

Managing Moral Decadence among Youths in the Contemporary Nigerian Society: Women as Mentors

ABSTRACT

Socio-cultural values and beliefs are crucial for the maintenance of law and order in a society. They are passed from the older generation to the younger ones. Therefore, there is no gainsaying that much is expected from the younger generation. However, with the current societal trends, showing high levels of moral decadence with youths at the vanguard of vices like kidnapping, cultism, internet fraud, drug abuse, rape, robbery, and money laundering, among others, it then becomes inevitable to check these societal ills. This paper, thus, seeks to review the state of moral decadence in our present-day society with the aim of proffering workable solutions, particularly by looking at the roles of women as mentors to the youths in a bid to stem the tide of moral decadence in the society.

Keywords: Moral decadence, Youths, Women, Socio-cultural values, Mentoring.

1. INTRODUCTION

The conduct of the people of a society is regulated and controlled by moral values. Different societies have their own moral values which are considered normal, ideal, and acceptable. Muraino and Ugwumba [1] describe morality as upholding certain beliefs, ideas, values, behaviours, rules and regulations which are considered good, right, and acceptable by the society and to which members of the society are bound.

In the opinion of Gert [2], the descriptive definition of morality explains morals as a set of conduct put forward by any group; including a society; and the normative definition which is based on the idea that what is moral should have a code of conduct, that is put forward by a society and that it should be accepted as a guide to behaviour by members of that society.

In a nutshell, morals can also be referred to as a way of life which is considered good, ethical, right, proper, honourable, just, or decent by a group of people. It is also related to issues of right and wrong and to how individuals should behave. Therefore, from the above definitions, morality seems to be a set of code of conduct put forward by any group, society or nation that is acceptable by members of the group or society.

There is deterioration or a collapse in upholding our societal values, beliefs, norms and ethical standards. The occurrence of moral decadence among youth in the contemporary society is worrisome. It is a problem that starts within the family and in worst cases escalates beyond the shores of a country. It is a dreadful disease for any country, causing many criminal activities as well as impeding the development of the country.

In the view of Odewoye [3], the problem of moral decadence among the youths is a major one that dominates everyday intellectual discussions, creating waves in the media today. Enueme and Onyeme [4], observed that a lot of youths all over the world, do not conform to the rules and regulations from higher authorities. The aftermath of the colonial invasion on the African continent clearly explains how they were able to exchange our cultural values with their own behavioural patterns. These patterns basically never conformed to the original standards of living which saw the African child respect the dictates of his or her elders totally, without questioning their authority. There is therefore no doubt that moral decadence is fast replacing or eroding our core values today.

The issue of moral decadence in our society today has reached a very alarming state. Most heart-wrenching is the active role played by the youth in this life-shrinking venture which has simply pointed out to all stakeholders the easiest of ways to bring a society to a sudden halt, and also plunge it into a backward movement. The deteriorating rate of moral, social and educational values, especially among youths has remained a strong 'dark force' to be holistically combated if the brighter future ever promised the younger generation is anything to hope for or talk about [5].

The alarming rate of decline in the moral consciousness and conduct among youths in our society has informed the concern for a sound moral status. The youths are the assets of any country but they easily become a burden if they are affected by moral decadence. They are the future leaders and the artisans to build the nation tomorrow. If everyone can ensure a peaceful and progressive life for the youth which is free from moral decadence, they will bring about the social and economic development of the country and bring pride to the nation in the international scene [6].

It is disheartening that in spite of the various efforts being made to curb this menace over the years, no significant progress has been made. Why has the problem of moral decadence persisted over the years in spite of the role of women in homes and the society at large?

Based on this concern for eradicating the menace of moral decadence or reducing it to the barest minimum in the contemporary society, this paper examines the extent to which women as mentors can help to reduce drastically the problem of moral decadence in our contemporary society.

2. CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

2.1 Moral Decadence

Moral decadence could be seen as the deviation from the value system of the society and each society has its own set of values which differentiates it from other societies. It is the deterioration or collapse in upholding the values, beliefs and ethical standards of a given society. Nwankwo (cited in Muhammad & Abubakar [7]) described it as "a flight from moral virtues". Moral virtues are good habits which incline and allow their possessors make good moral choices. Odeh (2013) stated that moral decadence is the failure to maintain sound morality in our society. It is the decline or failure in upholding our societal values, beliefs, norms, and ethical standards (JC Odeh, Ebonyi State University, Nigeria, Unpublished result, 2013). Moral decadence is the decrease or drop in the ethical values and norms that direct an individual and the society at large [8].

