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Editorial Note

Undoubtedly, the human family is one of the most threatened units of our individual and communal existence. Many have argued that the family's failure or success reflects the order in the development of society. This unvarnished truth and the consequences of ignoring it account for establishing a journal devoted exclusively to family life - *International Journal of Family Life and Societal Development*. This journal, conceived as a means and avenue to express concern and interrogate pressing family issues and proffer solutions, is not a confessional one; it takes discursive and practical approaches to issues on family life from interdisciplinary perspectives.

In this maiden volume, Stephen Ayankeye argues that there is a nexus between family integration and societal development. Inversely, a disintegrated family will lead to the underdevelopment of society. He further argues that there are factors that engender family integration but that those factors are now being challenged. He recommends ways of ensuring that the challenges are tackled. Benson Igboin interrogates the effects of social media on family life. He argues that society is dynamic, and globalisation has ambivalent impacts on family life. While it is now practically impossible to insulate family life from social media, he concludes that reasonable and responsible deployment of social media will enhance family unity and connectedness. Sharon Slater's article examines the integration of family and the family's protection in Nigeria and Africa. Slater argues that the assault on children and families in Nigeria is propelled by the global sexual revolution, to which many parents in Africa have not given sufficient attention. She notes that this revolution should be viewed from a human rights perspective to challenge its causes and effects on African families, particularly young people. She thus recommends that parents and the African government have critical roles to play in safeguarding the sexual health of their children.

On his own, Elijah Adeyinka examines the effects of postmodernism on the African family system. He points out that postmodernism's tilt

towards relativism adversely impacts family life. In order to stem the tide of postmodernism's inroad into the family, he suggests that family life should be guided strictly by enduring biblical principles. Oluwakemi Amuda's article intervenes by highlighting the critical role of effective communication within the family. She argues that when there is adequate and mutual communication in the family, faith is developed, which results in the development of the whole person. For Abosede Ayinde, violence against the female gender in the family and society has remained unabated. Ayinde notes that contemporary society has been unable to arrest violence against the female gender. She also examines the biblical basis of violence against the female gender and recommends ways to ameliorate it. John Oladapo echoes the argument that the challenges of the modern family system directly link with societal development. He argues that the African family system is being critically neglected, and the consequences are dire and visible. He, therefore, recommends the need to pay urgent attention to those values that sustained the family system before modernity unleashed its forces on it. Princess and Raphael Idialu reaffirm the argument that effective communication in the family has a way of dispelling and resolving conflict. They examine effective communication skills to demonstrate that family health will be maintained and sustained when emplaced. Foluke Odesola articulates that parenting is critical to the healthy growth and development of the child. Effective parenting, she argues, leads to arresting juvenile delinquency. As a result, she recommends that effective parenting is a sine qua non for guiding the child through the challenges that the teenage period of development poses.

Ogbeni Sylvester examines the role of education in the development of the family. Although education costs are high and hardly affordable, he argues that education is essential to the family and society. He suggests ways through which parents could navigate the challenges the cost of education has posed in contemporary society. Michael Otun introduces the ethical and religious dilemma many Christian couples face in deciding whether or not to resort to IVF in

their quest to procreate. He argues that the decision is not easy because of many interpretations of scriptures and pressures that are brought to bear on couples. He thus concludes that couples should weigh the moral implications of IVF before taking their final decision. Finally, Andrew Itakorode Olanrewaju examines the causes and effects of drug abuse among youth. He argues that despite concerted efforts to discourage the youth from engaging in substance abuse, the reality on the ground shows an increase in the number of those involved. He recommends that parents and government should intensify efforts towards ensuring that the youth are dissuaded from abusing drugs because of their harmful effects on them and society.

Benson Ohihon Igboin
Editor-in-Chief

FAMILY INTEGRATION AND SOCIETAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This article argued that there is a nexus between two realities: family integration and societal development, and this nexus is a practical approach to enhancing a genuinely developed society. Although many works have been carried out on family integration and developing society, adequate attention has not been paid to the nexus in its practicality. The article used secondary sources to explain concepts and several implications using a descriptive research method. It found that family integration has essential and crucial roles in societal development because the families within the society bear the primary responsibility for the education and socialization of the children and for instilling values, discipline and a sense of belonging in the society. It thus concluded that if the family serves as the engine for the development of society, the religious bodies (church and mosque as examples) and all tiers of government should support a proper establishment and sustenance of marriage and assist in the family to experience integration.

Introduction

The family is the bedrock of any society simply because society is formed from the family. In other words, everybody found in society is a product of a family. If the family does not produce, there cannot be a society. Most societal problems today, like governmental, religious, communal, and institutional, are traceable to the family. Regrettably, it is common knowledge that there are families that are not stable today and some that cannot be sustained. Such unstable families are implicitly or explicitly creating problems for society. In reality, any society comprising disintegrated families is equally a disintegrated society which cannot experience the expected development.

Nevertheless, the importance of family integration in ensuring societal development cannot be over-emphasized. When families are united and sustained, society will grow and develop. However, if the families are disintegrated, it will adversely affect the growth of society. This is because society is a product of the family, and what becomes of the family will affect society. Little wonder that scholars worldwide continue to look into how they can address the problems of family instability and thereby ensure societal development. Therefore, this paper examines the concepts of family integration and societal development and presents a nexus between the two realities as a practical approach to enhancing a genuinely developed society.

Concept of Family Integration

This section of the paper presents marriage as the foundation for marriage and what it means to have and integrated family.

Marriage as Foundation for Family

Marriage is an institution that often results in a family. Marriage is considered the oldest and the most fundamental human institution. Two essential elements of the family are marriage and parenthood, revealing God's character like nothing else in creation. Indeed, the love between a husband and wife provides a glimpse of Christ's passionate devotion to Christians as His bride. In the same way, the ups and downs of parenthood offer a compelling picture of God's tenderness and patience toward His children. Family does more than reflect God's character. It provides a safe place where children can experience God's love through their parents and learn how to love others. Even Christ himself was born within the context of a family. "God in the flesh" submitted to an earthly mummy and daddy to model what it means to honour parents and to benefit from their loving direction. It was within the nurturing care of His earthly family that "Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men" (Luke 2:52). The family is a masterpiece of God's Creation.

Meaning of Family Integration and Related Characteristics

Many definitions of the family describe diverse domestic arrangements among human societies. There are differences between a family and a domestic group. In many human societies, it is assumed that the family performs biological as well as social reproduction for the survival and continuation of society. The family plays a crucial role in individuals' personality formation and socialization. When the family's primary function remains the same worldwide, scholars have noted certain modifications and variations among societies across time and space. While integration implies coming together as a whole, and it is a process of being assimilated into a group, family integration, according to (Alba, 1987), can therefore be described as “a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitude of other persons and groups by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life” (861-862).

The family has three main components: the man, the woman and the children. Each of them, especially the first two, usually has to perform several roles in one. The man is both father and husband; in the same way, the woman is both wife and mother (Adesogan 2009, 109). The husband and wife and their children develop a sense of caring for each other and begin sharing their joys and sorrows. The relationship between husband and wife, son or daughter and other extended relation stabilise with time, especially when the family keep to the roles guiding the relationship (Akande 2004, 41).

Again, integration or cohesion in the family is influenced by characteristic behaviours that members of such a family should exhibit. A few of the cohesive elements are exemplified from a biblical point of view.

1. The proximity of Spouses to Each Other

It is common knowledge that family begins traditionally with the marriage between a man and a woman who are expected to live together to solidify the marriage and family. Scriptural pieces of evidence give the imperative as indicated below. For instance, the

man must “leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife” (Gen. 2:24), and the woman must “forget also thine own people, and thy father's house” (Ps. 45:10). He must “dwell with them” (1Pet. 3:7), and she must not “depart from her husband,” even if he is an unbeliever (1Cor. 7:10). Other duties of marriage require living together, as regular sexual relations, which they both owe each other (1Cor. 7:3-5). The Old Testament prohibits husbands from going to war during their first year of marriage (Deut. 24:5) to solidify the marriage and lay a good foundation for an integrated family. This shows the importance of living together (Agboifa 2014, 19-20). Couples are expected to live together to promote peace and harmony in their families.

2. Loving Each Other

Another important factor is love for each other. According to Ilufoye (2020) “The instruction to love your wife is a command and duty that must be carried out with fear and trembling. It is an obligation that must be done” (65). This is both the husband's (Col 3:19) and the wife's duty (Tit 2:4). Love is the great reason and comfort of marriage. This love is not merely romance, but genuine and constant affection and care for each other “with a pure heart fervently” (1Pe 1:22). Marital love cannot be based on beauty or wealth, for these are passing, and not even on piety, for that may decay. It must be based upon God's command, which never changes. The marriage vow obliges “for better or for worse,” and married persons ought to consider their spouses the best in the world for them. Marital love must be durable, lasting even after death has severed the bond (Pro 31:12). This true-hearted love brings authentic content and comfort in its train. It guards against adultery and jealousy. It prevents or lessens family trouble. Without it, the marriage is like a bone out of joint. There is pain until it is restored (Heward-Mills 1992,28).

3. Staying Faithful Together as Spouses

Every man should have (sexually) his own wife, and every woman her own husband (1Cor. 7:2). The marriage covenant binds one to his or her spouse as the dearest, sweetest, and the best in the world. Even in the heart, the slightest infidelity may lead to full-

blown adultery. Indeed, the man who is not satisfied with one woman will never be satisfied with many because this sin has no boundaries. Faithfulness also involves keeping each other's secrets. These must not be disclosed unless there is a more outstanding obligation. Telling one's spouse's secrets is bad when accidental or motivated by hate (Agboifo, 24).

4. Standing Firm in the Face of Adversities

An integrated family is also characterized by standing secure in the raging storm of life. For instance, the basic needs of life, as theorized by Maslow (1954), may not be met, yet the family stabilizes. Such a family surrounds a child with love and keeps his small innocent heart warm as it is not filled with quarrels and fighting. This is because a child is a gentle creature, and he deserves the best if he will later contribute to the development of society. An integrated family builds the man, the woman and the children as the stakeholders who give their best to sustain the family.

Contemporary African Family Situation

Contrary to the picture of an integrated family described above, it has been observed that building an integrated family has become a herculean task in contemporary times. This is because the family is facing many challenges day in and day out. For instance, the contemporary family faces crises like involuntary delayed marriage and childbearing, sexual immorality (LGBTQQIA+), separation and technical or conventional divorce and juvenile delinquency (Ayankeye, 2011). These and other crises may be due to negligence of individual stakeholders' roles in the family and the intentional attack of the devil to destroy the family, which is God's pillar for holding the world. From the Christian perspective, in addition to God, whose interest in the sustenance of the family is solid, other stakeholders are the church, the father, the mother and the children. The family faces several disintegrative challenges, some of which have been exemplified here.

1. The Challenge of Involuntary Delayed Childbearing and Childlessness

Childlessness constitutes a crisis for many African families in this century. Although it is not just starting in the twenty-first century, it is becoming more glaring in recent decades. In another context outside Africa, a recent study in Britain indicated a fertility decline. The probable reason for this declining fertility is extremely delayed childbearing resulting in childlessness. Findings from the study show that:

The average age of women first giving birth has risen from 23 in 1970 to 27 in 2005...The proportion of women remaining childless has almost doubled in recent decades from 1 in 10 women born in 1940 to nearly a fifth born in 1959. There has been a decline in families with 4 or more children; although the number of women having one child has remained broadly the same...There has been a marked increase in childlessness for highly educated men and women, with a rise of 37% for men and 31% of women, between the 1958 and 1970 cohorts. Childlessness has also increased among those with no qualifications. A third of unqualified women born in 1970 are childless in their early 30's compared to 53% of men (www.cfr.ac.uk).

The above findings imply that if a developed nation like Britain is facing the challenge of childlessness, the African situation cannot be less with technological development. In other words, if childlessness is a crisis in Britain, it must be more traumatic in Africa.

Donovan O' (1996) concedes that childlessness is a painful experience in Africa. In his view, much of the emotional pain of childlessness in African life has to do with the traditional value of children. Africans see children as essential for the continuation of a person's family and his conceptual status in the spirit world. In some cultures, "the traditional idea of eternal life is an endless continuation of the person's family line ... such culture believes that God curses a couple if they are unable to have children" (O'Donovan, 295). In

other words, the perspective from which Africans view childlessness makes it to cause them emotional and psychological pains that can hinder them from contributing maximally to the development of society.

2. The Challenge of Sexual Immorality

God's concern for the stability of society and families, in particular, can be deduced from his hatred for moral vices. For example, it is categorically entrenched in the Bible that God frowns at adultery (Exodus 20:14), sexual immorality (1 Thessalonians 4:3-6), incest (Leviticus 18:6ff), and homosexuality (Romans 1:24-28). The basis for God's detestation of these and other vices is that they disrupt his plan for a stabilized human society. Little wonder why immorality is described as a “crime against human nature” (<http://www.biblebelievers.org.au/radioorg.html>). This is why the Bible (Hebrews 13:4) warns that God will judge the adulterer and all sexually immoral (O'Donovan, 27).

Indeed, one of the major problems confronting many families today is connected to sexual immorality. In the opinion of Keel (2008), “Family violence and sexual assault are reported to be at crisis levels in many indigenous communities” (<http://www.aifs.gov.au/acssa/pubs/briefing/b4.html>). It is so common that Odunze (1991) observes that “...already in this world, sexuality has ruined many people and has prepared many for eternal destruction ...” (35). Some husbands are going into extra-marital sexual affairs with the excuse that their wives do not give them sexual satisfaction. Some other men engage in immoral acts and expend on their concubines. In the case of some women, extramarital sex is used to generate extra income to support the family because of economic hardship. As the proverbial physician, the family needs healing for integration as the basis for a developed society.

Again, naturally speaking, Adomeh and Aluede (2002), in their discussion on the psychosexual theory of child development, gave some relevant observations. To them, the genital stage, the final stage of psychosexual development in a child occurs mostly between ages twelve and eighteen. Sexual ability comes to play here because

excitement is now located around the genital area. In order to resolve some struggles and feelings, adolescents begin experimenting with sexual activities. This agrees with the opinion later expressed by Fong (2007) on the stage of adolescence. In his words, “adolescence is like being let loose in a huge laboratory where all sorts of fun and games are going on...” (128).

Also, young people are tempted to commit sexual immorality through pornographic magazines and unethical books, saturating society. These materials stimulate young people sexually in a wrong way; the next thing is to want to ventilate the sexual feeling. Unfortunately, girls are tempted to expose their bodies by wearing enticing dresses. In the view of Orodiji (2003), “wearing any dress that can lure or wake up a sexual desire in another person is a serious reason for rape today” (56). In cases where boys cannot get girls to play with, they go into homosexual practices. This contradicts God's plan for sexual intercourse, which should involve heterosexual individuals (Kore 2004,72).

3. The Challenge of Juvenile Delinquency

Another social problem constituting a crisis for the contemporary family is juvenile delinquency. Juvenile delinquency in Africa and beyond has not received a unanimous definition due to the different eye-glasses with which it is viewed from one country to another. As a result of this, it is defined as “a legal term which denotes acts of varying degrees of social consequences from mere naughtiness to major assault punishable by law” (Kar, 1992,133). This is the situation whereby children and adolescents involve themselves in deviant behaviours capable of causing society in general and parents in particular heartaches. This problem is appropriately stated in an Italian proverb, “Little children-headache; big children-heartache” (Fong, 2007: cover page). In the United States of America, delinquent behaviours include truancy from school, consistent disobedience to parents, consumption of alcohol and smoking in public (Kar, 133). Five of such behaviours cause traumatic experiences for families in Africa, as stated by U. I. Anwana (Anwana, 2001:151) and are discussed below.

Normal or casual delinquent behaviour is the first type. This is the situation where a child of 6-7 years old attempts certain practices like stealing money from the father's pocket or the mother's purse. In this case, the experience may not last long because the child may outgrow it. Another example of the usual type is street fighting. Young people may involve themselves in this delinquent behaviour to demonstrate physical strength (Anwana, 151). These behaviours are apparently simple but are sources of crisis for the family and the society- which may result in adults' inability to control their anger (as demonstrated by some members of the parliament exchanging physical blows in Nigerian and Ukraine, as examples). The reason is that either or both of the deviant behaviours give parents and relations of the children involved some psychological trauma. Stealing might have caused confusion in the home before the person responsible for the act was ascertained. The experimental fighting might have caused parents unforeseen expenses for treating a wounded opponent or paying for torn clothes, among others.

Neurotic delinquency is another type of delinquent behaviour. The child is involved in symbolic stealing from parents or teachers due to the experience of isolation. The practice is symbolic because the child may not necessarily be interested in the money. The primary reason for the practice is that, since parents or teachers owe him/her love, regard or respect, he/she now steals what he/she feels they owe him/her. This is confirmed by throwing the money away because he/she is indirectly expressing unsatisfied needs or wishes (Anwana, 152).

If care is not taken, parents or teachers affected would have viewed the practice as an offence that must be met with severe punishment. Unfortunately, the more parents react this way, the more damage they are causing in the life of such a child. The reason is that they would not have known the real problem of the child, which is isolation. Instead, they would have toughened his/her mind to do worse and thereby causing more crises in the family.

Acting-out delinquency is the fourth one which is “the free, deliberate and often malicious indulgence of hostile impulses, particularly in the sphere of hostility, aggression, vandalism (a form

of revolt)” (Anwana, 152). In other words, aggressive and destructive behaviour confronts the family with such a child as a sign of revolt. The situation is critical in an African family where submission to elders (parents and senior ones inclusive) is highly-priced. However, the contemporary family is facing the spill-over of the negative aspect of information technological advancement in audio and visual media, which reflects the delinquent behaviour of young people in the home.

The last type of delinquent behaviour mentioned by Anwana is the psychopathic one. The child involved in this practice lacks solid emotional ties to reality. As a result, the psychopath does not possess the capability congruent with feelings for others and himself/herself. For instance, the individual may go ahead to steal an item where and when he/she knows the probability of catching him/her is high. Another way is that such a person may lie without genuine reason.

Further still, the psychopath may be causing assault or performing murderous activities. Other sadistic activity a psychopath is characterized by has to do with causing physical harm to others with ease (Anwana, 152). The above juvenile delinquent behaviours are occurring in the lives of some members of contemporary African families. Any family harbouring a member whose life is characterized by one or more of the above behaviours is undoubtedly on the verge of disintegration.

Additionally, the examination of malpractices is a challenge to the family. Currently, cheating and other fraudulent activities during examinations seem to have become the order of the day in some African countries. Viewing such practices as unacceptable in the society, governments are putting in place mechanisms to eliminate these deviant behaviours. However, some children are sent out of school and become dropouts, creating problems for the family.

4. The Challenge of Separation and Divorce

Modern families are going through severe social, psychological and moral pressures that put them in crisis. One social pressure is the limited interaction time because of work. Most of the

works embarked upon by members of contemporary families are away from their homes. People must spend long working hours away, thereby eating into the time they can spend with one another (Moynagh 1995, 372). This type of separation is involuntary; each member moves to work early in the morning to return late at night.

There are also those whose work is by shift, making it difficult to have regular time together in the home. African families have to forgo the alternative of being together to source funds to maintain the family. The situation is even more critical for some families because the spouses stay in different towns, states or countries, searching for livelihood. Such people only come together once in a while. An unfortunate effect of separate living due to work is that it is becoming a reason for spouses to learn how to live independently of each other. This results in planning alone or involving those around in the planning and execution of plans since the spouse is far away. This practice gradually leads to dying love, which may lead to divorce, putting the family in disarray.

Divorce is a problem not in Africa alone but the world over. It is so terrible that the menace is swallowing many world leaders. More shocking is the case of Christians who toy with their marriages by practising divorce like child's play. For example, a source reveals that Ronald Reagan, Phil Gramm of Texas, Alfonse D'Amolo of New York and John Warner of Virginia divorced their wives. Women politicians like Helen Chenoweth of Idaho, and Susan Molinari of New York, who was the Republican National Convention keynote speaker, did the same. Governors and presidents are not an exception because George H. W Bush is said not to be free of the problem of divorce (<http://www.liberalikechrist.org/about/gopimmorality.html>). This experience is biting on these leaders because of the liberality of their marriage.

The African situation is not spared of the devastating weight of liberalism in marriage. Divorce is a serious matter of recent because couples find it more challenging to cope with the responsibilities of marriage. Understanding each other and life goals are becoming more complex, resulting in physical or emotional divorce (Fakunle 1992, 99). The result is that divorce throws the

family, “which is considered the most basic human institution,” into crisis (Dali 2001, 57). Indeed, divorce or separation constitutes an emotional blow to the children. In most cases, one of the parents makes the child a confidant, thereby putting an emotional burden beyond the child's capacity on him.

Concept of Societal Development

The focus here is on the meaning of societal development. Characteristics of contemporary society are also exemplified.

Meaning of Societal Development

Societal development and social development are used interchangeably. Societal development is a process in which a society increases its capital stocks across social, economic and environmental capitals. The idea of societal development has often been connected with the progress and development of people and society. The term is synonymous with social development, which is about improving the well-being of every citizen. Therefore, societal development in this context means investing in people, in which case their families will also do well, and the whole of society will benefit (Apenza 2010, 140).

Moreover, human beings are inherently social, and developing competencies will enhance a person's ability to succeed even in family relationships. Conceptually, societal development encompasses a commitment to individual well-being and volunteerism and the opportunity for people to determine their own needs and influence decisions that affect them. Social development incorporates public concerns in developing social policy and economic initiatives (Huitt and Daoson, 2011). Social development is conceived of desirable results - higher incomes, longer life expectancy, lower infant mortality, and more education. Recently emphasis has shifted from the results to the enabling conditions, strategies and public policies for achieving those results - peace, democracy, good governance, social freedoms, equal access, laws, institutions, markets, infrastructure, education and technology.

Characteristics of the Contemporary Society

The family is the fundamental social institution of society. Several significant institutions are found in all human societies; their relative importance varies from one society to another. The family is easy to locate, and the members of any society are constantly aware of and deeply involved in performing its requisite functions. Therefore, family is always a conspicuous feature of social organization (Chudhuri, 2012). As an integrated unit, a family is a social group. A social group is an aggregate of individuals in which definite relations exist between the members, and each individual is conscious of the group boundary and its symbols. In other words, a social group has at least a rudimentary structure and organization that includes normative rules, status, roles, and rituals. The family is not the only social group that influences the social and cultural development of human resources; a village, a nation, a trade union, or a political party are all social groups.

The nature of contemporary society is exemplified by what happens in the church because the church is in the world, and the world is in the church. As observed by Olotu (1992), contemporary churches are now busy pushing programmes instead of prayer; stressing numbers instead of needs; seeking crowds instead of consecration; featuring stars instead of the Saviour. They know more about gold than God. They are more concerned daily about silver than about souls (8). Also, the context of the church at present is bedevilled with uproars in nations. Examples of such uproars include the situations in Egypt, Libya, and Ivory Coast, and the Boko Haram and banditry sagas in Nigeria. All of these have a disintegrative impact on the family, resulting in an epileptic development in society.

By its content and objective, modernism substantially opposes known religious traditions. According to Reardon (1987), modernism began to be more popular as there came a broader adoption by theologians of opinions that were more or less critical of received dogma or traditional interpretation of scriptures. Instead of the term “modernism”, these theologians employed the term “liberalism,” which they took to signify a readiness not only to modify or negate certain doctrines or beliefs usually associated with

received religious teachings but also to propagate views of a more positive nature, such as the necessity for freedom of inquiry and research (7).

One of the central characteristics of modern society that stemmed from modernism or liberalism is secularism. Inquai (1970) observed that secularism is a negative extreme of secularization, which has become a pseudo-religion based on the absence or elimination of all forms of religion. The secularist attributes many evils to institutionalized religion, such as spreading superstition, blocking the progress of knowledge, infringing on the conscience and liberties of countless men and women, supporting oppressions, and perpetuating deep divisions in human society (27). Secularism envisions society's physical, social and moral improvement based on practical morality and negates anything spiritual, which has become a bane to a peaceful society. There is no doubt that secularism accounts for so many ills of the present society, like corruption, bribery, kidnapping, insecurity, prostitution and various other atrocities.

Another characteristic of modern society is the concept of pluralism which is also an offspring of the enlightenment era of technological development and bureaucratic growth. Jacques (1976) noted that this development had occasioned a very high mobility rate and concentration of populations in the great urban centres. Along with these is the instant reportage of the wireless and television news, which make people of the world become emotionally involved in problems of others mile away at the very time they are happening (2). The result is that the world is reduced daily to a "global village". However, instead of harmony, the present society seems more and more to be breaking up into a plurality of groups and lifestyles, confronting each other with manifest hostility.

It is also important to note that modern society has resulted in many attendant moral problems that have developed into strange complications. This is evident in the breakdown in respect for tradition and authority. Regrettably, no more authoritative guidance carries automatic respect (Jacques, 2). Modern society has become secular and ethical values that used to be absolutes in guiding conduct, and intentions are now considered relative in any prevailing

circumstance. Before modernism, moral schools were agents for teaching and impacting moral values, providing authoritative guidance for conduct and practices. This is mainly getting eroded in the present modern society.

Another complication of modern society is a wrong shift of value from integrity, godliness and contentment to the mounting craze for wealth accumulation and materialism among individuals, families, communities and nations. Globalization is another feature of modern society that fosters an increasing trend for wealth accumulation and materialism. Though the proponents and promoters of globalization point to its acclaimed benefits like free trade, and international market opportunities, however, one of its devastating effects is that local cultural traditions are being destroyed in the name of economic growth and the gap between the rich and the poor keeps widening (Craig 2005, 278). The role of the family in transforming society becomes germane as people need to be re-orientated on how to make the best use of the advent of the modernism movement to develop society positively and to discard the evils wired into this same modernism movement.

Nexus between Family Integration and Societal Development

Having carried out conceptual analysis of family integration and societal development, it is needful to present the relationship between both concepts.

No Family, No Society

Marriage is the firmest foundation for building a family, while the family is the firmest foundation for building society. The role of the family as the primary educator is claimed to work together to educate their children. The family's leading role in educating the children is a foundation for moral education and religious life. The nature of the children and their personality growth is primarily derived from their parents and other family members. There is no doubt that the family environment is the first educational environment for children. Therefore, the family significantly influences the period of child development, which will, in turn, encourage societal development (Chudhuri, 2012).

Families are also a source of social statutes, many of which are ascribed. In all societies, the family is organized to perform certain societal functions. A function is defined as an activity that is imperative if society is to continue to exist. Each role of the family is conceptualized around specific functions. Moreover, each role implies a reciprocal role. For example, the sexual functions of marriage reside both in the husband's and wife's reciprocating roles. To identify each function with a role, it is necessary to regard the functions and the roles themselves as universal. The specific context of the role may vary, but the formal aspects must be universal (Chudhuri, 2012). Closely related to this discussion, Murdock (1960) points out four universal family functions: sexual, reproductive, economic, and educative. Murdock argues that without sexual and reproductive functions, society would become extinct; without economic cooperation among family members, life would cease. Without the education of children, societal culture would end.

Integration in the Family as an Engine for Societal Development

There is no doubt that family integration has essential and crucial roles in societal development. The families within the society bear the primary responsibility for the education and socialization of the children as well as for instilling values, discipline and a sense of belonging in the society. Society gives marriage a unique recognition because it is where children learn what it means to be members of their family and society. It is not merely a private institution from a cultural perspective (Babatunde 2010, 54). The well-being of the family and its place in society is not simply a matter for the husband and wife but also includes the positive role and contribution of other members of society as active players.

The family of a woman and a man is a fundamental building block of society which makes a unique and irreplaceable contribution to the common good and society. A Christian family or marriage is a union where Christ-like husband and wife join together, learn from Christ and obey His teaching (Oyedele 2011, 6). The writer agrees with the opinion of Oyedele that in marriage, a woman and a man promise fidelity to each other for the rest of their lives, not minding what lies ahead. Nevertheless, they commit to loving each other,

whatever comes. While it is known that their commitment may break down and the sorrow that this can bring is also known, it is recognized that many couples live on marital commitment faithfully. This committed love in marriage provides a stable and nurturing environment for children. Here, children receive the most important encouragement for living positively, which will rub on society positively.

It is important to note that the place of family integration in ensuring societal development cannot be overemphasized even though technological changes characterize the present modern society, changes in norms, new priorities and new forms of communication fueled by the advent of social media. No matter the changes experienced in society, family and its integration will forever remain a bedrock for societal development. A family provides a support system for every family member, helps meet basic needs and provides health benefits to the family members. Society, therefore, benefits when the family relieves it of the burden of supporting family members. Undoubtedly, healthy families produce people who contribute positively to society (Akande 2004, 41). Crime is undoubtedly a part of human civilization, with its ravaging effects on several societies, including Nigerian societies. Though families may not be able to eliminate crimes in society, they can help prevent crimes and lessen their effects on society by bringing up members who value integrity and hard work and who will abhor corruption with vehemence.

Parents need to enlighten their children about the different stages of development regarding psychosexual patterns. Children should also be informed that the rate at which individuals get mature sexually is not the same. It must also be recognized that sexual maturity in girls comes earlier than that of boys. Children should also be acquainted with the possible physical changes that may occur when puberty approaches. (Anwana, 154). They should be made to know that, according to Fong (2007), “part of the function of puberty is to physically prepare the individual for parenthood.” (137). Sex education, though unpopular in Africa, is a potent weapon for fighting against sexual immorality. Anwana rightly observed, “One does not necessarily behave better if kept in ignorance about sex

matters. Ignorance can cause more harm than good in this respect.” (Anwana, 154). This means that sex education should be provided for the young ones at home.

Work-related challenges notwithstanding, members of contemporary families should seek a balance between work and home life to lay a good foundation for a developed society. As entrenched in the Scriptures, the goal of family life is holistic. The Bible stresses that immediate personal pleasure or selfishness should not be put before family well-being. As emphasized in the Scriptures, the social pressures of work can be confronted and overcome by contemporary families through proper prioritization. In the words of Kore (2004), “caution should be taken against placing one's career or profession above one's faith in God and loyalty to do his will” (104). The modern family should borrow a leaf from the model exemplified by the 'work' of the cross, which occurred in a family context. The model involved the Father, Son and other human beings regarded as the Son's 'brothers.' The model focuses on the creation of “a family rather than just helping to create God's family, which means that work must not assume such importance that the task of families is neglected” (Moynagh, 374). This type of family and work model is forward-looking and should be emulated by contemporary families to reduce work-related separation and thereby enhance societal development. Christian parents must provide a holistic developmental upbringing for their children because “heredity does not equip a child with proper attitudes; children will learn what they are taught” (Dobson, 9).

Indeed, people's negative responses to their social and physical environment, like indiscriminate bush burning, and premature harvest of fruits, fish and animals, point to the foundation they got from their families. This is because the phenomenal field of a person (i.e. the totality of his/her background) informs the phenomenal self (the way one perceives oneself), which in turn guides his/her response to the environment (Parents are to ensure their children develop physically, spiritually, intellectually, socially, and emotionally. It is such well-groomed family members who will contribute positively to the development of society.

