolescent development are always on the negative side. However, the result of subscribing to negative influences on people is very cheap and it goes with immediate result but the pains, regret and agony for such could be a lifelong experience. For example, a young lady who refuses to join her mates in fornicating may likely suffer hunger, lack, want and poverty temporarily but when she gets married she may not suffer any sexually transmitted diseases while those who succumbed to the pressure of their friends to join the league of fornicators could be very rich at the initial stage and may suffer untimely death through sexually transmitted diseases (HIV / AIDS) later in life.

These are social life reality issues affecting teens in contemporary Nigeria, which they themselves are not serious about. Thus, as they try to discover who they are and what is vital to them, they seek the opinion and guidance of their friends. The question is what type of opinion do they seek? Positive or negative? The response to this question depends on moral standing of the adolescents and their friends

Dwelling on [Sutherland and Cressey \(1955\)](#), the architect of differential association, one of the powerful sociological paradigms rooted in social interaction, when members of a peer group support certain actions such actions are generally accepted by all members. Adolescents with proper upbringing in the same environment can influence others positively. This is common among Scripture Union members in higher educational systems in Nigeria, where members are being trained spiritually, academically, economically and socially through collective efforts of brotherliness and unison of members.

2.4.3 Popular Culture

Adolescents' moral development can be heavily influenced by the culture of a given society. [Cambridge Online Dictionary \(2018\)](#) defined culture as "the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time" (p. 1). Based on this definition, the culture of people in any setting can determine their behaviours. In traditional societies such as the Yorubas, southwest Nigeria, the culture of the people emphasized moral integrity, hard work, respect for elders etc. hence, people valued or cherished their fathers name than gold which prompted them to behave well outside the family. This is manifested in the popular saying in the region such as, '*ranti omo eni ti iwo nse*', meaning remember the son of whom you are. '*Oruko rere san ju wura ati fadaka lo*', meaning a good name is better than silver and gold.

Also in traditional culture in the old Western Nigeria, young ladies were trained to remain virgins till their wedding night ([Arobi, 2015](#)). By this, females were mandated to avoid having sexual relationship with males prior to marriage. It was the duty of every parent to ensure their wards comply to avoid being disgraced after marriage ([Azu, 2018](#)). This used to instill sanctity on youth many years ago before the advent of modernization and the same can be enforced to curtail sexual immorality among adolescents in modern society.

2.4.4. Educational Institutions

In school environments such as kindergarten, primary and nursery school, primary and secondary schools as well as tertiary institutions, basic values and principles such as honesty, decency, hard work cooperation, quality education, discipline can be instilled on the adolescents by their teachers (Abdulrasheed *et al.*, 2016; Nwokolo *et al.*, 2018; Oni, 2016). Punishing them for wrong doing and rewarding them for good behaviours could go a long way in shaping their lives positively.

2.4.5. Religious Institutions

Religious associations are also very important in moral development of adolescents. Moral teaching from teachers in Sunday school, clergymen during sermon in churches and mosques are vital to raising children in a positive way. It could be a good idea if these persons could be exhibiting godly behaviours to adolescents around them. The major problem in Nigeria today is that people profess religion without possessing and displaying godly characters. If godly characters are being displayed with the number of religious organizations across Nigeria, the rate of moral decadence would have reduced to the barest minimum.

Apart from the above, studies have shown that adolescents' moral improvements can be achieved through various tasks. Such tasks are briefly discussed below:

2.5. Developmental Tasks Involving Adolescents' Moral Improvement

Dwelling on Atwater (1992) cited in Mwale (2010); there are certain developmental tasks that must be consummated in the course of time between childhood and adulthood, as for other life stages. In other words, before adolescents can successfully move to the next stage of maturity, certain developmental tasks must be accomplished. The first of such developmental tasks in adolescent lives is their ability to relax with their personal physiques. When adolescents begin to experience changes in their own physiques, they begin to develop certain behaviours to show that they are of age. Training that goes with this task should be impacted on adolescents by their models.

The second of such developmental tasks is independence. The desire of adolescents toward individuality or independence from either their parents or other mature persons in authority in the community or school environments is also very important in the process of translation from childhood to adulthood. More often than not, they see their parents and other older persons as old schools. This means persons of old ideas. Given this, they intend to avoid them and rely on their own judgments. At this stage it is very crucial to educate adolescents that such interdependence could lead to self-destruction.

Their models should let them know that life experiences needed for accomplishments can never be acquired in a day and it goes to confirm Maxwell cited in Oyedepo (2010) who argues that leadership development is a life-long exercise and not a brief trip. Adolescents need to be very close to their parents, elders till when they are mature enough to take concrete decisions on their own. Even when they are matured, they still need counsel and advice from their parents and aged in the family. The words of elders are the words of wisdom. Adolescents need these words in the process of development and it will help them to take good decisions in life. Why most adolescents are having moral challenge in contemporary times can be attributed to their desire for untimely independence from their parents and elderly persons. This desire, more often than not is the gateway to destruction as evident in the life of Jeroboam, the son of Solomon Holy Bible (1King 12: 4-16).

