MORAL DECADENCE
A SETBACK OF MORAL EDUCATION IN NIGERIA.

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Abstract
Moral education is the informed process of inculcating enduring values and virtues that would mould good personality and garden the mind towards good character. It faces a setback due to moral decadence made manifest in different spheres of life in Nigeria. Moral decadence poses serious challenges to the sustainable growth in moral education due to the lack of moral fiber in the conscience of many Nigerians irrespective of class, religion, socio-economic and political standing in Nigeria. This study is to examine the various ways moral decadence has been a setback to moral education in Nigeria that the study adopted Anomie in examining the causes, effects and possible solutions to the scourge of moral decadence in Nigeria. The research engaged majorly secondary data obtained from documentary sources such as journals, textbooks, magazines, dailies, thesis, dissertations and internet materials. They were complimented by primary methods which include interview and observation methods. They will be historically, analytically, phenomenologically and descriptively show that moral decadence is deeply rooted and manifest in people, institutions and relationships in Nigeria. It possesses a serious challenge to the families, traditional institutions, the church, educational system and the society at large. It is recommended that checking the excesses of immoral activities to moral education is a collaborative and collective effort of all and sundry.
Introduction
The level of moral decadence in Nigeria is disturbing and in whatever form, it distorts plans, programmes and processes of moral education. This distortion affects negatively the dignity of the human person made manifest in socio-economic vices such as kidnapping, armed robbery, rape, incest, cultism, touting and cybercrimes. Others include moral depravity such as acts of disrespect, insubordination, laziness, idle gossip, dereliction of duty manifest the decay which are glaring and seems to defy solution in Nigeria. Moral decadence as it affects a new culture of nudity among girls seems to have led to sexual harassment which has been widely reported as menace to academic excellence. Ugoagu (2017) states that moral decadence manifests in prostitution and other forms of sexual abuses with their concomitant ailments like Human Immune Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Why is moral decadence so prevalent in Nigeria? Why has it persisted in all works of life despite concerted efforts to curb it in Nigeria? How has moral decadence been a setback to moral education in Nigeria? It is imperative therefore to explore into the causes, examples and effects of moral decadence on moral education in Nigeria. What actually does this moral depravity or deplorable behaviour do to the very being of a person remains the thrust of this article.

There is need to examine the general concept of moral decadence and moral education. The theoretical framework as a treatise anchoring the study will help explore ways moral decadence remains setback to moral education.

Conceptual clarification
Attempt is made to conceptualize various terms that appear in the study. They include moral decadence, moral education and setback. It is hoped that the clarification will give improved understanding of the concepts under review to the study.
The Concept of Moral Decadence

Moral decadence is made up of two words namely moral and decadence. Moral, etymologically is a word from the Latin word “Mores” which means custom. Custom according to Stutter (2002) means usages, practices, standard of norms and codes which are common to certain groups or classes of people and which regulate the group action in both religious and social obligation. Longman Dictionary of contemporary English defines moral as principle or standards of good behaviour, especially in matters of sex. Moral relates to the principle of considerations of right and wrong action or good character. A man of action is moral when his behaviour as adjudged of being wrong in a given society. Agha (2003) says an action is right if it leads to physical, intellectual and spiritual development or to a more harmonious personal and social life. To be moral is to be disciplined, intelligent and sociable in the process of social living. An individual's moral consists of his ideas of what is right or wrong, and his conviction about his responsibilities. Moral consciousness consists of system of ideas, attitudes and inner motives or control that degrees what is right or wrong.

It further explains that morality means beliefs or ideas about what is right and wrong and about how people should behave. Okwueze (2003) says “morality just like ethics involves the idea of good or right conduct and it is utterly hostile to bad or wrong conduct” (p.67). A more clearly articulated set of beliefs about the nature of man, ideas about which is good, desirable, worthy of pursuit for the sake of social order and orderly co-existence is emphasized. Morality is also seen by Okwueze (2003) “as a specific form of social consciousness, of awareness of your relatedness to others without which social life would be impossible” (p.68). Atilade (2008) says morality refers to the actions, dispositions, attitudes, virtue and of life that should characterize the moral person and the society. The good, right and desirable human conduct or bad, wrong and undesirable actions are emphasized in the above meaning of morality. Ugwu (2010) describes morality as “the astuteness of one’s conduct and behaviour which enhances good conduct and fair relationship” (p.46). Morality has to do with what is good and striving to do that which is right
over what is bad or wrong. Morality according to Nwachukwu (2017) has to do with attitude or behaviour of man. Attitude can be cultivated on a personal, corporate, structural or cultural sphere of life. Man's perception, values, beliefs, life styles, cultural and religious practices that are deep-rooted and long standing could be held tenaciously and easily translated into attitude that may either enhance or impede moral development of society.