Conclusion

Literally, the family is a primary institution in society, and has a primary role in ensuring societal development, provided unity and harmony are ensured. The family consists of the father, mother and children or none, and has crucial roles to play in society. No other social unit or social organization can assume the most crucial function of the family, the nurture of the young. To this institution, it is entrusted with the essential responsibilities of life. Reliance is placed on the family to perform the functions of production, preparation, and guidance of society's future generations and establish the necessary moral, social, and interpersonal framework for society. The home and family is the first social organization into which a child is brought. The sanctity, serenity, freedom, and organization of that unit will have a marked effect on the child's personality and development and one's ability to become an effective and operative part of society. It can be safely concluded that if the family serves as the engine for the development of society, the religious bodies (church and mosque as examples) and all tiers of government should support a proper establishment and sustenance of marriage and assist in the family to experience integration.

A child first learns through relating with other family members. After that, his mental and moral growth depends upon the stability of personal relationships, which only the family, at present, seems able to provide. To the extent that the family fails and degenerates, so shall society fail and degenerate. However, from the present perspective, contemporary society seems to be witnessing the rapid dissolution of an institution that is yet indispensable. The seriousness of the problem is reflected in the many centres for studying the family and the many groups professionally concerned with sustaining it. Family integration is an essential component of social stability, protection and development. In many developing countries, family is the only form of social security. Therefore, every couple should know and apply for their roles in marriage to ensure family integration and stability in society.

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EFFECTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON FAMILY LIFE

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Abstract

This article argued that just as society is dynamic, so are the media of communication. Although many works have been carried out on the effects of media on family life, adequate attention has not been paid to social media in this regard. Utilising both primary and secondary sources, the article used Michel Foucault's transgressive theory to analyse the effects of social media on the family. It found out that although social media has negative effects on families, there are also positive contributions to enhancing family solidarity. It thus concluded that social media could be managed to minimize their corrosive effects on family life.

Introduction

In November 2015, Pope Francis visited Africa. Before the visit, the traditional and social media were awash with expectations and calls on the Pope to say something definite about homosexual unions. Eventually, when he arrived, he spoke glowingly about traditional African family values that have respect for elders and children. He states,

The health of any society depends on the health of its families... Kenyan society has long been blessed with strong family life, a deep respect for the wisdom of the elderly and love for children.... Let the great values of Africa's traditions, the wisdom and truth of God's word, and the generous idealism of your youth guide you in working to shape a society which is ever more just, inclusive and respectful of human dignity (Harris, 2015, n. p.).

Family is usually conceived as the basic unit of the community. It has also been described as the place where the socialization of the child takes place. It is the arena of human mutuality. Family as a concept has increasingly become difficult to define despite these functions. Religion, culture, modernity, globalization, and others have shaped and impacted the family's meaning, understanding and value. It has been argued that “the family is a human system that has a life of its own that must be understood in terms of ever-expanding contexts of mutual influence. The family has a history that is best understood as a life cycle with predictable and unpredictable crises” (Anderson, Foley, Miller-McLemore and Schreiter 2004,5). Thus, as a human system, the family constitutes independent and yet interdependent persons. Being independent suggests that each family member has choices to make and responsibilities to discharge on their own. Being interdependent means that each family member needs one another and is accountable to each other. The choices made and actions enacted are not value-free; they have consequences on every member of the family because they are knitted together. This intertwinement forms the nucleus of the communal life that a family is traditionally associated with. This accounts for the understanding of family as a place of mutual influence. Mutual influence is a habitus, a carefully, consciously developed virtue, a way of being in relations rather than a natural aptitude or accidental mutuality. In other words, even though we, as human beings in a family setting, have a natural inclination to love, we certainly do not naturally know how to love. Thus, in a family, love is learnt and developed as a skill and an art; it is indeed a discipline, a course that requires continuous initiation, nurturing and development. The same mutuality principle applies to communication (Wadell, 14).

But family as a human system is not static; it is dynamic. Its dynamism is critical to the effect that it will become staid if we do not countenance and diligently appropriate it. Because of this dynamism, the family must be approached in terms of predictable and unpredictable crises, which contemporary society is laced and faced with. The predictable and unpredictable events in the family depend on the nature of those who constitute the family; their values, virtues and goals for the family.

I will demonstrate this more vividly later when discussing family as a human organization. Nevertheless, it will suffice here to state that human beings can be both predictable and unpredictable, and thus they can precipitate ideas and actions that are predictable and unpredictable, even in a family. It is pertinent to state that the predictability and unpredictability of crises in the family can be culture-based, while culture is also dynamic. Institutions and government policies can also cause predictable and unpredictable crises in families. However, there are occasions in the development of a culture that unpredictable influence struggles with and acts as a predator on a particular culture. For instance, many years back, it would have been difficult to conceive that same-sex marriage would be legalized even in the United States because those who engaged in same-sex practices were routinely arrested and prosecuted. But today, the situation has changed. It is not that it has changed in the US alone; the decriminalization of same-sex unions has become both a political and diplomatic weapon to coerce other developing countries that believe that the practice is anti-culture to decriminalize it. Studies have also shown how the Industrial Revolution in the West has changed and continued to change the constitution and understanding of the family; how roles of each member have changed as well as their rights. In fact, the democratization of Western societies has also impacted the understanding of the family and introduced such concepts as “just love” in replacement of “unconditional love.” Individualism in its severe form has also resulted from the democratization of the family: expressive.

Individualism has conflicted with the family's need for accommodation and compromise of a personal desire to maintain and sustain mutuality and communality in the family. In addition, the democratization of the family has raised and escalated gender issues and rights in the family. These and many other issues once thought exclusively Western are now deeply entrenched in the African family system. In other words, globalization has affected the African family system in ways different from its traditional conception.

But the question is: how does the foregoing relate to social media and its effects on the family? I will argue that the family's history as a human system cannot be divorced from communication. Communication is essential in the family system; it is indeed the instrument through which the essence and value of the family are mutually shared, transmitted, preserved, socialized, evaluated and reproduced. Communication is the ritual that transmits meaning among members of the family and beyond. "In both profane and sacred settings, the communication of meaning to both human and divine witnesses takes place through repetition of symbolic actions" (Adekakun, 2021,1). In other words, communication "rituals are essential and powerful means for making the world a habitable and hospitable place. They are the basic vehicles for creating and expressing meaning. They are an indispensable medium by which we make our way through life" (Anderson and Foley, 1998,22). As it has been noted that family is dynamic, it must also be acknowledged that communication and its modes are dynamic, fluid, evolving, and globalizing. This immediately suggests that the family cannot be left behind in the fluid mode of communication; it must develop along the strokes of contemporary communications technologies to be relevant. It must provide enduring values to stem the tide of corrosive effects of its values in the jet age. Social or traditional media as a means of communication negatively and positively impact the family.

Theoretical Foregrounding

In this work, I use transgressive theory to analyze how social media or any mode of communication at all transgresses geographical and emotional distance. Loosely, I define geographical distance as the space created between two or more places, and emotional distance is conceptualized as the emotional feeling of the absence of a person due to geographical distance.

When we talk about transgression, we may quickly bring in theological meaning loudly present in the Christian Lord's Prayer, which teaches the request for vertical forgiveness from God and reciprocal obligation for horizontal forgiveness among men. Beyond

that, transgression could mean “crossing boundaries”: that is, “the ability to go beyond limits and conventions, to deny and affirm differences, to move against and beyond boundaries” (Reimer-Kirkham, Sharma, Brown, and Calestani, 2020, 8). Reimer-Kirkham, Sharma, Brown, and Calestani (2020, 8) expounded the theory of transgression on Michel Foucault's explanation that limit and transgression are mutually dependent. According to Foucault, “a limit could not exist if it was absolutely uncrossable, and, reciprocally, transgression would be pointless if it merely crossed a limit composed of illusions and shadows.” The pertinent task here is to disentangle what becomes of a limit after a transgression has taken place. Concerning social media as a transgressive mode, we are to determine what becomes of a geographical distance after transgression in the form of communication has taken place, “the moment that limits do not contain” (Ibid). I argue that no matter the ubiquity and fluidity social media has achieved through its transgressive powers and influence, the emotional void created by geographical distance cannot be fully met except via geographical proximity and physical, emotional reconnection, especially within the frames of family. I then argue that crossing geographical distance and dissolving space through social media communication in a family can only satisfy the family momentarily but produce a deeper emotional vacuum that face-to-face communication and reconnection can heal more deeply.

Before the emergence of information technology (IT), a global village theory had been envisaged, which the proponents argued would result in a borderless society and make geographical proximity irrelevant in social relations. Today, IT has transgressed geographical distance and brought some form of emotional proximity. In fact, social media has created an e-village that virtually brings almost everyone to the village square to discuss, dialogue, chat, contend, assess, bargain, trade, politick, socialize and so on. Social media has indeed incredibly increased the volume of communications across the globe in a short while. Although social media must have transgressed traditional and electronic borders, it has not made geographical and emotional proximity irrelevant as some had thought

it would. Studies and reality have shown that yearning for geographical and emotional proximity in an e-world has seriously increased (Goldberg and Levy, n. p.) Patacchini (2015) reinforces Goldenberg and Levy's position that both theoretical and empirical studies show that the volume of social media interactions has not reduced the need for physical communication. Social media seems to have increased the emotional yearning to knit together in a traditional form.

The Family as a Human System

The simple definition of family is a group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood, or adoption, constituting a single household and interacting or communicating with each other in their respective social positions, usually those of spouses, parents, children, and siblings. The family has many qualifiers: traditional, nuclear, extended, Christian, Islamic and so on. For there to be a family, there must be at least five characteristics: there must be at least three persons; marriage is its foundation; change of status of the couple from bride to wife to mother and bridegroom to husband to father; changes continue as more children are born to the basic family unit; recognition that the foundation of the family are the spouses. It has to be borne in mind that the sequence given above may not be routinely followed in many contemporary family settings. Marriage, which is traditionally regarded as the starting point of a family, may sometimes come after children must have been born. Marriage itself is challenging, if not impossible, to define with acuity. For instance, when one man marries one woman only, it is generally, but erroneously defined as monogamy. In an actual sense, monogamy occurs when one man marries one woman only (monogyny), and one woman marries one man only (monoandry) at the same; it is when both monogyny and monoandry happen at the same time that we can have monogamy. But we cannot but realise that “marriage is a rearrangement of existing relationships” rather than narrowly conceived as “a rearrangement for the sake of subsequent relationships” (Gittins, 168). But whether we agree or not, contemporary marriage tends toward the latter as an ideal and goal to pursue.

We can distinguish between the family of orientation and a family of procreation. The former has to do with the family we are born into, the family within which we are orientated, socialized and cultivated. It is the family our parents instituted. The latter is the family we have formed; the family we have established within which we raise our children. Beyond these two is the family of choice, which is also increasingly finding its way into the African family. The family of choice is “identifiable by the freely undertaken commitment of its members.” Gittins exemplifies it this way:

My own 'family of choice' includes my adopted daughter, her three adopted children, and her one natural child; her common-law husband; and the adopted mother of my daughter, who is neither my wife nor my lover, but my friend. The common-law husband is the father of my daughter's natural child and also one of her adopted children, who is the half brother of the two other adopted children. All three adopted children have different fathers but the same mother – who is not their adoptive mother (Gittins 179).

The family of choice is a complex family, real but does not conform to the traditional patriarchal heterosexual family known in the Christian and African family systems. The family of choice is an existential or circumstantial family; it meets the need of its members and forms a basis for their fulfilment. This inconceivably sociological family is fundamental in Africa, too; it generates a theological basis for the crucible of love of persons, that is, persons upon whom grace must be shown. My family also exemplifies this form of the family: I had an uncle and an aunt who were not biological children of my grandfather but whose mothers were my aunts and daughters of my grandfather. Both of them have siblings from the same mothers but not the same fathers. These uncles and aunts bore the same surname as me and their own mothers, my aunts. While they were my grandfather's children, they were also his children. Both of them shared the property of their father (my grandfather), like their mothers (my aunts).

Perhaps, I should complicate the conception of the family system more by adding this: I worked on transsexualism in my doctoral programme. Simply put, transsexualism has to do with a process whereby a man or a woman believes that his or her soul is incompatible with his or her body. That is, one can argue, in the case of a man, that while his soul is feminine, his body is masculine, and in the case of a woman, while her body is feminine, her soul is masculine. They thus feel that a male soul is incongruous with a female body and that a female soul is incompatible with a male body. In this situation, the transsexual feels that he or she is not a wholly fulfilled person despite the position of biogenetic formation of maleness and femaleness. Therefore, to align their bodies with the desired souls and vice versa, they may go through hormonal therapy or sex reassignment surgery. The sex reassignment surgery, which is irreversible once carried out, entails the evacuation of the sex organs of a particular transsexual and the replacement of the opposite sex organs or the desired sex organs. In other words, a male transsexual who wants to become a female person will surgically evacuate his male sex organs and replace them with female sex organs. Through hormonal therapy, he can now develop the female body structure – body politic! At this stage, he has transitioned from male to female, dressed as female, and act as a female, but is limited in the biological-reproductive process. Of course, this limitation has also been overcome through in vitro fertilization. One of my case studies was a lady who married and gave birth to two children before she transitioned from female to male. After she had successfully transitioned and become a man, he formally changed *her* name and bore a masculine name. In his new formation or gender as a man, his two children have a biological father and transsexual father who was once their biological mother. At this point of transition, the two children have no mother but two 'fathers' because they can only relate to both parents as fathers and males. However, it is a family, not of choice but of procreation and design (Igboin, 2010).

Gay and lesbian families are also human, even though they disagree with other generally acceptable family forms. This is a form of the family established based on a biological man marrying another

biological man or a biological woman marrying another biological woman. These couples may adopt children to fulfil the family characteristics described above. The lesbian couple can go through in vitro fertilization to raise children. In either case, the children, whether adopted or biological, have both parents being the same sex. Another widespread cultural family in Africa and some other places is the woman-to-woman family, which is not lesbian in nature and function. In a lesbian union, the two married females have sexual intercourse, whereas, in woman-to-woman marriage, the female husband assumes the duties of a husband to the female wife, except for sexual intercourse. In southeastern Nigeria, where this is common, the female husbands usually profit from “their productive and reproductive activities – hence the reference to 'female husbands’” (Hanson, 2014,194). Although the Supreme Court of Nigeria has outlawed this form of family, the practice may not have died completely. Evans-Prichard also notes amongst the Nuer thus:

What seems to us, but not at all to Nuer, a somewhat strange union is that in which a woman marries another woman and counts as the *pater* of the children born of the wife. Such marriages are by no means uncommon in Nuerland, and they must be regarded as a form of simple *legal marriage*, for the woman-husband marries her wife in exactly the same way as a man marries a woman (Carrier and Murray, 1998,254).

Other forms of the family exist, but the point I want to make is that any form of the family involves human beings. Hence the family is a human organization, and their qualifiers instantiate different modes and levels of communication. Nevertheless, what makes a family qua family is the bond among its members; the emotional attachment, the we-feeling and mutuality that no other human organization can readily offer. This bond separates one family from another and makes it unique in its entirety. This bond provides and guarantees security for its members against internal and external threats. Within this bond exists a family language or communication code, a specially developed but confidential language of communication, different

from general language and its nuances in the community, which all members learn as they socialize in the family. Most traditional families speak a coded language in a larger community. The coded language can be both verbal and non-verbal in nature. But the essence is that effective communication occurs insofar as the members understand one another.

Traditional Communication in the Family System

We cannot productively talk about communication without understanding geography's influence on it. Geographical proximity or distance naturally creates the thirst for communication. This is because there is an emotional gulf that geographical distance creates, which needs to be filled by communication. There is an absence that needs a presence to heal it, even though that presence is symbolic, in terms of communication. Maintaining emotional presence due to geographical distance is a critical reason why communication in the family is imperative. For instance, children born to the same family grow up to socialize together, communicate and bond. As it is well established, most family members do not always live together forever. There comes a time when they have to leave home to pursue different goals in different places. Space is created by leaving their home, both geographically and emotionally. Moreover, this gap has to be filled through communication so that all can be knitted together. Before we discuss social media and its effects on the family, let us briefly discuss the traditional mode of communication before the rise of social media. Oral communication mode is the oldest form of human communication and remains the most effective to date. Words are vehicles of communication of information, emotions, thoughts, and ideas from one person to another. This means of communication entails giving and receiving what is being communicated within geographical proximity. It is a transactional exchange that is highly symbolic. It is a means of creating and sharing meanings in a family setting. This exchange in the word is basic, primary, encompassing, enlivening, therapeutic and inspiring. In a family, communication is not just an everyday activity but also a therapy and recipe for human flourishing. It has been argued that communication is never too much

in a family; the more communication members engage in, the more bonding exists amongst them. Communication in the family plays a pivotal role in building and maintaining relationships both at leisure and during serious engagements. This face-to-face, verbal communication system takes place in everyday settings at a meal, work, leisure, and festival. For instance, a rehash of *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe will clearly explain how oral communication in a family, household and community took place. Suppose there is anything that modern communication systems and devices are taking away from us. In that case, it is the moonlight story time when family and communal values were communicated and taught in a didactic manner, where riddles and proverbs provided advanced epistemological courses. Mathematics of community and inter-community relationships were solved in a relaxed open-air space. This advanced communication course could take the form of a palaver, where everyone present often seemed to talk simultaneously, yet everyone listened to everything being said. As some Western scholars have criticized, palaver is never a superfluous talk; on the other hand, the means through which complex family and community issues are resolved in the act of frank talk, rigorous thinking and honest delivery of each person's narrative.

Letter writing as a mode of communication was a cherished instrument of communication. Even though it used to take some time to arrive, at least from my local experience, the local postmaster's announcement that one had a letter had both emotional and physical pride and fulfilment. Although we hardly maintain family archives in this part of the world, it has been observed that such letters are still cherished and kept as much as possible because of their historical and emotional value.

It is instructive to add that the transportation system filled the geographical space and absence from home. One of my interviewees, Mrs. Iruolagbe narrated how she used to wake up early, around 4:00 am, and trek to another town where there was a motor park to send verbal and symbolic messages to her daughter in Lagos in the 1970s

to early 80s. According to her, she would usually receive a response from her daughter in four days.

But seeing the eyes that saw my daughter and her family was the affective presence I often felt. I watched the mouth of the driver as he narrated or described my daughter. I could feel my daughter's mood through the driver's words. It helped me to visualize my daughter and her wellbeing. A few questions I asked the driver and how he responded usually helped me to know her state of mind. Whenever she sent a gift, I hold it close to my chest with smiles. Back home in my room, I sang and danced quietly. I would then feel her presence, and prayed for her.

Iruolagbe's experience adds an essential dimension to communication in the family. That is, communication has a spiritual value. It knits the family together in the same spiritual fold and helps them to maintain mental health. The anxiety that characterized her daughter's absence is replaced with smiles, singing, dancing and praying whenever she received news from her through the driver. Both emotional and spiritual bond is ritualized, and the geographical distance is momentarily dissolved.

When I asked Mr. David to tell me about his first experience with a telephone as a means of communication with his daughter, who was then in Lagos, he said:

I didn't believe that it was my daughter's voice I was hearing clearly as if she was present with us physically. I had to look around to be sure that nobody was playing some pranks on us (my wife and me). However, as the conversation continued, I still believed that she was hiding in a nearby room, would step out as soon as the trick was over. My wife was anxious. I had to give her the phone, and they spoke for some time. It was when they were conversing that I went round the house, but didn't see her or hear her voice. I then realized that my daughter wasn't in Benin truly. But her voice brought her

presence to us.... That night, I dreamed of her continuing with the conversation during the day.... Subsequently, I was more relaxed talking with her on phone. Her voice echoed in my mind for several days after.... The conversation reminded me about her childhood and many other things we experienced when she was growing up.

According to Mrs. David,

We all went together (referring to her husband and other children) to make those calls in uncle's house (referring to her brother in-law). Everybody would talk on phone. After the phone conversation, we would usually unconsciously break into a family meeting. Although such meetings were normally unstructured, we discussed diverse issues affecting the family. Many long-standing disagreements between me and him (referring to her husband, Mr. David) would just be resolved. We would forgive one another in the euphoria of communicating with our daughter. ... But we didn't always have opportunity to discuss private issues as mother and daughter. Even though she would want to confide in me, my response would announce the secrets we wanted to share privately to everyone in the parlor. But that did not replace the joy of knowing how she was doing in Lagos.

From the Davids' narratives, we can glean that communication in the family (1) produces supersensory effects when he has to continue with the conversation in his dream; (2) results in sharing of value among family members, thereby maintaining bond; (3) creates active and affective presence and lights up the gap created by geographical and emotional absence (4) offers the opportunity for recall of historical events and memorials; (5) leads to reconciliation and; (6) that telephonic conversation in a communal setting does not give adequate room for private discussion, unlike the mobile phone. Studying “ritual activities” as a means of communication in family is also important. Ritual activities are those activities members of a family share in rather than direct communication. Ritual activities

help to create a sense of connection, connectedness, hierarchy, and boundaries. These activities fill a void created by geographical distance, separation, divorce, or natural occurrences such as death. For instance, the girl-child is socialized to emulate her mother in many ways, like domestic chores and social and cultural values. As the child grows up and even leaves home, she invokes the presence of her mother by acting precisely as her mother. Sometimes, she sings her mother's best lyrics by mimicking them. According to Mrs. Iruolagbe,

When I began to act exactly like my mother, may be sang like she used to sing, gesticulate in similar ways like she would, I realized that I was missing her. Acting the same way she acted when we were together as a young girl would bring a sense of connection between us. Sometimes, I would act like my father.... Whenever my husband noticed it, he would tease me and lit up my mood.... But one thing I noticed was that a few days after, I would sometimes receive messages from them. It was as if they too were missing me at the same time I was missing them.... After my mother's death, I still unconsciously continued, and remembered her stories and instructions she had given me while alive.

Ritual activities instantiate the fact that even though social media can transgress geographical distance, the need for emotional reconnection is deeply ingrained in a bonded family.

Social Media as a Revolution of Communication System

Social media is a means to an end and not an end itself. Social media has revolutionized the global communications system. It has quickly contested and almost wholly overshadowed the conventional or traditional modes of communication. It is a 'transgressive' communication mode with far-reaching implications. It has been defined as interactive technologies that enable the creation and sharing of information, ideas, interest, and other forms of expression through virtual networks and communities such as

Facebook/Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp, Skype, Tiktok, WeChat, Instagram, Ozone, Weibo, Twitter, Tumblr, Baidu Tieba, LinkedIn, and so forth. We can also understand social media as a group of technologies known for their fast, easy and widely vast and accessible information through online platforms. These can be in the form of mobile or website applications, which individuals and a group of persons can utilize to generate, share or analyse information in digitized environments.

New media represents “an elemental metamorphosis into multiple dialogues within a community from monologues in media broadcast. This transformation mirrors the process of the internet revolution dubbed Web 2.0.” At the beginning of the 21st century, the internet suddenly changed the degree and mode of communication worldwide. The information generated by anyone is made available to all interested users (Nyambura, 2020:13). The point must be made that social media has become an intrinsic part of the contemporary family. Its dynamic effects have to be evaluated with caution.

We cannot underestimate the influence and reach of social media in contemporary society. We have witnessed the political impact of social media on governance across the world. The Arab Spring that started in 2011 in Tunisia and spread to Syria is one of the results of social media mobilization by the youth. The revolution this social media mobilization caused has emboldened other youth in different places to challenge corrupt political officers and the government. In fact, many secrets or confidential reports that would have remained inaccessible to the public have been freely circulated online, some with dire consequences. In Nigeria, the #EndSARS protests of 2020 started on social media. Youth all over the country used Twitter as a social medium to express their excruciating experiences at the hands of the police unit called Special Anti-Robbery Squad. With gory pictures and videos uploaded, the protests could not be stopped, eventually leading to the unit's disbandment for the third time. Some have argued that the Nigerian government's suspension of Twitter was not unconnected with the #EndSARS protests aided by the

platform. However, the government now turns to social media to bridge the gap between it and citizens by frequently engaging them in the activities and policies of the government. Of course, political engineering now actively takes place in social media: online polls are conducted, political aspirants are assessed, and campaigns are carried out online. However, there is a need to conduct empirical research to determine the influence of online political engineering in a country whose electoral body relies on offline conduct of elections that encourages massive rigging, voting buying, thuggery and so on. Apart from political mobilization, many churches are now investing in social media. The lockdown of 2020 occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic radically changed the perception and utilization of social media in churches. Theological debates that it prompted were swiftly responded to in such a way as to keep the members in fellowship digitally. The transition from physical, offline church to digital, online church during COVID-19 has not been completely reversed, and one doubts if many churches would return fully to offline worship alone. Hybrid worship is now common among many churches, especially the Pentecostal brand (Igboin, 2022).

We cannot also underestimate the security challenges that social media engender worldwide. Bandit and terrorist groups effectively coordinate and execute their sinister plans precisely on their targets. Boko Haram and bandits in the northern parts of Nigeria and kidnappers and ritualists in the southern parts thoughtfully utilise social media platforms to carry out their activities. In fact, one of the reasons the Federal Government gave for the enforcement of compulsory linking of individual SIM with National Identification Number (NIN) is to be able to track the locations and activities of these groups to neutralize them. These influences ultimately impact the family.

Impact of Social Media on the Family

The vast array of opportunities social media affords the family has become a matter of contention. The question is whether there is still communication in the family and if there is, what kind of

communication, and how does it impact the family? Social media's impact on family depends on certain characteristics of a particular family. In other words, the impact social media has on literate, semi-literate, traditional, intergenerational, and wealthy families will significantly differ from the other. The awareness of social media's impact differs from the acceptance of the effects. For instance, in a traditional family, the use of social media to bridge the gap created by geographical distance will be different from that of a literate or wealthy family where even children have access to or own their individual phones. It can be argued that while in the former, the opportunity to communicate with family members via social media, which is occasional, will be highly cherished. The opportunity will bring them back to their sense and value of communality through a virtual connection. The latter may rescind into rugged individualism, where everyone is concerned with, or concentrated on, what they believe is most important to them to the utter neglect of what should bond them as a family. Therefore, there is a need to investigate the social position, geographical distance, emotional bonding, accessibility to information communications technology and/or spiritual relations that exist in a family to determine social media's impact on it.

Furthermore, we must examine what has been referred to as “ritual communications” to ascertain the impact social media has on a family (Couture, 139). By ritual communication, we mean the mode of communication adopted by a geographically distant family, frequency and/or regularity, and contents of exchange. However, the mode of communication can evolve or change depending on social relations and accessibility to other means of communication. For instance, one interviewee told me he regularly wrote letters to his son in Germany in the 1990s. At least he would write five letters yearly, and his son responded to each. Later, the mode of communication changed when his son was able to install a landline telephone for him. The frequency of their communication changed. That is, they talked fortnightly on weekends. With the mobile phones, he could relate more emotionally with his son and his family: “I see my

grandchildren via phone every time we talk. I see them grow over the years. Recently, when they all visited home (Nigeria), I could easily recognize and call them by their names. We were all surprised that we knew one another even though we were physically meeting for the first time.”

Thus, discussing the impacts of social media – negative or positive – the question of *how* is paramount. How does a family handle or mishandle social media as a form of communication? This becomes necessary because, in the context of globalization, almost nobody is insulated from the effects of social media. Social media can enhance and create communication flow, generational gap and increased production of privatization of individual families just like it can cement them. The consequence of social media on the family, as shown below, is that it takes away face-to-face family meetings. In his proverbial response, an interviewee posited that “the social media now make our children like little birds who, after learning how to fly, will never return to the nest. They occasionally meet their mother in the air, chat and fly to other direction.” Nyambura observes thus: “face-to-face conversations among individual family members are gradually fading out where you find most individuals engrossed in their own virtual world and circle of online friends who they would rather share with their psychological and emotional challenges” (Nyambura, 2020, 4).

Positive Impact of Social Media on Family

One of the advantages social media has brought to the family is that it makes communication easier, more accessible, faster, more frequent, cheaper, and more robust. It also helps to create, maintain or manage social relations amongst family members at both nuclear and extended levels. In this instance, social media fills the gaps created by geographical distance. It has been estimated that over a billion text messages are sent daily worldwide. In addition, the emotional bonds and needs of family members can be met using social media platforms. According to an interviewee, “I don't miss my husband as such since we bought our mobile phones. We do video calls almost

every evening and share deep emotional feelings. We only continue where we stop when we meet physically. But sincerely, the experiences differ between phone and physical meetings and conversations.” In another interview, a respondent stated that he assists his children with their assignments, frequently discusses other family matters, and enforces discipline when necessary. In addition, many families today have social media platforms, for example, WhatsApp, where members relate freely. Family events such as birthdays, marriage, and burial ceremonies are shared and discussed. Social media platforms have also helped families fill intergenerational gaps among their members. It makes the older members learn from, the younger ones and vice versa. With patience and respect, both groups begin to understand and manage the difference that the age gap has created, which geographical distance has amplified.

Although family almanacs, diaries and pictures gradually fade, digital archives are being massively replaced. Social media can be used to preserve family documents, values, traditions and cultures and is retrievable by future generations. Many families have resorted to using social media for memorials and digitizing their archives.

On the spiritual front, many families agree that they use social media to connect with their members for prayers and devotions. Even though these spiritual exercises are not as organic as a face-to-face meeting, they have created an opportunity to unite to deal with family spiritual issues or challenges.

Some Negative Effects of Social Media on Family

The idea of technologization of the child in the 21st century is a product of social media addiction. This sometimes happens deliberately when parents give devices to their children in order to keep them away from distracting them. Gradually, the child gets used to it and regards the device as his companion, thereby estranging him from his parents, who want to accomplish their tasks at the expense of building human relations with their child. Technologization of the child can also take place when young children have uncontrolled access to social media. Left unguided, the child develops an intimate

interest in programmes and events on social media, which may sever him from parental care, love and relationship. Adults are also not insulated from technologization as couples can desire to fill the void caused by geographical distance through the addictive use of social media. Some marriages have collapsed because of addiction to social media: couples develop an interest in social media and diminish their relationship with themselves. Of course, many studies have revealed that couples who use password protection on their platforms which are not made known to their partners risk breeding suspicion and investigatory actions. Some such investigations have revealed acts of infidelity, which led to the collapse of such homes or marriages (Ngonidzashe, 2016,62-68).

It has also been observed that family life lived online caused disruption in some other families. Most families post unreal or phantastic sides of their lives online. This has caused envy and uncritical comparison amongst other families, eventually leading to social, family and unhealthy competition. The strong presence of make-believe on social media should be a concern for reasonable families; there is the need to verify whether or not the sudden transformation of families as posted online is real. Even when some postings are real, family consent might have been obtained before they are made public. 'Living online' has unnecessarily exposed some families to public gaze and scrutiny, leading to security challenges.

