

Religion and Ethics as Catalysts for Social Reform in Contemporary Nigerian Society

by
Samuel C. Nwankwo
Wesley University, Ondo, Nigeria

Abstract

This research accentuated that the aspiration of every human being in any given society centres on peace, security, and access to amenities that make life worth living; as well as the general well-being of the people. These are possible only when the society entrenches good leadership that prioritizes social justice, human rights and freedom, probity and accountability, and in return good followership. It is a society devoid of bribery, corruption, insecurity, nepotism, tribalism and other social vices. Such is the society everyone seeks to belong. However, this dream has become a mirage in Nigerian society. The nation Nigeria has been enmeshed and bedevilled by lots social vices that have rather retarded meaningful developments in recent years. All these are hinging on successive bad leadership. Using sociological method and secondary sources of data collection, the findings of this research, revealed that bribery, corruption, insecurity, nepotism and political instability, have resulted in social disruption and disintegration of the Nigerian state. To this end, the nation has not been on its best in terms of providing the citizens with the enabling environment for development. It is recommended that eschewing social vices, and entrenching religious values, social ethics and morality, will enable leaders focus on programmes and projects that bring development. Government agencies, religious and traditional leaders should endeavour to champion this course of enthroning social reform for the general wellbeing of the Nigerian citizens.

Keywords: Religion, Ethics, Social Reform, Development, Nigeria.

Introduction

No nation thrives in a state of chaos. Peaceful atmosphere is prerequisite for meaningful development in any society. The socio-economic and political conditions of the nation are so deplorable that positive change is the only remedy left. Social reform is that change in structure or organization that positively affects the lives of the individuals within the society. It could result from economic, social, political and religious factors (Obaje, 2018). Reform in any society may be deliberate and as such will lead to the needed aspiration of the people; otherwise, the reverse will be the case.

The interconnectedness between religion and ethics or morality has been a subject of intense debate among scholars (Ganusah, 2002; Yinger, 1970; Uche, 2011). Nwankwo, (2018),

affirmed that religion and morality are interrelated. To separate them will be a difficult task, especially, in Africa. This agrees with the view of Ezudu (1972) who argued that to have religion is synonymous with having morality. Especially, for those that are of the view that religion is the basis for ethics; and are key in societal transformation.

Social reform will be a herculean task without religion and ethical values. The functions of religion in human society are germane in all facets. Religion functions as an integrative force, provides mental peace, promotes social solidarity, cohesion and control, in any given society (Obaje, 2018). Religious practices, ethical and moral values are key to transforming the country into a virile and productive nation of opportunities and a sense of commitment to all (Olaosebikan, 2023). Religion and ethics profoundly impact social reform efforts, because religious institutions and leaders are powerful catalysts for social change.

The main thrust of this work centers on examining the place of religion and ethics in social reform within the context of Nigerian society. The nation Nigeria is rift with all manner of social imbalances, seen in politics, economy and cultural milieu. Injustice, insecurity, hunger, bribery and corruption and myriads of social vices bedevilling the nation are at alarming rate. There is need to change the narratives and the status quo for the citizens to heave a sigh of relief. Adopting the sociological method and social change theory of Max Weber, this work underscored the values of religion and ethics in driving social reform in Nigeria. The research emphasized that when religious and moral values are properly inculcated, embraced and entrenched, it will foster the long needed reform everyone desires in this nation.

Analysis of Concepts

Under this sub-heading, the concepts of religion, ethics and social reform shall be succinctly examined. Religion covers a wide range of meanings that reflect the enormous variety of way (Obaje, 2018). Etim (2001) says it is a complex and comprehensive phenomenon, whose definition may not be pinpointed. Danoye (2006), states that religion is a system of belief and practices by which a group of people struggle with the ultimate problems of human life. Gilbert (1980) accentuated that religion describes any system of values, beliefs, norms, and related symbols and rituals, arising from attempts by individuals and social groups to effect certain ends, whether in this world or any future world, by means wholly or partly supernatural. On the other hand, Omoregbe (1999), affirmed that religion is essentially a bipolar phenomenon...an encounter between man and a transcendent deity conceived as a

personal being; capable of communication with man...is not a relationship between equals. It is recognition of the existence of a power or powers beyond man, which created the universe, sustains, preserve and provides for the universe (Madu, 2003).

