

A Comparative Analysis of the Nigerian National Policy on Education: Examining Moral Values and Paradigm Shift in Senior Secondary School Education in Katsina State

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Abstract: The research analyzed the Nigerian National Policy on Education with particular reference to moral values and paradigm shift in senior secondary schools in Katsina. The study is hinged on five objectives and five research questions. The population comprised three thousand seven hundred teachers from Katsina state (3,700), ninety two (92) Quality Assurance staff, and one hundred and sixty one principals (161). Research advisors (2006) sampling table was used to arrive at 357 teachers, 80 Quality Assurance staff, and one hundred and thirty two principals. Descriptive survey designed was used together with four fingered Likert scale questionnaire to elicit responses of the target population on different issues raised. Mean, standard deviation and percentages were used to describe respondents' perception. The findings revealed that National Policy on Education has not adequately addressed moral values in the curriculum. It also showed that there is a moderate support for a paradigm shift to enhance moral education. The study recommended among other things that National Policy on Education should properly articulate and implement policies on moral values using effective strategies.

Key points: National Policy on Education, Moral Values and Paradigm Shift.

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Introduction

Education is a value-laden enterprise as it is a moral enterprise that is why it has been established that every education policy, process and content must have as part of its aims the inculcation of moral values. However, the procedures for realizing these significant objectives differ from society to society and from time to time. Any educational system which perhaps by omission or commission fails to produce morally upright citizens may be faulty and therefore, requires very serious attention. The formal edification system in Nigeria which is backed up by the document the "National Policy on Education" is accepted in (this paper, as the testament of Nigerian education). Nigerian education is supposed to reflect the overall interest of Nigerians in multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious dimensions. The education, as we have it today cuts across all levels

from pre-primary to tertiary. Equally, the moral value expected should meet the overall interest of all Nigerians. An educated Nigerian must be one that would be acceptable within and outside Nigeria. In other words, he should develop himself well enough, to take his rightful place locally, nationally and internationally. To this end, his moral credentials must not be built on mere ethnic, cultural or religious sentiments. His concepts of good and bad, right or wrong should flow through logical sequences.

In this paper, attempt is made at a philosophical examination of the policy provision as contained in the Nigerian National Policy on Education and their bearing for the inculcation of moral values. Human being as a social animal never lives in isolation right from birth to the last minute of his life. This social nature of man takes him an inevitable member of many social groups, i.e family, school, community and the society. This composition of human beings into such inter-connected and inter-related categorizations warrants the need for authority to govern the conduct and affairs of human in such categorization. The essence of governance is to lead people towards anything that makes their lives better and comfortable. "Education" as stated in the National Policy on Education, is an instrument for effecting national consciousness and patriotism among citizens and thus, required by any government to provide the right type of education that suits its nature, needs and aspirations. The nature and culture of the society, its needs and its future aspirations are core issues that should dominate any nation's overall philosophy.

Nigeria as a nation is not an exception – in the quest to provide the required individuals needed to service as agents of overall development. It is on ground of this, Nigeria derived its philosophy of education from its overall philosophy which is much concerned with three main issues: The development of individual into a sound and effective citizen. Full integration of individual into the community and the provision of equal access to educational opportunities for all citizens of the country at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal system. But, on the contrary, the practice in Nigerian education has taken different direction from what has been enshrined in the nation's educational philosophy. Highlighted are the various ramifications of Nigerian educational practice that poses great challenges to address the three issues in Nigeria's educational philosophy. How does Nigerian education make individual sound and effective while it lacks proper and suitable approach to teaching moral values? Education and morality are intricately linked in the complex process of development. The educational system and development of a society cannot be divorced from its values orientation. Many scholars have attempted the analysis and interpretations of the relationship between education and morality. Education is a value laden enterprise. Education is a value, both intrinsic and extrinsic. Education is value intrinsic because it is positive and it implies a positive and it implies a positive state of mind. Education is also value extrinsic when viewed from the material end. It elevates one, gives recognition, prestige, provides avenue for social mobility, status, economy, and host of material benefits associated with education. The most important however, is the intrinsic value of education in which morality is indispensable. According to Bagudo (2004) education is a worthwhile activity. The importance of education cannot be overemphasized. This is why it is linked with human survival, as man cannot survive without some form of education, of which moral education is indispensable.

In Nigeria schools and colleges, what appeared to be regarded as moral education is the teaching of Islamic religious studies and Bible knowledge. Is Islamic and Christian studies the same as moral and values education and do they serve the same purpose? Could moral and values education be left in the hands of religious instructors? Are teachers of all school subjects and courses equally moral instructors? In other words, do all school subjects and courses contain moral and value teachings? The paper up holds that all teachers irrespective of whatever subjects or courses they teach are moral instructors and all school subjects and courses contain moral teaching. This is the reason why moral education should be given a pride of place in the school curriculum.

This paper therefore focuses on Nigerian education alongside the general principles of moral values, its investigation the extent in which the education is committed to the expected moral values of the country.