Moral decadence is behaving in a way that shows low moral standards, reduction in the moral values among individuals or a group in a particular society [1]. It is the process of behaving contrary to the laid down moral standards, principles or expected way of life. Afuye [9], highlighted the forms of moral decadence as; cultism, rape, examination malpractice, teenage pregnancy, students prostitution, sexual harassment, sale of "Grade", students demonstration, drug abuse, indecent dressing, stealing, bribery and corruption, sexual promiscuity, social maladjustment, insubordination, disrespect of constituted authority and to the rules of law. Others include laziness, idle gossip, and dereliction of duty which manifest the decay which is glaring in Nigeria [10].

Ihuoma [11] also explained that moral decadence involves any act or behaviour which violates the norms and codes of the society. It is an abnormality involving basic conflict with the society's value system. It could be better described as an aggressive behaviour which defiles the established values in a given society.

2.2 Youth

There is no universally agreed definition of who can be classified as a youth. However, for statistical purposes, the United Nations in 1981 without prejudice to any other definitions made by member states defines 'youth' as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. In a general term, a youth is a boy or girl of ages between childhood and adulthood. Taking a cue from Mofoluwawo [12], "youths refer to all young persons who are approved citizens of a society and stand within the age ranges of 17 to 30 years". This refers to the most active and most adventurous unit of any given society.

Alimba, Momodu, Abba, and Bello [13] see a youth as somebody, who is within the age bracket of 15 and 34 years. A youth can also be referred to as the younger generation in any society that is, a person that is in the period of adolescence and one below the age of 40 years. They are also referred to as the engine room of any given society, because they stand as the drivers of developmental activities within the society and also form the major determinants of the extent of growth and development in any given society.

Different countries may define youth according to their unique situations. In Nigeria, youth according to Adebisi [8], comprises all young persons of ages 17 to 30 who are citizens of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Youths are important group of people in every society. They represent the most active, volatile and yet the most vulnerable segment of the

population socially, economically, and emotionally. They are full of energy, exuberance and curiosity about life and the environment they find themselves. The success or otherwise of any nation depends on the quality of her youth because they are future leaders whose excellent behaviour must have great impact in the future leadership of the nation [14].

2.3 Mentoring

The term mentoring has been conceptualized and defined in several ways, but three common factors can be seen. Firstly, mentors (older) are individuals with more experience and wisdom than their protégés (younger). Secondly, mentors are expected to provide guidance to their protégés, with the goal of fostering the protégé's growth, positive development, and transition into a mature adult. Lastly, the relationship between mentor and protégé consists of an emotional bond that is founded on core relationship principles such as trust and respect.

Klasen and Clutterbuck [15], explained mentoring as a developmental process which can occur both naturally and officially to allow an individual to share his/ her experience, knowledge and skills with another individual in order to benefit from the latter's personal and/or professional development. Mentoring can also be described as a system of semi-structured guidance, whereby one person shares his knowledge, skills and experiences to assist others to progress in their own lives and careers.

Also, mentoring has been defined as a reciprocal and collaborative voluntary relationship that must often occur between a senior and junior employee for the purpose of the mentee's growth, learning and career. Mentoring is a structured and trusting relationship that brings young people together with caring individuals who offer guidance, support, and encouragement aimed at developing the young person's competence and [16].

Mentoring is a powerful intervention for supporting people in various academic, employments, and community settings and it is described as a relationship between an experienced, wiser adult and a younger person (Leake, Burgstahiser & Vreeberg, 2011 cited in Bayiga [17]). Mentoring has been widely used as a crime prevention strategy for young people who have had contact with the criminal justice system or are at risk of becoming involved in offending or anti-social behaviour. It is important for establishing positive relationships with children, adolescents and young adults as a strategy for behaviour modelling and positive socialization. In fact, the presence of a close adult in a position to serve as a role model and to support the young person is considered a protective factor [18].