Decadence is seen as a decay or decline in moral standard. Echeta (2007) sees decadence as a temporal contrast or comparison, a body, a society or an artiste for falling away from something and better health, virtue tradition and so forth. Badijo (2004) defines decadence as “moral depravity or decay” (p.2). Oxford English Dictionary says it refers to behaviors, attitudes etc which show a faith in standards, especially in relation to moral and an interest in pleasure and employment rather than in more serious things. It describes a lack of moral and intellectual discipline. Decadence, according to potolsky, is a temporal contrast or comparison. Moral decadence according to Ehusiani (2003) is moral decay and failure to uphold sound morality. According to Muraino and Ugwumba (2014) moral decadence is the process of behaving in a way that shows low moral standards, gross reduction in the moral values among individuals or a group in a particular society. It appears to be a fall in the moral standard, deterioration, a collapse in upholding societal values, beliefs, norms and ethnical standard of group social living. It is referred to as moral misconduct within the context of education. It is a way of behaving in a way that shows low moral standards in the school. Moral decadence describes a person's lifestyle, lack of moral and intellectual discipline and a luxurious self-indulgence of people in the society.

The Concept of Moral Education
Moral education is difficult to define. The reason is not far from the emphasis on religious education, character education, moral instruction, civic education, character training, education without character and moral studies. Another difficulty stems from seeing moral education as two concepts such as moral and education rather than one-moral
education. Defining them separately does not help in giving the meaning of moral education. Other scholars have given moral education such names as learning without character, moral indecency, churches without moral integrity and indecent activities. Others include moral re-awakening and value education.

In spite of the above difficulties in conceptual clarification, a number of inroads have been made in gaining better view of moral education based on contemporary scholarship. Nwodo (2016) says "moral education is a process by which principles of right and wrong are being instilled in the child/individual" (p.2). It explains the moral dimensions of educational theory and practice. As a follow up to this process, Obiano 2016 maintains that:

Parents and guardians leave the house early in search of the means of survival and come back late tired, they abandon their responsibilities to outsiders and technological devices. The results are bad habits learned from television, films, video games, telephones, internet and other social networks. These are expressed in the forms of indecent dressing, permissive lifestyle, wild partying and drug abuse. It gives rise to armed robbery, cultism, 419, prostitution, abortion, child trafficking and abuse. (P.11)

Emenusiobi (2017) in an x-ray of academic dishonesty which distorts the dignity of the human person, defines moral education as “helping children acquire those virtues or moral habits that will help them individually live good lives and at the same time become productive, contributive members of their communities”. (p.14). This definition seems to emphasize the role of moral education rather than the meaning. Uche and Nwodo (2016) explain moral education as character education based on cultural values such as respect for elders, honesty, justice, hard work, loyalty, patience etc. (p.123). Eche and Amakiri(2016) see moral education as “the preparation, leading out, bringing out, exploiting, exhibiting or displaying
the moral qualities or context of man for the purposes of survival" (p.24). According to Ziebertz and Roebben (2009) “moral education is an initiative and communicative constitution by which the education requires dynamic and effective moral development” (p.55). Nduka (1983) asserts that “moral education involves not only the teaching, learning and other processes whereby values, rules, principles, ideas, habits and attitudes are inculcated but also the taking of adequate educational steps supplemented with appropriate institutional arrangement to promote moral growth along the developmental continuum” (p.25). This is a descriptive rather than a definitive moral education. Nduka is not alone. Nsirim (2006) defines moral education as the process whereby man is being helped to form good habits, develop character, imbibe useful experience and pursue skills and capabilities that enable him to lead functional and harmonious moral life as a member of a social group or society.

Obiano (2016) sees moral education as tending to place value of education on studying and discovering the creator and creations. It is the basis of general education which inculcates the teaching of moral values in children and young people. This meaning is descriptive and needed to be seen as efforts aimed at addressing those challenges that confront stakeholders in the upbringing, education of the family, including the complex problems faced in the harmonious, troubled or failed families. Dike (2007) claims that corruption drives and shapes social values in Nigeria and called for “values education” which involves “educating for character” and for good "moral values" to be institutionally adopted as a way of growing citizens that will effectively contribute to national development. Obioma (2016) gives an alternative name to moral education. Value education is suggested to mean the teaching of respect, responsibility and other values to the citizens for good character development.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework as a treatise anchoring the study adopted anomie. It is imperative in examining the ways moral decadence remains
setback to moral education in Nigeria. The above social paradigm is statement on how and why certain facts on social life issues are illustrated for proper understanding of social and moral ideas affecting humanity.