Statement of the problem

While Nigeria has a longstanding commitment to education through its national policy, there exists a discernible gap in the effective implementation of moral education components. This research identifies this gap as a significant problem, with potentials reunifications for the ethical development of the nation's youth. The inadequacies in the integration of moral values within the education framework may continue to sources challenges such as ethical erosion, lack of civic responsibility, and diminished social cohesion. Understanding and addressing these shortcomings are critical for the enhancement of the overall quality and impact of education on the moral fabric of Nigeria society. This is why Nigerian education should be made to be more committed to the nation's moral values i.e the school, with its human and material resources, is the best place to handle the nation's moral regeneration. This of course, is built on the premise that the schools should be well equipped, human and material wise, to execute their numerous assignments. Nonetheless, the school, in a sense, is an extension of the family (home), while the latter is the foundation of any society.

Being pretty aware of the above, the Federal Government of Nigeria emphasizes the need for moral education in the (National Policy on Education). Regrettably, moral education has not, until this moment, been taught as an independent subject in the school timetable in Nigerian public schools. Moral values should rather be taught outside religious institution, being in mind the secular status of Nigeria. This is problem that equally deserves necessary attention.

Consequently, with the complex nature of Nigeria, a nation with numerous ethnic groups, each with its cultural and religious differences, the issue of moral principles becomes a pedagogical problem. The problem then lies on what precisely constitutes morality of the standards that would be used to measures morality in Nigeria, traditionally, it is believed that a child is meant to conform to the norms and values of the society through acculturation. Morality then implies conformity to stipulated norms. Here gain our education should be able to evolve a sound, logical, moral standard that will cut across religion and ethnicity.

Sheriff (2002) rightly argues, that to achieve growth and development in a society, the moral character of the citizens has to be developed. He observes that lack of moral character marked the decline, and its presence, the eventual rise of all great civilizations. The task of education, obviously speaking, cannot be limited to mere intellectual culture only. Ottaway(2003) supports this strong view, stating that the educator has on one hand, an academic role concerned with scholarship and on the other hand, he is a character trainer concerned with the development of the child's whole personality. This fact, of course, is consistently reviewed in the Nigerian situation. For instance, the National Policy on Education has as one of its cardinal objectives, "the inculcation of moral values". Nigerian education, therefore, is expected to inculcate the required moral values among Nigerians. But, unfortunately, the entire country is increasingly permeated with corruption, dishonesty, murder, armed robbery, insurgency and numerous other vices. These unfortunate acts are found among the leaders and the led, among the elites and non-elites. They are found in our various institutions of learning, our political, social and even religious institutions and our homes. Hence, various organs of the nation cannot function properly because they are not in healthy conditions this is the result of why life in the country becomes increasingly difficult, insecure and unhappy and can only be cured through moral regeneration. This is necessary because, the greatest obstacles to the development of our country is lack of moral values.

This paper is a committed attempt at examining the various aspect of Nigerian education and how the policies and practices of the system enhanced the moral values and expectations of the country.

Objectives of the study

The general objective of this research work is to at examining the various aspect of Nigerian education and how the policies and practices of the system enhanced the moral values and expectations of the country. However, the research has the following specific objectives:

1. To critically analyze the correct status and implementation of moral values within the Nigerian National Policy on Education.
2. To identify challenges and gaps in the integration of moral education in the national curriculum.
3. To propose a reconstructed view for a paradigm shift in the incorporation of values within the education system.
4. To provide innovative strategies and recommendations for policy makers and educators to enhance moral education.
5. To contribute valuable insights for future policy development and academic discourse on education and moral values in Nigeria.

Research Questions

In line with the objectives of the study, the following research questions were formulated to guide the research work:

1. What is the current status of moral values within the Nigerian national policy on Education?
2. What challenges exist in the effective implementation of moral education within the national curriculum?
3. How can a reconstructed paradigm shift enhance the interpretation of moral values in the national curriculum?
4. What innovative strategies can be proposed to address the identified gap in moral education?
5. How can the outcomes of this research contribute to informed policy decisions and educational practices?

Literature Review

Nigerian National Policy Provision on Moral Values and Situational Analysis on Ground

The overall Nigerian philosophy emanates from the fundamental political aspirations of the founding fathers of our great nation and it presents Nigeria's desire in attaining the optimum living standard for its citizens, continental neighbors and rest of international community. It seeks to make Nigerians to live in unity and harmony with one another as an indivisible, democratic and sovereign nation founded in the principles of freedom, equality and justice and secondly, it seeks to foster inter-African solidarity and world peace through understanding. How does Nigerian education help in promoting unity among Nigerians? Do Nigerians live harmoniously among themselves in all geo-political zones in the country?

Long before independence, Nigeria has its unique system of education (indigenous education) which best suits its nature, culture and traditions, as well as religious education system inherited in the predominant faith of its populace. During that time peaceful co-existence among Nigerians was at its highest peak and people live harmoniously with each other. With the advent of western education after the coming of colonial masters, a number of educational conferences were held and a lot of reforms were introduced to restructure the indigenous and religious education which if analyzed critically would expose the mismatch of the newly introduced system of education which up to date is being practiced in Nigeria, and this is the fundamental genesis of crisis in education sector as the western ideologist inherent in the inherited colonial education system does not conform to Nigerians needs, and aspirations. In relation to the main issue in Nigerian philosophy of education as enshrined in the National Policy on Education, which includes:

- a) The development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen.
- b) The full integration of individuals into community; and
- c) The provision of equal access to educational opportunities for all citizens of the country at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal school system.