Also, Smith (2007, p. 277), defines mentoring as "a particular mode of learning wherein the mentor not only supports the mentees, but also challenges them productively so that progress is made. It is a process which develops the whole person rather than parts." Mentoring is more than just giving advice or passing on what your experience was, in a particular area or situation. It is about motivating and empowering the other person to identify their own issues and goals, and helping them to find ways of resolving or reaching them not by doing it for them or by expecting them to do it the way 'I did it' but by understanding and respecting different ways of working.

2.4 Mentor

The term mentoring was derived from the word mentor. According to the Microsoft Encarta Dictionary [20] a mentor is defined as an experienced adviser and supporter: somebody, usually older and more experienced, who advises and guides a younger, less experienced person. Zey [21] defines a mentor as a person who oversees the career and development of another person, usually a junior, through teaching, counselling, providing psychological support, protecting and at times promoting or sponsoring.

A mentor is a supportive adult who works with a young person to build a relationship by offering guidance, support, and encouragement to help the young person's positive and healthy development over a period of time [22].

A mentor is an experienced and trusted adviser. The roles of a mentor include listening, asking questions to help develop yours and the mentee's understanding of a situation or problem, providing information and knowledge and share informal networks, providing advice on self/career development, offering different perspectives, providing support and encouragement.

Other duties performed by a mentor include, providing an insight into your life, work and career, being critical friend, encouraging self-reflection, helping mentees identify areas for development and performing other roles such as networking, counselling, facilitating & coaching.

Specifically, Clutterbuck [23] asserted that mentors do the following: manage relationship, provide encouragement, nurture talents, teach morals, encourage mutual respect and respond to the learner's needs among others.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The position of researchers in this paper is informed by Kram's theory [24] which states that mentoring involves an intense relationship whereby a senior or more experienced person (the mentor) provides two functions for a junior person (the protégé), one function being advice or modelling about career development behaviours and the second function being personal support, especially psycho-social support. This theory posits an understanding that mentors have two distinct functions that revolve around providing professional and psycho-social assistance to protégés. Professional assistance refers to mentorship schemes which aid the youth in developing career skills, while psychosocial assistance strengthens the sense of competence and effectiveness through encouraging interactions in youths. Kram explains the functions that mentors play in a dyad relationship and concluded that mentoring is a type of developmental relationship in which mentors provide two types of functions: first is the career functions, which focus on the development of the protégé's skills in this case youths and secondly the psychosocial functions, which centre on providing support and encouragement to the protégé that is the youth.

Career functions "are those aspects of a relationship that enhance learning the ropes and preparing for advancement" [24]. This strengthens the possibilities of the protégé becoming successful. It includes sponsorship, exposure and visibility, coaching, protection, and challenging assignments. On the other hand, psychosocial functions enhance the protégé's "sense of competence, identity, and effectiveness" [24]. Psychosocial functions include acceptance, counselling, friendship, and role modelling.

4. CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF MORAL DECADENCE

4.1 Causes of Moral Decadence

The issue of moral decadence in the African society has been largely blamed on the influence of the western world on the indigenous beliefs, socio-cultural lifestyle and values of the different African societies. Some educators have outrightly antagonized this viewpoint on the influence of the western world as the root cause of moral decadence within African societies. They cited poverty, parental negligence, peer pressure, and youthful exuberance as some of the major causes of this cancerous stem which is fast eating into the fabric of our society [25].

JO Olorundare, (Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria, Unpublished results 2011), for instance, opined that, moral decadence among Nigerian youths can be associated with parental negligence, mass media, peer group influence, greed, love of money and unemployment among other things. According to JC Odeh, Ebonyi State University, Nigeria, Unpublished results (2013), the causes of moral decadence among youths can be categorized into four: social, economic, cognitive, and technological factors. The social factors include peer pressure and unstable home environments, while the economic factors have to do with poverty; cognitive factors include the need for belonging among the youths driven by physical needs and psychological needs, and technological factors include media and internet.

There are many causes behind the rise of moral decadence such as breaking promises, less practice of values, changes in people's behaviour and needs, decreased practice of ethical instructions, breaking the kinship, politicization and changes in political norms, corruption, unemployment, drug addiction, cultural assault and dominance by foreign culture and so on [6].