The spiritual life of families has also been negatively affected. In many families, the phone is the first thing to interact with in the morning and the last in the evening, either wanting to be the first to break the news or the first to share the breaking news. Many children in the family use social media almost all night long; this affects them academically, emotionally and spiritually as they hardly participate or concentrate during family devotion. In fact, many families are now addicted to entertainment platforms on social media to the neglect of spiritual exercise. According to Mrs Kenny, "I was so glued to Zee World that my spiritual life was adversely affected. I did not only watch television programs, spending much time, but also online during office hours. Whenever I wanted to pray, my mind would roam

about to the scenes I watched, and that would end the prayer. I lost spiritual concentration until some things happened in the family which helped me reverse my attention from Zee World and many other social media platforms.”

Suggestions and Conclusion

At the beginning of this paper, I pointed out that the family is a human organization, and communication is critical to its social relations and values. I also pointed out various forms of families which make family a contested concept from one culture to another. But it is expedient to add here that the challenge of the contemporary family is compounded by the notion of nursery families, where a nursery family is understood as one composed of immature members. Unplanned parenting is taking a profound toll on families; children give birth to other children! The sexualization of the body and society means that children are exposed to sexual activities mainly through social media and practice what they are exposed to, which more or less results in unwanted pregnancies and unplanned families. Nursery families are often birthed from exposure to social media. They see it as a norm rather than assess its abusive effects on them. Therefore, it is difficult to restrain them from addiction to social media.

Education and counselling are critical to the family's reasonable use of social media platforms. The truth is that many positive things can be achieved using social media. However, family members need education to understand that there are both legal and social limits to what can be done using social media. The value of face-to-face meetings with family members should be emphasized as part of family socialization in this jet age. Within this, family members should be made to realize that the flow should be: face-to-face family - e-family - face-to-face family. The family is the child's first school; the values inculcated have deep roots in the development of the children. Therefore, efforts should be made to balance education and counselling on the use of social media. Of course, examples from parents are essential to driving home the counselling. This is where responsible parenting comes in.

Government and schools also have roles to play in ensuring reasonable use of social media. Although the controversy that trailed the regulation of social media in the country was birthed by bad governance, the honest government can still make policies that will guide the usage of social media platforms. The schools are responsible for developing inclusive curricula that will countenance tips on the healthy use of social media. Urgent curriculum revision is needed in this direction (Ephraim, 2013, 2). Religious bodies are compelling means of transmission of values in the country. In fact, many people seem to adhere more to what their religious leaders tell them than the government. Patriotism towards religious organizations is stauncher than to government on many occasions. This places the task of educating families on the balanced use of social media on religious leaders.

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IMPLICATION OF GLOBAL SEXUAL RIGHTS REVOLUTION ON THE FAMILY INSTITUTION

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the integration of family and the family's protection in Nigeria and Africa. The paper intends to discuss the recent assault on children and families in Nigeria and things to do to protect the family in Nigeria. The attack, which came as a result of the global sexual rights revolution to capture the mind and hearts of children to change the gender and sexual norms of African society and Nigerian society, is the concern of this paper. The paper examines the current threat to families in Africa, investigates comprehensive sexuality education in Nigeria and highlights things that can be done to protect the family in Nigeria and Africa. The paper concludes with a recommendation that parents should protect their children by looking at the actual curriculum to know what their children are being taught and to protect them. Also, joining hands to protect family life in Nigeria is necessary through creating awareness of the assault that comes after the hearts and minds of the children.

Introduction

This paper discusses the importance of integrating the family and protecting the family as the fundamental unit of society. Without the family, nations fall, and we have a theme song that we use at "Family Watch." It is called save the family, and it starts like this "The family is the beating heart that keeps the nation strong, if the families fail, the nation falls and all that is good is gone. The time is now, the time is here for everyone to see that if we are to save the world, we must save the family." The worldwide family, including the Nigeria family, is under attack, and the children are under attack. This attack is coming from Western governments and many United Nations Agencies. This assault comes after the hearts and minds of the children because they

know that if they can capture the hearts and minds of the children, they will be able to change all the gender and sexual norms of African society and Nigerian society. The paper examines some severe threats to families in Africa, especially in Nigeria today. It also discusses things that must be done to protect families in Africa and Nigeria.

Threat to Families in Africa

The worldwide family, including the African family, is under severe attack, and the children are under a serious attack from Western Governments, including Sweden, Canada, the Netherlands, Germany, Norway, Denmark, the United Kingdom and the United States. In addition, UN agencies such as UN Women, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), UNAIDS, United Nations Human Rights as well as the World Health Organization (WHO), are aggressively pushing anti-life and anti-life policies with a significant focus on Africa. The assault focuses on the hearts and minds of the children because these agencies know that if they can influence the hearts and minds of the children, they will be able to change all the gender and sexual norms of African society. Since the family is the fundamental unit of society and is critical to the survival of nations, we must fight for the family and the protection of the children who will form the future families of the nations. We are going to walk through some of the evidence.

Comprehensive Sexuality Education

A major assault on the health and innocence of children comes under the guise of “Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)”, which can introduce children to masturbation, gender ideology, abortion, promiscuity, and homosexuality, among other things. To understand what Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) is, it is crucial to understand what sexuality is and how the United Nations defines sexuality. This Comprehensive Sexuality Education is like Pandora's Box that brings in all sorts of controversial agendas, and it is the number one tool of the global rights sexual rights agenda to capture

the children in order to change the sexual and gender norms of society. To understand how U.N. defines sexuality, we must go to the World Health Organization's definition. According to World Health Organization,

a central aspect of being human throughout life encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. Sexuality is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles, and relationships. While sexuality can include all of these dimensions, not all of them are always experienced or expressed. Sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, legal, historical, religious and spiritual factors” (https://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/sexual_health/sh_definitions/en/).

Here we have this controversial definition, the controlling definition used by all U.N. agencies. In other words, “sexuality” and sexuality education encompass homosexuality, transgenderism, sexual pleasure, fantasies, thoughts, and desires.

The World Health Organization have created, for example, the standards for sexuality education for Europe, and they are recommending that children be taught beginning at zero new-born age to four years old that children can get enjoyment and pleasure through masturbation and children should be given a right to explore their gender identities. At age nine, children are to learn about sexual pleasure, masturbation and orgasm. At age fifteen, a change from positive/negative feelings and disgust and hatred towards homosexuality to acceptance and celebration, and children are to learn that they can get sexual pleasure and that they can learn how to come out to be homosexual or bisexual (<https://www.icmec.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/WHOSTandards-for-Sexuality-Ed-in-Europe.pdf>). Now one would wonder why the World Health Organization would be promoting such.

However, International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) helped co-write and publish a manual titled *Exclaim a Young People's Guide to Sexual Right*. The manual teaches children how to learn about their sexual rights. They will learn that all women have the right to abortions and that it is accessible, affordable, acceptable and convenient. They are going to learn in this IPPF declaration that young people are sexual beings that have sexual needs, desires and fantasies. In addition, they have a right to express their sexualities in pleasurable and safe ways, and sexuality and sexual pleasure are essential parts of being human no matter what age (IPPF, 2011).

Similarly, in a book titled *Healthy, happy and hot: a young person's guide to their rights and sexuality* published by IPPF, they suggest that children should learn about sexual pleasure and that they can get sexual pleasure in various ways, including through licking, tickling, sucking, and cuddling (IPPF, 2010). This is for HIV-infected youth, but the most unconscionable part is that it teaches youth that some countries have laws that say people living with HIV must tell their sexual partners about their sexual status before having sex. It is unconscionable that any organization such as International Planned Parenthood Federation would be allowed to partner with multiple U.N. agencies in pushing this horrible anti-health, anti-child and anti-family agenda onto Africa, especially those infected with the HIV virus.

So why might they be doing this? International Planned Parenthood profits from sexualizing children. They sell them condoms and abortions; even in the United States, they are giving them hormones to try to change their sex even though that is impossible contraceptives. Comprehensive sexuality education, sexual counselling and more are in the United States. We know they have been implicated in even selling the body parts of aborted babies. So this is big business if they can sexualize children and get them hooked onto their services.

Unfortunately, International Planned Parenthood Federation has over 65,000 service points in 170 countries. So they have these clinics where they can profit all over the world. Now to understand the U.N.'s agenda for comprehensive sexuality education, we need to look no further than the *International Technical Guidance on*

Sexuality. This was published with the firepower of all these U.N. agencies, including UNESCO, UNAIDS, UNFPA, UN Women, WHO and even UNICEF, the agency charged with protecting the world's children and yet it seeks to redefine abstinence, saying abstinence does not just mean choosing not to have sex it also means deciding when to start having sex and with whom. It falsely claims that abstinence-only programs are ineffective and potentially harmful to young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights (UNESCO et al., 2018).

Furthermore, multiple U.N. agencies funded by donor countries promote sexting as healthy for children. The UNFPA, with all the aforementioned U.N. agencies, co-published a book titled *Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights: My body is my Body my Life is my Life*. They start defining young people as young as ten years old. So this is meant for ten years old, and it describes sexting as sending, receiving or sharing sexually explicit text messages, photos and videos (UNFPA Et al). One would think that these U.N. agencies would say this is a huge problem, but instead, they say sexting may be used to seek positive body image from peers and therefore help to improve self-esteem and sense of identity. For many young people, sexting may be their first expression of sexuality. This is particularly true for young people with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions for whom sexting may allow private exploration of sexuality and intimacy (UNFPA et al.).

Sexting also has the potential to be beneficial as a way to sustain intimate relationships and demonstrate love, trust, and commitment. It calls upon governments to decriminalize consensual sex between young people to decriminalize same-sex sexual activity, and here is the assault on parental rights. Here is where this is an attack on the integration of the family. It calls for removing parental consent requirements for children to access sexual and reproductive health, counselling commodities and services (UNFPA et al.). This is an assault on parental rights and an attack on the integrity of the family.

More so, UNESCO produced a teacher training manual explicitly designed for Africa with the help of one of IPPF's partners, Advocates for Youth, titled *Regional Module for Teacher Training on*

Comprehensive Sexuality Education for East and South Africa. This African teaching manual asserts that everyone, including babies, children and adolescents, are sexual being even before birth. It promotes the right to sexual pleasure, the right to sexuality information, and explicit sexuality education for children. It states that children have a right to decide with whom they will be intimate, whether with people of the same sex or the opposite sex, and it promotes the right to abortion. This manual teaches children that masturbation is a normal part of sexual expression (UNESCO).

Similarly, the UNFPA is partnering with donor countries to teach children about paedophilia, sodomy, sadism, sexual pleasure and more in the manual called *Comprehensive Sexuality Education for out School Young People in Zimbabwe*. The manual also carries the logos of multiple governments, including the European Union, the UK, Sweden, Ireland and Switzerland. The program description states that this is all about protecting children and their sexual and reproductive health. This is for children starting at age ten, and it seeks to desensitize children to sexual things, teaching them all about different sexual behaviours and teaching them about masturbation, sodomy, voyeurism, sexual pleasure through exhibitionism, sexual pleasure through bestiality, necrophilia, sexual pleasure with corpses and with urine (UNFPA et al.). This is beyond the pale, revealing the hidden agenda to destroy the health and innocence of Africa's children. It has activities calling for children to brainstorm all the terms and ideas they know regarding male sexual organs and female organs and sexual intercourse. There is also sexual relativism activity where the scale represents two choices young people can make about having sexual intercourse either to have sexual intercourse or to wait. On one side of the scale are the reasons to have sex, and on the other are the reasons to wait. A child can choose whether to wait or not. It does not encourage children to wait until marriage.

The Comprehensive Sexual Education Agenda in Nigeria

The Comprehensive Sexual Education agenda is being pushed in Nigeria, similar to many countries. The leading promoters of CSE from the beginning have been SIECUS, along with the Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria, the member organization of the

International Planned Parenthood Federation and Action Health Incorporated, and Marie Stopes International (an organization that largely exists to promote abortion). The Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria (PPFN) website states that they are a one-stop solution for sexual and reproductive health and information and services. It states, "If you care about abortion rights, then you should care about sex education. If you care about LGBTQ rights, you should care about sex education." PPFN is funded by United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), Global Macarthur Foundation (GMF), the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and more. Their 2019 annual report states that they have been working in Nigeria for 30 years at least and that they are promoting national policy approval for universal access to sexuality education. They claim that starting in 1992, Action Health Incorporated (AHI) partnered with the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS) to promote its agenda in Nigeria. They also seek to change gender and sexual norms and to promote abortion in Nigeria by introducing guidelines for comprehensive sexuality education into Nigeria's classrooms. They use sex education to advance abortion and LGBTQ rights, which is what they sought to do when they introduced different aspects of their guidelines for comprehensive sexuality education into Nigeria's teaching of children.

The *Guidelines for Comprehensive Sexuality Education in Nigeria* were published by the federal ministry of education. These guidelines established what they think children should be taught, such as masturbation alone or with a partner as one way to express their sexuality without risking pregnancy or STDS. Legal abortion is very safe, and again this whole mind manipulation has become the basis of many programs in Nigeria. AHI and SIECUS drove the publication's creation back in 1996. In fact, UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) proudly post these guidelines on their website and here is a glimpse into this publication pushed by SIECUS and influenced by SIECUS guidelines for comprehensive sexuality education.

It has level one for children six through eight, then level two, nine through twelve. It was co-sponsored by Action Health Incorporated and the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States. It also states that the others involved in the publication were the WHO, UNFPA, and PPF of Nigeria. It starts from level one, teaching that in children at six through eight, both male and female bodies respond when they are touched, and their bodies feel good when they are touched. Starting at age thirteen, sexual feelings, fantasies, and desires are normal and can occur in all stages of life. At age nine, children need to learn about sexual identity and orientation. Sexual orientation refers to whether a person is heterosexual, homosexual or bisexual. Some men and women are homosexual, which means they will be attracted to and fall in love with someone of the same sex and so forth. Also, many young people have fantasies and dream about the same gender, and this is common, and a certain percentage of society will be homosexual all through. Then at level three, when two people express their sexual feelings, they can give and receive pleasure, including exhibitionism, voyeurism and homosexuality.

It also teaches the children to choose their values independent of religion and family. Sexuality in the arts sexual images are depicted in music, art, drama, and literature, and some religions frown on them. Then, from 2000 to 2002, there was significant opposition within Nigeria from religious and conservative groups that led to changes in the national curriculum and the name was changed from sexuality education to family and HIV education or home and family life education, and that is the name that is currently used to promote both good programs and harmful programs in Nigeria.

Actions to Protect Families

a. Checking of Children's Curriculum

Parents need to look at the actual curriculum and not just the name of the curriculum to know what their children are being taught and protect them. A manual with the innocent name of family life and HIV education for junior secondary schools was published in 2007

and 2014, also by Action Health Incorporated. It uses UNESCO's international technical guidance on sexuality education as part of the references and some other very highly controversial CSE programs. It teaches them about the clitoris, the sexual organ that gives sexual pleasure or the part of the anatomy that does this. The book complements an earlier publication of the guidelines for comprehensive sexuality education in Nigeria and again refers to CIECUS as helping to create and promote these materials. It states that the myths surrounding masturbation are that all religions teach masturbation as a sin. This myth is not a sin, and it only perverts masturbation. Masturbation is only for boys and girls; people should not masturbate any more than once a week.

The manual further mentions teaching about abortion, promoting abortion and manipulating the appearance or a family's values about abortion, saying feared parents or other family members and human humiliation by community members may be why people do not want to have an abortion. Several religions might disapprove, but others do not. So this manual teaches children to choose their own values independent of religion or their parents. This program is in multiple comprehensive sexuality education programs promoted by planned parenthood and UN agencies in multiple countries, including the United States and has children line up different pictures that indicate the different stages of sexual arousal, sex erection, and orgasm. Even a picture of the erect penis and the children must line them up correctly, thus desensitizing them to sex.

b. Raising Awareness of Comprehensive Sexuality Education's Agenda

You will notice that the Ford Foundation is heavily involved in funding comprehensive sexuality education in Nigeria. It states that Nigeria's youth futures fund is launching with five million in seeding and funding from the Ford Foundation and the Mark MacArthur Foundation. The new fund hopes to raise fifteen million, increasing leadership capacity, enhancing opportunities, and building relationships between youth. This program is known to be used to promote comprehensive sexuality education as part of leadership training for youth.

Dr. Natalia Kanem was appointed UNFPA director in 2017, and her bio shows that she worked for the Ford Foundation. She served as the vice president of the Ford Foundation's peace and justice system, and they invested between 2000 and 2016 the Ford Foundation 56 million dollars for sexual and reproductive health and rights of young people in West Africa. They lead the efforts to have open discussions with children about sexuality, sexual autonomy and sexual pleasure. Sexual autonomy means the right for children to have sex without interference. So the Ford Foundation are rallying outside the United States capital to promote abortion and the LGBTQ agenda in Africa.

c. Stopping the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement

As bad as these manuals are, the most dangerous threat currently facing the African family is the Nigerian family and children, called the ACP-EU partnership agreement. The Africa, Caribbean, Pacific-European Union (ACP-EU) partnership Agreement. This is an agreement between the European Union and the Africa, Caribbean, and Pacific states. The president of Nigeria and almost every other African president is expected to sign this agreement, a binding treaty with the EU. This treaty has many names: the ACP-EU partnership agreement, the Post-Cotonou Agreement, and the Samoa Agreement (www.DeviousEUTreaty.org).

So, to understand what this treaty is, we must understand what the ACP is. The ACP consists of 79 African, Caribbean, and Pacific states, all of whom had signed on to a 20-year Cotonou partnership agreement. This was a 20-year agreement binding all the ACP countries, including Nigeria, legally and economically to the European Union. It was essentially a trade and development treaty and governed the economic and trade relations between the EU and the 79 countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific. The original Cotonou agreement was signed in February of 2000, and it united over 100 countries and represented over 1.5 billion people.

The problem with this treaty is that this new 20-year revised vision now brings in controversial human rights issues in addition to trade and economic issues. It uses the human right strategy it has over

a hundred references to human rights without defining them, which allows the European Commission to try to force its radical sexual rights, LGBTQ, and abortion rights agenda through those various provisions that are not specified. It has a problematic chapter on human and social development and one on global alliances in an international corporation. The treaty seeks to obligate all the African and Caribbean countries to adopt a joint position in resolutions, declarations, and statements, coordinate positions and, where appropriate, vote and take actions together in international organizations. In other words, the EU is trying to manipulate African countries to join with other partners to have the same position so they can have the power of the majority.

Here is some part of the deception after the ACP-EU test on April 15th 2021, was adopted with the term sexual reproductive health and rights, which includes abortion, comprehensive sexuality education, sexual reproductive health and rights for LGBTQ persons that includes the diversity of sexual orientation and gender identity. It also includes sexual health and reproductive health, and the UN agencies have defined sexual health in the publication sexual health human rights and the law to encompass abortion, the diversity of sexual behaviour and expression. They are saying that if nations are to implement an agenda that will establish the right to sexual health that they must decriminalize sex work or prostitution, legalize same-sex marriage provide access to treatment for gender reassignment surgery.

Conclusion

This paper has discussed the Global sexual rights revolution on the Family in light of the threat to family life in Africa, the comprehensive sexuality education agenda in Africa and what can be done to protect the family in Nigeria. It was established that the global sexual revolution, which is expressed in various sexuality program and promotion such as comprehensive sexuality education, abortion, sexual and reproductive health, LGBTQ, masturbation and so forth, are being sponsored by many United Nations agencies, including UNFPA, UNESCO, AHI, PPFN among others. It was discovered that this sexuality program and policy threatens the well-

being of children and family life in Nigeria and Africa. It was recommended that parents should protect their children by looking at the actual curriculum to know what their children are being taught and to protect them. There is also a need to join hands to protect family life in Nigeria by creating awareness of the assault that comes after the hearts and minds of the children.

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EFFECTS OF POSTMODERNISM ON CHRISTIAN PARENTING IN THE NIGERIAN SOCIETY

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Abstract

Postmodernism has influenced many aspects of human life, especially in raising godly children, which is the centre of Christian parenting. The effects are apparent in Nigerian society, and it now becomes a challenge to raise godly children from Christian homes in the postmodern society characterised by pluralism, globalisation, and strong individualism. This paper, therefore, seeks to examine the effects of postmodernism on Christian parenting and draw out implications for Christian parents in Nigerian society. The methodology adopted is literary research, whereby information is acquired within specific relevant literary works. Books, journals, and articles are consulted for relevant information for the study. It is discovered that postmodernism is a cultural phenomenon that eliminates absolute truth, making all things relative to an individual's beliefs and wishes. It is a culture of relativism that upholds self and emphasises what pleases an individual without concern for others. It has affected Christian parenting in the areas such as creating adequate time for the children; moral values and principles being attacked; Christian parents exercising discipline and authority over their children; giving room for permissive child-rearing. The paper concludes and recommends that children, through their parents, learn how to live a godly life in the postmodern age, and this is by helping them develop a cohesive Biblical worldview. Christian parents must set an example of Christian living based on the standards of truth flooded by postmodern ideologies so that children can also embrace and follow suit.

Key Words: Effects, Postmodernism, Christian parenting, Nigerian society.

Introduction

The emergence of postmodernism has influenced Christian parenting greatly, creating a severe challenge towards raising godly children in Nigerian society. This researcher witnessed a recent case of a 14-year-old boy practising money rituals at this tender age. His guardian found a ritual soap (*igba ose*) in his room. When challenged, he was bold enough to talk back to his parent about “what they were looking for in his room.” By the way, should a 14-year-old boy be granted a room to himself by his parent to practice whatever he likes? That is the level of absolute freedom children of this postmodern age are beginning to live, which some parents feel unconcerned about. Christian parenting and Child upbringing have become increasingly complex in postmodern society because family values are fast eroding. Some Christian parents are shifting attention from using the Word of God and Christian principles to raise their children to use postmodern ideologies. The postmodern world is characterised by pluralism, globalisation, and strong individualism and is also shaped by democracy, religious freedom, consumerism, fashion and increasing access to news, social media and entertainment (Garmaz & Čondić, 2017, 334). This has been posing a severe challenge to raising godly children in contemporary society and making Christian parenting more demanding, as there is a clear difference between the youth of today and those of past years. It has become difficult for young ones to please God and hear His voice and that of their parents amid other voices being presented to them in society.

The significance of raising children in a Christian home has gradually lost its value. It is sad to notice that Christian virtues being inculcated into children are fading away due to postmodernism because some Christian parents no longer pay good attention to them as they pay attention to postmodern activities in society. Christian parenting focuses on raising children based on the standard set and avenues provided by God through His Word (Deuteronomy 6:7-8). It is one of the major aspects of Christian life and responsibilities that involves Christian parents towards raising another generation of godly seeds. The effects of postmodernism can be noticed in all

aspects of the Christian life because it has changed the worldview of people, their understanding of truth and reality, and their approach to some of the essential questions of life; the effects have not left out the aspect of Christian parenting. Therefore, this paper aims to examine the effects of postmodernism on Christian parenting and draw out implications for Christian parents in Nigerian society. Thus, an attempt is made to examine an overview of postmodernism and the concept of Christian parenting. An attempt is also made to highlight and discuss the effects of postmodernism on Christian parenting and draw out the implications of these effects for Christian parents in Nigeria.

Overview of Postmodernism

Postmodernism is regarded as a historical term that succeeds modernity. The term “postmodernism” means “after modernism.” It is also used to describe philosophically the current era, which came after the age of modernism (Adu-Gyamfi 2015, 1). Modernism, however, is the age that came after pre-modernism. Its worldview came to the limelight through objective knowledge and scientific method (Forghani, Keshtiaray & Yousefy 2015, 98). It is the age where authority and traditions that were accepted in the pre-modern age are questioned. According to Ayandokun (2015, 49), “modernity affirms that truth is only authentic based on facts or anything that can be proved scientifically, putting more trust in reason and critical thinking to solve world's problems.” Scientific proof is employed to discover the facts and truth about particular life issues. Modernism, however, gave birth to secularism which is seen as a system of ideas that rejects the primacy of religion in corporate life.

Postmodernism, as agreed by quite some authors, is a reaction to the inability of modernism to fulfil its promise of using human reason alone to make humankind better and also make the world a better place and, more so, a reaction against the intellectual assumptions and values of the modern period. Gyamfi (2015, 2) opines that, among other beliefs, modernism has the belief that absolutes exist. However, postmodernism reacts to this by first eliminating absolute truth and making all things relative to an individual's beliefs and wishes Ogundapo (2015, 26) corroborates

that postmodernism dismisses the existence of absolute reality and truths of experience and life which modernism attempts to reveal and deeply concerned itself with the concept of human progress by being suspicious of it.

Postmodernism means many things to many people in different fields of study. Scholars in disciplines such as philosophy, psychology, sociology, history, cultural studies, economics, education, and theology have different opinions of the term. Coming up with a clear definition of the term will violate the postmodernist's idea that there are no definite terms, boundaries, or absolute truths (Ogundapo 2015, 26). Despite different interpretations and definitions of postmodernism, “there is a general consensus that it is foremost a cultural phenomenon which is noticeable in the society” (University of Pretoria, <https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/30427/02chapter2.pdf>). The different perspectives it represents to different people include that the term is a cultural worldview, a school of thought, a system of observation, and a sceptical interpretation of culture (Olaniyan 2015, 100). It is also seen as an attempt at creativity and reflection characterised by self-identification and unique language (Ogunsola 2020, 211). It is a culture of relativism that upholds self and emphasises what pleases an individual without concern for others. Ayandokun (2021, 30) corroborates that people turn out to be their authority and take what they feel is right for them. They believe that it is only what a person feels that counts and must be believed.

Among the postmodern ideologies, two are essentially noticeable. One is the teaching that all moral values are relative based on the fact that what an individual sees as the best should be the criterion for what is right. Postmodernism is highly relativistic and maintains that values are culturally determined, which means that ethics is not seen in terms of the absolute transcendent standards of the Bible or even concerning what is good for society (Porteous, <https://seminary.reformed.info/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/A-Christian-View-of-Post-Modernism.pdf>). There is no specific standard for the right way of living or doing things. Everybody lives based on what he/she considers the best way to live and behave, as seen in contemporary society.

The second ideology revolves around tolerance for every kind of religion and practice. All religion is seen as the same, and all religious practices are proper. Individuals can conclude what to believe or which religion to follow after listening to arguments and suggestions from various religions (Awoniyi 2016, 82). With this, postmodernity challenges the claim that Jesus is the way to God and that the Bible is absolutely the message of God to humanity. To impose one's views, beliefs or practices on others is against the principle of tolerance and, therefore, morally wrong. Alongside this is the principle of choice, where actions or practices are permissible based on choice. Thus abortion is often justified because it is the woman's choice. Similarly, euthanasia is defensible because it is the patient's choice.

Concept of Christian Parenting

Children and child upbringing are a significant part of human life. God has designed that every human being will bear children and replenish the earth (Gen 1:28). Except for a specific condition, every human being is a parent or will become a parent one day. Kunhiyop (2008, 196) opines that African Christians, where Nigeria belongs, place so much importance on childbearing. They have the belief that the command of fruitfulness in Genesis 1:28 applies to all marriages; God's blessing on His people includes fertility as found in Exodus 23:26 and Deuteronomy 7:14; children are the crown of old age according to Proverb 17:6, Psalm 128:3 and defender and provider for their parents in their old age (Psalm 127: 3-5). As a result, they value procreation far more than other aspects of marriage, such as love, companionship, and sexual pleasures.

Children may be categorised as those that are given birth to, adopted, or children that come as a result of one's faith. According to Obengo's (2019, 1) description, a child is understood to be one below 21 years. The maximum age of children who need parental care and guidance is averagely around 19 to 20 or at least before they become young adults. The age adopted in this paper is from birth to twenty. In the view of this researcher, these are the children that need adequate parental care and guidance. A parent gives care to a child as the child grows from baby to teenage, even onto young adulthood, ensuring the

child's health, teaching the child moral and cultural values and preparing the child for a life of adulthood.

Parenting is an act and responsibility being performed by parents or guardians. It is majorly about raising a child by parents or the act or process of performing the act of raising a child or children. It is a process that involves sponsoring, supporting, and promoting all areas of a child's life from infancy to adulthood which include intellectual, emotional, social, financial, and physical development (Ottuh 2011, 154). It is also regarded as the process by which parents or other significant caregivers rear and raise children in their heritage and for life in their society (Ikeler 1990, 470). These definitions emphasise raising children to become mature, giving attention to every aspect of their lives physically, emotionally, and in other ways. There are three major parenting goals as posited in the *Encyclopaedia of Psychology*. These are ensuring that a child is in good health and being protected from harm, grooming a child for productive adult life, and transferring acceptable cultural values into a child's life. (Lerner and Castellino, 2000, 443). These, among others, are the tasks involved in parenting that parents must know.

Christian parenting focuses on raising children according to godly standards using the Bible and Christian teachings/doctrine as the basis for raising them. It is an act of raising children in the way of the Lord and based on godly standards. The one who carries out this act is a Christian parent. From the Christian perspective, parenting is a responsibility placed by God on parents to care for their children from birth until they are mature and old enough to be directly responsible to Him by themselves (Ishola 2016, 62). In Christian parenting, the Bible remains the permanent resource for quality parenting. Moore and Bethancourt (2017, 19) assert that the expectation of God from Christian parents is to give quality training to their children following Biblical patterns. Christian parenting engages spiritual training and discipline of children to bring out good results. It guides against raising children following the secular patterns and worldviews that negate what God directs in the Bible. Christian parents cannot raise their children anyhow but follow biblical prescriptions to bring out the correct result. They commit themselves to training, teaching, and disciplining to raise their children.

There are Bible passages that form the basis for raising children in Christian homes. One that is most referenced as God gave to the Israelites is Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

Listen, Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. LORD the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them be a symbol on your forehead. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your city gates.

The content of this passage has remained an age-long instruction on child training and transmission of God's truth to the younger generation. As God gave this instruction to the Israelites, they never took it with levity as it is strictly attached to transmitting God's truth to the incoming generation. Ayandokun (2021, 5) opines that it is accepted as a duty by all Christian parents to be custodians of the scriptures for their children's nurture and education in the Lord. Training and guiding the young ones in the Lord's precepts would raise children who fear and love the Lord. Christian parents can therefore follow the Bible's admonition to instruct their children in the fear and knowledge of the Lord as they walk alongside them each day. Other Bible passages that support quality and godly parenting include Proverbs 3:11-12; 22:6; 22:15; 29:15; 29:17; Psalm 78:4; Joel 1:3; Ephesians 6:4; 1Timothy 5:8; 1Tim 3:4; Matthew 18:10; Matthew 19:13-14; Hebrew 12:11; Titus 2:4 & 7 among others.

Effects of Postmodernism on Christian Parenting

Christian parenting is no longer as it used to be before postmodernism due to the effect melted on it. This section highlights and discusses some of the effects of postmodernism on Christian parenting: Christian parents do not have adequate time for teaching their children, and children are not having adequate time for learning because of postmodern activities; Moral values and principles are being attacked in the postmodern world; looking down on moral

traditions which begin from home; adverse effect on parents who ought to set themselves as good examples to their children; effect on the level at which Christian parents exercise discipline and authority on their children; postmodernism gives room and encourages permissive child-rearing.

