

MORAL VALUE ACQUISITION AND STAFF JOB PERFORMANCE IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MAKURDI EDUCATION ZONE OF BENUE STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Nigerian educational system is beckoned with numerous challenges hampering its effective goals achievement. The differences in value attached to educational programmes and its practices can be seen to be one of these challenges. This study examines the perceived impact of acquisition of moral values on staff job performance in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study while two hypotheses were formulated and tested. Descriptive survey design was employed for the study. The population of the study comprised 2,178 staff from 89 grant-aided secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State. A sample of 218 staff from 15 grant-aided secondary schools drawn through random sampling technique was used for the study. A 15-item questionnaire titled "Moral Values and Staff Job Performance Questionnaire (MVSJPQ)" was developed, validated and used for data collection. The reliability coefficient of 0.81 was established using Cronbach alpha. Mean scores and standard deviations were used to answer the three research questions, while chi-square test was used to test the three null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that acquisition of moral values has significant impact on staff job performance in secondary schools particularly in the areas of students' discipline, and evaluation. Based on the findings of the study it was recommended among others that stakeholders in education should reorganize teachers training institutions to capture moral value development so that they will be equipped with the societal moral values that help them do their jobs with conscience and honesty in order to positively reshape learners, the society and the nation at large.

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Introduction

Acquisition of moral values among staff is crucial for staff job performance in secondary schools. The term value is concerned with principles or standards of behavior. It includes one's judgement of what is important in life. According to Ekemezie (2015), value is the worth, merit of a person, an idea or even an object. Enu and Esu (2011) see value as the ethics, moral principles and standard codes of behavior or rules of conduct. Ukpabio, Ekere and Nnaji (2017) note that values are classified into personal, family, moral, cultural, work, national and economic values. Okoh (2014) identifies the following types of values: religious values, moral values, aesthetic values, social values, cultural values, intellectual values, and economic values. Religious values mainly deal with salvation, God, beliefs, the next world, sin, failure and success, to mention but a few, while the contents of moral values are honesty, liberty, justice, brotherhood, neighbourliness, among others. These values guide man's conducts towards his fellow man.

Moral values therefore are principles or standard of behaviours which are acceptable to the society. It is the acceptable people's behaviours or conducts which serve as a yardstick for evaluating the actions of other people in the society. Moral values include honesty, love, care, fairness, fair play, justice and responsibility (Okoh, 2012). Acquisition of moral values therefore is the act of gaining or accepting a body of predetermined rights of the society like honesty, love and care, integrity, fairness and good judgement among others in order to be more useful and acceptable to yourself, the society and the nation at large (Esu, 2009).

Staff job performance on the other hand relates to the degree to which employees are able to undertake the tasks assigned to them and how the accomplished tasks add to the fulfilment of the organizational goals. Adesina (2001) views staff job performance in schools as the behavior and outcomes that employees engage in or bring about that are linked with and contribute to the achievement of educational goals. Educational staff engage in activities to improve the moral values or conduct of learners in the society. It is the teaching, students' discipline, counselling, supervision, evaluation, and other activities which educational staff engage in to bring about the desire behavior or characters in children.

Students' discipline is one of staff jobs perform in schools which may be influenced by moral values. Discipline, according to Adesina (2001) is when students are taught to respect school authorities, to observe school rules and regulations and to maintain established standard of behaviour. Egbagbara (2017) sees discipline to involve self-control, restraint, respect for self and respect for others. The disciplined person is guided in his behavior, moral and social principles, does what is right and good. The urge to do what is right comes from within an individual. Halstead and Taylor (2000) found that, moral value system of teachers is a rudimentary ingredient that plays a crucial role in school system, which insists on upholding the discipline of students. Jeannette-de and Julialet (2003) maintain that, what is necessary in schools is not new policy, more programmes or better projects, but virtuous people who live according to a specific value system. Jeannette-de and Julialet (2003) further note that, what leads to a lack of discipline can possibly be ascribed to the absence of a value system grounded in a specific life view perspective. Therefore, teacher value system needs to be developed in order to improve discipline in students.