Ezaka [26] on the other hand, gave a shot into the spiritual health of the individual when he stated that immorality has persisted in our society because many citizens no longer fear God. So whether or not these causes apply to some or all of the societies around us, we would agree that to some extent, they all play active roles at derailing the youths from the laid down moral standards which had been in existence even before their birth.

Parental factor has been considered to be one of the factors responsible for the problem of moral decadence among youth. Most Nigerian youths engage in anti-social behaviour due to the family upbringing, some are from broken homes or defective homes that can rarely satisfy children's basic needs let alone give them parental affection. According to Odewoye [3], the fact that different societies across the globe have continued to experience increases in cost of living has put added pressure on parents to provide for family needs. Hence, parents now have less time to monitor their children and to share important information on subjects like premarital or unprotected sex with their children. Lack of parental guidance on such sensitive issues makes youth more vulnerable.

Low moral standards and hypocrisy of the older generation have given room to the youths to get themselves involved in moral decadence. When the youths find out that the older generation is somewhat hypocritical, in that they pretend to inculcate set of moral norms but vigorously pursue the opposite [27]. As a result, the youth tend to join in the pretence.

Furthermore, Fadipe [28], observed that, the digital revolution, that is, the internet age has turned the world into a global village which seem to have done more harm than good for the modern society. The invention of internet is not a bad idea depending on the use to which it is so directed, unfortunately many youths are being exposed to salacious materials and are therefore prone to imitating immoral practices and crimes they watch via the internet or in films. This issue coupled with the lazy attitude of many youths who are no longer ready to work before becoming rich, has compounded the problem of moral decadence in our society today.

Also, the Eurocentric nature of the population has been identified by Olateju [29] as one of the factors responsible for this problem. The disposition to interpret the world from the European perspective has made Nigerians for instance to

embrace lifestyles which are totally in conflict with their cultural norms and values. Thus, the society's limits and boundaries have been shamelessly compromised and violated.

Leadership factor has also been recognized as a contributory factor. Only few of our leaders' lifestyles are worthy of emulation and this makes the nation insecure and unstable for living, with cases of rape, kidnapping, robbery, cybercrime etc. becoming more rampant [29]. All these are some of the factors that are responsible for this menace of moral decadence.

4.2 Effects of Moral Decadence on the Nigerian Society

Undoubtedly, immoral behaviours ranging from Bribery and Corruption, dishonesty and stealing, social maladjustment, financial crimes, religious persecution, sexual harassment etc., impact societal values and acceptable standard of living. Consequently, the Nigerian society has had a fair share of criticisms from within and outside the country [7]. Table 1 shows the types and effects moral decadence on the Nigerian society:

Table 1. Types and Effects of Moral Decadence on the Nigerian society

Types of Moral Decadence	Effects of Moral Decadence
1. Bribery and corruption	Bribery and corruption has generated loss of integrity among international community. This is one of the major effects of moral degeneration in Nigeria. The involvement of Nigerian leaders in corruption and other immoral acts has dented the image of the country in the international community. Ituma [30], painted the picture thus: The image of the country in the international arena has become so battered that every Nigerian should psychologically feel a scorching hurt inflicted on his individual psyche. The dent has gone so far that everywhere in the world Nigerians are said to be generally dreaded like mad dogs and criminals, cautiously approached like dangerous snakes, and avoided like lepers.[31]
2. Dishonesty and Stealing	Foreign investors tend to be jittery in their intention to start business in Nigeria. The reasons for this are not far-fetched. There is the fear of falling into the hands of dupes during an initial business arrangement. [32]
3. Social Maladjustment	When breakdown in maintaining constructive social relationships, the vast majority of youths are involved in vices, there exists a great probability that the leadership and governance will decline as so many find their way in these leadership positions and effect negative changes to suit their vicious appetite. This is exactly the case with Nigeria where the get rich quick syndrome is the guiding principle of average Nigerian. [31]
4. Financial Crimes	Financial crimes harm both the nation and individuals. It is on record that about 90 percent of monies looted from public treasury are stashed away in private foreign accounts [33]. Such looting have become a recurring decimal in underdeveloped countries, Nigeria inclusive. These are monies that should have been used to build industries and create job opportunities for the teeming population. Instead, unemployment has become the order of the day and people are suffering in the midst of plenty. It has the dual effects of boosting the domestic economies of the custodian of the loot and worsening of the economies of the countries from where the money was stolen. The result of the practice is that the gap between the rich and the poor widens as it happens in Nigeria.
5. Religious Syncretism and	Those who gain from these immoral attitudes prefer them to