As learning and teaching children take time, Christian parents do not have adequate time for these in the postmodern society as there are many postmodern activities, such as entertainment and other social activities, that are taking the time that should be given to teaching the children. Moreso, many activities also take children's time to adequately learn the basics of life that will make them mature and responsible. Ishola (2016, 62) identified four keys to effective parenting: positive family relationships, communication between parents and children, meaningful involvement and interaction, and caring relationships. Adequate time is not being created for these in the postmodern society. As a result, it has been challenging to bring children from a self-centred lifestyle to a God-centered and others-centred basis for living, leading to frustration for Christian parenting in Nigerian society.

Moral values and principles are being attacked in the postmodern world. Ayandokun (2021, 21) notes that some children, teenagers, youths, and adults today are engrossed in personal pleasure above intellectual inquiry. In a postmodern world filled with godless philosophies, the emotional needs of children are subject to noise and wild behaviours. As a result, children, especially adolescents, are losing their grip on reality, their fight to preserve individuality slowly falls away, and a passion for conformity rises from deep within (Dobson & Bauer 1990, 6). They become victims of a peer-dominated society that often leaves them lost and confused. As parents fail to take cognizance of this, the rate at which children conform to what they see around them, mainly immoral behaviours such as theft, arm robbery, rape, sexual assault and harassment, is alarming without following the directives of their parents. For instance, there are teachings in the postmodern society that children listen to, which negate what their parents hold.

Another effect of postmodernism on Christian parenting is the looking down on moral traditions which begin from home. One of the

aims of postmodernists is to cause young people in every area of culture to reject the moral traditions which have always undergirded society (Ayandokun 2021, 22). Moral traditions that begin from home gradually fade away in Nigerian society. Moral value, sometimes termed “home training,” is gradually losing its significance in Nigerian society. Examples are the culture of respect, values about work, loving and caring for others, moderation and friendship, which result in good character at home and in society. Christian parents in Nigerian society no longer care about these, and any parent who emphasises these moral traditions is termed “old school.” Meaning he/she is obsolete and not conversant with what is happening in a civilised society.

Postmodernism adversely affects parents who should be good examples to their children. The children copy what they see them doing, so Christian parenting becomes difficult when parents fail to live according to godly standards. Some parents desire that their children be brought up godly but fail to set an excellent example of this. Katharine Kersey observes that the most substantial influence on a child is how his or her parents live their lives, and since the child is first influenced by those who care for him, they shape his life in more ways than they realise or even wish for (Kersey 1988, 199). In the postmodern society, parents live the way they want, and their children watch them and live even worse than they are living.

Postmodernism has also affected the level at which Christian parents exercise discipline and authority on their children. As noted earlier, one of the critical features of Christian parenting is discipline, but the level at which parents affect discipline on their children in the postmodern world has reduced drastically. This is because children have been given to freewill in the postmodern society. Before the advent of postmodernism, children used to fear their parents and bow to their authority, but in the postmodern age, parents fear their children and possibly adore or worship them. The researcher has observed and heard some Christian parents say that if they do not allow their children to do what they intend to do, things that please or satisfy their desire, they might run away and leave them to go wherever they feel. Before postmodernism, disciplinarian parents were more pronounced; but the reverse is the case in this postmodern

age. More so, discipline in schools that compliments home training is no more allowed in Nigerian society. Any report of discipline or punishment brought by children to their parents from school makes parents pick up a fight with their teachers. As a result, teachers are sometimes less concerned with children's wrongdoings in school.

Alongside this, postmodernism gives room and encourages permissive child-rearing. Many Christian parents are permissive to postmodernism trends and do not emphasise the Bible and salvation in the priorities of training they give to their children, which is, however, dangerous and disastrous (Ayandokun 2021, 31). This is becoming more prevalent in some Christian homes with the understanding that parents would not want their children to go through specific rigours and sufferings. Permissive parenting is a situation whereby parents lessen the act of discipline over their children and do not bother to demand specific responsibilities from them (Baumrind 1991, 56). Persistence in this act has made many children from Christian families have little or no knowledge about doing house chores as the responsibilities have been shifted to house help. Some of these children eventually engage in the service of people to help them even when married.

Implications for Christian Parents in Nigeria

In view of the effects of postmodernism on Christian parenting highlighted above, this section of the paper draws out some implications for Christian parents in Nigerian society.

Christian parents should be aware that most of the features in contemporary society, especially Nigerian society, are features of postmodernism: As opined by Olaniyan (2015, 99), the 21st-century world is undoubtedly a postmodern era whether an individual subscribes to postmodernism worldviews or not. Christian parents should be sensitive to some postmodern features so as not to subscribe to them and guide against them in their children's lives. Christian parents can find fulfilment as they try to raise godly children in this trying culture by acknowledging the critical nature of the postmodern world (Jeremy, <http://www.crosswalk.com/family/parenting/intilling-biblical-values-in-a-postmodern-world-1159764.html>). They should not fold

their hands to allow their children live and behave anyhow which may harm their lives.

Christian parents should pay deliberate attention to the Word of God in raising children that will meet godly standards: The Word of God is constant when reconciling between parents who live with postmodernist thoughts and children living with postmodernist thoughts. The word does not change even if the world is changing, and it remains relevant across every age of human beings. One thing is that it should be made to address the reality of the postmodern age in which human beings now live. Christian parents should engage their children with the deeper truths in God's Word, as it is the only viable tool for Christian parenting (Ayandokun 2021, 10). The Word of God is a practical resource that can help guide against the postmodern philosophies that children are highly vulnerable to. Therefore, Christian parents must teach the whole truth of the Bible to all their wards.

Christian Parents should be ready to take more responsibilities in teaching, training, and disciplining their children: These could be done by establishing rules and values that will serve as a guide for living. Among Africans, some values support biblical principles such as respect, loyalty, faithfulness, and chastity. Christian parents should embrace these earlier without waiting until their children are grown up and exposed to postmodernist ideologies. Every lousy trait must be dealt with early enough to help the children emerge as well-behaved children. According to Ayandokun (2013, 31), being trained with values begins at home, while the church and Christian schools can be added advantages.

Christian parents should develop traits from biblical points of view that will enhance their effectiveness in parenting: Among these traits, as Steiger gave (<https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/a-biblical-basis-for-the-7-traits-of-effective-parenting>) include love. God's love in parents helps them counteract their natural selfishness and relate intimately with their children. Children can also learn God's love through the sacrificial commitments their parents teach them to make and much more make to them. Another is value and respect. Christian

parents should not treat their children as useless because nothing encourages them more than being respected and valued. Refusing to use offensive language on their children is one of the ways parents can respect and value their children, as language habits can influence the ability to model respect to the children. Another trait is being intentional about raising godly children irrespective of what goes around. Being intentional is making decisions as parents about how they will own the spiritual atmosphere in their homes. Alongside this, parents must develop the trait of setting boundaries and limits for social media, behaviour, and relationships, not allowing a culture of whatever form to determine what is healthy for their family.

Conclusion

The effects of postmodernism on Christian parenting are evident in Nigerian society. These effects have been posing severe challenges towards raising godly children that can be vouched for in contemporary society and who can become a generation that meets God's standards. Though several books have been written on Christian parenting in contemporary society and the postmodern world; yet, nurturing children in a Christian way is not being achieved. This paper has highlighted some of the effects of postmodernism on Christian parenting, and some implications have been drawn for Christian parents in Nigerian society, which, if taken into consideration, can help raise and nurture children based on the godly standard. Children need to learn how to live a godly and better life in the postmodern age, and this is by helping them to develop a cohesive biblical worldview.

In the same vein, Christian parents have to set an example of Christian living based on the standards of truth flawed by postmodern ideologies so that children can also embrace and follow suit. This is because children tend to do what they see their parents doing, and a godly or standard way of living is easier caught than taught. Christian parents must commit to God's truth if their children are expected to adopt and follow those values. They must align their actions with what they are teaching their children about the absolute truth of life.

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BANDURA'S SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY AND PARENT-CHILD COMMUNICATION FOR FAITH DEVELOPMENT OF OLDER CHILDREN

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Abstract

The overriding agents in a child's development in every sphere of life are the parents because they are the first contact a child relates within his or her world. Hence, there is a need for Christian parents to bridge the communication gap between them and their children that is getting wider day by day. Parents here are both biological and non-biological, and their influence on the development of a total child cannot be overstated. In his Social Learning theory, Albert Bandura reveals that most of what children learn is acquired through simply watching and listening to others. Children learn and socialize by observing and communicating with adults and modelling adult communication patterns. They pay attention to their parents and most time display the behaviour exhibited by them. This paper establishes the need for more intensive verbal and nonverbal interaction between parents and their children, focusing on older children. These children between 10-12 years old crave adult status and will always revolt when referred to as children. Older children spend more time with their parents than with the church's pastors and children's workers; the paper posits that the bulk of the task regarding older children's faith development lies with the parents. In addition, the paper examines some parent-child communication patterns that are worthy of emulation and can help older children develop their faith vis-à-vis Bandura's social learning theory. The future of the family, the church and the nation are secured when children are rightly brought up in God's way. This research used descriptive research as a questionnaire was used to collect data from older children in selected churches in Rehoboth Baptist Association Ogbomosho. The paper recommends that the process of older children's faith development should go

beyond theory to what they can relate to as they interact with their parents.

Keywords: Social Learning Theory, Parent-Child, Communication, Faith Development

Introduction

It is observed that the communication gap between Christian parents and their children is getting wider daily, adversely affecting the faith development of these children. The influence of parents on the faith development of older children cannot be over-emphasized. Parents are the first set of people a child relates with and learn from in his or her world. The possibility that a child will take after the parents in conduct, speech, mode of dressing and other ways of life is very high as children are good observers and imitators. This is one of the emphases of Bandura in his Social Learning Theory that children's behaviour and communication pattern are a function of their relationship with adults. The adults in the context of this paper are the parents, either biological or non-biological, and the children are the older children.

Consequently, when there is a defect in the way parents communicate and relate with their older children, there may be a defect in the children's faith development. Therefore, this paper examines Parents-Child communication patterns for older children's faith development concerning Bandura's Social Learning Theory. The paper also summarises Bandura's Social Learning Theory, parent and older children's faith development and the need for Parents-Child communication with older children. The paper employs descriptive research as questionnaires were distributed to sixty older children in Rehoboth Baptist Association Ogbomoso to ascertain the level of parent-child communication for the faith development of older children.

Bandura's Social Learning Theory Vis-à-Vis Parent-Child Communication

Social Learning Theory by Albert Bandura (1977) emphasizes the importance of observing and modelling the behaviours, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others (Cullata, 2020). The changes Bandura observed in a child's behaviour after watching an adult show

aggression triggered him to his Social Learning Theory (Endiyang 2016, 40). According to Bandura, children learn and socialize into appropriate roles by observing and communicating with adults and modelling after the adult communication patterns (Edmund 2012, 42). By inference, the behaviour and lifestyle of older children may change through observation, imitation and taking after their parents' communication pattern.

As described by Gangel (1985, 184), communication is the process of speaking to another in a language familiar to both – it is a meaning exchange rather than a word exchange. It also sends information from one person to another, either verbally or non-verbal (Zolten & Long 2006, 1). By implication, communication involves two or more people, and it is effective when the parties demonstrate their understanding in words or deeds. Abegunde (2021, 62) describes the word parenting as bringing up children, a process of nurturing younger ones to become relevant and healthy adults equipped to be contributory members of society. This reaffirms that adults who have the most influence on children's socialization are usually their parents, and communication that takes place between a parent and a child has an essential role in the older children's acquisition of behaviour and faith development.

Consequently, Bandura's Social Learning Theory (BCLT) could be said to reflect God's expectations from parents regarding older children's faith development. This researcher agrees with (Anthony 2001, 64) that

what Bandura refers to as social learning theory is as old as the teaching of the Bible. The Old Testament spoke often of the need for the children to observe the practice of the fathers and so learn of their ways. It was in such modeling that the Hebrew culture, customs and religious beliefs were transferred from one generation to the next. Likewise, in the New Testament, Jesus commanded His disciples to imitate His ways and thereby carry on the faith.

It is then expedient that communication patterns that will be sought and developed with older children should bring them to the knowledge of Christ and keeps them rooted in this knowledge.

Parents and Older Children's Faith Development

Older children, also called juniors, are between the ages of ten and twelve. (Anthony 2001, 213) and (Ayandokun, 2017, 107). They are sometimes addressed as preteens, a name coined as a replacement for them to boost their self-esteem as they dislike being addressed as children. Regardless of race and culture, older children are alike in some ways because of the physical nature of human beings. As affirmed by (Theman, 99), all children have the exact biological needs as they grow and develop. Consequently, for parents to improve their communication skills with their older children, parents need to learn the characteristics, needs and uniqueness of these children (Gagne 1985, 189).

Physically, older children are energetic and active; they display tremendous energy and fine motor ability. As regards their social life, older children love identifying with their peers, disassociating themselves from adults. Choun & Lawson (1993, 68) declare that older children crave peer acceptance, do not care about adult approval and enjoy competition. Older children's interest matters to them a lot, which is a significant reason they prefer the company of their peers. Parents need to understand this and draw them closer than ever before. It is preferable to make them see why an action should be taken and why they should desist from an action rather than enforcing things on them.

Spiritually, preteens are old enough to understand spiritual matters. Taiwo (2015, 49) affirms that during late childhood, children begin to think about how their faith relates to life and evaluate the authenticity of what they have been taught. James Fowler identifies seven stages of faith development in his theory. Individuals between ages 7-11 and 12-18 are in the second and third stages respectively. The peculiarity of the second stage, mythical/literal faith, is the demonstration of sorting out the real from the make-believe. Getting to the synthetic-conventional faith stage, they can form a personal myth or identity based on the past, anticipated future and personality characteristics (Yount 1996, 124-125). By implication, older children can decide for Christ and stand by it if they are properly guided. To assist older children in making the right decision, parents should help them to understand God's provision of salvation and how matters of faith work out practically in real life.

In furtherance of this, older children's faith development cannot be isolated from their physical, mental, emotional, social and psychological well-being. The evidence that a preteen is truly developing in faith can be measured through his or her relationship, physical appearance, reasoning, speech and emotional outburst. Their perception of other areas of their development has much to say about their faith development. Bearing in mind that faith development is a process and is continuous, parents should strive and live a life that will enhance the faith development of older children as these children observe, imitate and learn from them.

In Deuteronomy 6:5-6, Moses admonished parents to love God with all their heart and soul and with all their strength and impress God's commandment upon their children, talking about them at home, along the road, when they lie down and when they get up. It is tactical for parents to communicate a living faith to their children and get them rooted in the Bible; this will ease the regular maturing process when they go through it. According to Oyeniyi (2021, 55), parents can affect the conversion of their children to Christ if the home environment gives room for activities that promotes Christ.

The Need for Parent-Child Communication with Older Children

The rate at which young children engage in vices today is a severe signal to parents, predominantly Christian parents, to establish a parent-child communication pattern that will provide the needed example to help the preteens live a worthy life. Older children need to be shown how to pray, love, conform their lives to Biblical teachings and live together in unity with all believers (Rahn 2008, 166). Most parents are not patient enough to accept and correct the excesses of these children constructively; instead, parents yell, shout and utter obscene words when older children make them angry.

Further to the previous discussion, some parents spend most of their leisure time with their electronic gadgets - television, laptop and phone- and will not create the time to ask these children questions about their school activities. They send them to children's worship on Sundays and will not ask for feedback. Some parents consider them too young and will not allow them to contribute during family discussions. As these children enjoy exploration, some parents do not consider it essential to take them out once in a while and make them happy.

A study was carried out among older children (10-12 years) from six churches in Rehoboth Baptist Association, Ogbomoso, to investigate the level of parents' child communication for the faith development of older children. There were sixty respondents, out of which 40 were female and 20 were male. Also, 13 were in primary five, 21 in JSS1, 18 in JSS2 and 8 in JSS3. The sample is purposively chosen because the paper is about parent-child communication for the faith development of older children, so the need to sample the opinions of older children whose parents are Christian. The research aims to know the extent to which older children enjoy parent-child communication, and the effort parents make regarding older children's faith development.

S/N	Statements	SA	A	D	SD
5.	Parents do not ask questions about what they are taught in the school or allow them to share their experiences.	8 (13.3)	22 (36.6)	19 (31.6)	11 (18.3)
6.	Parents see them as children and most time do not allow them to talk or ask questions.	4 (6.6)	14 (23.3)	32 (53.3)	10 (16.6)
7.	Parents do not sit them down once in a while and tell them stories.	13 (21.6)	17 (28.3)	22 (36.6)	8 (13.3)
8.	Parents do not take them out once in a while and make them happy.	15 (25.0)	19 (31.6)	17 (28.3)	9 (15.0)
9.	Parents do not celebrate and appreciate them when they have done well.	14 (23.3)	18 (30.0)	14 (23.3)	14 (23.3)
10.	Parents usually shout at them, punish and abuse them when they make them angry.	22 (36.6)	23 (38.3)	2 (3.3)	13 (21.6)

Table 1: Showing older children's opinions regarding the extent to which they enjoy parent-child communication.

The table above expresses the need for parents to intensify their efforts in establishing parent-child communication that will make them more accessible to older children. 75% of the children confirmed that parents yell and punish them when they make them angry, 56.6% agreed that parents do not take them out once in a while and make them happy, while 50% agreed that parents do not spend time with them and celebrate them when they have done well. Though 70% of the children agreed that parents do not consider them as children and allow them to ask questions, a child that is sure of

what the parent is capable of doing at any form of provocation will rather keep to himself and seek succour from his peers and social media than confiding in his parents.

Some of these children's new orientation about life is to spend their leisure time browsing, playing games, chatting with friends on social media, listening to music and the like. Mueller (2006, 96) reveals that children of the present generation are the most media-saturated generation of all time. The media shapes how they think and distinguishes them from previous generations. It is indisputable that most of what older children are exposed to as they sit with the television, laptop, and phone negates their cultural and spiritual upbringing. This researcher agrees that the experience and exposure of a child while growing up, what he hears, sees, tastes and smells are significant determinants of his or her faith development.

Table 2: Showing the opinion of older children on things their parents are doing to help them know more about Jesus and the Bible.

S/N	Statements	A	O	S	N
11.	We pray in our family both in the morning and in the evening.	53 (88.3)	2 (3.3)	4 (6.6)	1 (1.6)
12.	I am allowed to lead the family prayer.	18 (30.0)	8 (13.3)	33 (55.0)	1 (1.6)
13.	My parents ask about what I was taught in the church.	33 (55.0)	2 (3.3)	22 (36.6)	3 (5.0)
14.	My parents explain Bible stories with examples or happenings I understand.	42 (70.0)	13 (21.6)	3 (5.0)	2 (3.3)
15.	My parents go to church on Sundays and during the week.	57 (95.0)	1 (1.6)	2 (6.3)	-

Table 2 is the response of older children on things their parents are doing to help them know more about Jesus and the Bible. 96.6% of the children affirmed that their parents are regular worshippers on Sundays and weekly. 91.6% said family devotion is a constant spiritual exercise in their family, and their parents always explain Bible stories with examples they can relate with. Likewise, 58.3% agreed that their parents always ask about what they are taught in the church and 43.3% declared that their parents always allow them to lead the family prayer.

It is glaring from the result that older children are allowed to participate in spiritual activities that can aid their faith development, but this researcher observes that the attitude of some of these children negates the expected outcome from a child participating in spiritual activities at home and the church. By implication, the faith development of older children goes beyond words and religious activities, and it also requires good living, as emphasized in Bandura's Social Learning Theory. God expects parents to mirror Him to their children and make them knowledgeable about Him (Oyeniyi 2021, 54). Teaching children to love and serve God is good but best accomplished by good living.

In a functional family, parents are known for good living as they are very aware of their impact on their children (McArthur 2005, 14). Instead, parents should be careful in their word choice, relationships and conduct within and outside the house. These are necessary not to lead the children astray. Facts of who parents are in the family structure give them authoritative power, which can be used to convince their children to make an effort to win, to succeed, to respect their fellow human beings and to be people of honesty and integrity (Ziglar 1993, 267).

In essence, it is not enough to introduce older children to the knowledge of Christ; concerted effort must be made to ensure they grow in this knowledge. Again, it is not about the children's pastor or workers alone. It is also expedient for parents to consider older children's faith development as a task they should accomplish. Waiting for older children to ask for guidance regarding their faith development before providing one might be dangerous as most of them prefer to relate to their friends than their parents. Parents should know that they have to stand in the gap, encourage them to study their Bible, observe their quiet time and be role models in words and deeds. When a child is reared in a home where both parents are modelling consistent spiritual disciplines of Bible reading, prayer, church involvement and the like, the child will learn to incorporate the same elements of godly living into the early developmental experience (Anthony 2001, 64).

Parents-Child Communication Patterns for Older Children's Faith Development

This paper has pitched its tent with Bandura's Social Learning Theory and established that parents have important roles to play in the faith development of their older children because most of what older children display outside the home is the product of what they learn from home. It is easy for them to take after their parents when parental words and deeds carry weight and greatly influence their faith development. When parents can communicate rightly, older children will become agents of change as their lives reflect what they have seen and learnt from their parents. Standing on the premise that older children's faith development cannot be isolated from their physical, mental, emotional, social and psychological well-being, this paper discusses some parents' expectations regarding their communication with older children for their faith development.

1. Make their voice count: Listening is a skill that every parent must develop. According to (Popoola 2020, 34), part of how parents can prudently spend their time with their children is to take time to listen to them. Parents will be surprised at older children's knowledge level when they can express their minds on issues. Older children's suggestions can even be the solution to a pressing problem. Even when their opinion seems unreasonable, parents should carefully choose their words when correcting them. Telling a child that her suggestion is senseless is a way of demoralizing and silencing the child.

2. Satisfy their curiosity: God makes it known to the Israelites in Deuteronomy 6:20 that children will ask questions after taking them through His commandments, and God told the Israelites to respond by telling them the story of how He delivered them from the Egyptians with a mighty hand and how He commanded them to obey His commandments. God did not ask the parents to slap, shout at, yell, or ignore their children for asking questions; instead, they should sit them down and tell the story of how they were delivered (Abegunde 2021, 67). In essence, to foster parent-child

communication that will help the older children develop their faith, parents must be patient enough to listen to them, process each of their questions and respond in the language they can understand. As posited by Gangel (1985, 188), answering children's questions not only applies the truth of the moment but also allows the child to develop the reasoning process.

3. Rebuke them constructively: Older children, like every child, deserve their respect. They are more at home with adults that respect them and will not make a public show of their mistakes. This researcher agrees with (Zolten & Long 2006, 6) that Parents should not forget the ordinary rules of politeness simply because they are dealing with their children. Parents should treat their children with the same respect they would show to any other person. Children are people too, and deserve to be treated with respect. While parents should not restrict disciplining an erring child, the discipline must be corrective and not a display of anger or vengefulness (Ajibade 2017, 75).

4. Praise and celebrate them when necessary: When people are praised when they do good, such people take to correction when attention is called to the wrong done (Popoola 2020, 79). This applies to older children, too; appreciation keeps them going and motivates them to do more. This heightens healthy parent-child communication. The essence of celebration is to express parental care and love and not a show of affluence or to make a child feel that he is better than others. Parents must allow their older children to understand this to not be defeated.

5. Initiate Deliberate Discussion: Ask questions about their quiet time, activities in school, friends they keep and Bible lessons when they return from church. Parents owe it to themselves to seek and get relevant knowledge that empowers them for their God-given task (Abegunde 2021, 66). It is pertinent that parents know older children's peculiarities and the current trends in their world. The knowledge, coupled with the children's response, will help parents strategize and develop modalities with respect to their faith

development. Jesuleye (2014, 212) declares that “a child who is well ministered to will grow up to be a Christian adult that will enjoy being in the presence of God and be a useful instrument in His hands.”

6. Communicate with the right language: Communication is both verbal and non-verbal. When parents communicate with their children, they must come down to their children's level verbally and physically (Zolten & Long 2006, 2). Parents should be careful in their choice of words and always speak the language these children can easily understand. Most times, parents assume that their children are old enough to analyze instructions without proper clarification. The best approach is to make the instruction clear. There should also be careful consideration of the effect parents' choice of words can have on these children's relationships and faith development. Using obscene words and vulgar language should be avoided because parents are to guide by example.

7. Friendly in appearance: Parents that consider the faith development of their children as their responsibility will establish a child-parents communication pattern that will make them approachable to older children. They should be free to express their feelings, initiate discussion, ask questions, make a request and be sure of their parent's attention. Many children have become victims of predators because they have confided in the wrong person. Amoran (2018, 8) encourages stakeholders in children's upbringing should create more precious time with the children to give room for mutual understanding, relationship and intimacy. Most time, one can predict whether the parents of a child are friendly and approachable from the child's relationship with other children and people around.

Conclusion

This paper has explored Bandura's Social Learning theory in establishing some parent-child communication patterns for the faith development of older children. The paper delved into older children's peculiarities and presented the need for parent-child communication

with older children. Parents benefit more when they provide the needed guidance and exemplary lifestyle that will help the faith development of older children. These children can stand in the gap for their parents, be the mouthpiece of their parents anywhere they go and consequently be an instrument for the propagation of the gospel. The task of faith development in older children, as argued in this paper, goes beyond the biological parents; every adult connected with older children should see themselves as parents and perform their responsibilities accordingly. When all come together, the goal of raising older children that will turn their generation around for Christ will be achieved.

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VIOLENCE AGAINST FEMALE GENDER IN EKITI STATE: BIBLICAL AND CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

Violence against the female gender otherwise referred to as 'gender-based violence', has long existed since the writing of the Scriptures. It dates back to the beginning of the human race. Hence, it is not a new phenomenon in academia. The study examined some prevalent forms of gender-based violence in Ekiti State, Nigeria, from a biblical and contemporary perspective. It employed the descriptive survey method. The study's population comprises 100 females randomly selected from five local governments in Ekiti State. Simple and purposive random sampling techniques were employed to select 20 females from a randomly selected local government to make up 100 respondents from the five local governments. These local governments are Ado, Ifelodun, Ilemeje, Ise Orun, and Ido Osi, all in Ekiti State. The researcher used a questionnaire as the primary instrument for data collection. The Guttman Split-Half coefficient was used to establish the reliability of the instrument. The correlation between forms (halves) of the test is positive. This validates reliability model assumptions. The correlation showed a positive value of $r=0.74$, on $p>0.05$, which established that the instrument is correlated, fitted, and reliable for data collection based on internal consistency and correlation between forms. The study revealed that the most prevalent and recurrent gender-based violence in the randomly selected local government of Ekiti State is girls and women killing for ritual and sacrifices and female genital mutilation. It also revealed that more girls and women had penetrated rapes against attempted rape in Ekiti State. The study recommends that Cases of violation against the female gender in Ekiti State should not be

carpeted; instead, they must be reported to the appropriate desk designed by the State Government. Police must ensure that reportages of gender-based violence are not toyed with by collecting money from the perpetrators to cancel the case. The Ekiti State government should also empower local vigilantes to monitor movements in the sampled local government to identify killers of girls and women for money rituals or sacrifice and bring them to book. The State government should also create immunity for victims who surmount the courage to report abuses against the perpetrators after their release.

Key Words: Violence, Female Gender, Perpetrators.

Introduction

Violence against the female gender otherwise referred to as 'gender-based violence', has long existed since the writing of the Scriptures. It dates back to the beginning of the human race. Hence, it is not a new phenomenon in academia. Several studies have been carried out on the factors precipitating violence against women, extent, prevalence, and way forward to reducing the menace in society, if not abrogated (Ilesanmi & Afolabi, 2016; Adeleke, 2018; Afolabi, 2019; Ekiti State Gender-Based Violence Law, 2011, 2019; Anifowose, 2020; Adekunke et al., 2022). In most cases, sexual assault and molestation, female circumcision or genital mutilation, child trafficking for sexual exploitation, arbitrary deprivation of freedom, stalking, battering, and rape are a few cases of violence perpetrated on women, particularly in some rural settlements in Ekiti State, Nigeria. This is because gender-based violence is frowned upon in the Ekiti State. Hence, perpetrators moved back to the rural axis, where victims would not report News of such evil acts to parents or law enforcement agencies. Despite newspaper reportages and several campaigns hosted by the National Orientation Agency (NOA) and some non-governmental organisations (NGOs), violence against women is increasing, especially in some rural areas of the State.

The foregoing bedrock is valid because women and girls possess little or no control over their bodies, actions, and resources, as their male counterparts do. Hence, gender inequality is reinforced, and gender-based violence is perpetuated through some African social norms that

support patriarchal domination or control over women. In as much, they are more or less a property to their male counterparts, specifically their spouses. Hence, it could be said that women and girls worldwide, particularly young people, are most at risk. This view coincides with the World Bank report (2019), which notes that about 7% of women have been sexually assaulted or murdered by someone other than their spouses. This violence is much more rampant, leaving women and girls in fear of the unknown evil that is about to be perpetrated and whose turn it might be at any point in time. Similarly, activists against gender-based violence are increasingly becoming the perpetrators' prey. Thus, some women and girls interested in participating in gender-based activism, particularly in Ekiti State, Nigeria, in a safe and peaceful campaign, have been discouraged by the dread of violators within and without Ekiti State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Violence against the female gender (gender-based violence) has gained a global debate in the last two decades. This global menace includes but is not limited to rape (including marital rape), sexual molestation and assaults, battering, and ritual murder to harvest body organs – breasts, the genitalia, eyes, and the heart – among other domestic violence. Though violence meted out against women is well debated and campaigned against within the Ekiti State capital and surrounding towns and neighbourhoods, radio airing, television broadcasts, and symposiums, nonetheless, perpetrators are yet to desist from the act of defiling their female counterparts. The State's social fabric, expected to present tranquillity and happiness to all and sundry, has suddenly become a thing that causes psychological distress, emotional trauma, and fear resulting in sleepless nights. This does not exclude doubt about whether there will come a time when such evil will abate in Ekiti State.

Middlers (girls between the ages of 10-12) and adolescents (13-19) are recurrently perpetrated with social evil, including rape, sexual molestation, and coercion to send nude pictures for a token which would later be used against them as a threat to blackmail them on social media handles, to mention a few. However, most of these acts

against women, especially girls, are tried based on poverty, vulnerability, and discontentment. Girls and young women who fall within the three categories tend to become victims of gender-based violence more than those who are victims of circumstance, especially in Ekiti State. The study, therefore, investigated violence against the female gender in Ekiti State, Nigeria, from a biblical and contemporary perspective.

Literature Review

Violence against the female gender, otherwise known as gender-based violence, is a menace on the increase daily across the globe, particularly in Nigeria. Cases of gender-based violence particularly in Ekiti State, Nigeria, has gone to a point where a citizen of the State is afraid to allow their female youths and wives to walk alone in the general public or independently in a secluded area. For fear that perpetrators might prey on them. Ekine *et al.* (2020, 4) cited Nigeria Demographic Health Survey (2018, 441) in their investigation on gender-based violence in primary schools. Sexual violence against women in Ekiti State was rated 7%, Edo State and Kaduna State were 13.6% prevalent. Ebonyi State and Bauchi State were 20.1% each, while Gombe State was 44.9%.