Ethics, like religion, does not lend itself to a single definition. It is a branch of philosophy which deals with the morality of human action, or as a branch of philosophy which studies the norm of human behaviour (Uche, 2011).Obaje (2002) citing Kudadjie (ed., 2002), considered morality as ways of regulating the conduct of individuals in communities. In other words, human conduct must be guided in order to avoid chaos in the society. It is the quality of conforming to the principles of good conduct, moral or virtuous conduct (Obaje, 2002).Abogunrin (1986, p.2), defines ethics as “the systematic study of the fundamental principles of the moral law, or the normative science of human conduct.” It is the study of the moral rightness or wrongness of human activity (Thomas, 1963).Ethics studies human actions in terms of their being right or wrong, licit or illicit. In other words, it is the science of good and evil. The good is what is to be done and the evil is what is to be avoided (Iroegbu, 2005). On social reform, Meziobi (1992) observed that it is a modification in the structure and functions of organizations, institutions, and other social form. It is the alterations in the way of life of a people and the structure of the society over a period of time (Nwabuisi, 1986). This reform may occur in the customs, traditions, ideas, values and social relationship within the society. Essien (2023), noted that the term ‘social change’ as a broad umbrella to encompass a range of typical social and civic outcomes from increased awareness and understanding, to attitudinal change, to increased civic participation, the building of public will, to policy change that correct injustice.

The essence of religion and ethics cannot be overemphasized in relation to social reform. It is important to underscore the fact the values of religion and ethics need to be acknowledged by religious, community and political leaders at all levels in their effort to bring positive change in the society.

Theoretical Framework

Max Weber’s social change theory has been adopted as the theory that frames this research. Propounded in 1922, Weber’s major concern was to situate religion’s impact on social and economic change of the society. He saw religion as advancing social reform and change. This he confirmed when he saw the impact of religious denomination of Calvinism in bringing

about industrialization. In the 18th century, the values of Calvinism emphasized hard work, saving money, financial discipline and not engaging in frivolous pursuits. When new inventions were made in the 18th century, the Calvinists who had saved a lot of money were among the first few to finance the building of machines and factories. To Weber (1922), it was this contribution that brought industrialization based on capitalism in Britain. So it follows that, the values of Calvinism had led to the capital well-being of the people. Thus religion was seen as an enabler of social and economic change in the society (Obaje, 2018).

This theory aligns with the work in many respects. The values of religion are germane in shaping human character and morality, which are key to social reform and change. No society can do without religion. Through religion, moral values are inculcated and the society is affected in all facets for the good of all.

Vices Militating against Social Reform:

The nation Nigeria has been inundated with myriads of social vices militating against efforts towards social reform. In what follows, few of such vices shall be delineated.

Bribery and Corruption

One major challenge restraining social reform in Nigeria is bribery and corruption. They are two concepts which usually go together. One leads to the and vice versa. Bribery and corruption are very endemic and destructive in essence when it comes to social reform (Nwankwo, 2018). Azika (2016), noted that bribery is a specific offence which concerns the practice of offering something usually money, to gain an illicit advantage. When given, it is intended to pervert judgment, make the receiver act illegally, unjust or immorally.

On the other hand, corruption is the abuse of a position of trust in order to gain an undue advantage. Those who engage in corruption do it secretly in order to gain material wealth or some other advantage (Agbom, 2010). To be corrupt is to be open to bribery and dishonesty. Bribery and corruption thrive where the criminal justice system and governance are weak, where decision-making is unaccountable and where management is weak. Effects of bribery and corruption are far reaching and impact across special economic and political spheres of a country (Aziki, 2016). Corruption results in resources meant for the poor and disadvantaged being diverted for other selfish reason or even embezzled out rightly. It affects social services

that people need such as water, education, health, electricity, roads, houses, among others (Agbom, 2010).

Social Injustice

Ekanem & Emejulu (2024) affirmed that social injustice is more of an ethical term within the jurisprudential template in the definition of social norms or ideal. It relates to a situation where the society generally permits or encourages any form of oppression that tend to infringe on the fundamental human rights of the citizenry without challenge. Ugwukah (2014, p.87) sees it as that concept that entails a denial of fairness or justice in the society when it comes to “division of rewards and burdens and other incidental inequalities.” Social injustice emanates from “the distribution of advantages and disadvantages in society, which are not carried out on the basis of equity or equality or inequality in the sharing of societal rewards, burdens and resources. This is the root cause of several political conflicts and social unrest around the world (Ugwuka, 2014).