Exploitation

continue. For that reason, there is need for appropriate orientation to be given to the young ones. This will eradicate the moral decadence in our society, thereby creating room for development [32]. Women mentorship matters most in this case

6. Sexual Promiscuity and Misconduct

These result in the collapse of family and community life and inhibits growth and development in the country. [32]

Source: Ituma [30] Chinedu, Ede & Victor [31], Uko [33] and Sofadekan [32]

5. THE ROLES OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY

Throughout history, the central role of women in society has ensured the stability, progress, and long-term development of nations. According to Shuani [34], within the society, women have important roles to perform. In fact, they are the integral part of the society. Women are the key to sustainable development and quality of life in the family as wives, mothers, administrators, managers of the family income etc. So, a woman juggles several roles in the family at the same time.

As a wife, she is the man's helpmate, partner and comrade creating a conducive environment for the spouse to think more about the economic upliftment of the family, providing a good support system for him. As a mother, the whole burden of child bearing and greater part of child rearing tasks are carried out by her as the woman in the family. She serves as the first teacher of the child, transmitting social heritage to the child because of her intimate and sustained contact with the child. As a mother she is able to discover and nurture her child's special traits, aptitudes and attitudes, which subsequently play a key role in the shaping of the child's personality. As a result of her intimacy with her child, a woman becomes her child's friend, mentor, and guide among other things. In a nutshell, a woman is the central personality of the home and the family circle. [34]

The woman also serves as an administrator and coordinator of activities of the household. A well-ordered disciplined household is essential to normal family life and it is the woman in the family that performs this function. She organises various social functions in the family for social development. All these show that in the home the woman performs multifarious functions.[34]. Hence, Olorundare (Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria, Unpublished results 2011) remarked that women are called upon in the society to perform functions of housewives, mothers, and social mobilisers. They are biologically built to be multi-tasking. Within the society, women also have important roles to perform. Such roles are primarily recognised in the social, political, economic, cultural, and religious spheres, for instance a woman also plays a key role in the socio-economic development of the society. [35]

5.1 The Roles of Women in Managing Moral Decadence.

According to Ojo and Abibu [36], women are an indispensable group in any family, community, and nation. As mentors, women tend to handle every relationship by getting almost completely submerged in their emotions just like a mother would. This method is most definitely one of the easiest ways to make a mentee know that you feel whatever they feel and you as a mentor are also human instead of the superhuman look that comes with the manly ego.

When women function as mentors, they engage their mentees as professional mothers who care not just for them as a professional obligation but also as their mother. Therefore, they tend to easily extend the helping hand to these mentees just as a mother would. Women as mentors are not professional counsellors. Women have the ability to observe warning signs in their mentees and offer the right support. A female role model does not have to be a celebrity. She is any woman who can be looked up to. She is a woman who makes a difference, whether it is in the little things she does in her everyday life or the grand gestures made in the public eye. Being a female mentor requires a confidence not rooted solely in career or status, but in seeing the value in herself.

Ojo and Abibu [36], further remarked that female mentors do more than just inspire today's generation of youths to become morally upright, they are also the driving force behind youths who want to change the world for the better. They assume various roles in their relationships with their children, wards and mentees. The roles they play at any given time are determined by the mentee's needs, desires and interests. These roles overlap and change over time. In successful relationships, the number of roles that a woman as a mentor takes on often increases as the relationship develops. They may assume the roles of teachers, role models, counsellors, morality enforcement agents, interpreters of societal ethos and lovers and promoters of justice, peace and unity etc.

From the definitions of mentoring that could simply be summed up to be the process of matching mentors with young people who need or want a caring, responsible adult in their lives, we can ultimately say that women are the very answers

to this task. On one hand, women tend not to hoard or hold back knowledge and experiences learnt over time from their mentees. They just go all out to share their wealth of knowledge without holding back necessary information as far as they are sure it will make the mentee better at whatever he or she does. This is known as the transformational leadership style because it provides direction by the leader for the subordinates, all in a bid to influence them and have a good collaboration with them [37].