Similarly, Afolabi (2019, 141) investigated gender-based violence in tertiary institutions in Ekiti State, Southwestern Nigeria. The study revealed that 25.5% of university girls had experienced one gender-based violence at a point in time. Though the outcome seems low in selected tertiary institutions across Ekiti State, gender-based violence is gradually increasing in Ekiti State. Adebembe (2022, 11) notes that several rapists, among other women violators, have been sentenced to jail to serve as a deterrent to other perpetrators who might have the plan to defile more women and girls across Ekiti State. Adebembe (2022, 11) corroborates that gender-based violence is prevalent in the State. Hence, the Ekiti State government installation of some measures with which perpetrators could be apprehended to reduce the reoccurrence of such menace in its society. However, the known measures have not stopped perpetrators from molesting girls, assaulting women across streets, raping, and kidnapping them for

ritual killing. This view is in tandem with Ekine *et al.* (2020, 7) when they aver that despite the high prevalence, few structured efforts are currently in place for handling cases of gender-based violence in primary schools, particularly in Nigeria. The above is evident in their study result that the prevalence of sexual-related gender-based violence in primary schools across Nigeria is 67.1%, gender disparity 59.7%, and pupils that have experienced sexual harassment are on an average of 45.6%. The results show a high prevalence frequency, which begged for emergency intervention to deter recurrence.

On cases of violence against women in Nigeria, Alokun (2013, 102) has noted that there have been reports of husbands killing and maiming their wives with retrospective statistics of newspaper reportage from *This Day* (2011, online) newspaper stating about 65% are a victim of such heinous acts. Furthermore, Alokun (2013, 102) recounted the report of a 27-year-old mother of one who was gruesomely murdered by her husband, among several others who were a victim of death through their spouses. Ojo (2022, 24) studied the effects of culture-induced violence against women in Nigeria. The study reveals that patriarchal-oriented detestable cultural elements and traditions have incited, condoned and systematised violence against women and the girl child with devastating implications for peace, social security and sustainable development. This Ojo's view agrees with Okoroafor *et al.* (2021, 10) submission when they state, "culturally, the practice of gender-based violence is predominant in the world, societies, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria." Furthermore, they noted some identifiable forms of gender-based violence, including sexual harassment or abuse.

Conversely, Jegede (2019, 471) studied the penetrative forms of sexually-related offences and causal factors in selected rural and urban communities of Ekiti State through a mixed-method sampling technique that covered rural and urban communities involving 150 respondents. The study confirms the prevalence of sexually-related

offences in urban and rural communities of Ekiti State. The study also reveals that child defilement is the most prevalent sexually-related offence in Ekiti communities. Norah examined the emotional stability of students who have been sexually abused in some selected tertiary institutions in Ekiti State. The study used a descriptive survey method with a structured Likert scale questionnaire with 396 randomly selected students. The study reveals that sexual harassment of female students exerts statistically significant adverse effects on the emotional stability of the victims. Another study was carried out by Adekunle *et al.* (2022, 68) on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on gender-based violence in Ekiti State. The survey found that the stringent lockdowns nationwide significantly affected African families' lives.

Harmful repercussions discovered include physical and sexual abuse, violence against partners, especially women, and different types of domestic violence. Olatunji and Idemudia (2021, 23), cited in Adekunle *et al.* (2022, 68), described the ever-emerging global data on gender-based violence before the pandemic. They note that several women were subjected to sex even by their husbands and partner more than they were psychologically prepared for; this is because the men were idle and could only think of sex for most part of the day (Olatunji & Idemudia 2021, 24). Olofinbiyi (2021, 4), cited in Adekunle *et al.* (2022, 68) has stated that the evidence of gender-based violence perpetrated on girls and women in Ekiti State in the year 2020 is due to COVID-19 restrictions on movements. Adekunle *et al.* (2022, 70) recount the Ekiti State government's establishment of "The Ekiti State Sexual Assault Referral Centre", also known as 'Moremi Clinic' in 2020. This body responds to gender-based violence cases and has zero tolerance for waiving due punishment on the perpetrator once found guilty. Okunola *et al.* (2022, 3), referenced in Adekunle *et al.* (2022, 70), avers that the clinic between June 2020 to May 2021 recorded 74 incidents of gender-based violence in Ekiti State. This suggests that violence against women in Ekiti State is not reducing; instead, it gained more stance.

Biblical Instances of Sexual-Related Gender-Based Violence

According to Ecclesiastes 3:1ff, there are no new things under the sun. All are a product of what has already happened in antiquity, recycling or repeating itself in the current dispensation. Sexual-related violence, among other acts against women, dates back to the biblical age. From a cultural perspective, Chukwuka (2022, 76) aver that sexual violations in the Old Testament were considered an offence against a girl but also her father. In the case of Tamar, a daughter of David with an older brother named Absalom was raped by Amnon, her half-brother and the first son of David. Through the assistance of Jonadab, her cousin, Tamar, was persuaded by his half-brother to visit Amnon's house and make a cake for him under the pretext that he was ill (2 Samuel 13). David granted Amnon's request, and Tamar was given the go-ahead to visit Amnon and make lunch for him. She was raped during this process because Amnon harboured lustful thoughts for his sister. With the help of his cousin and friend Jonadab, he raped his sister, and the Bible states that Amnon "hated her with a very great hatred." After this, he "throw this woman out of his presence and locked the door behind her" (2 Samuel 13:15, 17). This suggests that Amnon's incestuous urge might not be an instinct; it has a connotation of spiritual obsession. This agrees with Chukwuka's opinion that "sexual predators and rape perpetrators are men who have lost their sense of reasoning and self-control as a result of employing illegitimate means to capture their prey" (Chukwuka 2022, 73). Adeyemo (2006), cited in Chukwuka (2022, 77), notes that "Amnon's lust for Tamar overrode all thoughts about family honour and concern for what would become of her.

Tamar spent the rest of her life as an outcast. She never married and was shamed. Tamar spent the rest of her life in her father's home. The study also submits that gender-based violence is increasing in Ekiti State. Genesis 30:21, 34, and 46:15 all refer to a similar episode in which Leah gave birth to Dinah, Jacob's only daughter. When Dinah went to see the local woman, Shechem, son of Harmon, attacked her. Shechem defiled Dinah, which was a severe transgression in Israel. Like a prostitute, Dinah was treated poorly. Dinah losing her virginity

to an unrestrained infidel robbed her of her honour, thereby subjecting her to perpetual poverty. Many Christians think that suffering the result of sin is God's ultimate plan for both men and women. She went on to say that women's sin is magnified as if the men had not also sinned. Reputable male Christian leaders have supported this perspective since Augustine and Aquinas, which endorsed and permitted the enslavement of women throughout history.

Esther 2:2-20 alludes to how some lovely young virgins were chosen for King Xerxes after Queen Vashti was deposed; these young virgins were brought to the Harem under Hegai's care they were given special attention. After receiving a year's worth of beauty treatments, the young virgin will be brought to the King's bed. After this, they will travel to the second haven, where the King's wives live, and Shaashgaz, the King's Eunuch, will be in charge of the concubines. She will never go to the King again, except he had especially enjoyed her and requested her by name, Shaashgaz said (Esther 2:15). Treating young virgins in a brilliant future-like way is violence against the female gender. Another instance of sexual-related violence against women is recounted in Judges 19:22-25 where a group of men who were homosexual attempted to defile a travelling Levite. However, a concubine was presented in exchange for the Levite and was sexually raped and molested from nightfall to the dawn of a new day. This is cruelty against a minor because of their susceptibility, and they are mostly prey to people they trusted.

However, the law of Moses, as recorded in Exodus 22:18, negates any sexually-related violence against women with capital punishment on the perpetrator. Nonetheless, the law was biased because it sentenced both the perpetrator and victim to the death penalty (execution), though with a clause that "if the rape occurred within the town. She is only protected if the rape occurs in a rural area where she cannot ask for aid. It seems unfair that the woman received two punishments when she was powerless to have helped herself (Deut. 22:22-23). Thus, in most cases, little or nothing is done when cases of rape or

sexual molestation are reported. Until the alarming incidence of a popular Nollywood actor with the stage name “Baba Ijebu” was apprehended on the count of sexual molestation of a minor and was sentenced to 16 years jailed term in Lagos in 2021.

In John 8:3-11, a woman was apprehended in the very act of adultery and brought before Jesus to have him pronounce her guilty. She was to be stoned, according to the Jewish tradition. However, Jesus broke the barrier when he asked, “Where was the man who had a sexual encounter with this woman? This suggests that women are consistently marginalised and used to erase men's sins, whereas their male counterparts are to be punished for the evil they had done using women. But Jesus introduced a paradigm shift that abolished seizing the woman found in sexual immorality or sexual abuse with a perpetrator.

One of the three main tribes in southwest Nigeria is the Yoruba tribe. Osun, Ekiti, Oyo, Ogun, Ondo, and the Lagos States are the states that make up the Yoruba communities. Jewish culture's conception of the female gender is crucial to Yoruba belief. The female gender is considered inferior to the male counterpart in Yoruba culture. Women are prohibited from exercising various freedoms and are regarded as undesirable beings. However, some effective campaigns have been against the glass ceiling, particularly by some NGOs. As long as he could provide for them, a guy might marry as many of them as he desired. They intended to have children and work on the farms for their husbands, one of their two primary roles. The following are some further instances of marginalisation of women in Yoruba cultural customs; When a mother gives birth to a newborn boy, she will be honoured by large celebrations and funfairs. This is because having a baby is desired and celebrated as a success.

However, if it is a woman, there will be a clear bias. The infant will not be accepted and honoured in the same manner as her male equivalent. This proves that fatherly or parental rejection of female offspring begins even before they are born. The truth is that nobody selects their sex when they are born. Why should an innocent child

endure punishment for a transgression that they did not commit? Yoruba husbands frequently accuse their wives of having female children out of ignorance. They were unaware that they were the ones who even chose the child's sex. Unlike their feminine colleagues, men are valued and given particular treatment. Children who were female could not move as freely as their male counterparts. Males receive more attention from parents than females do. They have control over their female partner at home. Males will not be permitted to perform some home tasks because they are exceptional and should not be involved. While men labour on the farm, return home, eat, and play about, women must wash dishes, do laundry, prepare meals, and clean the house.

Females have occasionally been used as sacrifices and carriers of gifts to please idols. The Osun Osogbo event takes place in Osun State. Transporting the components of rejection or the repudiation itself to the shrine of Osun is one of the festival's main customs (a goddess of the river). They use a virgin female rather than a male to carry out these rites. She serves as an Aruba (the one who carries the calabash to the shrine of Osun, a deity). She must be a young virgin female, not a male. Girls who have been utilised for such purposes lead miserable lives. There have been instances where women execute the majority of ceremonies. It gets worse since pregnant women, female albinos, and other people are employed in these rituals.

Objectives of the Study

The study's primary objective is investigating violence against the female gender in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. examine the existence of gender-based violence in some local governments of Ekiti State;
2. assess past or current victims of gender-based violence in Ekiti State,
3. identify types or forms of gender-based violence prevalent in selected local governments of Ekiti State,

4. investigate communal or parental measures for apprehending and reporting violence against the female gender in Ekiti State,
5. find out the existing action taken by the State government when incidents of gender-based violence are reported to the appropriate quarters, and
6. suggest ways minors can report any advances of violence against them to parents and law enforcement agencies in Ekiti State.

Research Questions

1. Have you noticed the existence of gender-based violence in your local government?
2. Is there any past or current victims of gender-based violence in Ekiti State?
3. What types or forms of gender-based violence are prevalent in your local governments?
4. What are some communal or parental measures for apprehending and reporting violence against the female gender in Ekiti State?
5. Do you know of any existing action taken by the State government when incidents of gender-based violence are reported to the appropriate quarters?
6. Can you state some means through which minors can report any advances of violence against them to parents and law enforcement agencies in Ekiti State?

Methodology

The study employed the descriptive research method. The study's population comprises a hundred females randomly selected from five local governments in Ekiti State. Simple and purposive random sampling techniques were employed to select 20 females from a randomly selected local government to make up 100 respondents from the five local governments. The study focused on women in rural settlements within the selected local governments, including

Ado, Ifelodun, Ilemeje, Ise Orun, and Ido Osi, all in Ekiti State. The study adopted a questionnaire to collect data from the respondents. The Guttman Split-Half coefficient was used to establish the reliability of the instrument. The instrument was tested valid and reliable. The correlation between forms (halves) of the test is positive. This validates reliability model assumptions. The correlation showed a positive value of $r= 0.74$, on $p= <0.05$, which established that the instrument is correlated, fitted, and reliable for data collection based on internal consistency and correlation between forms. Thus, the study analysed data collected using SPSS version 25. Categories of variables were presented using frequency, percentage, and mean scores.

Data presentation and discussion of Findings

Table 1: The existence of gender-based violence in some local governments of Ekiti State

Items	Frequency	(%)	Ranking
Yes	63	63.0	1 st
No	14	14.0	3 rd
Not Sure	23	23.0	2 nd

Source: Author's field experience, 2022.

Table 1 above revealed that respondents who answered yes, are aware of the existence of gender-based violence in the selected local government and are ranked first with a percentage of 63.0%; respondents who said no, ranked third, with a percentage of 14.0%, while respondents who are not sure of the menace ranked second with a percentage of 23.0%. This implies that gender-based violence exists in Ado, Ifelodun, Ilemeje, Ise Orun, and Idi Osi local government areas of Ekiti State, Nigeria.

Table 2: past or current victims of gender-based violence in Ekiti State

Items	Frequency	(%)	Ranking
Yes	88	88.0	1 st
No	7	7.0	2 nd
Not Sure	5	5.0	3 rd

Source: Author's field experience, 2022.

Table 2 revealed that more respondents said yes, they had been violated once; this ranked first with a percentage of 88.0%; a lower number of respondents said no, ranking second, with a percentage of 7.0%; while 5.0% of the total respondents say, they are not sure some people have been violated around them. This shows the prevalence of violence against women in the selected local governments of Ekiti State.

Table 3: types or forms of gender-based violence are prevalent in some local governments of Ekiti State.

Items	Frequency	(%)	Rank
Physical Violence	12	12.0%	5 th
Attempted Rape	14	14.0%	4 th
Sexual Molestation/Assault	16	16.0%	2 nd
Verbal Abuse	6	6.0%	7 th
Genital Mutilation	15	15.0%	3 rd
Murder for Money Ritual	27	27.0%	1 st
Penetrated Rape	10	12.0%	6 th

Source: Author's field experience, 2022.

Table 3 above revealed that physical violence is one of the forms of gender-based violence in the selected local governments, with a percentage of 12.0% and it ranked fifth; attempted rape ranked fourth, with a percentage of 14.0%; sexual molestation and assault ranked second with a percentage of 16.0%, verbal abuse ranked seventh with a percentage of 6.0%, genital mutilation, ranked third, with a percentage of 15.0%, murder for money ritual ranked first,

with a percentage of 27.0%, while penetrated rape ranked sixth, with a percentage of 12.0%. This suggests that the highest prevalent form of gender-based violence in the selected local government areas of Ekiti State is murdering women and girls for money rituals, followed by sexual molestation, genital mutilation, and attempted rape.

Table 4: communal or parental measures for apprehending and reporting violence against the female gender in Ekiti State.

Items	Frequency	(%)	Rank
Report to communal elders	5	5.0%	4 th
Report to perpetrator's parents or friends	15	15.0%	3 rd
Report to the law enforcement agencies	3	3.0%	5 th
No apprehending measures have worked	26	26.0%	2 nd
No reports are made to avoid stigmatisation	51	51.0%	1 st

Source: Author's field experience, 2022.

Table four above revealed some communal or parental measures for apprehending and reporting violence against the female gender in Ekiti State. Report to communal elders ranked fourth, with a percentage of 5.0%; report to perpetrator's parents or friends, ranked third, with a percentage of 15.0%; report to the law enforcement agencies, ranked fifth, with a percentage of 3.0%; no apprehending measures have worked, ranked second, with a percentage of 26.0%, no report is made on incidences of violence against women to avoid stigmatisation, ranked first, with a percentage of 51.0%. This implies that the highest measure ever taken on gender-based violence in the selected local governments is reporting incidences to parents or friends of the perpetrators, if known, or reporting to communal leaders. However, the ranking above shows that victims have not been reporting violence against them for fear of stigmatising themselves and the belief that the existing measures set by the State government are not effective enough to punish perpetrators and save their lives from unforeseen attacks for the reports made.

Table 5: existing action taken by the Ekiti State government when incidents of gender-based violence are reported to the appropriate quarters.

Items	Frequency	(%)	Rank
Police detainment.	28	28.0%	2 nd
Defilement fine without detainment.	1	1.0%	5 th
Punished and rehabilitated.	9	9.0%	3 rd
Nothing is done as perpetrators remain ghosted.	54	54.0%	1 st
No idea.	8	8.0%	4 th

Source: Author's field experience, 2022.

Table 5 reveals the initiatives taken by the Ekiti State government when incidents of gender-based violence are reported to the appropriate quarters. Police detainment ranked second, with a percentage of 28.0%; defilement fine without detainment ranked fifth, with a percentage of 1.0%; punishing and rehabilitation ranked third, with a percentage of 9.0%; nothing is done as perpetrators remained ghosted, ranked first, with a percentage of 54.0%, while no idea ranked 4th, with a percentage of 8.0%. This implies that perpetrators often disappear after defiling their victims (54.0%), while those who cannot abscond are not afraid of police detainment (28.0%).

Table 6: ways minors can report any advances of violence against them to parents and law enforcement agencies in Ekiti State.

Items	Frequency	(%)	Rank
Victims should ensure they picture the perpetrator in their minds for future identification for prosecution.	22	22.0%	3 rd
Minors should not be sent on an errand at an odd hour.	1	1.0%	4 th
Women and girls must avoid discontentment.	31	31.0%	2 nd
Parents must always check and understand their children's moods and ask necessary questions when they notice mood swings.	46	46.0%	1 st

Source: Author's field experience, 2022.

Table 6 revealed some of the suggested ways minors can report any advances of violence against them to parents and law enforcement

agencies in Ekiti State. Victims should ensure they picture the perpetrator in their mind for future identification and prosecution, ranked third, with a percentage of 22.0%; minors should not be sent on an errand at an odd hour, ranked fourth, with a lower percentage of 1.0%, women and girls must avoid discontentment, ranked second, with a percentage of 31.0%. Parents must always check and understand their children's moods and ask critical questions when they notice mood swings, ranked first, with a higher percentage of 46.0%. This suggests that there are three ways to reduce the chances of losing a girl-child to violators around, and they are noting children's moods with the understanding that they might be going through some difficult times, the avoidance of discontentment, and picturing the face of the violators in mind in case of reappearance for apprehension and prosecution.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study correlate with other previous studies on gender-based violence, particularly in Ekiti State, Nigeria. However, there is a gap in knowledge of the prevalence of female genital mutilation and the deliberate kidnapping and murdering of girls and women for money rituals. Cases of rape, sexual molestation or assault, though, are still prevalent, yet it has taken a bow for ritual killing of girls to harvest their privates – breasts, genitalia, eyes, heart, and sometimes, palms and feet. Female genital mutilation coincides with Olofinbiyi et al. (2021, 4) when they report that female genital mutilation is prevalent in Africa and has severe damage, particularly in the severity of the cutting, proficiency of the circumciser, and the level of hygiene of the environment and tools used.

They described some of the primary and secondary complications to include injury to genital organs, haemorrhage and shock, infections, pelvic fractures, failure to heal and death, lower obstructive uropathy, recurrent urinary tract infection, infertility, keloid formation, cysts and abscesses in the vulval, and menstrual disorders, among others. This suggests that the lives of many girls are currently endangered through genital circumcision or mutilation

(rubbing on sensitive parts of the genitalia – the clitoris and the labia minora and majora) in Ekiti State, Nigeria. More so, the finding of the study has revealed a higher percentage (27.0%) of cases of murdered girls and women across the selected local government areas of Ekiti State, submits that there is a significant shift and reduction in the known forms of violations against women in Ekiti State, to ritual killings of girls and women, and genital mutilation.

Conclusion

Based on the findings above, the researcher submits that there is a significant similarity between biblical occurrences of gender-based violence and contemporary daily events. Although there was no mention of female genital mutilation or ritualistic kidnapping and murder to harvest private and internal organs as observable across the Nigerian States, particularly in Ekiti State, Nigeria, other forms of violence against women, such as molestation, assault, attempted rape, penetrated rape, and verbal abuse, among others, are forms of violence currently trending in Nigeria. Acts of violence must not be taken as a social norm but as an anti-social evil distorting the delicate social fabric of society. Therefore, Jesus' style of dealing with sexual evil perpetrated by men on women with suffering only on women, upon apprehension, must be adopted among the Yoruba of Ekiti State without being gender-biased. On the other hand, it behoves every parent to set some surveillance measures on their female child and be careful where they send them to run errands daily. Since the study has noted discontentment as one of the reasons several girls and women fall victim to gender-based violence, it is the submission of this researcher that all must henceforth guard against discontent and be contented with what they have or possessed as the economy cannot continue to get worst.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were drawn from the result of the findings.

I. Cases of violation against the female gender in Ekiti State should not be carpeted; instead, they must be reported to the appropriate desk designed by the State Government.

- ii. Police must ensure that reportages of gender-based violence are not toyed with by collecting money from the perpetrators to cancel the case.
- iii. The Ekiti State government should also empower local vigilantes to monitor movements in the sampled local government to identify killers of girls and women for money rituals or sacrifice and bring them to book.
- iv. The State government should also create immunity for victims who surmount the courage to report abuses against the perpetrators after their release.

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THE CHALLENGES OF CONTEMPORARY FAMILY INSTITUTION AND SOCIETAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This paper seeks to examine the challenges in the contemporary family being a muddle to the development of society. The family is a social institution and the most important in society. It is full of experiences, paradoxes, and different varieties from time to time and is subjected to the interconnectedness of people in an environment across the African continent. The family life system has passed through phases from the past generation to modern times. Several developments have been taking place at the family level, and imputable virtues in the early centuries have been passing through changes since then till now. Hence, this work examined the complexities that the loss of values in the family setting has brought to society. It will identify the difficulties in society due to the absence of integrity and dignity, the problem of zero level of intimacy and affinity in the family, and the collapse of the extended family structure. Therefore, the family is becoming a more complex institution in contemporary times, and it is becoming harder for parents to control their children, which negatively affects the family unit and results in societal turmoil. These problems become the interest of this paper and how they will be ameliorated. Therefore, the work is premised on descriptive research methods to harness the subject matter. It was discovered in this study that family complexity is a reality threatening the integration and transformation of society. The long-run results of this complexity are that it generates a society where children grow up with high levels of emotion and deprivation with a strong desire to get back through all kinds of vices that may be detrimental to the society, socio-economy and religion. The paper concludes with recommendations necessary for curbing the complexities in the contemporary family and fostering the development of society.

Keywords: Family, challenges, Society, Development, Integration.

Introduction

This paper investigates the challenges the contemporary family institution has posed to societal development. In order to have developed in society, it is therefore essential to pay attention to the smallest unit of society, the family. It emphasizes personal and sensitive life issues as every human is born into a family, which is the place of the first relationship, first group, or experience a child will have in life. Man is conceived and trained as he grows, and hopefully, all the life cycle of a man is within the family. Life's events of man as captured in the larger frame of the society involving the socio-political context and religious disposition of individual is generated within the activities of the family life. Life is shaped by the events within and around the family life because the phase of family life is the natural context from which an individual's identity and development is formed. Because of the State's priority of respect for strong family ties, it has been discovered that there is hardly a community where people are not interrelated, just like in a typical African setting.

The concept of challenges in this work means the muddle that has come to the family front due to contemporary societal situations. These challenges have led to a gross loss of values in the family setting, and respect is no longer seen as a virtue as it used to be; the dignity of labour, loyalty, dedication to duty, and family intimacy have not been taken seriously as in the past years. These have significantly led to the complexity we now experience or witness in society. Family affinity has been corrosive to the extent that family ties are weakening. The complexity of the contemporary family institution has brought much confusion to family integration and societal development. The complexities that loss of values in the family setting has brought to society, the difficulties in society as a result of the absence of integrity and dignity, the problem of zero level of intimacy and affinity in the family, as well as the collapse of extended family structure cannot be overemphasis.

The family structure has dramatically departed from the known norms, bringing corrosive to family values. An analysis with various

parameters shows that different types and family forms in sociology have been classified as per world norms. Diverse types and structures of families in society have been classified in many ways, such as polygamous and monogamous, patrimonial, and matrimonial, among others. This family structure has a place in advancing societal development if it is well followed and allowed to safely guide the family institution that is as old as human existence. The rot that has permeated every aspect of society does not just come in a day; it is an accumulation of negligence from different units of the society, whereas the family setting is the common denomination to all in respective of background and community, and everyone is from the family, hence, the importance of the family unit of the society.

Family complexity occurs when legal ties, marriage, parenting, and living arrangements are not coterminous, resulting in diverging roles and relationships in family structure. The family has always been the smallest unit for the sustainable development of society with its physical, social, hereditary, and material endowment. The issue with family complexity is that it affects the composition, character, and resource-sharing in the family and society at large. The focus of this paper is to examine the challenges of contemporary family institutions and their adverse effects on societal development. To achieve this, the study will examine types and forms of family, highlight the functions of the family, and discuss the complexity of the contemporary family as it relates to societal development. The study used a descriptive research method to present the subject matter understandably. The findings of this study are relevant for contemporary family integration and social development.

Types and Forms of Family

Family is the unit of persons connected by residence, kinship, and close emotional attachment and provides for the nurturing and raising of children and other human needs. A family consists of a married man and woman with unmarried children harmoniously living together. Sociologists have opined that the family is the essential institution of society because the survival of the human race is related to it. The family is responsible for an individual's

upbringing, and by this, takes care of and trains him. An individual spends most of his time in a family, affecting his personality, particularly among other things. The family is the centre of society and is a source from which culture springs. Nonetheless, family structure is under culture and is in harmony with its demands (Rempusheki, 1990, 48).

The definition of family in sociological concept is summarized thus. The family unit is about parents and their children and a set of relatives or descendants of common ancestors. Its life system varies from society and culture. Therefore, this is a factor in deciding the structure and function of a family, as can be seen in the following views of scholars on the family from different angles of life, which are also relevant. “The family is a kin-based cooperative unit.” (Broom and Selznick, 2014). “The family is a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation, and reproduction” (Murdock, 2014). (A set of persons related by blood, marriage or adoption who shares the responsibilities for reproduction and caring for members of the society” (Schaefer, 2014).

There are different types and forms of family, and these types of family in sociology have been classified as per world norms. Diverse types and structures of families in society have been classified in many orders, such as families based on polygamous and monogamous marriage. On the basis of marriage, the family has been classified into other significant types:

1. Polyandrous family: in this type of family life, a woman marries not just a husband but many at a time. It is a woman and several men at a time. The choice of where she lives then depends on her. She may live with all of them alternatively or as she pleases. This family system is found with the Toda's, in the Kashmir to Assam area, and among the Eskimos. (Peter of Greece, and Demark H. R. H., 1962). The Bible prohibits polyandry. This way of life is regarded as adultery and sin before God and man; therefore, it is against the societal practice (Kapoor, 2008). This kind of family form is not

practised and never promoted; instead, it calls for punishment for any woman who practices such in Nigeria.

2. **Polygamous Marriage:** The practice of one man being married to multiple wives simultaneously is a typical family structure in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa. Before Christianity's era, this was common in Africa, but with the light of the Gospel in the lives of many believers now, the practice is not as prevalent as before. However, the polygamous family life system has not been totally eradicated. There is another new phase to polygamy, which differs from the pre-Christian era, and many men have lovers they are married to in secret as they also have their lawfully wedded wives at home (Kunhiyop, 2008, 224).
3. **Monogamous Family:** This is the practice of monogamy which consists of a family with a man and a woman in a conjugal relationship. It is not allowed for any of them in the relationship to engage in extramarital relationships. Unfaithfulness in this marital relationship is prohibited. It is considered the ideal type of marriage all over the world today because of its enormous advantages (<http://www.yourarticlelibrary.com>).

Classification of Family

The nature of residence is also a factor for the classification of families; therefore, in this regard, the family can be classified into three primary forms. The first one is the Family of Matrilocal residence, where the husband leaves to live in his wife's house (Richards, 2007). Another class of family is a family of Patrilocal residents, which indicates that the wife goes and lives in the house of her husband. The Patrilocal type of marriage is common in most places in the world, which is the view Africans subscribe to. It is the wife that moves and lives with the husband in line with the Bible (Matthew 19:12). Also, bi-local or family of changing residence is the type of family in which, after marriage, the married couple

changes their residence alternatively. Sometimes, the wife joins in her husband's house, while at other times, the husband resides in his wife's house (<http://www.sociologydiscussion.com>). In contemporary times, for expansion or economic status, or to announce a new status, every new couple usually changes location to move to a new place.

The need for relocation in most cases arises when the groom's accommodation cannot accommodate the bride, but if the groom is comfortable or has a more spacious space as accommodation before marriage, there may not be a need to relocate. It is, however, a typical lifestyle among young people to change location after marriage. The reason for this should not be for fashion only but for plans based on economic concerns. Motunrayo Adegbilero subscribes to this submission that couples should consider their status before deciding whether to change location after marriage (Adegbilero, 2022).

Another major classification of family type is based on ancestry or descent family, which are two main types:

(i) **Matrilineal family:** Matrilineal family is just the contrast to the patrilineal family. In this family system, the mother line determines the family's descent. The property and family name are also inherited through the mother line. The right is transferred from the mother to the daughter. A woman is the ancestor of the family. This type of family is found among the Garos, Khasis, and Nayers of Kerala (Richards 2007, 207).

(ii) **Patrilineal family:** This is a typical class of family and a prevalent type of family worldwide. The father is seen as the ancestor. The family descent is through the man and not through the woman. The property and family names are also inherited through the father line (<http://www.sociologydiscussion.com>). In another dimension of the sociological sense, the family can be based on size or structure and the depth of generations of the family, which can be classified into two main types; Nuclear family and extended family.

(1) Nuclear Family: A nuclear family comprises the husband, the wife, and their unmarried children. The nuclear family is a minimal size and is referred to as an autonomous unit. Control or influence is absent of the elders because newlyweds create separate residences for themselves, independent of elders. It is always tagged the primary family and the ideal family all over the world as it is characteristic of modern societies. However, urban societies have a family structure that resembles the nuclear family structure. The nuclear family is famous in the Western world and Africa.

The nuclear family has global characteristics: the husband, wife, and children are the only stable members with no external interference and close and deep social interactions. It is familiar with the nuclear family that there is closeness and individuals get attention, there is no cultural rigidity in their affairs, and there is an excellent level of innovation and acceptance of the recent happening in society. Also, in the nuclear family setting, mental regard and harmony form the relationship between husband and wife as they give weight to each other's opinion and form the correct opinion of the children. This form of family setting has the best platform for family economic cooperation and dependence on each other. (Sharma, 2013, 306)

(2) Joint or Extended Family: This family consists of the parents, their children, and near relations like a grandfather, grandmother, uncle, and so on living in the same house. This was current in traditional families. The agrarian economy demands the rampant extended family system in Africa and Pakistan. In India and Pakistan, the extended family commonly has parents, their children, grandchildren, aunts, and uncles. Such a family exemplifies practical unity and love, as elders are God's blessings (Jaeger, 2012, 22).