How Nigerian education system does help individual to develop into a sound and effective citizen? Development in individuals does not happen haphazardly, certain components have to be present in individual such as knowledge, skills, and the required training in addition to the outright moral being of individual. But the most essential of all these is the moral component of individual. Mango proclaimed that moral development is the most important aspect of human development just as human development is the most important aspect of national development. There are so many indicators to the fact that morality has been removed from Nigerian education despite the pronouncement of a slogan at each and every graduation ceremony in Nigerian educational institutions that “the students after finding them worthy in character and learning” they are awarded with certain certificates. But, the dramatic turn of event is evidently proved by the attitude of such graduates from Nigerian schools when they go into public service. They are mostly found in some immoral activities ranging from indiscipline, dishonesty, abuse of trust, injustice, embezzlement of public funds and other forms of such notorious vices. Where is the worthiness of character which was claimed to have been acquired by the Nigerian graduates? This immoral attitude of Nigerians had not only affected the quest for national development, but had adversely distorted the image of Nigeria and Nigerians in the eyes of the world.

On another hand, some Nigerian teachers are another thing of consideration for the fact that they are the most important pillar of any standard education system as they are the agents of execution of any program intended towards development of education as claimed by Salawu that, the development of any nation's education depends solemnly on the quality of its teachers and much of them are morally dwarf, they could not uphold and honour the trust vested on them and failed to exercise justice in the equal treatment of their students. Mango described such teachers as those that pass through education and education never passes through them. Furthermore, a number of Nigerian teachers have been sacked from their various appointments for indulging or conniving with students in either re-examination misconduct or other form of naughty affairs and some were discharged from their duty post on ground of sexual harassment. When teachers and students have, to a certain extent, manifested these kinds of immoral practices in Nigerian education system, what should be! The degree of the soundness, effectiveness, efficiency and worthiness of the product of this education system? If teachers and students in a given education are found morally crippled, what could be corrective measures be?

Further, Nigerian education system lacks to adopt suitable approach to moral education which is the most essential component of integrating individual in the community. It is only when individual is morally developed he respects himself; respect the other individuals and the constituted authority. Nigerian schools are found faulty teaching moral education to citizens. This is obviously seen in the approach to teaching moral education adopted by Nigerian schools. What approach to teaching moral education is adopted by Nigerian schools and colleges? They only provide Nigerian citizens with raw-knowledge without essence. The age-long approach that is being used in Nigerian schools had not made any impact in converting immoral practice among Nigerians i.e religious approach reflected in the subjects Islamic Studies and Christian Religious Knowledge. How many pastors and Imams were found red-handed in some immoral activities? How does religion influence their behaviour? Since immoral practices persisted among Nigerians despite the use of religious approach to moral education, what attempt is being made by the Nigerian education system to fashion out some other avenues through which moral education could be approached; hence the teaching of moral education in Nigerian schools will be more effective.

Many scholars are of the view that moral education could be approached through other avenues other than the age long religious approach one of which is ‘Secular approach to moral education’. Bagudo(2004) is of the opinion that moral education could be through various school subjects we have in Nigerian school curriculum based on the assertion that every teacher irrespective of the subjects he teaches is a moral instructor and every school subject has moral dimension which a teacher should aim at identifying and teach to his/her students. Oladele(2004) also advocated for

approaching moral education through 'Cognitive Development Approach' where student's cognition will be directed towards understanding and rational judgment between what is morally upright and what is morally bankrupt any nation that struggle for the development of its citizens but fails to have good approach to moral education of its people could not claim to have attempted towards its citizenry development. Thus, the philosophy of Nigerian education 'to develop individual into a sound and effective citizen' remained a mere wish, unrealizable and a shadow of something abstract. In addition to full integration of such individuals into the community.

On the issue of 'provision of equal access to educational opportunities' the present system of Nigerian education and the nature of Nigerian society have fall apart. In this regard, many factors pose challenges to the attainment of equal access to education for all the citizens.

The dualistic nature of Nigerian education system constitutes major constraints to equal access to education. Public schools exist side by side with the private schools in Nigeria and this has created a barrier between the well-to-do families and the economically disabled families. The economic class of a Nigerian citizen determines which school he is to go to. A child from a rich family is opportune to attend private schools which are run by private entrepreneurs with sophisticated and latest educational equipment's, more qualified teachers under a good and effective administration and supervision thereby making the learning atmosphere in private school conducive, while a child from poor family is left with no option than to enroll in the nearest public schools to his residence characterized by poor school infrastructure ranging from dilapidated buildings, unqualified teaches and substandard equipment. This feature of public schools in Nigerian education system must not be unconnected with corruption among public servants and poor budgetary allocation to education sector.