Anomie illustrates the active roles of deviant behaviour in criminality. Merton (1957) focuses mainly on the “broad patterns of norm-violating behaviour rather than in the behaviour of individual deviant” (P. 132). The strive for success is not always easy and the need for people to better themselves, culture, goals and institutional norms as objectives held out as legitimate or desirable for the members of a society to achieve success of same sort led to institutional means or legitimate ways to reach those goals as against the frustration, confusion and wrong they feel when access to legitimate means are blocked. This inconsistency leads to what Merton (1969) calls anomie – a state of normlessness.

Anomie as a social theory was used by Emile Durkheim (1933) to describe the loss of direction felt in the society when social control of individual behaviour becomes ineffective especially during a period of profound social change and disorder which may create a bewildering sense of not belonging, dominating, sometimes threatening and oppressive.

Anomie is considered very relevant because of its impact on reviving the moral conscience of Nigerians whose decadent behaviour constitutes setbacks to moral education in Nigeria. Uche (2016) sees anomie as a situation where anything goes, probably due to the fact that norms no longer direct behaviour and deviance is grossly encouraged. Haralambos and Holborn and Heald (2008) say that anomie can result from changes in society which disrupt existing relationships and bring existing values into question. Moral revival can control the tide of moral decadence. If the prescribed cultural norms and values are adhered to, anomie which describes the loss of direction in the society would become effective, orderly, and address the identifiable gaps which do not hitherto encourage individual behaviour, the rule of law, justice, transparency,
equity and filial bond in maintaining and sustaining high moral standard in socio-economic and political life in Nigeria.

**History of Moral Decadence in Nigeria**
The history of moral decadence in Nigeria started since the pre-historic period. One school of thought says that man is a rebellious prone being. However, the magnitude or the tempo of the wrongness, bad, immoral and condemnable actions became more pronounced during and after the Nigeria-Biafra civil war. In the pre-colonial era, issues like slavery, inter-tribal wars, killing of twins and burial of kings with human beings especially their slaves indicate immoral activities. The proliferation of arms, unemployment, poverty, hunger, disease and lack of shelter led many people including youths into armed robbery, prostitution, rape, incest, stealing, and slavery.

The process of rebuilding Nigeria especially the South-Eastern states was not easy. The civil war negatively affected the value system and compounded under development, progress or backwardness of Nigeria. The general principle or idea is that it refers to the principle concerning wrong or bad behavior which affects negatively greater number of people in Nigeria in a particular place, time and situation. The government takeover of schools from the church did not help the teaching of moral instruction, religious education and moral education. The implication of the takeover of schools affected the history of moral decadence in Nigeria. Education without character was invoke where religious education was taught, the missionary schools embarked on indoctrination. The curriculum for moral education was left out and the gardening of mind of man to direct and shape man’s intercourse and conduct in good moral integrity was difficult if not impossible. The danger posed by this western education and civilization accounts for the history of moral education.

There is culture conflict between western, Christian and traditional value systems in Nigeria. The fundamental moral principles had existed since the beginning of man and comprised the doctrine of most religions. Moral
education as an aspect of critical thought was not allowed to understand people, community and their relationships with others. Uche (2017) says “national moral decay in the private and public spheres of life in Nigeria has reached a deplorable condition despite increased religiosity and fattest rate of phenomenal growth in religious participation in Nigeria” (p.132).

The 1970 May/June West African School Certificate Examination marked the worst examination conducted by West African Examination Council (WAEC) in Nigeria. There was a repeat seven years later. This time, it was not cancelled, but the students were marked down. Examination leakages, malpractices, cheating in various forms and impersonation have been recurring moral issues challenging Nigeria educational system negatively. Poor funding is not left out of educational challenge.

From the foregoing, it is observed that the deplorable state of decay explains the monumental corruption, avarice, kidnapping, armed robbery, terrorism, child trafficking, child abuse, and other forms of unpatriotic activities. Issues of national interest or concern have not been seen as issues of immorality or have not been sustained due to lack of political will and instability. The complex nature of the above situation seems to compound the lack of moral fibre, attitude to economic and social issues in life.