An extended or joint family is large and consists of some nuclear families, including members of three to four generations. It is an extension of the parent-child relationship. Close blood ties are what the relationship is based on in this family structure. It is a prototype of the joint family in Hindu society. In this family structure, the eldest male person in the family is the head of the family, and the

tie is much among family members comprised of father, mother, their sons, and their wives, their unmarried daughters, grandchildren, grandfather, grandmother, uncles, aunts, and their children. (<http://family.lovetoknow.com>).

The characteristics of extended families are related to these: Its number is more, consisting of three generations which include parents, children, and grandchildren. There is the eldest, in most cases, men that decide for the family, and all other members follow their orders because of the reverence. The head of the family controls every aspect of their economic, agricultural, and social lives; their collective responsibility and income are commonly used. Elders are in charge of cultural traditions, social values, and customs. As the custodians of traditions, the elders coordinate all matters relating to death, marriage, and naming. There is a collective responsibility as it concerns educating the children in such a family (Rempusheki, 1990, 48).

Functions of the Family

Family Functions may be different from culture to culture, but some essential functions include these:

1. **Reproduction:** The family is an institution in which the human race survives through family reproduction, which functions to make the social life continue with its activities. A family is therefore conceived as an institution that reproduces children in an agreed way of marriage to maintain social and cultural life. (Schaefer, 2014).
2. **Regulation of Sexual Behaviours:** One of the gifts of God to every family is sex, which is the celebration of love between legally married partners. A family makes the sexual needs to be met in society with the selection of proper mates and organization of engagement and marriage ceremonies. There are spelt-out restrictions on the way or any irregularity in this respect because if any exists, it will affect the social setup of a society. The role of sex in marriage is of great essence because, after food in the home, sex ranks next as an excellent sexual act that is inspiring, relaxing, and revitalizing (Oladapo, 2013, 107).

3. **Security or Protection:** Unlike animals who can help themselves survive within hours or weeks of birth, human children rely on parents and relatives for social, economic, and physical protection. In a family, it is a matter of fact that protection with responsibility is to be provided. These give room for education, economic needs, old age care, and treatment. Human children are not socially mature until many years into life, unlike many animals that can care for themselves within a few hours or days after birth. So, the family is a sure source of protection (William Smith,

4. **Affection and Companionship:** Affection and companionship are part of what the family is to provide to create love and passion and create a pleasant environment to free an individual from fear of separation. Therefore, there is a need for total commitment, affection, and companionship for every home to succeed in the family. The emotional needs of individuals in the family are to be met, and there should be a platform for mutual relationships that makes others attend to people's problems and help in their time of need. There should be an individual effort not to make conflict thrive in the family (Oladapo, 2013, 82).

5. **Socialization:** The family comes to the forefront regarding the network of human relationships to meet man's social needs. The family setting is a significant way a child can learn socialization and cultural values and understand language, dress, norms, traditions, habits, skills, and social interaction. The family is a significant institution to provide a child with economic understanding and opportunities for good interpersonal relationships in society. The family is in the position of making necessary and advantageous decisions for the individual group in life (Martinson, 1970, 10).

6. **Provision of Social Status:** Social position and background determine the inherited ascribed role in society. The family offers as a gift to a child his race, descent, and ascribed status, which now determines his social position in society and social stratification. The

family's economic conditions affect the child by pointing to his chances of higher education and helping him improve his social position—the family bridges the child and the great society (Hortwitz, 2005, 669).

7. **Transmission of Culture:** The most crucial underlying function of the family is the transmission of culture informally from one generation to the other. A family teaches children about dressing, regards, cultural values, folkways, and more. Events such as marriage ceremonies within a family teach customs and relate to long-served relations and their compliments. By observation, learning occurs, and other generations follow suit with what has been passed to them informally.

8. **Religious Functions:** Tradition believes that the family should be the first platform where spiritual discipline is inculcated into a child. The scripture makes God's position known about the importance of bringing up a child in the way of the Lord (Proverbs 22:6). Parents serve as stewards of God in the training and godly upbringing of children; hence, they have the responsibility of praying for their children and every member of the family for them to grow in fear of the Lord and be responsible members of the society to the glory of God (Oladapo, 2013 114-117). Children in the family learn religious activities by imitation, which enables the religious values to be conveyed to individuals to follow the religion. The individual's personality reflects the family's propensity towards worshipping God. A family has an imprint of a religious impression on the minds of the children.

9. **Personality formation:** A good family has a social identity and solidarity that extends through generations in a heritage of responsible citizenship. There is a social identity on every excellent family and family camaraderie through generational chains that a responsible citizen has as a heritage. From birth, a child possesses some physical and mental abilities through inherited qualities, but his

growth gradually takes effect in the environment the family has provided (Martinson. 1970, 123-124). the manifestation of self-concept and its completion comes from social interaction and relationships within the family level. This is a significant issue in personality formation and character development. A loving family provides a well-adjusted environment for the growth of a child's personality forming in him a sense of responsibility and buoyancy.

Conversely, the less attention and love a child gets from a family can make him fall prey to an inferiority complex that makes him rebellious and go farther from his first and parent's environment. The child, from there, may begin to go from committing one crime to the other. Therefore, a family plays an essential role in a child's personality development (Ghlum, 2014).

10. Provision of Recreational Facilities: Beyond the characteristic of the family in society, maybe agrarian, traditional, or industrial, the provision of recreational chances is the family's responsibility. It ensures standard health and interest in the domestic environment as there are different games and moves to recreational centres for which the family should prepare. There can be toys for children, get to the swing and make children walk in a park. There is also the provision of recreation through the radio and television. A family takes the bold step of eradicating boredom among its members as monotony too has no way as recreational activities keep the relationally healthy. A traditional village setting has some peculiar strategies for recreation after the day's work, which brings relaxation and maximum enjoyment when the people come together (<http://www.recsports.michiganstateuniversity.edu.>).

Challenges in the Contemporary Family Institution and Societal Development

Some of the challenges in the contemporary family institutions that affect societal development are mentioned and explained in this section.

1. **Loss of Values in the Family:** the family is considered the fundamental institution for social integration and development. It provides values such as discipline, hard work, respect for elders and constituted authority, credibility, a sense of belonging, support, responsibility, and integrity to its members. In essence, it can be said that a good family promises a good society. The values of the family have undergone a tremendous paradigmatic shift in contemporary society. Today, there is a high pregnancy rate among unmarried teens, and baby abandonment has increased. This condition usually condemns many mothers and children to be emotionally, financially, and paternal care deprived (Carlson and Meyer, 2014). The long-run results are that it generates a society where children grow up with high levels of emotion and deprivation with a strong desire to get back through all kinds of vices that may be detrimental to societal development. Such vices include youthful delinquency, drug abuse, high levels of criminality, disregard for hard work, addiction, disregard for elders and constituted authority, the get-rich syndrome, lack of integrity, credibility, responsibility, and corruption. All these are harmful to societal development and integration.

2. **Absence of Integrity and Dignity:** The lack of integrity and dignity in this contemporary society can be traced to the complexity of family institutions. Complexity in family institutions usually results in a lack of integrity and dignity in society. The concept of integrity and social development are mutually intertwined. Many developmental problems in society today are attributed to the failure of leadership in light of integrity and dignity. The absence of integrity and dignity is a major impediment to societal development. The absence of integrity and dignity is not hidden in this contemporary society. However, it is essential to note that individual quality is the major determinant factor for social integration and development (Uzodimma, n.d.). Integrity and dignity are integral and central to social development. This is because development is the advancement through qualitative and progressive modification of economic, social, cultural, and technological, which cannot occur without accountability and transparency. In other words, the absence of

integrity and dignity could hinder growth and development, which are aftermaths of complexity in family institutions.

3. **Zero Level of Intimacy and Affinity:** One of the significant consequences of complexity in the family is the lack of intimacy and affinity among the parents and children. The parents would no longer have time for the children. As a result, the children could be deprived of the natural emotional support the parents need, affecting their character, composition, and resource-sharing within families (Marcia and Meyer). The family is generally regarded as the lynchpin of the social cohesion, order, and structure that embodies society's moral health. One form of social growth and development is a relationship of intimacy and affinity among people in the family setting. Complexity in the family usually affects the level of intimacy and affinity among children. There cannot be a stable society amid family complexity. Stability and development in society come from families that are responsibly run through intimacy, peace, affinity, love, cordiality, healthy communication, and growth (George and Ukpong, 2013). As such, family complexity is a disease of societal integration and growth.

4. **Collapse of Extended Family Structure:** The complexity of the family institution has disintegrated the extended family system to a level of imminent collapse. The prevalence of family complexity in society affects the communality and social integration of the people. Because such families become less focused on the mutual life course of the people and instead pursue an individual life course, it is essential to note that the extended family was an African most reliable way of building family and kinship relationships and affinity, which was then used to build community. The extended family in Africa includes grandparents, cousins, uncles, and aunts living together. The essence of an extended family is expressed in living together and the sense of community among brothers, sisters, and other relatives. This relationship guarantees social security, one of the African milieu's most admired values. It also provides her members with the necessary economic, physical, and psychological

support and decreases individual stress (Charles, Aigbovu, and Ajayi, 2013). In other words, extended family is a fundamental and essential building block of societal growth and development in Africa because it provides the fundamental responsibility of educating and instilling the ethical and cultural values crucial for social development. Therefore, family complexity, which manifests in the aspects mentioned above of African family life, is detrimental to societal growth, integration, and development.

Conclusion

This paper has examined the complexity of the contemporary family institution as a disorder for societal development. The study highlighted the types of families and the essential functions of the family. The study also investigated family complexity in light of social development. From the foregoing, it is necessary to state that the disorder in contemporary society reflects the complexity of the family institution. The family is an essential constituent of society. To a large extent, family stability determines societal integration and growth. Regrettably, many families are experiencing complexity, resulting in a loss of values, lack of integrity and dignity, absence of intimacy and affinity, and collapse of extended family structure, among others. The long-run results of this reality are that it generates a society where children grow up with high levels of emotion and deprivation with a strong desire to get back through all kinds of vices that may be detrimental to society, socio-economy and religion. Such vices include youthful delinquency, drug abuse, high levels of criminality, disregard for hard work, addiction, disregard for elders and constituted authority, the get-richsyndrome, lack of integrity, credibility, responsibility, and corruption increase. Complexity in the family can also lead the parents to separation, divorce, and re-partnering. Therefore, the study makes the following recommendations to curb family complexity and ameliorate family life to promote social development and growth.

Recommendations

1. Parents to be available for their responsibilities: one of the reasons for the increase in family complexity is parents' negligence to their responsibilities. This has led to an increase in single parenting. Building a stable family and raising children is a mutual task involving strenuous efforts from the parents. Therefore, parents should mutually respond to the task of childrearing and caring.
2. Pre- Marital counselling to be taken seriously: The family is the central unit of society, and its nature needs proper understanding from the onset for it to remain stable. The family's complexity and capacity to disrupt the very foundation of society and its values makes pre-marital counselling imperative. Counselling is crucial to building a stable family and playing preventive, remedial, and rehabilitative roles. Therefore, pre-marital counselling should be taken seriously.
3. Family integration is essential to pursue: integration is one of the major characteristics of a developed and stable society. Family integration through extended family structure is fundamental and crucial to social development and the sustenance of ethical and cultural values. Therefore, parents should promote family integration through extended family and African heritage.
4. There should be concerted efforts of all stakeholders toward social development: building an economy-integrated society requires the intensive involvement of all stakeholders through a stable and blissful family institution. Therefore, parents should intensify their effort to strengthen the intimacy and affinity of their family to foster social integration.

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EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION FOR DISPELLING CONFLICTS IN MARRIAGE

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Abstract

Human communication is one characteristic that distinguishes humans from other species among God's creation. It is incontrovertible that the effectiveness of this communication is imperative for marital bliss. A significant percentage of marital challenges and divorces globally are traced to ineffective communication in marital relationships. This paper highlights the concept of effective communication, some principles of effective communication in marriage, the signs of conflicts in marriage and the ways to dispel these conflicts through effective communication. The descriptive research method was adopted for this work. A secondary source was used to elicit information from the works of scholars in the field of communication and its impacts on marriage relationships. Library search was the tool used to gather information—myriads of causes of marriage conflicts and equally ways to dispel conflicts. The study, therefore, recommends that couples listen to one another and communicate effectively for a sustained and blissful marital relationship.

Keywords: Communication, Conflict, Dispelling, Conflicts, Marriage.

Introduction

Communication is an essential tool in human interaction, cooperation, and advancement. There are as many definitions of communication as there are scholars, but these researchers agree with

Borisoff (1992), who expounds on Myers & Myers' view of communication. Deborah Borisoff posits that communication is an exceptional interface between or among people who share the same language and those who share the same understanding of the symbols of interaction. This could also be expressed symbolically. It can be deduced from this definition of communication that there must be an established pattern through symbols that the parties interacting mutually understand. When we relate this to communication in marriage, it goes without saying that couples need to study each other to establish their communication pattern and to know what each person is saying through words, clues, actions and hints.

Effective communication is the ability for someone to transmit his or her ideas, concepts, knowledge and information to a target audience and for such a target to be able to decode and act effectively on the message they have received, thereby achieving the intent in the best possible way, (Shuchi Sharma and Rachna Sharma, 2014). In the secular and the Church today, effective communication has become imperative; big corporations and organisations spend vast resources on effective communication training because communication becomes irrelevant when it is ineffective. Some have opined that effective communication is the foundation on which blissful marriage is built (Jo Ann Atkins, 2021). However, this is elusive due to its fluidity because couples are different from one to another. Nevertheless, as one of the formidable foundations on which a blissful marriage can be built, effective communication is crucial for a happy marriage.

Biblical Basis for Effective Communication in Marriage

Numerous statements in the Scriptures prove that God supports effective communication in marriage and all social spheres of human interactions. For instance, Proverbs 18:21 states that death and life are in the power of the tongue, those who love it will eat its fruit. Proverbs 18:21 shows that words are seeds with repercussions, and the tongue can inflict death and give life to a situation. Death, in this case, could be stagnancy in life in terms of progress. The importance

of careful listening in communication is also spelt out in James 1:19 that everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to be angry. James 1:19 attests to the wisdom in learning to listen without judging or being too eager to jump in, as also corroborated in Proverbs 18:2, stating that a fool takes no pleasure in understanding but only in expressing his opinion. Apart from good listening, the Bible maintains that people reply to someone angry softly to dispel tension. This is stated in Proverbs 15:1 that a soft answer turns away wrath. It is also pointed out in Proverbs 29:20 thus: “Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.”

Again, truthfulness in communication is a desirable and mandatory trait that can engender trust among couples and help them understand one another. As 1 Peter 3:10 puts it, whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit. Married couples would therefore do well to heed the advice in Proverbs 17:14 that the beginning of strife is like letting out water, so quit before the quarrel breaks out. As presented by the author of these passages, the import of this is that the tongue, which is the tool for communication, must be appropriately used to avoid unnecessary conflict in marriages.

Signs and Causes of Conflicts in Marriage

The best time to nip conflicts in the bud is when there are signs of possible conflicts in a relationship. A lack of crisis is not necessarily a sign of a healthy marriage as sometimes some couples adopt the “elephant in the room” stance, which means avoiding confrontation of issues because of fear of worsening the relationship. According to Marcus & Ashley Kusi (2015), some signs of conflict may be a spouse withdrawing from asking the partner to meet a need that he/she used to meet and preferring to go to other people to meet those needs and the spouse trying to adjust to the conflict situation rather than dealing with it. Also, a spouse may be more easily irritated and seem to overreact over issues that may have been hitherto overlooked, or there may be frequent criticisms and arguments

between spouses; when marriage becomes unduly without sexual intimacy with spouses avoiding spending time together, or keeping secrets from each other (Stritof, 2020). One of the root causes of conflicts in many relationships is that one or both spouses take for granted the vast benefits they enjoy from their partners because of love (Cloud and Townsend, 1999).

Also, instead of talking with the spouse, engaging in branching-offs, like telling it to colleagues, friends, parents and even children, becomes a habit (Cloud and Townsend, 1999). Some researchers (Asadi, Sadeghi, Taghdisi, & Zamani-Alavijeh, 2016) aver that certain aspects of marital life that should bring couples together, if not properly managed, could ironically end up being sources of a rift. Some of such issues could centre on an ideal number of children to have, time management and distribution, money-spending (managing finances - frugality versus prodigality), levels and ways of socialising, and sexual expectations (sexpectation) that border on frequency, type and style of sex, often varying at different phases and different ages as couples live together.

Principles of Effective Communication in Marriage

Principles are ways, methods, or keys adopted in carrying out specific tasks. They are pointers and “directors” in the execution of tasks (Idialu, 2015). When these principles are followed, fruitful results are expected. Communication can constantly be improved so that it can metamorphose from bad to good and from good to excellent (Marcus and Ashley Kusi, 2015). A prime principle for effective marriage communication is to avoid giving vague and unclear messages. In addition, honesty and sensitivity to each other are principles many have neglected to their detriment. The use of positive statements and humour are principles one must not neglect in a fruitful marital relationship. A couple must learn how to commend and appreciate each other with kind and positive words instead of using maligning words on each other. Also, the occasional presentation of gift items oils the wheel of marriage. These principles will help couples communicate effectively.

Effective Communication for Resolution of Marital Conflicts

Couples must take Romans 12:18 seriously, “If it is possible, as much as it depends on you, live peaceably with all men.” This clear biblical injunction is sometimes more difficult to obey in marriage relationships where couples relate daily and see/confront each other's weaknesses. Occasional disagreements in a marriage relationship are most likely occurrences. 'Respectful disagreement' may even be necessary, according to Emerson (2004) and Kapur (2020). Battling the issue by dropping subtle hints or by adopting the avoidance syndrome, also referred to as “elephant in the room or stonewalling” attitude, with the belief that the spouse will understand the hints and know what the problem is, is not an effective way of communication for resolution of marital conflict.

When there is a problem between spouses in a marriage, each should take responsibility for their behaviour and reflect on the events that caused the rift and what a spouse is saying. This may spur the other spouse to admit their faults and apologise and move toward resolution. Continuation and steadfastness in correcting inappropriate behaviour, whether or not the other person responds in like manner, is an effective communication strategy that will eventually win over the other spouse

If a spouse is stonewalling (refusing to cooperate or discuss), the other spouse should ask open-ended questions to draw the stonewalling partner into dialogue to probe the cause(s) of the problems in the relationship. The use of body language that encourages conflict resolution is necessary in relationships because when a spouse senses criticism through comments or mannerisms of the partner, the natural inclination is to self-protect by resorting to defensiveness. Hence, the defensiveness will escalate the blame game, and not much will be achieved in attaining the desirable peaceful and loving relationship that should be the natural tone in a Christian marriage. Constantly finding faults with every other person without finding faults with oneself is one of the fruits of the fallen nature (Genesis 3:11-13). When a spouse takes responsibility without being under attack, it goes a long way towards deflating the conflict.

Marriage conflict resolution begins with a spouse thinking of his/her contribution to the conflict. As it is stated in 1 Corinthians 11:28, Christians are also supposed always to examine themselves. Again, Proverbs 14:29 reveals that he that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalts folly. Effective communication to resolve conflicts requires the discipline and patience to temporarily put aside preconceived notions to be able to listen carefully to the concerns of a spouse.

Proper communication involves using lingual and para-lingual cues (using the right words accompanied by apt body language). Abercrombie (1968) rightly states that we speak with our vocal organs but converse with our entire bodies, emphasising that 55 percent of the meaning of what people say is derived from body gestures, postures and physical clues, and 38 percent from the tone and inflexions of the words. Meta-communication, a code that interprets the words humans tend to express into what they actually mean, refers to non-linguistic elements in conversation that tell powerful visual stories.

It is unwise to flood his/her spouse with a rush of past wrongs, bringing one complaint after the other rather than concentrating on the issue at hand. Words should be chosen with care and consideration to connote respect, wholeness and a willingness to heal rather than to tear further apart because a wounded heart could take longer to heal than physical wounds.

Conscious learning and mastery of attentive listening will help couples to be empathetic and open-minded. Marcus and Ashley Kusi (2015) strongly advise against using certain expressions by married people to avoid or make conflict resolution easy. Some avoidable expressions are, “You are the one” “You are always....” “You never” Such statements show nagging, often hyperbolic, and reveal a deep dissatisfaction that puts the other spouse on the defensive, leading to long arguments that push the couple further apart. Instead of the expression 'never' one could say, “I feel....” Putting on a bad attitude, like having a sour face for the more significant part of the

day, and reacting to negative buttons pressed instead of responding to them are examples of paralanguage that should be avoided in relating with a spouse. When we react to experiences or the poor attitude of a spouse, we tend to give back negative energy in a multiplied form, but when we respond to negative buttons that are pressed, we tend to find out why such buttons are being pressed and communicate positively to ensure that such roots of conflicts are quickly pulled out of the relationship.

Couples who wish to pursue peace, as Hebrews 12:14 teaches, should forget ego protection and preservation or sweeping things under the carpet for fear of roughening the hornet's nest. They should lovingly and tactfully address issues when they occur, as trying to resolve multiple problems instead of dealing with them one at a time stretches patience and will make couples forfeit the opportunity of resolving the issues bothering them. If spouses quickly get grumpy, there could be deeper problems other than the superficial ones that can be immediately noted. It will be wise to find out the root cause of such adverse reactions for more lasting solutions. The overreactive partner may be fatigued, pass through some stress at his/her workplace, or battle anxiety or grief. Once the real cause of the hypersensitivity is established, resolving the problem will be a walkover for the couple.

It should be stated, however, that couples may not quickly get to the root of their problems unless they practise empathetic listening and pay attention to body language to mirror grey areas. When the facts have been identified, the couple may brainstorm and agree on a possible solution and how to execute it and check if it works. As Christians have been admonished in Ephesians 4:15, couples need to discuss telling the truth in love with their spouses. If a spouse does not feel safe discussing with the partner, it will be difficult to lend a listening ear, let alone listen empathetically.

Timing is an essential aspect in communication contexts or settings. Choosing appropriate communication timing involves considering the environmental context, psychological context, and social, historical and cultural contexts of communication. This means that

the couple needs to consider where to discuss (not confronting the spouse in public or when there are people that need not be involved in the matter), the best mood, and what and how the partner is likely to respond bearing in mind factors like physical and psychological fatigue and different pressures (Idialu, 2015).

One way to avoid marriage conflicts is to be obedient to instructions. It is stated in Ephesians 4:29 let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying may minister grace unto the hearers. Couples should remember Eph. 4:29 to curb negative language by communicating positive traits about the marriage and the spouse to them for positive deposits in their relational bank in line with the spouse's love language, which could be words of affirmation, quality time, physical touch, acts of service, and receiving gifts.

Couples should communicate their genuine appreciation to their spouses for good deeds hitherto taken for granted, such as an appreciation for food well cooked, payment of bills, a good round of sex, and a positive surprise. Avoid unhealthy responses to conflicts, like tendencies to lash out when angry, get withdrawn, seek to punish, or be resentful. A spouse's unhealthy responses should be lovingly pointed to the spouse who instinctively does this. Couples should take note of deal breakers in their marriages and table them for discussion to find lasting solutions. Setting expectations in various aspects of interaction may be the best way to avoid or end misunderstandings (Emerson, 2004).

Favourable compromise is a way of communicating to a spouse that they are valued. When there seems to be a deadlock on the way forward on an issue because each spouse is convinced about his/her way of how things should be or go, both can take turns activating their preferred solutions. In all of this, the couple must joyfully work towards the emotional resolution of their issues. For instance, no spouse should accept too many responsibilities from others for fear of hurting them while giving insufficient attention, communication and intimacy to the spouse they feel will understand.

Granted that getting involved in platonic friendships, work, and church activities should give spouses a sense of fulfilment that should make their marital relationship more robust, such involvement should not lead to negligence of the spouse, thus pushing life out of the marital relationship. There are times when getting too involved in things outside the relationship could be a symptom that the busy spouse is trying to cover up or cope with certain things that are not right in the relationship. These may be hurts or feelings of being neglected. It could be that the busy one feels the spouse is no longer attracted to him/her, so they expend their energy on other things that will take their minds off the marital problems.

While couples grapple with issues in their marital relationships, there is often the temptation to tell it to a third and neutral party. This may not solve the problem(s), but to have one to pour one's heart to, a kind of shoulder to cry. Such spouses must be careful during this vulnerable period and be discerning enough to avoid those who magnify the problem by making the other spouse appear worse than they were original. Going to the third party should be a last resort; if need be, the person should be a Godly person that each party respects, which may be called in to smoothen things, not to be a 'gossip-listener' to one of the spouses and an escalator of the problem.

Perhaps, one of the most salient facts that couples should realise in their efforts towards dispelling conflicts is that there is no winner/loser in arguments put forward to resolve relational problems in marriage. A 'victorious partner' cannot be happy in his/her victory when the other is sad at 'losing' (Asadi, Sadeghi, Taghdisi & Zamani-Alavijeh, 2016). Therefore, it should be acknowledged that both spouses lose or win together. With this in mind, the needlessness of defensiveness in the presentation of each spouse's stance becomes obvious. Couples should eschew vengefulness as it only leads to bitterness and unhappiness, not forgetting that they are to be tender-hearted and forgiving of one another (Ephesians 4:32).

Couples should realise that without God in the equation of effective communication for preventing and dispelling conflicts, the 'flesh' nature of humans, with its self-centredness, will not lead to pursuing peaceful and loving interaction. Couples need the Holy Spirit's intervention to direct or re-direct affairs in order to resolve the issues because not only does He know the spouses more aptly than they know each other, but He also knows exactly what should be done in all situations, and He mercifully prompts willing and yielded hearts to do that which can lead to healthy resolutions.

Advantages of Effective Communication in Marital Relationships

Effective communication helps couples achieve success on many fronts, attain extraordinary heights, and positively influence people they encounter and society. A paper by Portland Community College, Continuous Learning for Individuals, and Management Business - CLIMB (2019) emphasises that it helps to direct their focus on salient issues, to ensure emotional stability and to understand each person's point of view better. Effective communication helps couples to understand the motives behind their speeches, actions and reactions. Establishing clarity of purpose prevents clashes or helps quick resolution of conflicts. When communication is effective, it builds trust that leads to bonding, further generating the will to deepen communication levels. It prevents potential conflicts, thereby dispelling clashes of interests in relationships. Proper communication will also help foster unity and peace, enabling couples to achieve great goals in life (Szczena & Przybyla-Basista, 2019).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The first step in ensuring effective communication in dispelling marital conflicts is turning to God to heal heart wounds. The place of prayer in positively changing things is, therefore, incontrovertible. Even if one of the spouses does not seem enthusiastic about involving God's Holy Spirit for intervention, the other spouse should lift the offending spouse in prayer for God to touch his/her heart. Moreover,

couples should choose happiness over being right. They should lower exaggerated expectations from the spouses. Every spouse should realise that no spouse can love them as profoundly and unconditionally as God does because of man's imperfection. When spouses plunge into God's love and wallow in it, they are so filled and satisfied with that love that it makes it easy for each spouse not to be too demanding on the other for depths of love that they cannot supply as humans. It will also help couples see the trivialities of the things that irritate them about their spouses.

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PARENTING AND ITS IMPACT ON TEENAGE DELINQUENCY

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Abstract

Teenage delinquency is a global phenomenon, for it has become a significant concern of the government, parents, schools, society and the church. This paper focuses on understanding parenting styles and how they can affect teenage delinquency. The writer used a library-based approach to review some accessible research on the family, parenting, and juvenile and teenage delinquency. It was discovered that parenting is a crucial function in teenagers' life as they transition to adulthood. It can be gathered from the literature that parenting practices and styles adopted by parents in raising their children either avert or inhibit delinquent behaviour at any level of their lives. Therefore, parents should step up their parenting styles with the church's help and adopt an authoritative style to reduce teenage delinquency.

Keywords: Impact, Parenting style, Teenager, Juvenile Delinquency.

Introduction

Teenage delinquency is a global problem that needs serious attention from everybody. According to Antwi (2016, 124), deviance or crime is inevitable in every society where there is an acceptable way of living or conduct. Deviance and crime by teenagers are regarded as a challenge to the tranquillity enjoyed by members of the society or country (Bernburg 2019, 179). Juvenile delinquency remains a concern for teachers, the community, and parents. Some juvenile crimes observed are stealing, deception, sexual promiscuity, thuggery, rape, drug abuse, absenteeism, verbal abuse, and cultism (Yusuf, Daud, & Arshat 2021, 1426). These delinquent acts committed by young people in teenagers have drawn the attention of many people concerned about these children's growth. Teenage crime is,

therefore, one of the main issues all countries of the world are struggling to deal with, and if young criminals are not cared for, they will graduate into hardened criminals. Teenage crime is caused by juvenile delinquency, which the next session of this paper will discuss.

Juvenile Delinquency in Nigeria

According to More (2020, 1), the term “Juvenile delinquency” refers to a large variety of behaviour of adolescents and children which society does not approve of and for which some kind of admonishment, preventive or punishment and helpful actions are justified in the open interest. Juvenile delinquency is the failure of children and youths to meet certain obligations expected of them in by the society in which they live. Juvenile delinquency is a devastating event worldwide, including in Nigeria (Ojo 2012,5). It is, therefore, a result of the social changes that develop from the conflict between the African and Western cultures after the incidence of colonisation. Culture, in this case, refers to the usual way people do things, including various human values and morals or how they do things. This can as well be referred to as anti-social behaviour.

Examples of anti-social behaviour that we can see in Nigeria presently are arson (the crime of intentionally initiating a fire in order to harm or terminate something, particularly a building), misuse of drugs, rape, examination malpractices, school crime, intimidation, cults, truancy, drop-outs in schools and prostitution (Sanni et al. 2010, 25). The prospect of a more robust, improved, and stable criminal culture in Nigeria will remain impossible until there is a deliberate action to turn back a wave of juvenile and teenage crime (Sanni et al., 2010: 26).

In Nigeria, juvenile crime became noticed in the 1920s, when young offenders like pick-up, shoplifting and truancy became prevalent, which led to legal disciplinary proceedings being established by the colonial government dealing with criminals (Fourchard 2010, 130). Juvenile delinquency is evident in Nigeria as a significant problem that impedes and hinders progress (Muhammed et al. 2009,45).

According to Adegoke (2015, 18), juvenile involvement in crime in Nigeria is one of the critical regions of worry for the Nigerian Police Force.

It was revealed that one of Nigeria's primary issues of concern was youth and teenagers' involvement in the crime. Adegoke's study revealed that in 2001, 19,000 Nigerian teenagers were jailed for committing more than 185,000 crimes. In 2005, 31% of the children detained in Nigeria were guilty of shoplifting, 17% were arrested for robbery, and 11% for committing disturbances. Thus in Nigeria, these crimes have also resulted in social abuse, mental illness, disrespect to elders, armed robbery and other social ills among teenagers and young people (Yusuf et al. 2021, 1427).