Moral values can also influence students' evaluation in secondary schools. Evaluation here refers to the rigorous analysis of a person, completed or ongoing

activities of an organization that determine or support management accountability, effectiveness, and efficiency. It involves collecting and analyzing information about a person, program's activities, characteristics and outcomes in order to make judgments about the person or programme to improve its effectiveness, and/or to inform programming decisions. Osaat and Omordu (2011) found out that, a morally trained teacher uses appropriate evaluation strategies to monitor progress made by students towards acquiring positive values, guide students to develop positively in their reasoning and behaviours, and also help them acquire and practice specific skills that support positive living. Gabarino (2004) notes that moral values are the basic principle that influence human's behaviors and actions. In schools for instance, these principles guide teachers to behave or do their jobs effectively. It therefore means students' discipline and evaluation are likely influenced by moral values teachers acquire either through learning or social interaction in and outside school.

Statement of problem

The decay in the society has affected the values and moral character of Nigerian educational system. This has exhibited in many school social vices and immoralities like examination malpractice, cultism, indecent dressing, drug abuse, sexual harassment among others. There is also lack of value for educational excellence, decent dressing, and honesty among people today in our society because of the decay in the societal values and moral behaviour. Examinations in our schools are not viewed today as a means of testing one's ability thus examination malpractice is a normal practice of the day. Value attached to paper qualifications other than the intellectual ability of individuals is causing more damage to the educational system. That is why most parents who are supposed to be giving moral training to their children do not care to bribe teachers in order to pass their ward during examination. Most students who may one day serve the society as teachers thereby impacting societal values to others are not properly nurtured due to lack of self-control and value attached to the educational system by most stakeholders in the system. The indecent dressing practices these days in higher institutions do distract teacher in effectively carrying out their job. The understanding of students today according to Adesina (2001), is limited to learning about their subjects and hardly knows how they should live their lives, commit themselves to the welfare of the community, care about their environment and other social and moral issues. Some teachers are not always serious with their job performance in schools. People do not have conscience to guide their behaviors and actions and they do anything to achieve what they want to achieve not minding how they do it, hence the saying, "the end justifies the means". The change in moral values of our society and lack of conscience seem to be responsible for the decline in the performance of staff in their job in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria. It is in view of these worries that this paper investigated the extent to which moral value acquisition impact on staff job performance particularly in the areas of students' discipline and students' evaluation in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of acquisition of moral values on staff job performance in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

- 1) find out the extent to which acquisition of moral values impact on students' discipline in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria.
- 2) ascertain the extent to which acquisition of moral values impact on students' evaluation in secondary schools.

Research Questions

- 1) To what extent does acquisition of moral values impact on students' discipline in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria?
- 2) To what extent does acquisition of moral values impact on students' evaluation in secondary schools?

Hypotheses

- 1) There is no significant impact of acquisition of moral values on students' discipline in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria.
- 2) There is no significant impact of acquisition of moral values on students' evaluation in secondary schools.

Research Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The study was conducted in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria. The population comprised 2,178 staff from 89 grant-aided secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria. A sample of 218 staff from 15 grant-aided secondary schools drawn through random sampling technique was used for the study. A 10-item questionnaire titled "Moral Values and Staff Job Performance Questionnaire (MVSJPQ)" was developed, validated and used for data collection. The reliability coefficient of 0.81 was established using Cronbach Alpha. The questionnaire was divided into Sections A and B. Section A contained information on the personal data of the respondents, while Section B contained information that bordered on impact of moral value development on staff job performance in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria. Staff responses were collated and analyzed using mean and standard deviation and chi-square. Mean scores and standard deviations were used to answer the three research questions. The decision was based on the real limit of numbers. Hence a mean response score of 3.50-4.00 was considered Very High Extent (VHE), 2.50-3.49 High Extent (HE), 1.50-2.49 Low Extent (LE), while 0.50-1.49 was considered as Very Low Extent (VLE). The chi-square test of goodness-of-fit was used to test the three null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The results were analyzed and interpreted in line with the research questions and hypotheses as follow:

Research Question One

To what extent does acquisition of moral values impact on students' discipline in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria?