This is because the experience of an adult can never be compared with any brilliant young person. As the saying goes in Yoruba, southwest Nigeria, *'ti omode ba ni aso bi agba ko le ni akisa bi agba'*. This means if a child has clothes more than an aged, he cannot have as many rags as the aged. Building new and expressive interactions with the same and opposite sex is the third developmental task developed by Atwater (1992) cited in Mwale (2010). Social interaction is very vital among mankind but interaction has to be carefully done because most of the anti-social activities involving adolescents in contemporary Nigeria are being conceived, developed and executed in the process of social interaction. Dwelling from Edwin Sutherland, a giant of the Chicago school of American Sociology, all behaviours emanate from socialization via social interaction. This scholar and his associate believe that how people act depend on how those around them desire them to act and how they deviate from or conform to rules and regulations also depend on who they interact with (Sutherland and Cressey, 1955).

In line with the above scholars' views, adolescents tend to seek conformity with their friends, thereby accepting all they ask them to do, good or bad. Also, the relationship with the opposite sex is more difficult to define. It usually takes their parents a long time and strong efforts to get information from them in this respect. A lady can easily be carried away lustfully by another boy, mostly when he is from a wealthy home. Whatever anybody tells her could be immaterial. It is when she begins to suffer the negative effects of such a relationship that she will begin to understand her mistakes. It is on this ground, a concerted effort should be put in place for proper training on how to manage this stage of life.

The fourth development task is seeking economic and social stability (Atwater 1992 cited in Mwale (2010)). For serious minded adolescents, the period of teen is generally used to seek the beginning of economic stability in life. To this end, they use to choose the subjects that enable them to build careers later in life. For those who are not serious, they still rely on their parents to spoon feed them. Wayward children are in this category. The same thing goes with social relationship. The stage of teen marks the beginning of partnership in people's lives. Lifelong relationships such as marriage and friendship usually start during adolescence/teenage hood. While those who are wise among them learn how to build lasting social relationships with others.

The second to the last development task is developing a personal value system. Based on Hereford (2016); an individual value system is “a set of principles or ideals that drive and/or guide your behaviour”. These principles usually help people to express who they are and what they stand for per time. A serious-minded adolescent begins to develop his or her value system at teen. If people disengaged from their values, it prompts them to make choices out of immediate gratification rather than firm reasoning. In other words, values define people’s character and they impact on every area of life. Hereford (2016) identified four categories of personal values which could help adolescents in building their lives to include: personal, spiritual, family and career values.

Irrespective of cultural background, there are features that mankind value in other people and they exceed economic, social and religion limitations. These according to Hereford (2016) are: integrity, respect, loyalty, diligence and responsibility. The more adolescents inculcate these early in life the more they developed themselves towards adulthood.

Learning to verbalize conceptually is the last development task of adolescents put forward by Atwater (1992) cited in Mwale (2010) and it could also help in building moral integrity among them. Instead of using modernity to improve on their rich cultural heritage, Nigerians allowed their culture to be eroded. This paved the way for waywardness witnessed to day in the country. Although, the media of today (television, movies, music, magazines and advertising) which serves as an important aspect of modernity, portrays behaviours that can be used to influence adolescents positively, sometimes the media influence adolescent behaviours in negative ways.

2.6. Forms and Methods of Education for Adolescent Moral Development

Since the incorporation of western culture into traditional ways of life in Nigeria, education has been a major means of transmitting knowledge, values and morals from one generation to another. Education is a concerted effort well packaged by the government, private individuals and corporations to instill moral, values, knowledge, skills, understanding etc. on people. Education can be acquired through formal and informal techniques. The formal aspect usually takes place in school environments. This type of education has grown to become more popular than informal education which was the original means of instruction prior to colonialism.

Formal education is classroom-based. It allows adolescents to learn basic, academic or trade skills through well trained teachers (Ayo *et al.*, 2014). It commences at kindergarten through secondary school and end at university level. Informal education on the other hand happens outside the classroom. In after-school programs, community-based organizations, museums, libraries, or at home are involved. In many cases it is usually a very flexible approach to aid learning. An informal mode of education operates in all cultures, usually at an unconscious level and involving learning by imitation of models, but this degree varies greatly among different social groups. In Igboland, southeast Nigeria, another form of informal education, relating to skill acquisition that is prominent in the region is ‘*nwaboy*’ or meaning servitude. According to Udeze (2014); the practices involves adolescents forfeiting marriage early in life for a service that will eventually earn him or her ‘settlement’ in business such as supermarkets, electronics, spare part shops etc. In the course of servitude, ‘*nwaboy*’ acts as his or her master’s *protégé* to learn how to manage one business or the other. When ‘*nwaboy*’ completes his term of agreement, his master opens a new business for him to start his life with. This seems to have helped a lot of youths to actually acquire skills and be relevant in life.