Social injustice is the cradle of national insecurity, threat to peaceful co-existence, and unending bitterness and rancour among citizens of the nation in many quarters. Injustices are obvious to the common man on the street and have led to a large spectrum of the population to lose faith in Nigeria, if not properly addressed, Nigeria could soon become a failed state (Ekanem & Emejulu, 2024).

Insecurity

Insecurity is one of the banes to social reform. Eze (2013) noted that insecurity is a situation where people find it difficult to enjoy safety of lives and property. Nigeria has witnessed insecurity of lives and properties, both in the rural communities and the cities. The rise in insecurity in Nigeria, has stalled development in virtually all sectors of the economy. Human lives and property all over the country are no longer safe (Nkom, 2005). Given the emergence and deadly activities of non-state actors, kidnappers, bandits, terrorist organization, the nation’s security landscape continue to nosedive, thus affecting government’s efforts towards meaningful development. Insecurity retards investments and increase poverty and unemployment, among other ills (Muddassi & Sanusi, n.d).The efforts of security agencies to stem the tide have usually, proved abortive. In order to safeguard themselves, the people are now devising any means available, and in most cases this has compounded the insecurity

situation in the land (Nwankwo, 2025). No meaningful development can take place under this condition.

Ethnicity

It is difficult to conceptualize ethnicity, given various views it has attracted across the globe. Rahim & Adetiba (2012), argued that an ethnic group is an unofficial interest group whose members are distinct from those of other ethnic groups within a greater society, because they share ties with the king, beliefs, and culture. On the other hand, Yinger (1975) defined an ethnic group as a subset of a larger society whose members share significant elements of a common origin, and have a common culture (Lee et al., 2002). They also participate in shared activities, in which a common origin and culture are important components.

Nigeria is a culturally diverse nation-state, and there are cultural variances among all its constituent ethnic communities as a result of their various socio-cultural disparities. These cultural disparities are exhibited by different cultural elements such as language, food, clothes, and social structure. One of the main causes of social instability and political discord in Nigeria is the ethnic virus, which has generally been seen as an important impediment to the nation's politico-economic advancement (Achi 2021). The forces of national integration and cohesion in ethnically divided states, particularly Nigeria, continue to be negatively impacted by the inability of every ethnic group to access socio-political goods (Obire & Chiemeké, 2025).

Key Factors towards Social Reform in Nigeria:

Social reform in Nigeria will be a mirage if some key factors are not taken into consideration. Such factors as purposeful leadership, accountability, social justice and human rights and freedom are quintessential to restoring positive change in Nigerian society, for the good of all. These shall be examined in details going forward.

Purposeful Leadership and Social Reform

Leadership is a responsibility to be carried out; it is a work to be done and a mission to be accomplished. Anowai (2005, p.1), accentuates that leadership simply means that, "you know your mission on earth and pursue it with all your strength, might, and vigour and achieving it." In the same vein Newman (1997, p. 7) noted that "leadership entails knowing the way,

going the way and showing the way.” Leaders are achievers of results. They are adventurers. They are capable of having positive influence on the people and the society.

Leadership is to a society what the eye is to human person. It is very indispensable in any social organization or institution (Esedeke, 2000). Citing Iwe (1979), Esedeke (2000, p.78), noted that a leader is one who:

Gives direction and guidance, formulates policies and guidelines of action; initiates plans and programme; coordinates the execution and implementation of policies, stimulates, sustains and raise morale; assesses and evaluates performance, resolves issues and conflicts, is the dedicated custodian of the welfare of those under his jurisdiction of sphere of authority.

No society ever has functioned without a leader. Leadership and especially a visionary and purposeful one, is essential for the attainment of social reform or change that will transform the course of human living. A society with bad leaders is worse than a society without leaders at all; such societies will only experience chaos and retrogression in every sphere (Nwankwo, 2018). History has shown that there were bad leaders, dictators even in Nigeria and other African countries under whose reign the people experienced hardship, killing of the innocent, rise in moral degeneration and all kinds of imagined wickedness. What religion and ethics that are sound is looking for is good leaders who will deliver the goods of good governance, well-fare and steady stability of the citizens (Iroegbu, 2005).