Table 1
 Mean Ratings and Standard Deviations of Impact of Acquisition of Moral Values on Students' Discipline in Secondary Schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue, Nigeria.

S/No	Item Description	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	N	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	To what extent do/does/has/have/is/are: honest teachers produce disciplined students.	51	86	51	30	218	2.72	0.97	High Extent
2	students always copy the way their teachers behave.	52	91	43	32	218	2.75	0.98	High Extent
3	moral values develop in learners acceptable characters.	51	92	52	23	218	2.78	0.92	High Extent
4	teachers feel guilty when they fail to do their job effectively.	58	94	37	29	218	2.83	0.97	High Extent
5	teachers with acceptable morals do give learners punishment that is commensurate to their offence	45	92	48	33	218	2.68	0.97	High Extent
Cluster Mean							2.75		High Extent

Source: *Researcher's Field Work (2018)*

Decision: *Mean scores between 1.00-1.49 = Very Low Extent (VLE), 1.50-2.49 = Low Extent (LE), 2.50-3.49 = High Extent (HE) and 3.50-4.00 = Very High Extent (VHE)*

Table 1 shows that the mean ratings of items 1 to 5 are 2.72, 2.75, 2.78, 2.83 and 2.68 with the corresponding standard deviations of 0.97, 0.98, 0.92, 0.97 and 0.97 respectively. Based on the boundary criteria for decision making, it reveals that the mean scores for items 1 to 5 were above the cut-off point of 2.50. Item by item analysis on Table 1 shows that the respondents were of the view that to a high extent honest teachers produce disciplined students, students always copy the way their teachers behave, moral values develop in learners acceptable characters and that to a high extent teachers feel guilty when they fail to do their job effectively. The respondent also pointed out that to a high extent teachers with acceptable morals do give learners punishment that is commensurate to their offence. The cluster mean of 2.75 with the standard deviation of 0.96 was above the cut-off point of 2.50. This means the respondents are of the opinion that to a high extent acquisition of moral values impact on students' discipline in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria.

Research Question Two

To what extent does acquisition of moral values impact on students' evaluation in secondary schools?

Table 2
 Mean Ratings and Standard Deviations of Impact of Acquisition of Moral Values on Students' Evaluation in Secondary Schools

S/No	Item Description	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	N	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
	To what extent do/does/has/have/is/are:								
6	teachers moral values help in assessing learners' characters.	67	90	35	26	218	2.91	0.97	High Extent
7	moral judgement help you identify areas that need improvement in teaching and learning.	49	88	46	35	218	2.69	0.99	High Extent
8	teachers with good morals do assess their methods of teaching before evaluating learners.	48	90	46	34	218	2.70	0.98	High Extent
9	teachers with good morals use assessment to improve their performance	46	95	47	30	218	2.72	0.95	High Extent
10	moral training help one realize his targeted goals more efficiently	60	89	44	25	218	2.84	0.96	High Extent
	Cluster Mean						2.78		High Extent

Source: *Researcher's Field Work (2018)*

Decision: *Mean scores between 1.00-1.49 = Very Low Extent (VLE), 1.50-2.49 = Low Extent (LE), 2.50-3.49 = High Extent (HE) and 3.50-4.00 = Very High Extent (VHE)*

Table 2 indicates that the mean ratings of items 6 to 10 are 2.91, 2.69, 2.70, 2.72 and 2.84 with the corresponding standard deviations of 0.97, 0.99, 0.98, 0.95 and 0.96 respectively. Based on the boundary criteria for decision making, it reveals that the mean scores for items 6 to 10 were above the cut-off point of 2.50. Item by item analysis of Table 2 shows that the respondents were of the view that to a high extent teachers moral values help in assessing learners' characters, moral judgement help one to identify areas that need improvement in teaching and learning, that to a high extent teachers with good morals do assess their methods of teaching before evaluating learners. In the similar vein, the respondents maintained that to a high extent teachers with good morals use assessment to improve their performance and that to a high extent moral training help one realize his targeted goals more efficiently. The cluster mean of 2.78 with the standard deviation of 0.97 was also above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies the respondents are of the view that to a high extent acquisition of moral values has impact on students' evaluation in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant impact of acquisition of moral values on students' discipline in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria.