Another obstacle to the provision of equal access to educational opportunities for citizens is the rural-urban diversities. Provision of infrastructure and other social amenities is in wide disparity between rural schools and urban schools and this is in turn brings inequality to the availability of the required equipment posting and transfer of teachers between rural and urban areas.

Moral development is believed to be the most important aspect of human development and it is an indispensable tool for national development because only when individuals are morally sound they could maintain and become conscious of their rights and that of other members of the society. Thus, the better way to make Nigerian citizens develop into sound and effective citizens, teaching moral education in Nigeria schools has to be redefined and or reviewed so to fashion out more suitable approach to teaching moral education coupled with equal distribution of basic amenities of life between rural and urban areas and address the issues of dualistic nature of Nigerian school system.

On the basis of this exploration of the mismatch Nigeria's educational philosophy and the Nigerian educational practice, there is used for certain reformations and of adjustments on the Nigerian school curriculum, school system and Nigerian educational practice entirely. First and foremost, for Nigeria to realize its philosophy of developing individuals into a fit sound and effective citizens, the problem of morality among Nigerians should be rationally and critically looked into. This could be by way of specification i.e to identify and adopt a suitable and encompassing approach to teaching moral education in Nigerian schools, an approach that could cater for all die multi-religious, multi-cultural, multi ethnic and multi lingual diversities of Nigeria. This is for the fact that the currently used religious approach has failed without making the desired impact in addressing the issue of immorality among Nigerians. When the nation adopt an approach that suits all the Nigerian diversities and the teachers become conversion with it, the teaching of moral education in Nigeria schools will surely witness a boost and provide in Nigerians a sense of belonging. Rationality and consciousness that are indispensable instrument for making individuals sound and increase effectiveness in all their affairs.

On the issue of integrating individual into die community, individuals is by nature an integral part of the whole society but some elements have to be present in both individual and the society before the process of that integration is completed. Such elements in individual include morality, and for

Nigeria to realize its philosophy of integrating individual into the community, it has to rethink about the issue of teaching moral education in Nigerian schools.

In addressing the issue of provision of equal access to education opportunity the effort is being sabotaged by the challenges of dualistic nature of Nigeria's education system in which public schools are being outsmarted by private schools and significant portion of Nigerian population are dancing to the tune of this challenges where they regard private schools and recommends their certificates more than that of public schools, in this regard, Nigerian education system should endeavour to harmonies and reconcile the wider disparity in terms of the provision of quality equipment and teachers between private and public schools in addition to proper management and administration.

The Nigerian government should in the same vein make concerted effort to provide basic infrastructure and other social amenities at a balanced rate between rural and urban areas which in turns make life easier and comfortable living to equalize the distribution of quality teachers and equipment between rural and urban schools.

Reconstructed View for Paradigm Shift

Nigeria has a very interesting value system which both the previous and present systems of education aimed at inculcating into the minds of Nigerian citizens right from the traditional system of education, Islamic system of education and the modern system of education. All the subsequent systems of education we had in Nigeria are the by-product of our traditional and indigenous system of education. In traditional education, morality is based on the traditional norms and traditions aimed at making individuals' citizen respectable to the traditional authorities and a strict adheres to the traditional system of values.

The curriculum of traditional education are more of providing communal socialization, employment and economic self-reliance and some other activities regarded as special occupation. Teachers under this system involve parents, members of both nuclear and extended families and apprentices trainers and virtually all members of the community.

In Islamic system of education, morally is the watch-word but based on the dictates of Islamic laws. In Northern Nigeria most especially, individual is trained to keep on good and refrain from evil all of what Islamic permits and forbids. The curriculum of Islamic system of education reflects the three categories or levels of Islamic education. These levels are equated with the modern primary, post-primary and tertiary levels. At primary level, which is considered as basic, a child learn by imitation, gestures, pronunciation, learn how to walk etc. and the first teacher of such learning period is the mother, family members and the rest of the community members.

In Islamic education system, all knowledge, skills and behaviours to be acquired are centered on the teachings of Islam as a religion as contained in the Holy Quran and Prophetic traditions. Traditions. Moral values are taught to every individual by Quranic Mallams and by all Muslims as they are all ordained to help to the acts of obedience and refuse to help in the act of disobedience. Islam enjoins all Muslims to be kind, generous, brother keeper, selflessness, honest, just and all other form of moral behaviours that keeps the Muslim community functional and peaceful. Therefore, the content of curriculum in Islamic system of education is simply derived from the Quran and Hadiths, (the dos and don'ts of Islamic Sharia). Thus, the approach used in teaching moral education in Islamic system of education is simply religious which still reflects in the current system of Nigerian education 'religious approach'.

The present system of Nigerian education is a by-product of the previous systems of education. In this system, religious approach to moral education is adapted as reflected in the subjects of Islamic religious knowledge and Christian religious knowledge in the Nigerian school curriculum. This religious approach has failed without any impact in converting the immoral practice among Nigerian students due to so many challenges, shortcoming and misconceptions ingrained in 'religious approach'. This approach has failed the evidence of which failure is seen in rampant

assassination and kidnapping of innocent individuals, looting public treasury, betrayal of public trust, injustice and other forms of such vices.