On the other hand, and from the standpoint of motherhood, women tend to have a better grip and firmness on their mentees. They create a routine check schedule which aids their follow up design system to keep tabs with the progress of their mentees just as they do to their biological children. As managers, they assume the position of managing their mentees and ensuring they remain detailed on all matters that require their input [25]. A complete follow up system is essential if the level of moral decadence among youths will be brought down from its present height. This can be achieved by the women as mentors. Women can stand as an important figure to help straighten things out again as regards the alarming rate of moral decadence through consistent mentoring sessions for youths.

Perez [38] remarked that, traditionally, a mentor is known to be a wise and trusted adviser, teacher or friend who is usually a more experienced person than the mentee. Women play invaluable roles as powerful sources of inspiration, guidance, support, and encouragement. Undeniably, men can be great mentors too, but it is the commonality of womanhood that makes women true life mentors.

It is a scientifically proven fact that a female's body is equipped with hormones that make her more sensitive and emotional than a male. This is what makes her a better friend. Experience has shown there have been people who along the curves and bumps in their lives' journeys, have been fortunate to have female mentors, to guide them in the right direction, to get them back on track and to cheer them on to the finishing lines. Such female mentors have therefore served as powerful role models, anchors, life coaches, motivators etc. in the lives of such people. [38]

As life mentors, women possess the following common characteristics:

- Most women could be described as wise people. They have experienced and conquered challenging moments in their lives which have made them wiser persons. Such women can readily use their own personal experiences to instil hope and share life strategies.
- Most women are resilient, positive, and open-minded.
- Women enjoy empowering others and bringing out the best in others.
- Most women are supportive and are able to put aside their interest, for the sake of others in need of help and guidance.

Research confirms that quality mentoring relationships have powerful positive effects on young people in a variety of personal, academic, and professional situations. According to Austin Partners in Education (APIE)[39], research indicates that youth participating in mentoring relationships:

- Experience positive academic returns including better attendance, better attitudes towards school and increased likelihood of going on to higher education.
- Are less likely to initiate alcohol or drug use while being mentored and less likely to engage in some negative behaviours.
- Have more positive social attitude and relationships.

It is however important to note that there are some qualities that must be possessed by such female mentors before the task of mentoring can be carried out in a way that can bring about the desired result bearing in mind that mentoring is more than just giving advice or passing on of the mentor's personal experience, it therefore also requires some special skills.

According to Franchise Growth Partners (FGP), to be able to impact our youths positively to the extent of reducing moral decadence in our society, a female mentor must possess the following qualities among others:

- She must be willing to share skills, knowledge and expertise. With the understanding that good mentoring requires time and commitment and she is willing to continually share information and other things with the mentee.
- A good female mentor must demonstrate a positive attitude and act as a positive role model, her behaviour must be worthy of emulation.
- One of the key responsibilities of a good mentor is to provide guidance and constructive feedback to their mentee. Therefore, a good female mentor must possess excellent communication skills and be able to adjust her communication to the personality style of the mentee
- As a good mentor she must value the opinion and initiatives of others. She has to appreciate the ongoing effort of a mentee and empower him or her through positive feedback and reinforcement.
- A good mentor should be an active listener, not allowing any distractions when the mentee is talking with her.
- She must be someone who can treat others respectfully. She should know how to be tactful in her conversations, and be emotionally intelligent, she should not be judgemental of others and should not be the type that would force opinions on others or that will not be able to handle confidential matters.

Effective mentoring requires more than the aforementioned qualities. According to Phillips-Jones [40] “research indicates that mentors and mentees who develop and manage successful mentoring partnerships demonstrate a number of specific and identifiable skills that enable learning and change to take place”. These include core mentoring skills such as listening actively, building trust, encouraging, identifying goals and current reality. To be effective life mentors to the youths, women must also acquire these skills among others.

6. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Conclusion

As a major force in the development of any given society, the youths should not be left alone hoping that they will trace their ways back from the dark end of moral decadence that they might have plunged themselves into. Therefore, they should be guided and if need be, mandated to follow the socio- cultural processes which will guarantee that they remain in the line of morality. To uphold moral values, a collaborative effort is needed to ensure that youths are disciplined and are made to resist immoral behaviour that will eventually culminate in loss of moral compass.