The infiltration of Nigerian market with fake and sub-standard drugs, pornographic materials, internet and other cyber activities have added momentum to the hard and perilous times Nigeria is passing through for decades. These have brought bad names to the nation and its citizens both locally and internationally. For instance, Folaranmi (2012) says that:

Mention anything negative, corruption, violation of human right, fallen standard of education, electoral malpractices, epileptic power outage, incessant strike, unemployment,
The above predicament has been blamed on leadership, law enforcement agents and the populace. In the history of moral decadence in Nigeria, they portray moral decay, negative image, uncomplimentary attitude and immoral disposition of Nigerians. The high rate of unemployment, poverty, corruption and insensitivity of government gave rise and increased anomie. The culturally approved goals became meaningless. The political leadership is characterized by large scale fraud, corruption, exploitation, selfishness, avarice and other forms of bad image which had dangerously deteriorated the moral life of Nigerians. Lawal (2012) says that life expectancy seems to be decreasing because people's life are being disposed off cheaply through different means such as armed robbers, hired assassins, kidnappers and death traps on most of our high ways. The long military rule was another source of moral dilemma as the military joined multitude to do evil in Nigeria. Their effective occupation, institutionalized avarice, corruption, armed robbery, bad leadership, drug pushing and other vices that had cast aspersion on Nigerians as indecent, notorious and disgraceful. The same military rule and sit tight syndrome that bedeviled the socio-economic and political life in Nigeria introduced policies and programs such as ‘ethical revolution’ by former president Shehu Shagari in (1979) which was aimed at combating moral decadence in Nigeria. Former President Mohammadu Buhari introduced ‘War Against Indiscipline’ (WAI) in (1983) which tried to justify military takeover by emphasizing the eradication of the vices associated with indiscipline such as greed, dishonesty, impatience, vandalism, brutality, armed robbery, tribalism among others. National Orientation Agency (NOA) also known as Mass Mobilization for Social Justice, Self-reliance and Economic reconstruction (MAMSA) in (1991). The above programs could be seen as efforts aimed at expurgate according to Igbara and Apenda (2002) “ignorance and liberation of the Nigerian citizenry from the chain of incapacitation”. The war against corruption found unfulfilled expectation as the worst perpetrators of indiscipline and corruption in Nigeria. A follow up to these program initiatives to fight corruption in Nigeria were the Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) and the
International Crime Persecussion Commission set up by former President Olusegun Obasanjo. These two bodies have been criticized as tools in the hands of former President Olusegun Obasanjo to fight his perceived enemies.

The deplorable state of decay in Nigeria probably informed late President Umaru Yaraduah to initiate rebranding Nigeria project. For evil to triumph, every God fearing man and woman must have maintained indifferent attitude to the damaged image of Nigeria. Approaching the immoral disposition from outside marked the failure hitherto recorded. The rebranding effort was short lived probably due to the demise of late President Umaru Yaraduah the initiator of rebranding project. The much needed U-turn in Nigeria's drive towards deliberate turning away from materialism, religious belief and practices which blinded their eyes from true humanity, hope in the saving grace of God, liberation from operation and socio-economic transformation.

Causes of Moral Decadence in Nigeria
The alarming rate of moral decadence in Nigeria could be regarded as the cumulative effects of the failure of many social institutions such as the family, school, and the church in contemporary Nigeria.

Unemployment has drifted many into priesthoods without seeing it as a calling who needed to be trained. Such pastors are in the ministry because they were once jobless and needed any lucrative job to earn a living. Omonijo, Nwodo, Uche and Ezechukwu (2016) are of the view that “a pastor who see vision and predicts future events always enjoy the patronage of many Nigerians” (p.42). It may be observed that activities of such pastors are enmeshed in immorality and fake doctrines. They seem to mislead Christian members into moral activities as divine imperative. Priest craft remains a cause of moral decadence in Nigeria. Failure of pastors to punish or correct erring members for wrong doing is another cause of moral decadence in Nigeria. The elite class in the church is not readily rebuked for immorality.
In African traditional religion, the ancestors and the divinities reprove members of the society for wrong doing. They also reward them for their good and moral deeds. These contributed to moral decency of Nigerians prior to colonialism and early missionary activities in Nigeria. Today, instilling discipline is stigmatized wicked while evil practices have been condoned as a normal way of life. This makes restitution seem not to be reckoned with in the present day Christian church. Correcting one’s bad behaviour by returning what is stolen is not invoke. This sign of change does not make a person conform to the standard of God. In addition to the above causes of moral decadence, human beings are very difficult to correct or control.