With this on ground, Nigeria needs a suitable approach, all-encompassing with wide applicability to all the multi-religious, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-lingual nature of Nigerian society to alternate the unidirectional approach currently in use. Nigeria should look for an approach to teaching moral education that will cater for the multi-religious, multi-cultural and multi-ethnic nature of Nigerian society.

Multi-religious nature of Nigerian society is obviously traced in the number of religious professed to Nigerian citizens. Apart from the two prominent religious i.e Islam and Christianity some Nigerian professes the religion of nature. Multi-ethnic groups we have in Nigeria also constitute many constraints to the success of religious approach with diverse cultures and traditions. Therefore, in order that teaching moral education in Nigeria schools be successful and effective to curve the menace of immorality among Nigerian students, multidimensional approach should be adopted to replace the unidirectional approach currently in use. This is for the fact that, a number of approaches which include secular approach, values clarification approach and cognitive development approach, other than the religions approach are incorporated in die newly proposed multi-dimensional approach.

Methodology

Descriptive survey designed was used to seek opinion of respondents using four fingered Likert scale questionnaire. Research advisors sampling table (2006) was also sued to acquire the sample.

Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion

Research Questions

Research Question 1: What is the current status of moral values within the Nigerian national policy on Education?

Table 1: Current status of moral values within the Nigerian National Policy on Education

SN	Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (D)	Mean	Std.dev
1	Morality and education are related	297 (54.4)	76 (13.9)	103 (18.9)	70 (12.8)	3.10	1.113
2	Education does not address morality	138 (25.3)	255 (46.7)	81 (14.8)	72 (13.2)	2.84	0.951
3	Moral value are entrenched in NPE	80 (14.7)	112 (20.5)	242 (44.3)	112 (20.5)	2.29	0.955
4	Moral values are integrated in National curriculum	32 (5.9)	106 (19.4)	313 (57.3)	95 (17.4)	2.14	0.765
5	Moral values are only confined in religious teachings	110 (20.1)	171 (31.3)	141 (25.8)	124 (22.7)	2.49	1.053
	Cumulative aggregate	657 (24.1)	720 (26.4)	880 (32.2)	472 (17.3)	2.57	0.967

The data presented in Table 1 provides insights into various aspects of this relationship, as assessed through a survey. A significant majority (54.4%) of respondents agree that morality and education are related, with a mean score of 3.10. This suggests a strong recognition of the importance of moral values in the educational context. In contrast, 46.7% of respondents agree that education does not adequately address morality, leading to a mean score of 2.84. This indicates a perception that the educational system may be falling short in incorporating moral teachings. Only 14.7% believe that moral values are entrenched in the NPE, with a mean score of 2.29. This low percentage signals a concern regarding the actual implementation of moral values within the policy framework. A mere

5.9% of respondents affirm that moral values are integrated into the national curriculum, reflected in a mean score of 2.14. This suggests a significant gap between policy intentions and practical application in educational settings. The belief that moral values are primarily confined to religious teachings is supported by 20.1% of respondents, with a mean score of 2.49. This highlights a perception that moral education is not sufficiently secularized or inclusive within the broader educational framework.

The cumulative aggregate scores indicate that a substantial portion of respondents (32.2%) disagree with the current state of moral values in education, reflected in an overall mean score of 2.57. This suggests a general dissatisfaction with how moral values are perceived and implemented within the NPE. The findings indicate a critical need for reform in the Nigerian educational policy regarding moral values. Despite a recognition of the importance of morality in education, there is a significant gap in its practical integration into the curriculum and overall educational experience. The low percentages associated with the entrenchment and integration of moral values suggest that while the policy may articulate noble intentions, its execution may not align with these goals. This disconnect could contribute to the observed moral decay in society, as noted in various studies highlighting the rise of anti-social behaviors and a decline in moral character among the youth.

Research Question 2: What challenges exist in the effective implementation of moral education within the national curriculum?

Table 2: Challenges in the effective implementation of moral education within the national curriculum

SN	Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Std.dev
1	Nigerian education lacks suitable approach to teaching moral education.	167 (30.6)	149 (27.3)	113 (20.7)	117 (21.4)	2.67	1.124
2	Nigerians are morally bankrupt.	95 (17.4)	107 (19.6)	207 (37.9)	137 (25.1)	2.29	1.029
3	There is no equal access to education in Nigeria.	82 (15.0)	132 (24.2)	189 (34.6)	143 (26.2)	2.28	1.014
4	Moral values are not well addressed in the Nigerian philosophy of education.	127 (23.3)	170 (31.1)	175 (32.1)	74 (13.6)	2.64	0.984
5	Government is not ready to implement moral education.	121 (22.2)	206 (37.7)	134 (24.5)	85 (15.6)	2.66	0.990
	Cumulative aggregate	592 (21.7)	764 (28.0)	818 (30.0)	556 (20.4)	2.51	1.028