It is disheartening that the problem of moral decadence in our contemporary society, which has been described as a dreadful disease for any country still persists at an alarming rate. Mentoring at its core, guarantees young people that there is someone who cares about them and gives them assurance of a bright future.

Women play a very vital role in human progress and they have a significant place in the society. Their feminine nature has placed them in a good position to relate with younger people as a friend, adviser and teacher, thereby serving as life mentors. Women participating in mentoring relationships can bring about better social attitudes and relationships. This implies that if many women engage in mentoring relationships, the social vices which have more or less completely replaced core moral values can be reduced drastically if not eradicated. As such qualities which are normal, ethical and desirable can be restored in the lives of our youths.

However, it should be noted that not every woman can be a successful mentor. To serve as effective mentors women must possess the desirable qualities and acquire necessary skills. With this in place the problem of moral decadence among youths in the contemporary society could be reduced to the barest minimum if not totally eradicated.

6.2 Recommendations

- Moral decadence can be consistently curtailed with more women assuming the role of mentors. This is because they tend to be closer to these youths on the home front and even within the academic environment.
- More women should see their positions at home, in offices and schools, as an opportunity to mentor the youths. Hence, they should not hold back on matters that relate to moral decadence by finding responsive correcting measures to the situation as and when due.
- Government and other concerned authorities especially in leadership positions must see women as major stakeholders in the training and retraining of the youths. Most importantly, they should be given such leadership roles that will help these youths believe in the women as achievers and not just as ‘weaker vessels’. This definitely will make their mentees see them more as high fliers and submit to women mentorship.

- It is therefore recommended that mentoring should be an integral part of all our societal, educational and developmental operations and planning.
- Lastly, but very importantly, it should be ensured that women who will carry out this assignment should be equipped with necessary skills in addition to making sure that they possess the desirable qualities of a mentor so that they can be effective mentors.

REFERENCES

1. Muraino, M. Ugwumba, E. Moral misconduct among students of higher institutions in Nigeria: A case of selected higher institutions in Imo State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Education Foundations and Management*. 2014; 2(1), 63-70.
2. Gert, B. Morality. *The Standard Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2012; 6, 723.
3. Odewoye, FS (2017). Moral decadence among youth: causes and solutions.
4. Enueme, CP Onyeme, V. Youth restiveness in the Niger Delta of Nigeria: Implications for education. *European Journal of Social Sciences*. 2010;5(2), 286-296.
5. Chima, IM Enhancing morality in Nigerian youth through moral education and counselling for national development. *Journal of Education and Management Sciences*. 2010; 4(2), 41-67
6. Haque, R. Karim, M. Moral decadence of youths and its impacts. *Daily Sun Nigeria* 9th Feb 2018
<https://www.daily-sun.com/post/287817/Moral-Decadence-of-Youths-and-Its-Impacts#:~:text=The%20decadent%20youths%20forget%20to,lives%20and%20continue%20doing%20mistakes>. Accessed 9 February 2021
7. Muhammad, MS & Abubakar, S Between moral decadence and melting pot in Nigeria: An Islamic perspective. *International Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Studies (IJHAS)*. 2018;3(2),49-59
8. Adebisi, KS Moral decadence among Nigeria youths as future leaders: A socio – cultural regeneration. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal*. 2018; 5(2), 190-199.
9. Afuye, A. Moral decadence in tertiary institutions. *Journal of Educational Studies*. 2015; 6(13), 234-245
10. Oliver OC, Martina CU, Nwodo JN. Moral decadence: A setback of moral education in Nigeria. *Journal of Moral in Education in Africa*. 2017; 3:160-184
11. Ihuoma OS. Moral institution for senior secondary schools in Nigeria. Kag Bee See Publication Ltd; 1995.
12. Mofoluwawo EO. Developing Nigerian youth through social studies education. *The Archives in Multi-Disciplinary Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*. 2006;11(2):5.
13. Alimba CN, Momodu JA, Abba MA, Bello M. Education, youth and national development in Nigeria: Issues and challenges. *Africa Journal of Historical Sciences in Education*. 2010;6(2):124-136.
14. Mbachu OO, Okafor TA. Crisis and problems in education in Nigeria. Spectrum books; 2015
15. Klasen, K Clutterbuck, D. Implementing mentoring schemes: A practical guide to successful programs. Elsemer Butterworth Heinemann 2002
16. Garringer M, Kuppensmidst J, Rhodes J, Stelter R, Tai T. Elements of effective practice for mentoring. Research-informed and practitioner-approved best practice for creating and sustaining impactful mentoring relationships and strong program services. 2015; Accessed 28 July 2020
Available: https://www.mentoring.org/images/uploads/Final_Elements_Publication_Fourth.pdf
17. Bayiga J. Learning narrative mentoring for successful rural youth livelihoods. Save the children Canada.2018; Accessed 23 July 2020
Available: <https://www.savethechildren.ca>
18. Keating C. Evaluation of women and mentoring program.2012; Accessed 14 May 2020. Available: <http://womenandmentoring.org.au/cms/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/women-and-mentoring-evaluation-report.pdf&ved>
19. Smith A. Mentoring for experienced school principals: Professional learning in a safe place. *Mentoring and tutoring*.2017;15(3):277-291
20. Microsoft Encarta Dictionary (2009). 1993-2008 Microsoft Corporation
21. Zey, M. G. (1990). *The mentor connection: Strategic alliances in corporate life*. Transaction Publishers
22. Bruce M, Bridgeland J. The mentoring effect of young people’s perspectives on outcomes and availability of mentoring.2014; Accessed 2 August 2020