**Persistence of Moral Decadence**

The persistence of moral decadence can be attributed to western civilization and colonization which are exemplified in western education, science and technology, foreign religion and influence. Others include Eurocentricism, priest craft, the quest for rebellion against the word of God, disobedience to parents and those in authority, lack of respect for elders, laziness, idleness, gossip and worldly pleasures account for the persistence of moral decadence in Nigeria. Other persistent factors include lack of fear of God, poverty, greed, unemployment and bad leadership qualities, human right abuses, lack of respect for sanctity of life, get rich quick syndrome and insensitivity to the various forms of social, economic and spiritual decay of the day are not left out of the persistence of moral decadence in Nigeria.

Pluralism calls for the persistence of moral decadence in Nigeria. The earliest Nigerian society was monolithic and whatever occupied the minds of Nigerians from different ethnic extractions was limited and easy for the church to monitor. This period witnessed no telephone, television, no computer and no internet facilities. However, with the introduction and commercialization of computer-internet, the socio-economic framework changed. The attention of Nigerians became diverted from traditional value system to the computer-internet which brought about divided interest in the vices that violated societal norms and values. This violation
has not only persisted but it has eroded the moral values, cultural values and are responsible for the persistence of the moral decadence in Nigeria.

Lack of strong moral education program under the general studies unit of Nigeria University and tertiary education programs explains another persistent factor of moral decadence in Nigeria. There is need to sustain the moral values at primary, secondary and tertiary levels of our educational system. The family system in Nigeria has been bedeviled by polygamy, divorce, separation, unemployment, poverty, disease, lack of shelter and illiteracy. The family which is the basic primary, social, economic and political units and agent of socialization has not been effective in instilling good moral values in children and wards. Anofienm (2007) says “parents with sound moral and ethical sanctity are no longer available like in the traditional society, hence moral decadent children with little or no regard with societal norms and values” (p.1). Similarly, there has been concentration on formal education without a corresponding effort in moral education at family level. This error is responsible for the persistence of moral decadence. Making the family the bedrock of sound moral upbringing will reduce to the barest minimum the persistence of moral decadence in Nigeria. Aumal (2015) maintains that when those children move from home to educational institution, they become worst due to the current state of education in the country.

As a follow up to the family aiding the persistence of moral decadence, the role of parents and guardians with strong moral foundation in order to safeguard acceptable moral standard need not to be overemphasized. The economic challenges seem to weaken parents’ mandate in the moral upbringing of their children and wards in Nigeria. The difficulty in gardening the mind as a way forward towards Nigeria’s dignity explains the persistence of moral decadence in Nigeria.

Moral values are expected to be inculcated forcefully but Naija Church News says the reverse is the case. Many strange practices and teachings are subject of orchestrated arguments. Similarly, Eyoboka (2004) argues that most Pentecostal churches have not come out to condemn immorality,
rather, they provide comfort zone for moral decadence in all ramification. The manifestation of moral decadence could be found in indecent dressing and such attraction is one of the breeding grounds for moral decadence. What then constitutes the setback of moral decadence to moral education in Nigeria?

Setbacks to Moral Education

There are setbacks to moral education in Nigeria. These setbacks are primarily traceable to moral decadence in Nigeria. Moral decadence in these analyses of setbacks will be interchangeably used by learning without character, moral indecency, churches without moral integrity, indecent activities because they are anomic, conflicting and negate acceptable goals by the members of the society. It is characterized by behaviours, actions, attitudes and opinions that are considered by most members and social group not right and thereby unacceptable, wrong and retrogressive. It is like immorality whose set of ideas put forward by any group are grossly unacceptable because they impact negatively on people, institutions and relationships in Nigeria.

Moral decadence does not help Nigerians distinguish between wrong from right. It is not in our norm to promote acts of disrespect, insubordination, fear, tension, laziness, and idleness. These acts imply a breakdown of moral values which have far-reaching moral, social, religious, economic and political implications. It has become complicated primarily because of the greater mixing of cultures and religions. Each has its own cultural ideas about evil. Generally speaking, falling from a higher standard of social living to a lower state in morals explains the personal trait which implies diminishing in the moral values among Nigerians.

It is also called moral misconduct which shows poor moral standards prevalent in educational system such as sexual abuse, indecent dressing, rape, cultism, examination malpractice, armed robbery and other anti-social behaviours. Moral decadence describes an erosion of professional ethics such as hypothetical oath taken by medical doctors. Similarly, societies that nurture individual and collective greed is generally disliked
and accused of decadence. It is a deviation from the functional value system of the Nigerian society.