Eke (2004, 4) notes that there are two main categories of delinquent behaviours in teenagers; criminal and status offences. The criminal offences include stealing, rape, arson, drug offences, burglary, murder, pickpocketing and armed robbery. However, she listed status offences, including running away from home and school, malingering, and truancy.

Parents play an intricate role in delinquency. Kumpfer & Magalhaes (2018, 179) opined that parents are one of the closest and most influential people in a young person's life. Parents have an essential role to play as a social and controlling agents for children's behaviour, which makes parenting important in teenagers' development.

Parenting and Juvenile Delinquency

Parenting has been playing a fundamental role in teenagers' transition to adulthood. Parenting has been recognised as a major vehicle in socialising the child (Utti 2006, 30). According to Utti, parenting is the act of parenthood, the child's upbringing, training, and rearing or education. Some research reports have revealed that a large percentage of juvenile delinquency comes from homes that lack parental care and love. Attention, warmth and love go a long way in assisting the child's emotional development and adjustment

(Odebunmi 2007, 21). Growing children, even teenagers, require parental love, warmth and extreme attention to adjust adequately to the atmosphere in which they find themselves. Parents have a major role to play in the adjustment process of teenagers. The behavioural problems of most deviants are embedded in their homes (Onyechi & Okere 2007, 107).

Otuadah (2006, 25) noted that when the relationship between the parents and the teenager is warm, it creates a healthy development environment. Teenagers exhibit friendliness, cheerfulness, positive emotions and good maturity, showing evidently that such come from homes where they are loved and accepted (Otuadah 2006, 25). The neglected teenager gradually becomes a drug addict, hardened criminal, aggressive, armed robber, cultist, ritualist, and rapist.

Several types of research on the factors that precipitate delinquency among teenagers stress that the teenage age is a period of stress and storms characterised by rebelliousness (Okorodudu 2010, 60). According to him, it was observed that factors like environmental, social, psychological, physical, negative peer group influence, drug abuse and especially family are the causes of delinquency among teenagers. Eke (2004, 3) opined that causes of delinquency tend to find theoretical explanations in the interaction between biological, environmental and social factors. Eke believes that individuals' biological or genetic makeup can predispose teenagers to engage in delinquent activities. Chromosomal abnormalities among teenagers may dispose them to anti-social behaviours.

The Nigerian government has devised and employed several measures to curtail teenage and adolescent delinquency in our society, but to no avail (Okorodudu 2010, 61). For instance, the establishment and administration of juvenile justice, promulgation of juvenile courts and laws, establishment of remand homes, and security and law enforcement agencies. Therefore, many researchers agree that the foundation of teenagers' or adolescents' delinquency is rooted in the kind of home they are brought up (Odebunmi 2007, 20).

As the saying “Charity begins at home”, the basis of good behaviour orientation and good teenage attitude development is founded in positive parenting. Okpako (2004, 277) stated that parents should be blamed for the misfortune that befalls teenagers. Hence, the paper will discuss the relationship between delinquency in teenagers and parenting styles.

Parenting Styles

According to Johnson (2016, 243), although a teenager can choose how to behave irrespective of what method of parenting the parents choose to practice, research reveals what is more operational for progressive results. Numerous studies have analysed the association between parenting styles and teenage delinquency. Parenting style deals with how teenagers perceive their parents, which invariably affects their reactions to the authority of the parents (Johnson 2016, 243). Adequate parenting and strong family ties are significant factors in averting delinquent behaviour. As discovered by Baumrind (1991), the four types of parenting styles and their outcomes are now discussed.

Authoritative Parenting

The parents demonstrate responsiveness to the child's demandingness and needs (setting expectations of behaviour and consequences for noncompliance), checking the child's behaviour, providing clear standards of discipline, and conduct based on reasoning rather than on the power of assertion or withdrawal of love. Authoritative parents offer home environments rich with strict behavioural supervision with high degrees of emotional support. Within this parenting style, children are encouraged to behave prosocially, reason autonomously about moral problems, respect adults, and think independently (Baumrind 1997, 322).

Baumrind (1997, 322) observes that two primary parenting goals are to nurture character and optimal competence. She also adds that responsiveness is imperative as well. Responsiveness concerns how parents intentionally foster self-assertion and individuality by being attuned, acquiescent and supportive of children's needs and demands.

Disciplines happen within the context of a warm, engaged parent-child relationship. Parental warmth (both mother and father, but knowingly more vital for nurturing), compassion, and prosocial ethical perception were strong predictors of teenagers' prosocial behaviours (Carlo, Mestre & Samper 2010, 116).

This parenting style predicts positive and beneficial outcomes for children and teenagers. One result of the stern behavioural supervision that happens with high degrees of emotional support is the subsiding of engaging in criminal behaviour in adulthood (Bandura 1986, 55). Children and teenagers in these households reveal higher degrees of mental change. Overall, the teenagers developed with this method of child-raising tend to be more self-assertive, self-reliant, self-controlled, exploratory and content. They tend to have more life success and self-confidence.

Authoritarian Parenting

In the home where this type of parenting is being practised, the parent demonstrates demandingness (setting expectations of behaviour and consequences for noncompliance); is less responsive to the child's needs, is more likely to use assertive power discipline, and may utilise love withdrawal to gain or impose compliance (Johnson 2016, 244). Love withdrawal involves using love as a weapon or reward; when the child does something wrong, support and love are withheld from the child. The parent runs with a “do as you are told” mode of discipline and does not frequently discuss why something was wrong, nor does the parent request a moral discussion with the child. The parent may exhibit some warmth but demands respect from the child (Johnson 2016, 244).

According to Simons, Simons and Chen (2007, 482), this parenting style has some degree of efficiency but also has some negative influence. Parental rejection and hostility foster anger and frustration in children and teenagers, resulting in higher levels of anti-social behaviour. Simon et al. (2007, 483) opined that children tend to be more discontent, withdrawn and distrustful. Cross-cultural differences have been found in the type of parenting style. Some

research suggests that this parenting style is more operational for Blacks than Whites, taking into history higher-risk environments, for example, lower social and economic status and dangerous neighbourhoods (Baumrind 1972, 265). However, this parenting style is more effective when parents demonstrate involvement, trust, care and communication. Many children develop healthy self-esteem and self-confidence but may have somewhat more inflexibility in their surviving style.

Permissive Indulgent Parenting

A permissive indulgent parent demonstrates a high degree of responsiveness, a lack of demandingness (failing to set expectations of behaviour and consequence for noncompliance), less-involved parenting and is emotionally hostile (Johnson 2016, 244). The parent exhibits little control over the child, sets minimal anticipations and rarely disciplines. The parent fundamentally befriends their child, treating the child as if they are equals. It is more critical for this type of parent to be adored by their teenager than to offer discipline and structure. The parent allows the children to make their own decisions and set their own rules (for example, when to come back home in the evening, whom they date or relate with socially, what they eat or drink) rather than provide education and guidance for the child. The parent's emotional needs and self-esteem are met through interaction with their children and adult-to-adult connection with them.

Permissive indulgent parenting is one of the more negative and destructive parenting. Children and teenagers recounted lower mental well-being and more depressing signs than the ones brought up with authoritative parenting styles (Rothrauff & Cooney 2009, 140). Children and teenagers in these homes reveal higher degrees of psychological instability. The children tend to be less self-controlled and immature and demonstrate more anti-social behaviour than those raised with authoritative parenting. This style of parenting is connected with significantly higher criminal behaviour in adulthood. As opined by Johnson (2016, 244), because the children raised by permissive indulgent parents were never held accountable for their

activities, teenagers and adults tend to experience difficulty with regulations and struggle with control by others. They do what they like, when they want it, without regard to the rights or safety of others. The child's moral development is limited; hence, they can be more involved in anti-social and violent behaviours. Adults have a habit of dysfunctional relationships and are more likely to engage in anti-social and violent behaviour.

Permissive Neglectful or Uninvolved Parenting

According to Maccoby & Martin (1983, 89), this type of parent demonstrates minimal warmth and control over the child. The parent often rejects the child and gives the child minimal or no attention or nurturance. This parent is neglectful in all parenting responsibilities. Basically, the parent offers some or most of the physical necessities of the child but has little or no relationship with the child. The slogan “children should be seen but not heard” may be applied here. Parents are consumed with their own lives and have little time or worry for their children. The child, at times, is left fending for himself with little or no structure in the family. Most of the time, the child is mainly neglected and ignored by the parents. This is common among single and divorced parents (Johnson 2016, 244).

This is feasibly the most damaging and destructive style of parenting. Children and teenagers from this style of parenting have lower psychological well-being, more depressive signs and higher rates of substance abuse than those developed with authoritative parenting styles. According to Steinberg (2001, 11), children in these homes demonstrate a higher degree of psychological maladjustment and have a high risk of developing behavioural disorders. Because of the lack of nearly any type of parenting, the sense of rejection shared with the lack of moral development makes teenagers right from childhood experience depression, narcissism and antisocialism, including violence. Likely, the parent rarely has any discussion with their child about moral issues, and the parent is not involved in the child's life unless the child's behaviour draws attention to the parent or family. In that case, the parents are likely to disallow the child from the family

or passionately secure the child by depicting him as a prey of the acts of others or situational conditions. Essentially, the parent sights the child as taxing and an inconvenience.

Recommendations

According to the literature, religious adolescents are less delinquent and commit fewer crimes than their non-religious peers (Chui, Cheng & Wong 2013, 10). Therefore religious-based preventive intervention, which the Christian church should handle, is recommended, as briefly discussed below.

Religious-Based Preventive Interventions: According to Okonkwo (2012, 89), for an extended period, considerable effort has been made to prove that religion has a more significant role to play in correcting human behaviours, including teenage delinquency in society. Although some religious leaders have derailed their role in instilling moral principles and teachings in the people, there is a need to call back the different religious institutions to re-embark on this journey of bringing back ethos in society. Therefore, too many researchers have emerged and demonstrated the benefits of religious practices within society (Okonkwo 2012, 89).

Religious practices promote the well-being of individuals, families and communities. Regular attendance of religious amenities is related to stable family life, healthy, well-behaved children and strong marriages. The exercise of religion also decreases substance abuse, domestic abuse, addiction and crime. Studies have found that teenagers who frequently attend religious services have a high level of spiritual backing from others in their society and have the lowest levels of depression (Marshal & Handel 1997, 110). Immigrant youths similarly enjoy the aid of a higher level of universal well-being when they attend religious services regularly.

It is the critical duty of the church to provide sound moral and ethical education which directs human consciences towards doing good and avoiding evil; towards a wholesome love of God and neighbour; as

well as persuading individuals and social groups to embrace and fill their minds. Therefore, teenagers at all levels should be encouraged by their parents and authorities in these places to join various church organisations for their spiritual welfare. The government should recognise and promote the incalculable roles of church organisations in forming good characters for fighting teenage delinquencies in the country.

Conclusion

To decrease anti-social behaviours in teenagers, we must focus on parenting styles. This research has provided a reliable and precise track to proliferate positive potentials for positive results. Imposing parenting is the most operative parenting method, with an authoritarian coming second. The permissive indulgent and permissive neglectful are ineffective in encouraging morality and encourage delinquency in children and teenagers. Effective parenting education, particularly in the church and other religious organisations, may give parents the tools to be the best, most operative prosocial parents possible.

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FAMILY AND EDUCATION, SITUATING THE NIGERIA EXPERIENCE

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Abstract

Education is a change in behaviour as a result of experience. The missionaries of blessed memories brought the derivatives from education that Nigerians are enjoying today. It has liberated many families and societies; else, we would have been confined to the Stone Age and will continue to grope in the dark, despite the tremendous impact of education on human and societal development. Many families are ignorant and appear not to be interested in the education of their children or wards. Paradoxically, many are prepared to do the unimaginable to raise funds to ensure their children/wards are educated. This paper examines why some parents are careless about the education of their children/wards, x-ray the benefit of education, investigates the challenges confronting education in our contemporary societies and makes pragmatic recommendations that will ameliorate the problems. Individuals can benefit from the good life if recommendations are adequately implemented because awareness and developmental strands are associated with education. The paper adopts functional prerequisites theory for its framework.

Keywords; Family, Education, Society, Privatisation and Curriculum

Introduction

The development of human and material resources in any society is predicated upon the educational advancement of society. In this connection, the role of the family, the smallest unit of society, cannot be over-emphasised. In Nigeria, for example, differential educational development of the diverse segment of the entire country created room for the use of the coinage educational disadvantaged

states. A forceful political equation of the various divisions across states in Nigeria led to the initiation of a balance ideology anchored on the instrumentality of Government policy. Otherwise, refer to as federal character. This is hatched to substantiate equilibrium in our educational disequilibrium states because more significant chunks of Nigeria's population, particularly in the North, are uneducated. Despite the various intervention policies of the present and successive governments to encourage educational development, the number of school dropouts and the uneducated continue to soar, primarily due to early marriage, the activities of Boko-Haram and other miscreant groups that perceived western education as evil and forbidden. However, it is expected that State and Federal governments deploy Statecraft at their disposal to end the activities of these dastard groups ravaging the country because education is a liberator of the human race.

Moreover, suffering, stagnation, and backwardness are unrelated to race, tribe or religion. While the government creates an enabling environment, individuals must avail themselves of the opportunity to get educated. This work is poised to carry out an analysis of the topic under examination by way of investigating the non-challant approach of parents towards the education of their children/wards, the factors militating against education in Nigeria and make recommendations that could ameliorate these flaws or situations.

Theoretical Framework

The adopted theoretical framework for this paper is the functional prerequisites theory of Talcott Parson. Who viewed society as a system and asserted that every social system has four major functional prerequisites instrumental to the sustainability of order and social stability. These include adaptation, goal attainment, integration and pattern maintenance. These are problems that society must solve because the survival and continuity of society largely depend on them. The institutionalisation of solutions to related social problems will contribute to meeting the ideological framework of functional prerequisites theory (Haralambos, Holborn, Chapman & Moor 2013; 509). The solution to these four societal survival

frameworks must be streamlined into a stable and ordered society. The adoption of this theory as a framework for this paper is justified because of the significant impact of education on societal development. Moreover, education functions in society, the way blood operates in the human body.

Clarification of Terms

Education: Education is a process of transmitting societal norms, values and desirable attitudes from one generation to another (Egunjobi, Alude, Zubairu&Mu'azu. 1978; 1). It is a process of providing people with knowledge, skill, competence and possessing desirable qualities through a formal course of study in an institution (Akinyemi;2003:10). education is also a process of developing the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domain of an individual or group. This will enhance the development of human capital that will eventually snowball into the development of the entire human society (Ethusani, 2002; 1). Other concepts directly related to education are initiation, training, drilling, instruction, indoctrination and schooling. (Egunjobi, Alude, Zubairu&Mu'azu. 1978; 3-5)

Family: The family is the cornerstone of society; it is the basic unit of a social organisation, the smallest unit of a society, that carries out vital function of socialising children and preparing them for integration into the larger society. (Haralambos, Holbor, Steven, Moor. 2013; 957). It is also a group of people with consanguinity, with blood relationships. However, some children could be adopted into the family cycle. Imperatively, the family wield a lot of influence on the entire social sphere (www.britannica.com). Two types of family include the extended and nuclear family; the nuclear family comprised a man, his wife and their off-springs. Fundamentally, extended family is usually huge; it includes the Father, his Wives and Children, sisters, brothers, his uncles, aunts, cousins, nephew, nieces, mother, his father and family. (Ogunniiyi & Oboli, 1988; 40). The conglomeration of all the families in a particular place makes up the society.

Society: Society is a group of people with similar distinctive features and characteristics that shares the same social territory and history,

often subjected to the same political authority and a product of a dominant socio-cultural expectation.

Privatisation: Privatisation is a process where formerly owned government companies are set to private ownership. However, the government could still control a reasonable percentage of the company's shares. It helps the government to save money and thereby increases efficiency since private companies are better managed than the government. The resultant effect of privatisation is increased productivity and profit maximisation (www.investipedia.com). Globally, education is managed by government and private individuals.

Curriculum: It covers all the learning experiences that a learner acquires under the guidance of a school and is directed towards acquiring some skill or social, Economic, and technological competence. The word curriculum is derived from a Latin word, which means running a course, a race or a career; it, therefore, implies a course of study that a student pursues and competes for targets. Therefore, the curriculum is a base that provides parameters that serve as a platform to measure and equip learners, through which their cognitive ability is assessed and rated (Ayo, Hamman, Ohide, Lanre, & Adeyanju, 1979:1-2).

Some Benefits of Education

Education brings about personal satisfaction: Some people study for personal development while others study for a change of status (Natarajan, 1993; 3). This is evident in Nigeria and the global society. In some cases, people acquire education for personal prestige or a change of occupation.

Education gives a good life: The benefit of education includes family planning, which equips parents with the necessary skills needed for the proper upbringing, guidance, spacing and counselling of their children. Through education, parents could make far-reaching decisions regarding their family after considering the necessary

parameters. For instance, the entrepreneurial competence and creative ability of the educated will make his/her ventures distinct from the ones run by the uneducated (Akinyemi, 2003; 10). Again, the educated usually space their children, a practice hopeful for many families today.

It enhances a high standard of living: Education positions an individual in a lane that he/she will earn or attract good income, which will eventually reflect in self-advancement. Consequently, the standard of living of the individual will improve. This will affect his or her family positively.

Education enhances an individual's social status: It enables them to climb to an enviable social status. In Africa, for instance, Lawyers, Doctors and Administrators rank highest in public esteem than other professions. They can assume a leadership position and command respect in society (Thompson, 1981; 16). Generally, society regards the educated, who provide leadership in all spheres of human endeavour.

Education encourages effective community participation: Educated people are reasonable because they participate more in community development programs than the uneducated. This is attributed to their rationality, exposure, awareness and educational training.

Knowledge of reading and writing: The skill of reading and writing an individual acquires through education enables the individual's thoughts or mental concepts to be put into black and white. Moreover, he or she can read the thought of others when it is written. The advantages of these are enormous, limitless and can be better imagined.

Awareness of rights and responsibilities of individuals: Education educates an individual on his rights, obligation and responsibilities. Individuals could challenge whoever infringes upon their rights and can as well go to court to seek redress in defence of his/her right

The benefit of education to the government: The benefits of education to the government is enormous; it enables the government to plan the economy of a country, organise other sectors like health, finance, agriculture, and political system, and harness the associated potentials of technology.

Personal evaluation & development: Education provides individuals with the required skills needed for the development of a rational and refined human being, with a broad approach to issues. Basically, it stimulates mental alacrity, socialisation and much more.

It increases individual initiative: An educated individual does his/her things uniquely. His/her decisions are reasonable and rational. His work is always preferable to that of the uneducated. This is due to the progressive mindset, self-comportment and confidence inculcated into them through education.

Factors that Restrain Parents from Sending their Children to School

Paradoxically, many parents ignore or completely downplay their children's education, despite its associated values. Today, a common slogan among Nigerian youth is that education is a scam. The soaring rate of unemployment in Nigeria prompted this disheartening conclusion. However, some parents would not send their children to school for the following reasons.

Ignorance: Many Nigerian parents are ignorant of the importance of education; they see it as a waste of time and valuable resources; such parents would instead engage their children in a trade or skill acquisition program. Some even engage their children in farming. It has been discovered that other things are done better when one is educated. However, the International Labour Organisation (I.L.O.) stated thus, 43% of Nigeria's population, which represents 15 million, are children in child labour (www.borgenproject.org). Their age ranges from 5-11yrs. Painfully, most of these children are engaged in hazardous ventures and are grossly under-employed.

Early marriage: Early marriage is a situation where parents give out their underage girl child, usually within the ages of 12 –15 yrs in marriage. Ironically at this age, the child or children are supposed to be in school or learning a trade. A survey conducted by UNICEF in 2012 shows over 44% of girls in Nigeria are given out in marriage before they clock 18yrs, and 18% are married before their 15th birthday. These statistics make Nigeria one country with the highest number of child brides. The causes of early marriage range from poverty, lack of robust legislative framework, and some traditional practices harmful to the girl child. The practice should be stopped because it subjects an innocent girl to abuse. Moreover, victims of early marriage are vulnerable to sexually transmitted infections like H.I.V., Vesicovaginal Fistula (VVF) and many more (www.earlymarriage.com).

Poverty: In 2020, the Nigeria National Bureau of Statistics reported that 40% representing 80 million Nigerians, are poor. It is estimated that the number of poor Nigerians will swell as the year progresses. Nigeria is designated as the world's poverty capital (www.povertyindexnigeria.com). The Nigerian economic reality forced many Nigerians to abandon their children's education to seek means to remain alive. The poverty situation of Nigerians can be attributed to corruption, poor handling of the national economy, linkages in public financial management, harsh government economic policies and the over-dependent of the Nigerian government on oil revenue.

Fear of bandits & kidnappers: The activities of bandits and kidnappers in recent times posed a serious threat to educational advancement in Nigeria. As such, many parents are afraid to send their children to school for fear of possible attack. Moreover, the attack on government girls' science secondary schools in Chibok, Borno state and many others are still very fresh in our memories. However, the North East and the North West are the worse hit. This is because of the unprecedented violence, insurgency, banditry and terrorist attacks and activities in that part of the country. Kidnapping is a virulent form of banditry. In Nigeria, schools remain the soft

target for criminal elements kidnapped for ransom. Available data revealed that 2,371 people were addicted in the first–Six months of 2021 (Agbakwuru & Ibrahim, 2022). Adoption for ransom is very lucrative in Nigeria. Unfortunately, state actors appear bereaved of ideas and ways to mitigate this ugly development.

Religious bigotry: Religious bigots are people that would not accept members of other religious traditions (www.merriamwebster.com). Such people would not send their children to schools owned or managed by people of other religious convictions. In some cases, owners of schools do not admit children of parents from outside their professed religion. This has deprived children of access to quality education in some parts of Nigeria. However, some schools (government and private inclusive) try to balance the equation by providing teaching for Christian and Islamic religious studies.

Lack of jobs after school: The Nigerian education curriculum is designed to prepare students for white-collar jobs. Ironically, these jobs are not in existence. Currently, the unemployment rate in Nigeria is projected to trend around 32% in 2022 and 30% in 2023, according to the econometric models (www.tradingeconomics.com, may2022). This is a dangerous trend. If properly harnessed, the agricultural potential of this country could help minimise, if not solve, this problem. Those saddled with such responsibility should think and do the needful.

Underage parents: Underage parents include people bearing children and under their own parents' care. Such people might not be financially stable to make adequate provisions for the education of their children because the upbringing of a child comes with enormous economic responsibilities.

Factors Militating against Education in Nigeria

Despite the advantages associated with education, it is expected that the government and the private sector should prioritise it. Unfortunately, the reverse is the case; these could be a result of the following factors;

Lack of qualified teachers: The teaching profession attracts poor remuneration; this discourages people that are educated and naturally equipped with the knowledge and requisite teaching skills for the teaching profession. Moreover, those currently in the profession adopted it as a last resort.

Learning and teaching methods: Our current education system and method are obsolete since change is the only constant thing on earth; societies are changing. Educational curriculum and methods should also change along the dynamics of societal and situational changes. Planners of our national curriculum should discourage rote learning and fact-based educational system to a more pragmatic system. It will enable students to face the challenges of work life (www.logiwearereacherfinder.com).

Incessant strike by university lecturers: Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) always embarks on strike as a result of the inability of the government to meet their demands. Parents and students often suffer from these strike actions. It will continue due to the government's nonchalant attitude and carelessness regarding the demand and welfare of lecturers. However, despite the significance of the ASUU strike in Nigeria, it has hardly received serious attention from the Government (Otobo, 1988; 302). These strikes can be averted if only government listen and meet the demand of ASUU.

Problems of finance: Failure of the Nigerian government to budget substantially for education led to a non-functional student loan board and no more education grants and scholarships for indigent students; where any of those mentioned above exist, it is cleverly cornered by politicians to gratify their selfish interest. Thus, there is a report that Nigeria gets the lowest educational budget in six years, months after the President's promise to double funding (Marcus, 2021). The Nigerian education sector gets funding from grants and aids from the government, school fees, levies and contributions from parents and guardians, the Education Tax fund (ETF) and levies from parents and teachers' association. However, funds raised from these sources are grossly inadequate for the developmental needs of the Nigerian

education sector, this is as a result of a long period of neglect. The government is therefore expected to live up to its responsibility.

Drugs and cultism: The use of drugs for self-activation is high among the youths, and the percentage of youths that inhale drugs for one reason or the other is high. The result of drug abuse is that it charges them, after which they can venture into dreadful missions, like armed robbery, bullying and even cultism. Consequently, many youths have experienced untimely death while some have run mad or drop out of school.

Examination Malpractices: Examination is the extent of the test of actual knowledge acquired by a student. It cuts across all levels of learning in the world. It helps predict academic achievement in the future and provides itself as a system with which suitable candidates are selected into certain educational courses or occupations. A cardinal objective of the examination is to ascertain the level or amount of learning that has taken place and to determine the measures of achievement of learning objectives and goals. Currently, examination cheating/malpractice and intellectual dishonesty is a problem in the educational sectors (Adegoke, 2010). Examination Malpractice means cheating in an examination. Consequentially, it encourages the promotion of mediocrity over merit or excellence, which could snowball into poor decisions and policy formulation in the public and private sectors.

Inadequate deployment of Information and Communication Technology (I.C.T): The deployment of I.C.T. in schools in Nigeria will empower students and teachers, and transform teaching and learning processes (www.infodev.org/article). Unfortunately, Nigerians are faced with the challenges of unstable internet connection, lack of support for schools, scarcity of qualified staff that are I.C.T. compliance (www.researchgate.net 3076). Coupled with poor electricity supply, the movement of people with their phone and power bank is a trend in Nigeria.

Recommendations

The Nigerian school curriculum should be developed to capture skill acquisition and entrepreneurship; this will arm educated graduates with skills needed for work life. This paper advocates for the compatibility of rote learning and fact-based educational systems with skill acquisition. Federal government should increase budgetary allocation for the education sector in such a way that it will be in tandem with international best practices.

1. All schools in Nigeria should deploy information and communication technology in teaching and learning processes. The government must put the necessary facilities in place to achieve this objective.

2. The Federal Government should listen and make a conscious effort to grant the request of aggrieved members of the academic and non-academic staff unions of the universities across the country.

3. National drug law enforcement agencies should take the fight against drug abuse and consumption to our tertiary institutions. This can be achieved by establishing drug law enforcement stations/offices in all our higher institutions.

4. Religious leaders in the country should, as a matter of urgency, set up branches of their churches in all higher institutions across the country. By so doing, they could facilitate the campaign against drug abuse, cultism, and fee fraud (419), colloquially referred to as 'yahoo yahoo' among the youth of higher institutions in Nigeria.

5. Parents should counsel, provide leadership and inculcate morals worth emulating into their children because charity begins at home.

6. Government and private individuals/sectors should explore employment opportunities in the agricultural sector; this will reduce the country's unemployment rate.

7. The implementation/reinforcement of family planning policy must be vigorously pursued across the country; enabling legislation should be put in place to check child marriage and child labour. This will help to eradicate these barbaric practices in Nigeria.

Conclusion

Education, whether within the government or private platform, is the purveyor belt for the actualisation of Talcott Parsons' functional prerequisites framework. These whole strings of social development will remain a mirage without education. Education is, therefore an absolute necessity for the socio-political and socio-economic development of any society. The government has a pivotal role to play in the development of education in any given state or society. She can play this role in the development of education by granting scholarship to indigent students, creating employment opportunities for university graduate/young school leavers and making teaching job lucrative in the country. This will attract the best brains into the sector.

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ETHICO-RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSY ON IN VITRO FERTILISATION TO MINIMISE INFERTILITY AMONG INFERTILE CHRISTIAN COUPLES

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Abstract

Scientific research revealed that the desire to have children remains one of human being most primal and deep-seated desires. Over the centuries, since God's injunction, children have been born by natural means; but it appears that more than ever, some couples find their desires to have children thwarted by infertility; which has given room for the society, family, parents and even the Church to mount pressures on the infertile couples to seek an alternative solution through in vitro fertilisation (IVF). Social pressure, especially on women, is at the heart of the drive for natural parenthood. As a result, infertile Christian couples desperately seek alternative methods through in vitro fertilisation because of the natural means that have failed them to procreate. Without the natural means to procreate, God-created species would reach extinction. Thus, men and women grow up emulating their parents and planning to have their families through assisted reproductive technology. However, religion plays a mammoth role in the ethical considerations surrounding in vitro fertilisation among Christians. The assisted reproductive technology to procreate is not without its ethico-religious criticisms among some Christians as the argument from a Christian religious perspective states that in IVF, children are created through a technical process, made to go through quality control, and destroyed if found deficient, which the Church considers being a waste of life created by God. Therefore, this paper adopts critical and analytical methods to evaluate the controversies surrounding ethical and religious arguments on in vitro fertilisation among infertile Christian couples.

Keywords: Ethico-Religious, Controversy, In vitro fertilisation

Introduction

In vitro fertilisation has consistently become a source of ethical and religious controversy among Christians since its development. Looking at it from the Christian religious perspective, the Church has compartmentalised fertility into two categories: First, those that help achieve pregnancy through sex - fertility drugs, ovulation chart, and surgery to remove blockages are moral. Second, those that replace sex with technology, including IVF and artificial insemination, are immoral. Considering the way religion is coming to terms with modern fertility methods, Cha (2018, 9) explains that 40 years ago, the world's first "test tube" baby born at a British hospital in the industrial city of Oldham, heralded a radical change in the creation of human life. Afterwards, one of the doctors involved in developing the test tube child opined that science – not God – was in charge of the 'test tube' baby.

The procedures of assisted reproductive technology have amplified profound and ethical questions for the world's theologians: When does life begin? Is it a sin to destroy a fertilised egg if life starts at conception? What defines a parent? Is it biblical to use the sperm or eggs of a third party in assisted reproductive technology? Can we say the woman who donates the egg is the mother or the woman who gives birth to the child? What defines a marriage? Can we say it is adultery if the sperm used to fertilise an egg is from a man who is not the husband? Some religionists discuss these controversial issues, whether it is ethical or not to involve a third party in assisted reproductive technology. Some Christians argue that it is unethical to use the sperm of another man or use the womb or eggs of another woman who is not directly involved in marriage for IVF. To some, this is ethical, and to others, it is not. This has, however, become an issue of debate among religious groups, especially in Christendom.