The challenges in the effective implementation of moral education within the Nigerian national curriculum are highlighted in Table 2, which presents survey data reflecting various obstacles perceived by respondents. A significant 30.6% of respondents strongly agree that the Nigerian education system lacks a suitable approach to teaching moral education, resulting in a mean score of 2.67. This indicates a widespread belief that current methodologies are inadequate for effectively imparting moral values. Only 17.4% strongly agree with the statement that Nigerians are morally bankrupt, leading to a mean score of 2.29. This suggests that while there is recognition of moral issues, there is a more significant portion of respondents who may not fully endorse this view, indicating a nuanced perspective on the moral state of society. With 15.0% strongly agreeing that there is no equal access to education in Nigeria, the mean score of 2.28 highlights a critical challenge. Disparities in educational access can hinder the equitable delivery of moral education, particularly in underserved regions. A combined 54.4% (23.3% strongly agree and 31.1% agree) believe that moral values are not well addressed in the Nigerian philosophy of education, resulting in a mean score of 2.64. This reflects a significant concern regarding the integration of moral education into the overarching educational framework. The perception that the government is not

ready to implement moral education is echoed by 22.2% who strongly agree and 37.7% who agree, leading to a mean score of 2.66. This indicates skepticism about the political will and commitment to prioritize moral education within the national curriculum.

The cumulative aggregate scores reveal that 30.0% of respondents disagree with the current state of moral education implementation, reflected in an overall mean score of 2.51. This suggests a general concern about the effectiveness of moral education initiatives. The findings indicate several critical challenges facing the implementation of moral education in Nigeria. The lack of a suitable approach to teaching moral education suggests that existing pedagogical strategies may not effectively engage students or convey moral principles. The mixed views on moral bankruptcy highlight the complexity of moral perceptions in Nigeria. While some respondents acknowledge moral decline, others may see hope or potential for improvement. Inequitable access to education remains a significant barrier, suggesting that efforts to implement moral education must also address broader educational inequalities. The insufficient emphasis on moral values in the educational philosophy indicates a need for a more robust framework that prioritizes moral education as a fundamental component of the curriculum.

Research Question 3: How can a reconstructed paradigm shift enhance the interpretation of moral values in the national curriculum?

Table 3: Enhancing the interpretation of moral values in the national curriculum through reconstructed paradigm shift

SN	Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Std.dev
1	Paradigm shift can enhance value reorientation of the society	125 (22.9)	150 (27.5)	138 (25.3)	133 (24.4)	2.49	1.094
2	It could facilitate curriculum development.	111 (20.3)	165 (30.2)	130 (23.8)	140 (25.6)	2.45	1.081
3	There is no equal access to education in Nigeria.	123 (22.5)	182 (33.3)	138 (25.3)	103 (18.9)	2.60	1.035
4	Moral values are not well addressed in the Nigerian philosophy of education.	133 (24.4)	147 (26.9)	119 (21.8)	147 (26.9)	2.49	1.130
5	Government is not ready to implement moral education.	132 (24.2)	166 (30.4)	126 (23.1)	122 (22.3)	2.56	1.086
	Cumulative aggregate	624 (22.9)	810 (29.7)	651 (23.8)	645 (23.6)	2.52	1.085

The potential for a reconstructed paradigm shift to enhance the interpretation of moral values in the Nigerian national curriculum is explored through the survey data presented in Table 3. This data reflects respondents' perceptions regarding the impact of such a shift on moral education. A total of 22.9% of respondents strongly agree that a paradigm shift can enhance the value reorientation of society, with a mean score of 2.49. This indicates a moderate belief in the potential for a new approach to positively influence societal values. Only 20.3% strongly agree that a paradigm shift could facilitate curriculum development, resulting in a mean score of 2.45. This suggests skepticism about the direct impact of a paradigm shift on improving curriculum frameworks. The statement regarding unequal access to education received a strong agreement from 22.5% of respondents, with a mean score of 2.60. This highlights a recognition that systemic issues in education access may impede the effectiveness of any curricular changes. A combined 51.3% (24.4% strongly agree and 26.9% agree) believe that moral values are not well addressed in the Nigerian philosophy of education, resulting in a mean score of 2.49. This underscores a significant concern about the current educational framework's ability to effectively incorporate moral education. The perception that the government is not ready to implement moral education is echoed by 24.2% who strongly agree and 30.4% who agree, leading to a mean score of 2.56. This indicates a prevailing doubt about the political commitment necessary for meaningful changes in moral education.

The cumulative aggregate scores reveal that 23.8% of respondents disagree with the current state of moral education implementation, reflected in an overall mean score of 2.52. This suggests a general concern about the effectiveness of moral education initiatives and the potential for improvement through a paradigm shift. The findings suggest that while there is some recognition of the potential benefits of a reconstructed paradigm shift in enhancing moral values within the national curriculum, there are significant reservations. The relatively low percentages of strong agreement indicate that while some respondents see potential in a paradigm shift, many remain unconvinced about its effectiveness in addressing deep-rooted issues within the educational system. The skepticism regarding the facilitation of curriculum development suggests that a mere shift in paradigm may not be sufficient without accompanying structural changes and practical strategies that address existing educational inequities. The acknowledgment of unequal access to education and the inadequacy of moral values in the current philosophy of education highlight systemic barriers that a paradigm shift alone may not overcome. The prevailing doubt about the government's readiness to implement moral education underscores the necessity for political will and support to translate theoretical shifts into practical outcomes. Thus, while a reconstructed paradigm shift holds promise for enhancing the interpretation of moral values in the Nigerian national curriculum, its success will depend on addressing systemic barriers, ensuring equitable access to education, and fostering genuine governmental commitment to moral education initiatives.