There can be no meaningful church or Christian growth and the piety of every member without godliness and holiness. These cannot be achieved with moral decadence stirring at our faces. Sociologists of Religion have given what constitutes measures of religiosity in the society. The level of involvement does not centre on measurement of moral education. The interest of adherents of religion in particular and Nigerians in general does not seem to correspond with developing interest in the fear of the lord which Psalm 25:7xxx says is the beginning of wisdom.

Immoral activities do not seem also to promote exemplary life as the light and salt of the world (John 1:5). However, Gbote (2014) and Ogiugo (2015) were increasingly disturbed by prosperity gospel and gang rape, cultist assault respectively. They have become worrisome especially among Nigerian youths in Nigeria. Similarly, Mfumbusa cited in Omonijo, Nwodo, Uche and Ezechukwu (2016) contains that “there has been a remarkable increase in the number of churches and also a commensurate rise in corruption and other vices” (p. 637). There is a consensus among scholars and agencies such as Adams (2015), Nigerianeye (2013) and United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (2015) who seem to agree that initially, when Christianity was first introduced in West African countries, it had the impact of leading the people to holiness than contemporarily when the reverse seems the case. By implication, the functional role of moral education is undermined by moral decay.

Moral decay remains a set back because the cumulative points of scholarly viewpoints such as Ejike (2014), Ifoh (2014), Mohammad (2015) and Dike (2008) all seem to agree that little improvement had been achieved in attitude, behaviour and comportment of Christians through the proliferation of churches. Indecent activities are products of moral decadence in Nigeria. These in decent activities according to Kalu (1978), Obiora (2001), Ekenna (2001), Alghalus (2001), Achunike (2004) and Diara and Onah (2004) are responsible for the little improvement hitherto
recorded in attitude and behaviour. Shedding more light on indecent activities by most Nigerians, Ejike (2004), Ifoh (2014) and Mohammad (2015) are of the view that indecent activities have cost the Nigerian society to be constantly ranked low in the corruption index.

Learning without character is deadly in causing set back in Nigeria. The Nigerian government and the Christian Church seem helpless by either not doing enough to expose the setbacks of moral decadence to moral education or that efforts put in place to curtail it are weak, uncomplimentary and grossly inadequate. Dikes (2008) believes that government is not doing anything about the problem of moral decadence or that efforts put in place are weak and have failed to yield a desired result. Moral decadence therefore accounts for many business failures in Nigeria. Corruption, insecurity and fear have given rise to moral decadence.

Holiness as a life style determines answers to prayer. Moral decadence is a sin which is regarded as iniquity in the heart of man and it hinders answers to prayers. The hindered answers to prayer may have explained the inaccessibility to deliverance, suffering, wickedness of the wicked, abject poverty etc. it may present many Christians from entering the kingdom of God. Moral decadence makes for eternal destruction.

It fuels spiritual leakage, carnality and worldliness. To be carnally minded is destructive. Church growth and the rise in corruption are conterminous. Economic development in based on business transaction but moral decadence makes the required trust and moral integrity low or lacking the rate of investment. Similarly, Ezeike (2008) says a high rate of criminal activities has remained a strong disincentive to business investment in Nigeria. It has a great setback on industrialization and employment.

Moral indecency like corruption impedes national development. Weber (1930), Igbo Moreho and Akpor-Robaro (2013) maintain that it could be very difficult to experience national development in a chaotic
environment. Ejiofor (1987) believes that chaotic environment characterizes the Nigerian state and its peace and tranquility that ensure investment that leads to national development. Moral education signifies peace and tranquility and could be regarded as a tool for promoting sustainable national development.

Churches without moral integrity affect people negatively by escalating diverse social ills such as family problems relating to fornication, adultery, abortion, divorce, prostitution and teenage mothers. Others may include organizational issues such as sexual harassment, denial of entitlements, corruption of different kinds, enslavement of workers, injustice and child abuse. Moral decadence is an indication that Nigeria is passing through had and perilous times. It is not enough blaming the precarious situation on either the political leaders or law enforcement agents but they portray the image, attitude and moral disposition of Nigeria in negative or uncomplimentary light. Folaranmi (2012) observes that:

Mention anything negative, corruption, violation of human right, fallen standard of education, electoral practices, epileptic power outage, incessant strikes, lack of security of lives and properties, unemployment, fraud, greed and the rest, Nigeria is in the forefront. (p.vii).