There is also an informal education which involves a parent teaching a child how to prepare a meal. Also it involves parents teaching their children how to successfully handle daily chores. Inability to perform daily chores and to also manage a clean home has been the bane of most couples in modern societies because this type of education is no longer in practice. In another development, since informal education entails obtaining skill and knowledge without school attendance or the use of a particular learning method, it is possible for someone to get an informal education by reading many books from a library, internet, bookshops etc. Most people have taught themselves how to read and write through this mean in Nigeria.

The fascinating difference between formal and informal education however, is that formal education provides a predetermined package that children are expected to absorb whether they get it or not, want it or not, connect to it or not. However, it should be noted that both are vital in instilling moral development on adolescents. Nevertheless, it has been realized that informal education has been slaughtered in the face of formal education in recent times. In most cities, towns and villages in Nigeria, the emphasis has been shifted from informal education to formal education and that must have been responsible for the escalation of moral decadence in recent times.

In the time past, when much emphasis was placed on informal education, the society was at peace than the contemporary times that formal education has gained prominence. At that point in time, Nigerians were not experiencing the high level of moral decadences that have become the trademarks of modern societies. These include, rape, sexual harassment, prostitution, kidnapping, armed robbery, smuggling, cultism, etc.

Very crucial and also related to the foregoing is non-formal education which is sometimes called adult basic education, adult literacy education or school equivalency preparation (Toscan Academy, 2012). In this type of education, an adult or a youth who is not in school can learn literacy and other basic skills or job skills. It can also be acquired in small classes or through self-study.

However, it should be noted that there is a dividing line between education and training. Education, unlike the latter, hold people’s commitment to: (i) reverence for persons; (ii) egalitarianism; (ii) the elevation of well-being; (ii) verity; and (v) fair-mindedness and impartiality. These values are also very vital in moral development of adolescents.

2.7. The Facilitators of Core Values of Modeling

To successfully engage modeling for moral development, adolescents need to subscribe to what we term core values of modeling (see fig, 1). These principles or facilitators could be regarded as treasures which adolescents need to possess in order to acquire moral development for their future leadership roles (Ibrahim, 2018).

The first tenet of modeling is what we call sacrifice and it means forfeiting immediate gratification in order to attain unforeseen greater worth in the nearest future. This was brought to bear in the modeling of Elisha by Elijah, in Christian literature. As the heir-apparent to a great fortune (extensive farming) which was the greatest occupation in his time, Elisha decided to abdicate the fortune that would have been accrued to him and became a 'modele' of Elijah. The abdication and his ardent subscription to sacrifice later prompted him to inherit Elijah's anointing which he did not envisaged at the onset.

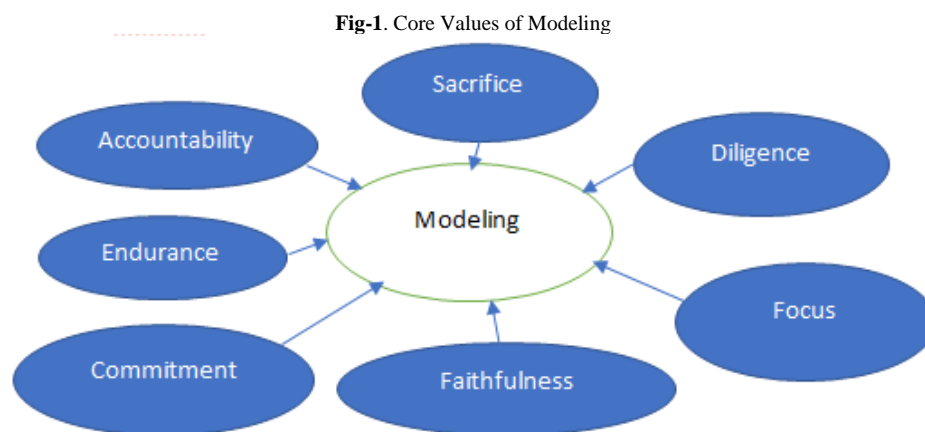
The second core value is accountability which could be regarded as the state of being answerable or responsible for actions taken. A Biblical example of accountability as a factor in modeling is found in the Joseph in the household affairs of Potiphar. Based on human logic, Joseph did not have any future as a slave but his ability to manage not only Potiphar's business, but also his family life positively gave him a great future. Being accountable to God and Potiphar in his family affairs painfully set the stage for his enthronement as the Prime Minister in Egypt.