The quality of leadership at various levels of our institution-ecclesiastical and civil leaves much to be desired. Iwe (1979, p.85) observed that, “not infrequently, vital positions of authority are occupied by mediocre or less qualified parsons.” There is often wide spread compliant against corrupt and inefficient leadership. Hence there is need for able leadership in every human society. Religion, ethics and morality therefore, come to play here. People, who assume leadership positions or aspire the position, must be people of proven characters, virtuous and morally sound. The society at every level needs true and efficient leadership, qualified, competent, enlightened and honest persons, humble at service, who seek the common welfare of the people not self-centred leaders (Iwe, 1979).

Good Followership and Social Change

The flip side of leadership is followership. If leadership is important in carrying out functions and achieving goals, then followership must be of significant relevance to leadership and goal attainment (Rygio & Lipman, 2008). Followership is a straightforward concept. It is the ability to take direction well, get in line behind a programme, and be part of the team and to deliver on what is expected of the person. The importance of followership in social reform cannot be overemphasized. Followership may take the back-seat to leadership but it matters a lot. Where followership is a failure, not much gets done. Followership problem manifests themselves in a poor work ethic, bad morale, distraction from goals, unsatisfied customers, lost opportunities, high cost, product quality issues, and weak competitiveness. At the extreme, weak leadership and weak followership are two sides of the same coin and the consequence is always the same: organizational confusion and poor performance (Nwankwo, 2018).

Rygio & Lipman (2008) understood followership to mean a role held by certain individuals in an organization, team, or group. It is the capacity of an individual to actively follow a leader. Followership is the reciprocal social process of leadership (Forsyth, 2009). The success and failure of groups, organizations, and teams is not only dependent on how well a leader can lead, but also on how well followers can follow (Rygio & Lipman, 2008). Effective followers are individuals who are considered to be enthusiastic, intelligent, ambitious and self-reliant, and co-drivers of social reform.

Accountability and Social Reform

In ethics and governance, accountability means answerability, blameworthiness, liability and the expectation of account-giving (Iroegbu, 2005). As an aspect of governance, it has been central to discussions related to problems in the public sector, nonprofit and private (corporate and individual contexts). In leadership roles, accountability is the acknowledgment and assumption of responsibility for actions, products, division, and policies including the administration, governance and the implementation within the scope of the role or employment position and encompassing the obligation to report, explain and be answerable for resulting consequences (Asekhanno, 2013). In governance accountability has expanded beyond the basic definition of “being called to account for one’s actions.” It is frequently described as an account-giving relationship between individuals, e.g. “A is accountable to B when A is obliged to inform B about A’s actions and decisions, to justify them, and to suffer

punishment in the case of eventual misconduct. Accountability cannot exist without proper accounting practices; in other words, an absence of accounting means absence of accountability (Scheduler, 1999, pp. 13-28).

However in Nigeria and other African countries, problems arise when leaders and key players in politics and governance and heads of institutions find it almost difficult in rendering accounts of their stewardship. Even in the religious circles, many church leaders find it difficult to be accountable to the people. Many of them embezzle, misappropriate and divert church funds for personal uses and finally destroy records to avoid tracing it back to them, this has been the case with many religious and political leaders in Africa. Others in order to cover their evil will enthrone people who will not probe them when they leave office (Nwankwo, 2018).

Accountability and probity make for good moral and social transformation. It endears the people to the leaders and motivates them to make further contribution for the progress of the organization.

Social Justice and Reform

Justice implies giving each person or group of persons his or their due; being fair to others (Asekhanno, 2013). The term has roots in the Latin word, *justus*, which means the quality of being just, fair or impartial. It means even-handedness and adherence to truth or fact and the rendering of what is due or merited to ones-self and others (Asekhanno, 2013). Social justice according to Clark (2015, pp.3-10), “is the fair and just relation between the individual and society. This is measured by the explicit and tacit terms for the distribution of wealth, opportunities for personal activity and social privileges.”

Social justice assigns rights and duties in the institutions of society, which enables people to receive the basic benefits and burdens of cooperation. The relevant institutions often include taxation, social insurance, public health, public school, public services, labour law and regulations of markets, to ensure fair distribution of wealth, equal opportunity and equality of outcome (Rawls, 1971).