The above predicaments constitute Nigeria’s woes. It is no longer news that Nigeria was ranked among the most corrupt nations of the world. Uche (2017) states that “Nigeria seems to be going backward every day in all aspects of life” (p.). He did not give the various variables used in measuring the perceived backwardness in Nigeria. However, Lawal (2012) opines that:

While corruption is on the increase, our life expectancy seems to be decreasing, poverty and powerlessness are the order of the day. People’s lives are being disposed
of cheaply through different means such as armed robbers, hired assassins, kidnappers and potholes on most of our high ways (p.ix).

Moral depravity is an index for measuring corruption. Uche (2017) states that “corruption breeds poverty and insecurity in Nigeria which are roots of moral decadence” (p.175). They need a frontal attack in pulling down the stronghold. Moral education is imperative in the much needed frontal attack on moral decadence in Nigeria. The Nigerian citizens, the political leaders and the armed forces need the gardening of mind as a way forward towards doing away with moral decadence and thereby restoring human dignity. Similarly, the activities of the above stakeholders had their activities characterized by corruption, exploitation, degradation, avarice, selfishness and other forms of bad image which had dangerously deteriorated the moral life of most Nigerians.

The long history of military rule had its toll on moral decadence which had cast aspersion based on armed robbery, kidnapping, bunkering, drug pushing, fake and adulterated drug among other vices which made Nigerians be described as indecent, notorious and disgraceful. Moral decadence does not encourage the molding, the required character and developing of sound attitude and moral in Nigerians irrespective of greed, gender, ethnicity, tribe, tongue and philosophy of life. Moral decay hinders the bedrock of socio-economic growth of the nation. Many investors will not want to invest their money in an unstable society. Moral decadence explains such immoral activities that gave rise to insecurity, corruption which are setbacks to moral education.

Similarly, moral decadence is a setback to moral education because it does not seem to equip and form Nigerians politically or become a desired pivot of every stratum of Nigerian life, especially in character moulding which needs to be instilled in Nigerians right from the cradle for a better Nigeria. Moral decadence is a negation of a strict observance of due process, War Against Indiscipline (WAI) among other ethical orientation
programs aimed at enabling Nigerians direct aright our noble cause. Moral depravity does not positively promote moral education exemplified in academic discipline, hard work, diligence, piety etc. It does not encourage self-reflective educational practices that value the worth and dignity of Nigerians irrespective of political affiliations and as moral agents in a pluralistic society. It does not help build to reconstruct the dilapidated moral structures that make social interaction in Nigeria difficult. The need to create a society where human dignity, filial bond, equality of human persons is imperative in restoring, promoting and respecting the rebranding Nigeria project based on sound moral attitudes, filial piety and respect for human dignity.

It could be observed that education without character does not have a place to foster a kind of training which must be holistic in incorporating in Nigerians irrespective of age, creed and social status an important place in the efforts to bring about sustainable development devoid of social vices such as corruption, examination malpractices, kidnapping, cultism, armed robbery, child trafficking, rape, incest, drug trafficking, drug abuse and other engulfed darkness of wickedness and terror.

The observed engulfed darkness has paralyzed moral education in plunging Nigeria into distress and being besieged by lack of fear of God, little or no obligation of sensitizing the nation, unable to reform the already deformed children and lacking in giving sound orientation to the growing children. Moral decadence that has negatively affected the family, the church, educational system and other social institution negatively has negatively affected the family as the cradle of safety, trust, educational and mental development. The immoral disposition of parents in the family does not seem to make home laying the desired foundation for learning and adequate development.

Moral decadence has posed a lot of challenges to the development of the family as a social, economic, political, religious and educational unit of the society. The observed constant and steady loss of values are based on indecent activities and their negative impact on people, institutions and
relationships. The erosion of values also explains the manner in which Nigerians seem to assimilate tendencies and behaviours that were once considered according to Obiano (2016) “unacceptable by the society. This has become a major source of worry to all” (p.9). The morally decadent Nigerians may be exempted from those who share in this major source of worry.

Moral decadence does not promote a desired change which moral education strives, according to Obioma (2016) “through embodiment and encapsulation of national integrity and deep ethical values” (p. 13). Moral decadence is a setback due to the fact that it does not deepen the drive and search for national collective return to the culture of ethical values, transparent integrity as reflective of Nigerian and communal way of life.

The Way Forward
There is need to emphasize holiness, righteousness and moral living rather than prosperity message. Righteousness exults a nation but sin is a reproach. This can drive a change of attitude towards restitution, holiness and U-turn from moral decadence. Men and women of God are watchmen over their congregation and consequently, they should as a mark of moral responsibility stop shielding moral decadent persons mostly government officials in their ministries, parishes and branches. As shepherds, leadership by example is necessary for moral decent living. The fear of God should be emphasized in religious adherents. The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (EFN) should also act as a regulatory body in flushing out quacks from their organized bodies. Similarly, erring members should be sanctioned in love.