Endurance is another crucial factor considered as the principle of modeling in this article. This refers to the ability to bear nasty situations, most especially poverty (Begum and Moinuddin, 2018) without submission or compromise in order to access greater results. The process of modeling is anchored on unpleasant situations which the 'modele' must bear to the end. For instance, Joseph was able to bear the hatred from his brothers, slavery, undue pressure for sex from Potiphar's wife and the regret of being a prisoner where his destiny blossomed. As a very busy man, Potiphar would not have known that Joseph was having an affair with his wife and certainly, the ungodly affair would have kept him in Potiphar's house and prevented him from getting in touch with the chief baker and butler in prison where his destiny opened up.

Actually, Biologists have argued that sex is strongly connected with gladness of heart (Muise, 2016 cited in Hewings-Martin (2017) but sex outside marriage is considered a terrible sin in Christian literature and it has the capacity of ruining one's destiny as it happened to Samson.

The fourth core value which the 'modele' needs to embrace in the process of modeling is commitment. The term commitment could be regarded as a requirement that strictly forbids autonomy of action outside the prescribed feat laid down for pursuit. Commitment as a great requirement for success, more often than not, demands unwavering posture in one's desire for success that may not be achieved in a short time frame. For instance, Elisha was committed to his master Elijah till the last day. The mockery of the sons of prophets was nothing to him and the trekking from one community to another was never a barrier because he was seriously committed.

As indicated in fig 1, faithfulness as a core value of modeling comes after commitment. The term faithfulness could be described as being full of trust; abiding with models' cause, beliefs and career without wavering, even in the midst of oppositions and persecution. Joshua demonstrated such virtue to Moses, even when the people threatened his life after they returned from spying Canaan-land. He pitched his tent with Moses and the promise of God which cannot be compared with the physical strong defence of the Canaanites.



Source: compiled by the authors of this work

In the academia, studies have shown that faithfulness is strongly connected with the production and replication of knowledge (Sulai, 2015). Students who intensely followed their supervisors at masters and PhD levels usually emerged as the carriers of their legacies. It is very hard to secure the blessing of a model when the 'modele' has not been faithful to him. This was manifested in the ministry of Elisha when his modele (Gehazi) was found unfaithful. The unfaithfulness of Gehazi prompted Elisha to curse him with the leprosy of Naaman as stated in the Bible.

The second to the last core value of modeling in this study is focus, which could be considered as the capability to have an obvious pictorial definition of one's destination in spite of several prevailing distractions either at the initial stage of one's career or in the middle or the last stage of its development. A 'modele' who will succeed needs to be focus. This was manifested in the life of Elisha when his model was about to be raptured. His reply to the fifty sons of the prophets at Gilgal, Bethel, Jericho and Jordan- 'I know, hold thy peace' shows that he knew where he was going and he was not ready to compromise as stated in the Bible (2 King 2:3-6).

The last core value considered essential in the process of modeling in this article is diligence. The concept of diligence means the application of cautiousness and doggedness, commitment or determined efforts into one's career. Studies have shown that diligence is a vital facet of individual's career in life. It does not only assist in accomplishing goals; it also creates an inspiring impression on others. Although, the life style of being persistent in working very hard in one's career could be painful, but it brings undeniable noteworthy achievements in the long run. Therefore, the work or activity that was regarded as painful at the initial stage usually turns out to be very fruitful. Hence, "whatever it may be, a field of knowledge, interest or activity, if persistent endeavours are added to diligence in the pursuit of such goals, they will not be fruitless at all (Siddiqui, 2018). Thus, a lazy 'modele' may not survive the process of modeling because it is highly demanding.

3. Summary and Concluding Remarks

This article considers modeling as a vital tool for adolescent moral development in Nigeria. The fact that much emphasis has not been placed on modelling as a plausible strategy of moral development among teenagers over the years makes it imperative in contemporary times that the level of anti-social behaviours among youth is escalating. The study examined modelling as a concept, its forms and differences. It also looked into the genesis of immorality among adolescents in contemporary society and channels of enforcing their moral development. In this regards, developmental tasks involving adolescents' moral improvement, methods of education which can be used for their moral development were elucidated. The study also considered what we called facilitators or core value of modelling essential for discussion.

However, this article concludes that the introduction and active use of positive modeling could result in desired changes in the lives of adolescents with the corresponding benefits to the nation. This could be reinforced by public enlightenment on family values, integrity, diligence and discipline. It could also strengthen the present legal framework that protects adolescents in Nigeria to inculcate modeling as one of the transformational tools in correctional institutions. This could go a long way in reducing juvenile offenders in Nigeria.

Acknowledgment

Covenant University Centre for Research, Innovation and Development (CUCRID) is appreciated for supporting in part by a grant from the academic research pool of the university.

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