Jenkins (1999, 58) asserts that the advances in molecular biology, transgenics, genetic engineering, reproductive technologies and human cloning raise various ethical issues. Ethical responses sometimes reflect the difficulty of keeping abreast of moral problems in this field. Jenkins argues further that medical technology has the

power to improve the human condition. However, this will not happen if medicine, science and technology lie only in the hands of scientists. Ethicists are equally vital in the controversies arising from in vitro fertilisation. Fifty-five years ago, many people condemned the first heart transplant as “unnatural”. Today, transplants are performed routinely, and scientists are discussing the possibility of transplanting animal organs to humans. According to ethicists, Jenkins (1999, 59) submits that medical and technological progress can have positive effects, making people's lives safer and more comfortable, but inventions at times can raise religious questionable issues and injustice. How do the Christians decide what is right and wrong in using science, medicine and technology? In light of this, this paper focuses on the ethico–religious controversial issues arising from assisted reproductive technology called in vitro fertilisation to minimise infertility among infertile Christian couples. Since God commands them to procreate, this paper argues that infertile Christian couples must be guided through assisted reproductive technology to have children.

Clarification of Concepts

In vitro fertilisation: There are now various ways to have a baby other than through sexual intercourse. In vitro fertilisation (IVF) is now widely used to produce 'test-tube babies'. In vitro means the fertilisation takes place 'in glass', i.e. in a testtube or culture dish or elsewhere outside the human body. In vitro fertilisation is a technique for helping infertile couples to conceive. It is a technique to induce a woman to produce eggs (ovulate) by hormone treatment; the eggs are then removed and fertilised in the laboratory by her partner's sperm. The tiny embryos are checked for abnormalities before being placed in the woman's uterus, where they continue their development in the usual way until birth (Jenkins, 1999, 70).

Christine (1987, 67) opines that in vitro fertilisation is fertilising an egg by sperm outside a woman's womb. It is a form of assisted reproductive technology used to treat infertility among couples. During IVF, the egg is fertilised outside the body and then transferred into the mother's uterus for growth and development. IVF

is used to treat women with blocked fallopian tubes, ovulation disorders, endometriosis or other infertility-related issues. Goldsworth's (1999, 94) argument states that in vitro fertilisation requires the intervention of the medical team. This intervention begins by taking a history of the couple, followed by physical and laboratory examinations that include a test for the sperm count of the male partner and a pelvic exam, cervical culturing, and staining of cervical secretions for the presence of Chlamydia for the female partner. Once these tests are completed, fertility drugs are administered to the woman to stimulate her ovarian follicles to produce as many healthy eggs as possible.

This is necessary because a single fertilised egg or pre-embryo has only a tiny chance of survival. Eggs are retrieved within 27 to 36 hours by a specific stimulation technique such as ultrasonographically guided aspiration or laparoscopy, and as many eggs as possible are obtained per single retrieval attempt. Goldsworth proves that the harvested eggs are inseminated by a sample of semen that contains sperm of good quality and is prepared by washing to induce capacitation. Each harvested egg has a 60 percent to 70 percent chance of being fertilised. Once cleavage occurs, the pre-embryos are transferred to the woman's uterus.

Ethics: To understand ethico-religious concept of in vitro fertilisation, it is apposite at this junction to explain the term 'ethics'. The word 'ethics' has intrigued scholars down the ages and continues to do so today. Ethics is a branch of philosophy that aims to understand the meaning of life and the nature of knowledge, beauty and goodness. Ethics helps us to make moral judgement about ourselves and others around us. It will be impossible to live a relatively ordered life if human principles do not agree with other people's ideas about right and wrong. At times, human beings do or say things we feel are all right, but our reflections later make us feel that what we are doing or saying is wrong. According to Ayantayo (2009, 4), ethics is a systematic study of human actions and interventions in order to determine their goodness or badness,

rightness or wrongness, correctness and incorrectness and with attention given to how such course of action and intention being evaluated affects the person who performed the act or showed intent in question, at which it is directed, and the society or the environment where the action is performed or the intention is melted. Infertility is a painful reality among many couples today. However, in vitro fertilisation promises to give infertile couples hope of having children but many people still see the moral cost of it as severe and unethical because of its procedures that destroy innumerable embryos, which are discarded as extra and unwanted. In response to this, some Christians have diverse interpretations and have reached varying conclusions that IVF and other assisted reproduction are not suitable and unworthy methods.

In response, Ayantayo submits that there are important issues based on the exposition above that ethicists note as matters arising from the description, particularly as they relate to what ethics is concerned with. The first has to do with what we mean by actions and intention, which ethics studies. The second focuses on what constitutes a good or bad action and who determines what constitutes a right or wrong action. Who or what sets the standard that determines an action's rightness or otherwise? And what comes out of the such study of human conduct? James (n.y) argues that ethics is a branch of philosophy that aims to explain the meaning of life, the nature of knowledge, beauty and goodness. It is a discipline that specifically refers to an area of morality that explores human conduct and values. Ethics also explains what constitutes moral and immoral concerning human actions and decisions.

Religion: It is not easy to get a consensus on the definition of religion. According to Oshitelu (2010, p1), each definer learns to define religion from a personal perspective and intellectual and psychological dispositions from their religious persuasions. Oshitelu (2010, 7) quotes Immanuel Kant (1724- 1804), who asserts that religion is a recognition of all human duties as divine commands. Among the multifarious definitions of religion, Oshitelu argues that religion, according to James (n.d), is man's compelling desire to be in

good relations with a religious transcendental order controlling human destinies and natural events in life, which finds expressions in a prescribed system of ritual and belief.

Ethical Controversies and the Position of Christian Religion on In vitro fertilisation

The ethical argument on in vitro fertilisation started when the result of the first animal IVF experiment was published in the mid- 1930s (the consequence was later contested). While some scholars saw it as a promising development to help infertile couples, some Christians were critical, pronouncing that assisted reproduction is against the intention of God about procreation. The Christians could lend their voices because Ojo (n.y, 10) submits that religion firmly holds people's beliefs, feelings, conduct, and attitudes. The religion of a man answers his questions about the Ultimate Being, man's place and roles in life. Obasola (2009, 143) argues that religion plays a significant role in the ethical considerations surrounding reproductive technology. Some religionists argue that reproductive technology should be banned because its unnatural procedure gives room for multiple pregnancies and threatens the mother's physical and mental health seeking a child through IVF Conception. Christine postulates that because non-secular communities have solid opinions and spiritual legislation related to marriage, sex and reproduction, thus, modern fertility technology has forced religion to respond to reproductive technology.

Jenkins explains that reproduction can bring the pleasure and joy of parenthood to childless couples and single women, whether they are infertile, post-menopausal or lesbians, or women wanting a dead partner's child. One effect of IVF is that children put up for adoption might lose out if an infertile couple has a child by IVF, while the child of a post-menopausal mother may find that its mother is too old to care for it or even dies before the child reaches adulthood. Roman Catholic Church has this to say about in vitro fertilisation:

It is because of the concern of the Church to protect the embryo that caution has been expressed about some developments in

in vitro fertilisation. So that scientists can be sure of fertilising an egg which will grow successfully when placed in the uterus, usually several eggs are fertilised, creating spare embryos which are either thrown away or used for experimentation. This is in effect killing of human life. While the Church does have sympathy with couples who are not able to have children, it does not consider it legitimate to treat the human embryo as experimental or disposable material. Life is God's gift and we do not have a right to children. Means to aid birth between husband and wife are considered morally good. However, if this involves a third person for example, artificial insemination by donor or a surrogate mother) this is not considered ethically acceptable (Jenkins, 1999, 71)

Obasola (2009, 144), while alluding to assisted reproductive technology, argues that theologians view all forms of cloning as a thorny issue, which is an example of the ongoing tension between faith and science. Some people believe the scientific advances that enable reproductive technology. Also, they believe these advancements are a God-given blessing. Others argue that science should not presume to “play God” by manipulating genetic makeup. Some claim that assisted reproductive technology must be banned because it involves and encourages the destruction of human embryos.

In the Christian understanding of in vitro fertilisation, Richie (2012, 7) submits that IVF can wreak havoc on a woman's body and reproductive organs. The body was not made to endure hyperovulation, multiple pregnancies simultaneously, and hormonal drugs. In the case of twins or higher-order multiple pregnancies, the mother will more likely develop a high level of blood pressure, preeclampsia (protein in the uterus), or gestational diabetes during pregnancy. In assisted reproductive technology, fertility drugs are an essential part of IVF, but they increase the chances of multiple pregnancies from 1- 2 per cent to 25 per cent. Multiple births place the mother and her babies at risk. One way around this problem is selective reduction, where one or more of the foetuses are aborted to give the remaining ones a better chance; but has the aborted foetus equal rights with the foetus or foetuses which were allowed to go to term?

In in vitro fertilisation, embryos transferred to the woman's uterus are determined by the chances of fertilisation, which varies with the woman's age. A sufficient number of fertilised eggs are needed to increase the likelihood of pregnancy. Those that are not needed usually are frozen. Embryos not transferred to a woman's uterus may be used for research or destroyed. Some Christians argue that in these instances, the physicians have halted further embryonic development with the consent of the couple. Ethically speaking, considering the human fertilised egg or embryo to be protoplasm overlooks the fact that it differs from every cell in a woman's body and can be identified as human by its DNA. However, some scholars support the view that the life of a human being starts at conception but disagree that the life that begins at conception is not human. Thus, Christians prove and conclude from this that the live pre-embryo is a developing human being right from the moment of conception.

The question is, "At what stage during pregnancy can a foetus be regarded as an individual?" This question has perplexed theologians, philosophers and medical ethicists down the ages. Indeed, the way scholars answer this question will influence our views on the issues concerned with medical ethics. The key questions are: is the foetus a person or a potential person? Does a foetus have rights, and if so, how can these rights be balanced against the rights of the mother? Is the foetus a person at sixteen weeks when it begins to move or is it a person only at 34 weeks when it is developed enough to live outside its mother's womb?

According to Raeper and Edwards (1997, 98), Aristotle proves that ensoulment (personhood) occurs 40 days after conception for the male fetus and 80 days after conception for the female fetus. Muslims, according to Goldsworth, argue that personhood occurs 14 days after conception. The question is: is a pre-embryo a person from the moment the ovum is fertilised? Shannon (1997, 65) reacts that the answer is no. However, Shannon argues that not until totipotency gives way to specialised cellular development, which occurs approximately three weeks after the formation of the zygote, can it be correctly said that the pre-embryo is an individual. Goldsworth

submits that Catholic Church is the proponent of the assertion that the life of a foetus starts when the ovum is fertilised.

Jenkins (1999, 90), while reacting to the submission of Shannon, proves that the Roman Catholic teaching disagrees with the argument of Shannon, which states that the pre-embryo cannot be referred to as an individual or a person. The Catholic Church submits that the Bible, according to Psalm 139, says, "thou knowest me right well; my frame was not hidden from thee when I was being made in secret' (KJV). The psalmist considers that God's interest in the individual is evident from the earliest moment of life, a theme echoed in Jeremiah 1:5, which says: 'Before I formed you in the womb I knew you'. One can argue that if life in its most total sense is imbued with meaning, even from its first form, then to interfere or destroy it is wrong.

Is a foetus a person or a potential person? St. Augustine maintained that the soul was implanted by God at 46 days, whereas Thomas Aquinas maintained that the soul of a girl was implanted at 90 days and the soul of a boy at 40 days. Thus, the destruction of fertilised eggs throughout the technique of in vitro fertilisation may not be morally wrong or unethical, provided it is carried out before the soul is implanted (Jenkins, 1999, 90). In the 17th century, however, the Roman Catholic Church taught that God implanted the soul at the moment of conception, which led to the Catholic view that the destruction of unwanted embryos during the IVF process is immoral because embryos are potential human beings that have souls right from the beginning of conception. Therefore, the Catholic Church concludes that destroying embryos is murderous and embryo research is unacceptable. However, to establish the ethical controversy concerning IVF practices, Asplund (2019, 1) submits that the ethical controversy over IVF started when the results of the first animal IVF experiment were published in the mid-1930s. While some people saw it as a promising development to help infertile couples, others were critical, saying that the scientists were playing God because human life has immeasurable values in all its forms, including the earliest stages that start with fertilisation. Ethically, embryos should not be dealt with carelessly or destroyed, but unfortunately, some IVF practices create several embryos that are

likely to die or freeze for an indefinite period.

From the Biblical arguments, Jenkins (1999, 97) states four basic principles that summarise the Roman Catholic theological position on the destruction of embryos during IVF:

1. God is the Lord of life and death - a person's ultimate value stems from God, and no individual can take it upon themselves to place themselves in total mastery over the life of another.
2. Human beings do not have the right to terminate the lives of other human beings. "thou shall not kill" (fifth commandment).
3. Destruction of the foetus at whatever stage of development is the taking of human life.
4. Human life begins at the moment of conception. However, an argument exists on Church agreeing with the termination of pregnancy or embryos in complex cases when the pregnancy wants to kill the mother. The publication in 1140 of Gratian's *Decretum* was the first fully systematic attempt to compile ecclesiastical legislation on the termination of pregnancy or destruction of the embryo during IVF. Gratian, according to Jenkins, maintained the distinction between formed and unformed foetus and argued that it is not murder to abort a foetus before the soul is in the body.

Until the sixteenth century, the Church followed a tradition which did not treat as murder the killing of the embryo less than 40 days; even if it was destroyed after 40 days, it was not regarded as murder because it was rarely killed in hatred. However, in 1588, Pope Sixtus V. abolished the traditional distinction between formed/ animate and unformed/ inanimate foetuses and called all acts of abortion "murder" in his Papal Bull *Effraenatum*. Pope John Paul II reaffirmed the inviolability of human life from conception, arguing that denying the newly conceived the right to life undermines the entire fabric of Christian ethics. According to Jenkins (1999, 91), the Catechism of the Catholic Church states that "Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. From the first moment of his existence, a human being must be

recognised as having the right of a person, which is the inviolable right of every innocent life.”

There is a need to focus on the controversy from totipotency results in the assertion that human individuality and personhood do not begin until 40 or 90 days after fertilising the ovum. Raeper and Edwards further opine that if one emphasises that the fertilised ovum normally will develop into a person, then the argument from potentiality may lead one to conclude, along with the Catholic Church, that an embryo is a person from the moment of conception. Ethically and religiously, because personhood bars us from abusing or killing a person, the logical conclusion is that pregnancy reduction and embryo research are immoral. Therefore, the Christians' ethico-religious perspective would like people to believe that personhood occurs at conception. Shannon (1997, 107) disagrees with this assertion and postulates that people cannot see the human countenance of the pre-embryo and cuddling it like a babe is a proof that the fetus is not yet a human being. Therefore, an embryo does not have a personality like a baby and cannot be treated like a human. The embryo's destruction during the earlier conception stage cannot be seen as murderous.

Conclusion

Religion plays a significant role in the ethical considerations surrounding in vitro fertilisation. Some Christians argue that it should be banned entirely and forever because of the controversial issues involved. However, research testifies that the desire to have children by infertile couples remains one of their most primal and deep-seated desires. Without the biological urge to produce, God-created species would reach extinction. This meaningfully suggests that if women do not produce on time, the chances of giving birth are thin.

Wayney (1998, 65) observes that infertility is a growing problem worldwide, and there has been a significant development in the reproductive technology industry to solve the problem of infertility among couples worldwide. Therefore, it is entirely legitimate and indeed praiseworthy to overcome the problem of infertility among couples that causes great pain and anguish. In some

cultures, children are seen as a precious gift of marriage; thus, scientists must look for possible solutions that prevent children from being conceived by infertile couples. In in vitro fertilisation, children are created through a technical process, made to go through quality control, and destroyed if found deficient, which the Church considers a waste of life created by God. Murphy (1990, 6) observes that in IVF, embryos may be damaged through handling and exposure. Murphy explains further that because the zygote is a potential human being, there are moral implications if the fertilised eggs are destroyed. Often, couples determine to harvest more eggs than they intend to use, which means that some of the embryos are eliminated or frozen for later use. However, if the couple conceives immediately, the frozen embryos will be destroyed because they may never need to use them again. From the Biblical point of view, it can be argued that God does not permit Christians to destroy human life because this would be considered a murderous act against the word of God.

Looking at the controversies surrounding the ethico-religious considerations of IVF, this paper submits that many of the techniques now used to overcome infertility also have profound moral implications, and infertile Christian couples should be aware of this before deciding on their use. Each technique should be critically considered to see if it is genuinely ethical to avoid the murderous act. This paper recommends that the practice of IVF should be allowed since it is the commandment of God to be fruitful and multiply. Thus, in this era of technological advancement, the practice of all assisted reproductive techniques, when the oocyte and spermatozoon originate from the wife and husband, respectively, should not be discouraged. Murphy also agrees with this recommendation that IVF with the husband's sperm and wife's egg is allowed, and the resulting child is the legal offspring of the couple, while the in vitro fertilisation of semen from the third party is considered adultery, according to the views of Christians.

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SUBSTANCE ABUSE AMONG YOUTH AND ITS IMPLICATION FOR SOCIETAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This paper seeks to bring out the adverse effect of substance abuse among the youth and its implication on societal development. This paper centred on substance abuse prevalent among youth in society. Society is deteriorating socially, economically, mentally and psychologically, and the causative factors of substance abuse are unemployment, illiteracy, lack of parental care, overpampering, secret cults and lots more. In the midst of all these, there are agitations which spring up from society on how to curb, reduce, or crop it out. The menace could not add value to the image of the society of which Christians are part but brings adverse effects of untimely Death, unwanted pregnancy, drug addiction and stealing. The paper induces that substance abuse among youth degrades society due to negative attitudes inherent in the youth. However, this study recommends that moral teaching be inculcated among youth and that counsellors be alive to their duties on behavioural modifications.

Introduction

In different communities, drugs are consumed to stir up some people who tend to see visions or have a connection with spirits. A renowned drug addict in the western world has an affinity with pop music culture during the late twentieth century governed by the Beatles and others. Society gave room for drug use, which became prominent around the 1960s. Many famous musicians at that period openly used drugs, and young guys in their hundreds of thousands followed suit. These youths became drug addicts (Norman, 2011, 48).

Some people make money from selling drugs to young and old because those who need them will try to contact the sellers. In the process, more young individuals are addicted to drug intake, while some become a nuisance and notorious in society. For example,

Norman (2011, 49) also described bandits, robbers and those who cause trouble or fight in public as a product of drug users.

Drug and substance abuse is constantly attributed to living miserably outside the home. Many youths who do not live with their parents and those who make 'life on the street' their second home represent uncultured adolescence and rebellion. In a nutshell, drug users think they escape from unwarranted situations like family break-ups, poverty, abuse and homelessness, which prevent their existence in some localities. Rocky (1994, 42) reports International Conference of American Public Health Association reports that youth engagement in substance ingestion is a reality and ascertained that young ones do not see drugs as part of the problem. They see drugs as a part of the solution and a coping mechanism. Some among the youth derive pleasure from the intake of drugs in society. They do not feel bad at all but feel good even when with their friends or colleagues.

Types of Substances Taken Nowadays

In this modern community, there are different types of substance people take and abuse in other countries. A few of these substances range from Amphetamines, Narcotics, Cocaine, Marijuana, Tobacco, Alcohol, Codeine and the like. The research noted that tobacco, marijuana, and alcohol usage could not be left out where substances are mentioned. Some implications are described here for better awareness about their properties and how they act on people.

Amphetamines

Amphetamine is a stimulant known as uppers or speed. It is commonly used on the streets as a white cross (pill), meth tabs (pill) and crystal meth (powder). The abuser can take significant amounts of speed a good number of times. Some abusers of this drug may inject more Amphetamines at once or even a dozen times in a single day. It could result in sudden Death. Amphetamines could produce a euphoric high, which diminishes within a few hours after the intake.

Narcotics: According to Phyllis (1997, 24), Narcotics comprise plant-based products ranging from opium and other drugs, Morphine, Codeine, and Heroin. Narcotics could also be derived from synthetic chemicals with morphine-like action known as Demerol and Methadone. There are infections and diseases in which unsterile solutions, syringes and needles can cause abusers of this drug. Diseases like; Scrum Hepatitis which is highly common. Other ones like inflammation of veins, congestion of the lungs and skin abscesses.

Cocaine: Cocaine is a type of drug obtained from coca bush around South American countries. Whenever a cocaine substance is injected or inhaled, it causes over-alertness and euphoria, and such a person may feel a kind of increase in power. It was noted that researchers do not support the idea that tolerance to cocaine can develop, but significant psychological dependence could result. As for speed (Amphetamines), depression can show after substance effects a no more visible. Such depression can be cured temporarily with the intake of more cocaine, and this is a contributing factor to cocaine addiction on the part of the abusers in their society. The use of heavy cocaine could lead to weight loss, anxiety and sleeplessness for the abusers of it in the community (Phyllis, 1997).

Marijuana: Marijuana is a substance that can be smoked, ingested and sniffed by abusers. A kind of active mind affects a substance in three forms of a drug called tetrahydrocannabinol (T.H.C.). The topmost part of the flower and leaves of marijuana has the highest percentage of T.H.C. concentration. Hash is a dark brown resin found on the top of marijuana. This is much stronger than crude marijuana because of the large concentration of T.H.C. Effects on the part of the abusers could be more intense, and the side effects may be more significant. T.H.C. could be considered a hallucinogen plus a kind of soothing property. It is noted that abusers are talkative and act silly, while others can be moody, boisterous and drowsy. The psychological effects of marijuana may be varied indeed. Abusers could report illusions, misinterpretations or unnatural sensations (Phyllis,1997, 25).

Tobacco: A substance called Nicotine is derived from the tobacco plant. It originated in North America and could reach other parts of the world when it was discovered on that continent. Tobacco has spread widely, and the leaves have been smoked in pipes, such as cigars and cigarettes. This substance can be chewed as a snuff in its powdered state. It is noted that the Christians of the sixteenth century rejected tobacco, but later in Europe and America, it was socially acceptable to smoke, chew or be sniffed. Nicotine is highly toxic or poisonous. Tobacco causes a short life span for many people and causes heart diseases, respiratory diseases, and cancer of the lungs, throat and mouth. Abusers of it increase per day in society beyond measuring (Norman, 2011, 50).

Alcohol: The abuse of alcohol affects the person or people who fall in; such may be free from tension and relaxed. To some people, alcohol could be a stimulant to them. The more incredible amount of alcohol could depress brain activity and temporarily impair muscular coordination and memory. If the users take more quantity within a short time, it can cause a loss of control and dull the senses. If the user continues to heavy intake of it, it will anaesthetise the brain, making it in a coma and also causing Death. Intake of more quantities for an extended period could damage the liver, brain and heart. It could lead to permanent brain damage, whereby memory, judgment and aptitude for learning deteriorate gradually. Such a person will not be able to achieve purpose in life. (Phyllis, 1997, 27).

P.C.P. or Angel Dust: P.C.P., or phencyclidine, was derived around the late 1950s and was used as a human anaesthetic. It was noted that patients in the hospitals began to experience side effects. The substance was annulled. Now, the substance produced is being used for veterinary purposes. In its primary usage, it is used as an anaesthetic for large animals. The society's widespread P.C.P. was first showcased in 1967 in the metropolis of San Francisco. When P.C.P. became a product that could be quickly produced from illegal laboratories, it was readily accessible, and the substance spread out. P.C.P. could be taken orally, smoked, sniffed, and injected. The users of this substance may become non-communicative and moves to a

level of oblivion and fantasy. It can take hold of the user from four to six hours and be very talkative. The person may experience mild depression, irritability, isolation, and fear. Then after 24 to 48 hours, such a person will become normal again. (Phyllis, 1997, 26).

Factors Motivating Youth to Substance Intake and Abuse

The numerous reasons motivating the youth towards taking the substance in society cannot be exhausted here per se. However, Aderson (1995) posit that youths are depressed because of environmental pollution, disorderliness in government policies and other vices that can lead to substance intake. Invariably, since other reasons could lead youth to engage in substance abuse, why were some youth involved in substance intake and abuse but not experiencing various challenges and different obstacles in life? That puzzle requires investigation.

Scholars believe that substance abuse is known to be a family ailment. In other words, that problem could be transferred to others in the family through the bloodline or the environment they live in (Gardner and Young, 2000). Hayward, Cook and Thome (1994) noted the following views, which could lead youth prone to using a drug to the point of abuse. Some of them left school without any excuse, some experienced failure in academics, some attempted suicide, some experienced no parental care, and some had parents who were drug abusers. In addition to these, some youth in another context could have mental disorders or may be economically disadvantaged, sexually abused, or injured for a long time and being uncomfortable, and have been in detention through a criminal court case (Hayward, Cook and Thome 1994).

Also, the result of a study shows that parents who are hostile to their young ones at home have a greater tendency to misbehave later. Some may go into substance abuse to ease the tension from the home front (Statistics Canada 2015). It was discovered that some parents addicted to substance abuse and nagging and looking down on their young ones form a loophole for them to practice taking

substances to the extent of the abuse. In a society where peer intimidation thrives, curiosity among youth, media, and low self-esteem could also lead some youth to use and abuse the drug. Some youth can be victims of intimidation from colleagues and have access to substance use or move to abuse in some quarters, while loneliness could cause it (Anderson, 1995).

The factors influencing youth to the act of substance intake and abuse highlighted above are not to be handled with levity. If we are not going to deceive one another, society is filled with negative messages; the media portrays drinking, partying, and people living extravagant lives. However, people were informed about prevention and some treatment procedures that can make youth refrain from taking drugs, leading to abuse (National Drug Control Policy 2001). Few more factors that push youth into substance intake and abuse include the following:

Illiteracy

Illiteracy is not excellent and unacceptable in our generation today because of the attached negative effect. Steve Padilla, a Times staff writer, wrote about one man called Garry Sapp, who had a royal background. Sapp could view his past life whereby he became a drunkard and drug addict, and such addiction could be traceable to his illiteracy. Later on, for him to change from such a habit and rehabilitate completely, he began learning how to read at 36. 'Sapp' happened to be one out of one hundred personnel that could recover from drug addicts and alcoholics, which took place at Action Rehabilitation centre, where a kind of innovative-year-old program was put in place. At this rehabilitation centre, simple reading is part of the treatment used for the victims. They are tutored on how to read by some drug abusers who have passed through training in the centre and later became tutors.

Lack of Parental Care

Guardian's biological fathers and mothers are full of activities and never have time to oversee and care for their wards/children; unavailability of time to oversee their children makes such join bad gangs and thereby get addicted to drugs. It is noted that youths and

teenagers do go to night parties and social engagements without permission or permission from their parents. Such guardians, fathers and mothers thought their wards were socialising with the environment, but great harm or havoc has happened in their lives.

Over pampering

Some youth who indulge in drugs and alcohol continuously have a rough life from their teenage years. In their teens, they were exposed to social media, where they watched different sites that lure them into illicit drugs. Many of their parents do not monitor what their wards watch and listen to on social media. They were given a free hand to do whatever they liked and wished. For example, celebrities like Justin Bieber, Drake, and Cardi B post pictures when they drink alcohol on different platforms. So, young people were influenced to do so.

Secret cults

From time immemorial, some cult-like personnel sponsor the use of substances as a part of the ritual. So, in ancient Greece, for a case study, the usage of ergot, a fungus which grows on grains and brings out hallucinations. It is noted that this plays an essential role in the sacrifices of the Eleusinian mysteries, as celebrated in adoring goddesses Demeter and her daughter Persephone. When the youth indulge in this act, they go out and synthesise others to join their crew. So the number keeps on increasing over time.

Effects of Drug Abuse

Drug Abuse poses much damage to the users, ranging from an untimely death to dwindling health. Some could die instantly, while some may experience slow Death (Normal, 2011). The under-listed are some of the adverse effects drug abuse poses on the user

Untimely Death

Substance abusers in society are prone to untimely Death, according to Buck. There may be a few substance-related health hazards, like an increased issue of H.I.V. formed through intravenous substance use, importance-induced psychosis, killing attempts, and sicknesses from poor care (Buck, 1999).

Unwanted pregnancy: - National Drug Control Strategy (1997, 34) discovered that many youths who use substances or indulge in substances abuse as young girls do unwanted contract pregnancy. According to a study organised by the Guttmacher Institute, one in four young girls became pregnant around age twenty-one. These pregnancies occur through fallow or shallow understanding in the life of girls about new and intense unpredicted emotions or moods the demand comes from the male counterparts when both are high in the intake of drugs (Josh & Bob 1996, 28).

Drugs Addiction

The addicted person is in a state or condition whereby such a person cannot correct or put off the attitude in his life. The addict uses drugs concurrently, not minding the dangerous effects that can show forth in his life. He likes to take substances repeatedly with an appetite that no one can stop. The urge to induce himself is already created in him, having pleasure in doing it. Someone addicted to drugs could be seen as somebody who has committed a crime because addiction has been noted as a sin and a crime indeed. (Martin Paulus romancatholicinfo.com/catholic-answers/addiction)

Stealing

Many youths who use drugs were found to commit violent acts and other crimes. In a study of about 113 youths that is valuable found in state detention, 82 per cent were found to be heavy alcohol users even before they got to imprisonment; also, according to one verification around 1988 in washing D.C. It was discovered that youth who sold and used drugs committed crimes more than those who sold but did not use them. There was a breakdown of unacceptable acts among the youths: Drug selling 36 per cent, create assault 24 per cent, burglary- 24 per cent, and robbery 19 per cent. Youth who find themselves among other drug abusers eventually join their colleagues in stealing and robbery (Office of National Drug Control Policy, 2001, 35).

Recommendations

Moral Teaching: This could be seen as one tool for curbing drug abuse in society. Yoruba imparted moral values to the young through

proverbs, storytelling, myth, and religion, chanting that the Yoruba will not accept any act of indiscipline or rudeness from youth to an elder; however, this Yoruba way of curbing an act of indiscipline is popularly known as cognitive restructuring.

Counselling: Counsellors need to ascertain drug addiction and the adverse outcomes that come to play in the life of their clients. Behavioural, cognitive, dynamic, and experiential, which are very important, should be ascertained to effect behavioural change. Collaborative relationships, trusting, bringing up insights, feedback, reality testing, and the like should also be employed by counsellors to bring about therapeutic change.

Pastoral care: Pastoral care is one of the solutions that could modify the behaviour of substance abusers and reduce the activity in the community. Religious leaders should preach sermons that could help modify drug addicts' behaviour and ensure that follow-up is done for all new converts to disassociate themselves from peers and friends that could lure them to drug abuse.

Government Policy: The government should make drug education compulsory at all levels of our educational programme. This will reduce ignorance of what constitutes drug abuse and the likely causes and effects.

Conclusion

The discussion above reveals that substance abuse among the youth hurts society. The youth in society who could have been significant assets are now on the opposite side, thereby affecting societal growth. Youth are vulnerable to substance abuse, where the concept of drug abuse sensitises types of substances or drugs that youth see as something to play with, not knowing the danger in them. The paper pinpointed the causes of substance abuse: unemployment, illiteracy, lack of parental care, and overpampering, which have affected many lives. Youth in society began to experience a significant effect of drug misuse, whereby many died prematurely, and unwanted pregnancies on the part of females as teens or youth

that are unmarried; some were addicted to drugs too.

In that light, there are steps to take to address the menace of substance abuse in society. So, for the future of tomorrow's youth, be good and pleasant. Good pastoral care and counselling with moral teaching must be adopted to solve this problem in the youth's life. There and then, parents are to make an effort to love and care for their children. If all these suggestions can be properly and adequately considered, the lives of the youth will be preserved and they will develop society.

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