Available: <https://www.civicerprises.net/Education>

23. Clutterbuck D. What is mentoring?.2004; Accessed 23 July 2020
Available: <https://www.skillsyouneed.com>
24. Kram, K. E. (1985). Mentoring at work. Scott, Foresman and Company.
25. Adedayo S. Moral decadence and its socio-economic implications on the Nigerian society. Nigerian Journal of Social Studies. 2016; XIX (1):76-87.
26. Ezaka U. Moral decadence in tertiary institution in Journal of Educational Studies. 2013;4(11):212-220.
27. Saheed IT. Moral decadence, causes, effects and solution in Journal of Education and Management Sciences. 2013;2(4):122-144
28. Fadipe S. Social crimes among our youths: Causes, effects and solutions.2003; Accessed 7 March 2022
Available: <https://m.facebook.com>
29. Olateju OR. Moral decadence.2020; Available:https://www.google.com/amp/www.opinion_Nigeria.com/moral-decadence-by-olateju-oluwatosin-rildwan/amp/
30. Ituma EA. The significance of youth development in eradicating corruption in Nigeria: Luke 2:41 – 52. Nsukka Journal of Religious Studies. 2008;2(1):33-46.
31. Chinedu JD, Victor IE, Ozioma FC. Addressing moral decadence in contemporary Nigerian society: The religious option. Discovery. 2020;56(293):273-280.
32. Sofadekan A. Moral decadence and its socio-economic implications on the Nigerian society. Nigerian Journal of Social Studies. 2016;XIX(1):76–87.
33. Uko, J.I. (2007). Corruption and sustainable development. In A. O. Edegbo (Ed), Contemporary issues and challenges of sustainable development in the new millennium. The Nigerian experience 37-45 Lagos: Same Artrade.
34. Shuani. (No date). Role of women in the family and society.
Available:<https://www.yourarticlelibrary.com>
35. Kapur R. Roles of women within the society.2019;
Available: <https://www.researchgate.net>
36. Ojo OO, Abibu AB. Re-orientation of moral value system in Nigeria: The roles of women as change agents in Journal of Research in Education and Society. 2018;9(3):148-155.
37. Rasool HF, Arfeen IU, Mothi W, Aslam U. Leadership styles and its impact on employee's performance in health sector of Pakistan University Research Journal. 2015;5(1):97-109.
Available: <https://www.yourarticlelibrary.com>
38. Perez A. The importance of women as mentors in our lives.2010;
Available: <https://theartof Simple.net/women-as-mentors>.
39. Austin Partners in Education, (No date). Mentoring.
Available <https://austinpartners.org/get-involved/mentoring-with-aisd-students>
40. Phillips- Jones L. Skills for successful mentoring: Competencies of outstanding mentors and mentees.2003;
Available: <https://my.lerner.udel.edu>.