Research Question 4: What innovative strategies can be proposed to address the identified gap in the moral education?

Table 4: Proposed innovative strategies to address the gaps in moral education

SN	Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Std.dev
1	Every teacher should serve as moral instructor.	150 (27.5)	194 (35.5)	114 (20.9)	88 (16.1)	2.74	1.032
2	Moral education should be taught through cognitive development of pupils.	96 (17.6)	146 (26.7)	153 (28.0)	151 (27.7)	2.34	1.064
3	Moral development of individuals could be attained through justice, equity and fair play.	166 (30.4)	157 (28.8)	121 (22.2)	102 (18.7)	2.71	1.091
4	Equitable distribution of resources and amenities can facilitate moral development.	146 (26.7)	189 (34.6)	118 (21.6)	93 (17.0)	2.71	1.041
5	Better ways of teaching moral education should be adopted and used in Nigerian schools.	163 (29.9)	188 (34.4)	108 (19.8)	87 (15.9)	2.78	1.043
	Cumulative aggregate	721 (26.4)	874 (32.0)	614 (22.5)	521 (19.1)	2.66	1.054

To address the identified gaps in moral education within the Nigerian national curriculum, several innovative strategies can be proposed based on the survey data presented in Table 4. A significant 27.5% of respondents strongly agree that every teacher should serve as a moral instructor, with a mean score of 2.74. This suggests a belief in the potential for teachers to play a more active role in imparting moral values to students. Only 17.6% strongly agree that moral education should be taught through the cognitive development of pupils, resulting in a mean score of 2.34. This indicates a relatively low level of support for a purely cognitive approach to moral education. A combined 59.2% (30.4% strongly agree and 28.8% agree) believe that the moral development of individuals could be attained through justice, equity, and fair play, resulting in a mean score of 2.71. This highlights the importance of creating a fair and equitable educational environment to foster moral

growth. 26.7% strongly agree that the equitable distribution of resources and amenities can facilitate moral development, with a mean score of 2.71. This suggests a recognition of the role that access to resources plays in creating an environment conducive to moral education. A significant 29.9% strongly agree that better ways of teaching moral education should be adopted and used in Nigerian schools, leading to a mean score of 2.78. This indicates a strong desire for the implementation of more effective teaching strategies to enhance moral education.

The cumulative aggregate scores reveal that 32.0% of respondents agree with the proposed innovative strategies, reflected in an overall mean score of 2.66. This suggests a general openness to exploring new approaches to address the gaps in moral education. The findings suggest several promising strategies to enhance moral education within the Nigerian national curriculum. The strong support for teachers as moral instructors highlights the need for comprehensive teacher training programs that equip educators with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to effectively impart moral values to students. While cognitive development is important, the relatively low support for a purely cognitive approach suggests that a more holistic approach, incorporating affective and behavioral components, may be more effective in fostering moral development. Creating an educational environment based on principles of justice, equity, and fair play can serve as a foundation for moral development, as it models the values being taught and provides a supportive context for students to practice moral behavior. Ensuring equitable access to educational resources and amenities is crucial for creating an environment conducive to moral education. This may involve addressing disparities in resource distribution and ensuring that all students have access to the necessary tools and support for their moral development. The strong desire for improved teaching strategies suggests that adopting innovative, evidence-based approaches to moral education can significantly enhance its effectiveness. This may involve incorporating interactive teaching methods, such as role-playing, case studies, and service learning that engage students in meaningful moral experiences. Thus, a multifaceted approach that combines teacher training, a holistic curriculum, a culture of justice and equity, equitable resource allocation, and innovative teaching strategies has the potential to address the gaps in moral education within the Nigerian national curriculum.

Research Question 5: How can the outcomes of this research contribute to informed policy decisions and educational practices?

Table 5: Contribution of the research outcomes to informed policy decisions and educational practices

SN	Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Std.dev
1	This can result through better strategies and approaches in teaching moral values in schools.	170 (31.1)	167 (30.6)	113 (20.7)	96 (17.6)	2.75	1.078
2	Moral values should be holistically approached in school curriculum.	157 (28.8)	162 (29.7)	117 (21.4)	110 (20.1)	2.67	1.096
3	Religion should be separated from moral values.	161 (29.5)	136 (24.9)	135 (24.7)	114 (20.9)	2.63	1.115
4	Students should be made to understand the relevance of justice, equity and fairness.	150 (27.5)	182 (33.3)	136 (24.9)	78 (14.3)	2.74	1.015
5	Equal access to education could facilitate sound moral values.	146 (26.7)	161 (29.5)	136 (24.9)	103 (18.9)	2.64	1.070
	Cumulative aggregate	784 (28.7)	808 (29.6)	637 (23.3)	501 (18.4)	2.69	1.075