Table 3

Chi-Square test of the influence of Acquisition of Moral Values on Students' Discipline in Secondary Schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue, Nigeria.

Responses	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	df	Level of Sign.	χ^2 -cal	P-Value	Decision
Very High Extent	51	54.5	3	0.05	37.01	.000	Ho1 Rejected
High Extent	91	54.5					
Low Extent	46	54.5					
Very Low Extent	30	54.5					
Total	218						

$P=.000 < 0.05$; $df=3$; and X^2 Calculated=37.01.

Table 3 shows χ^2 -cal.= 37.01 with 3 degree of freedom and at 0.05 level of significance. The $p=0.00 < 0.05$. Since the P-value of 0.00 is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant impact of moral value development on students' discipline in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria was rejected. This implies that acquisition of moral values significantly impact students' discipline in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant impact of acquisition of moral values on students' evaluation in secondary schools.

Table 4

Chi-Square Analysis of the Influence of Acquisition of Moral Values on Students' Evaluation in Secondary Schools

Responses	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	df	Level of Sign.	χ^2 -cal	P-Value	Decision
Very High Extent	54	54.5	3	0.05	36.17	.000	Ho2 Rejected
High Extent	90	54.5					
Low Extent	44	54.5					
Very Low Extent	30	54.5					
Total	218						

$P=.000 < 0.05$; $df=3$; and X^2 Calculated=36.17.

Table 4 shows χ^2 -cal.= 36.17 with 3 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. The $p=0.00 < 0.05$. Since the P-value of 0.00 is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant impact of moral value development on students' evaluation in secondary schools was rejected and the alternative hypothesis not rejected. It then means, there is significant impact of acquisition of moral values on students' evaluation in secondary schools.

Discussion of Findings

The first finding of this study revealed that acquisition of moral values significantly impact on students' discipline in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria. The finding is in consonance with Halstead and Taylor (2000) who found that moral value system of teachers was a rudimentary ingredient

that plays a crucial role in school system and therefore insists on upholding the discipline of students. Jeannette-de and Julialet (2003) maintain that, what is necessary in schools is not new policy, more programmes or better projects, but virtuous people who live according to a specific value system. Jeannette-de and Julialet (2003) further state that, what leads to a lack of discipline can possibly be ascribed to the absence of a value system grounded in a specific life view perspective. Therefore, teacher value system needs to be developed in order to improve discipline in students.

The second finding revealed that there was significant impact of acquisition of moral values on students' evaluation in secondary schools. This finding corroborated with that of Osaat and Omordu, (2011) who found that, a morally trained teacher used appropriate evaluation strategies to monitor progress made by students towards acquiring positive values, guide students to develop positively in their reasoning and behaviours and also help them acquire and practice specific skills that support positive living. Gabarino, (2004) notes that values are the basic principle that influence human's behaviors and actions. In schools for instance, the principles guide teachers to behave or do their jobs including evaluation of school activities and programmes effectively.

Conclusion

Based on the result of this study, it was established that acquisition of moral values has significant impact on students' discipline in secondary schools. It was also found that moral values acquisition has significant impact on students' evaluation in secondary schools. In other words, the study revealed that moral value acquisition to a high extent significantly impact on students' discipline and students' evaluation in secondary schools in Makurdi Education Zone of Benue State, Nigeria. The implication is that when educational staff are train to have integrity, love their jobs, they will be honest in doing their jobs, that will be fair to everybody and the nation at large. The issue of students' discipline and evaluation will therefore be handle professionally for effective achievement of educational goals of the nation.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, it was recommended that:

1. Stakeholders in education should reorganize teachers training institutions to capture moral value development so that they will be equipped with the societal moral values that help them do their jobs with conscience and honesty in order to positively reshape learners, the society and the nation at large.
2. Teachers should be trained to develop good moral behaviour that will help them impact good discipline to their students. They should learn to behave like role models to their students. They should also treat their students with love and care even when they are disciplining them for something they have done wrong.
3. Schools should always organize seminars and workshops that will allow experienced staff to educate inexperienced ones in the area of students' evaluation to enable them improve on the job.

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