There should be enlightenment, moral education and mobilization aimed at conscientizing Christian Leaders and their followers in discouraging immorality, decadent activities and indecency in favour of church attendance. It is observed that when a member is associated with ungodly behaviour, that member should be advised, counseled and prayed for.
Christian members passing through hard or difficult times should be assisted materially and kindly too.

**Recommendations**
Moral decadence is a setback to moral education in Nigeria. The following recommendations are made. The word of God for Nigerians ought to be spirit filled and not based on religious doctrines. The gospel message should be based on liberation of man from the chains of poverty and bondage and man's inhumanity to man.

The conscience of religious adherents should be aroused to detest evil and embrace righteousness and holiness in every sphere of life.

Conscious and deliberate efforts should be made in order to encourage Nigerians to do things that are right or in line with the Nigerian moral values and virtues. Nigeria needs moral renaissance which will help the morally decadent citizens to regain lost values that can help tackle issues of immoral activities in Nigeria.

Nigerians leaders should as a matter of necessity make integrity, commitment and accountability their watchwords.

**Conclusion**
It is evident based on the cumulative force of various ways identified by previous studies which have associated economic issues with moral decadence that moral decadence constitutes setback to moral education in Nigeria. Man by nature is rebellious, disobedient and anomic. Moreover, all the past inauguration of programmes were socially oriented and designed based on media message without the spiritual backing. Spiritual backing would have been created by conscientizing favourable attitudes that would shift norms and change overt behaviour. Sparking intrapersonal, interpersonal and group conversations are imperative in contributing to the process of directed social change which occurs at the level of individual, community or society.
Like corruption, moral decadence thrives in a situation where there is a denial of justice, fairness, goodwill and other forms of decay or loss of dignity and integrity which have eaten deep into the fabric of the society. Moral decadence has given rise to miserable conditions or immoral activities which manifested in dishonesty, lack of respect for elders, those in authority, uncaring attitude to the poor and the needy. Others include laziness, rape, marital infidelity, indecent dressing, lack of self discipline and lack of sanctity of human life.

This paper has examined the various ways moral decadence has constituted a setback to moral education in Nigeria. There is need for peace in Nigeria and the desired peace will be eluded if there is no peace in the family, community, society and institutions that make up Nigeria. There is need for the moral fibre, improved moral attitude to economic and social issues in life and the moral will to overcome moral decadence. There is a compelling need for religious functionaries to urgently exercise their prophetic functions in enlisting the setbacks of moral decadence to moral education.

As a result of moral decadence, Nigeria has continually struggled to make both ends meet. She has put in place laudable programmes aimed at overcoming her economic crises that compounded large scale unemployment, diseases, lack of shelter, poor funding of education and stagnation in the socio-economic development. Moral decadence explains setback in Nigeria’s collective resolve to increase the economic possibilities, stabilize the polity, consolidate the democratic governance structure and make modest progress in the social and economic spheres of life. Moral decadence is an index which degrades, makes for a highly unproductive activity, retards economic growth and shrinks the productive possibility frontier. Moral decadence is a negative omen and like corruption, Uche (2008) states that if encourages the suppressed growth, reduces the high frequency, unethical practices, economic decay which make sustainable poverty, education, employment generation and wealth creation, sound scholarship, creativity and value orientation which
ought to have made Nigeria one of the strongest economies in Africa difficult.

Moral decadence does not help in mobility the resources of Nigeria to make a fundamental break with the corrupt tradition which explains the failures of the past beneath a unified, prosperous and viral economy to generations unborn.

Functional approach as a platform for understanding moral education unfolds effective lessons socio-economic and moral challenges of moral decadence to moral education in Nigeria. It could be observed that moral education is imperative for peace and sustainable development based on equity, justice and patriotism. The concept of moral decadence exemplified above has exposed it as a snake poison. The functional approach to this snake poisons according to Uche (2017):

...is a regeneration, a spiritual rebirth and a national repentance. The same God who called John's audience to repentance through his message is calling on Nigerians to get back on the right track. This response would advance moral and spiritual development and character molding of Nigerian by subscribing to a system of prohibitions to limit the range of the people. (p.176)

It takes prayers and the intervention of the Holy Spirit to change persons from evil ways of life to good. Through prayers, the Holy Spirit convicts immoral human beings and delivers them completely from the lust of the flesh which is suppressed to the barest minimum.

References


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