The outcomes of this research can significantly contribute to informed policy decisions and educational practices regarding moral education in Nigeria, as illustrated in Table 5. The survey results reflect respondents' perceptions of how these outcomes can enhance moral education. A notable 31.1% of respondents strongly agree that the research can lead to better strategies and approaches in teaching moral values in schools, with a mean score of 2.75. This indicates a strong belief in the potential for the research outcomes to inform and improve pedagogical practices. Approximately 28.8% strongly agree that moral values should be approached holistically within the school curriculum, resulting in a mean score of 2.67. This suggests a recognition of the need for integrated moral education that encompasses various aspects of student development. A total of 29.5% of respondents strongly agree that religion should be separated from moral values, with a mean score of 2.63. This reflects a perspective that moral education should be secular and inclusive, focusing on universal moral principles rather than religious doctrines. About 27.5% strongly agree that students should understand the relevance of justice, equity, and fairness, leading to a mean score of 2.74. This highlights the importance of instilling these values as foundational elements of moral education. The belief that equal access to education could facilitate sound moral values is supported by 26.7% of respondents, with a mean score of 2.64. This underscores the importance of equitable educational opportunities in fostering moral development among students.

The cumulative aggregate scores indicate that 29.6% of respondents agree with the contributions of the research outcomes to policy and practice, reflected in an overall mean score of 2.69. This suggests a general consensus on the potential impact of the research findings. The findings suggest several key ways in which the outcomes of this research can inform policy decisions and educational practices. The strong support for developing better strategies in teaching moral values indicates that policymakers and educators can utilize these research outcomes to create more effective pedagogical frameworks. This may involve training teachers in innovative teaching methods and integrating moral education into existing subjects. The call for a holistic approach to moral education suggests that curriculum developers should consider integrating moral values across various subjects and activities, promoting a comprehensive understanding of morality that encompasses cognitive, emotional, and social dimensions. The emphasis on separating religion from moral values points to the need for a secular moral education framework that is inclusive and applicable to all students, regardless of their religious backgrounds. This can help foster a more cohesive and tolerant society. The recognition of justice, equity, and fairness as essential components of moral education highlights the need for educational programs that explicitly teach these values. This could involve incorporating discussions, activities, and case studies that allow students to engage with these concepts meaningfully. The acknowledgment of equal access to education as a facilitator of moral values underscores the importance of addressing systemic inequalities within the educational system. Policymakers should prioritize initiatives that ensure all students have access to quality education, which is crucial for their moral development. Thus, the outcomes of this research provide valuable insights that can guide policymakers and educators in enhancing moral education in Nigeria. By focusing on improved teaching strategies, holistic curriculum development, secular moral frameworks, core values, and equitable access to education, stakeholders can work towards fostering a generation of morally conscious individuals equipped to contribute positively to society.

Summary of Findings

The summary of the major findings from the research are:

1. Morality and education are recognized as related, but the Nigerian National Policy on Education does not adequately address moral values in the curriculum.
2. Key challenges include: lack of suitable teaching approaches, perceptions of moral bankruptcy, inequitable access to education, insufficient emphasis on moral values in educational philosophy, and doubts about government commitment to moral education.
3. There is moderate support for a paradigm shift to enhance moral education, but skepticism remains about its direct impact on curriculum development without addressing systemic issues.

4. Innovative strategies proposed include: training teachers as moral instructors, adopting a holistic curriculum approach, emphasizing justice and equity, ensuring equitable resource distribution, and implementing improved teaching methods.
5. Research outcomes can inform policy and practice by: promoting better teaching strategies, advocating for a holistic moral education curriculum, supporting a secular and inclusive approach, focusing on core values like justice and equity, and highlighting the importance of equitable access to education.

In conclusion, the findings underscore the need for comprehensive reform in moral education within Nigeria, emphasizing the importance of innovative strategies, equitable access, and a whole-system approach to effectively integrate moral values into the educational framework.

Recommendations

The study recommends among other things:

1. A general and critical reform in the National Policy on Education to critically articulate moral values as well as state proper strategies to implement it in the secondary school curriculum.
2. Effective pedagogical approaches be embraced and used by the teachers of secondary schools. This can be developed by the State Ministry of Education through seminars, workshops and conferences to expose teacher a paradigm shift in strategies.
3. Although paradigm shift is essential in addressing pedagogical strategies, increasing access to education by governed through proper funding and overall commitment to provision of education is not only desirable but necessary if the goals of secondary education are to be attained.
4. There is the need for teachers to play a leading role in ensuring moral values transmission. This can be done through provision of adequate teaching resources, proper curriculum that addresses the issues backed with effective policies in the National Policy on Education.
5. There is the need for the government to practice policies on equal access to education. This is essential in the maintenance of justice, equity and fair play as moral values cannot be entrenched in a society where injustice, exploitation, poverty are the order of the day.

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