African people understood social justice to mean the ultimate telling/determination of truth, fair, or correct application of rules, distribution of goods/services, allocation of roles/duties, rewards and punishment. Without justice there will be social chaos and disorder. Camara

(1971, p.55) noted that, “when injustice becomes too intensive, too oppressive and too unbearable; it explodes in revolt, which is called violence.” Social injustice, inequity, unfairness, denial, oppression are the roots of societal evils and instability we witness today in all quarters. To restore social reform, social justice has to be enthroned.

Human Rights and Freedom and Social Reform in Nigeria

Rights as defined are a standard or rule of action. It means that which is equitably or morally just, just treatment or justifiable claim (Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology, 1996). In the same vein, Michelin (2008, p.221), conceived rights as “entitlement to perform certain action or be in a certain state. It dominates most modern understanding of what actions are proper and which institutions are just.” Rights structure the forms of our government, the content of our laws and the shape of morality as we perceive it. To accept a set of rights is to approve a distribution and authority, and so endorse a certain view of what may, must and must not be done (Nwankwo, 2014).

On freedom, Fogothey (1953, p.164), defined it as “absence of bonds, ties, or restrains.” Human rights are ‘basic rights’ and freedom to which all human (irrespective of colour, sex, religion, tongue, age and status) are entitled (Iwe, 1986). Examples of rights and freedom which come to be commonly thought as human rights include civil and liberty, freedom of expression and equality before the law. There are economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to participate in culture, the right to be treated with respect and dignity, the right to food, the right to work, the right to education, the right of association and the equality of all human persons (Nwankwo, 2014).

All human persons are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in the spirit of brotherhood and sisterhood.

Iwe(1986, pp. 123-124) said, “in the history of man, times of oppression and cruelties have always afforded man and his society the occasion for reflections on their rights and liberties, and have often led to the major declarations of human liberty and humanitarian movement.”

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms (Iwe, 1986). Iwe (1986, p.252), further enumerated all the sets of fundamental human rights enshrined in the constitution for the good of human person. He itemized them thus:

Right to life, right to dignity of human person, right to personal liberty, right to fair hearing, right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, right to freedom of expression and the press, right to peaceful assembly and association, right to freedom of movement; right to freedom of discrimination and right to property.

It is quite appalling to note that whereas these rights and freedoms are enshrined in both national and international laws, they are yet to receive full implementation in the grass root levels. When they do, then there will be social peace and tranquillity in the society.

Social Reform and Human Responsibility to the Society

Asekhanno (2013), discussing the importance and relationship of human social responsibility to social reform, began by asking this question, “am I my brother’s keeper?” This question reiterates the response of Cain to God in Genesis... when he murdered his brother Abel. It is very important to note that to a greater extent, one’s thought, action or inaction has a way it affect others and oneself. Man is a social being, who does not live in isolation of others and nature around him. What one does or fails to do has a collective effect both in the positive and the negative (Nwankwo, 2018). Man is therefore socially responsible to his fellow man. Human responsibility which presupposes social responsibility is both an ethical and religious framework. It suggests that an entity, be it an organization or individual, has an obligation to act for the benefit of society at large. It is a kind of duty every individual has to perform so as to maintain a balance between the economy and the ecosystems (Asekhanno, 2013).

In traditional African society, the idea of individualism if it exists is a borrowed culture. People do not live by themselves or for themselves alone. Personal and individual concerns are equally the concerns of all. Failure to discharge a responsibility renders one to be liable to some censure or penalty defined in terms of the responsibilities they involve. One is responsible for and to himself, others and the community or state (Iroegbu, 2005). When everyone carries out his/her rightful duties in the society, social reform will cease to be a mirage in Nigeria.

Religion, Social Ethics and Reform in Nigeria

Ilega (2001, p.11), observed that despite all accusations against religious perceived dysfunctional role, “religion is still a potent factor for peace, morality and social reform and it should be practiced to let the nation grow, overcome differences and survive. The

true practice of the tenets of our religions will make Nigeria to build a nation where peace and justice reign.”

Obilor (2010, p. 183) noted that:

if the major religions in Nigeria are guided by reason of true religious sentiments, the most that could happen would be honest rivalry in outdoing one another in piety, good conduct and knowledge; each religion would take pride in proving its favoured share of God’s love by exhibiting a firmer attachment to moral conduct; all would boast of greater love for their country and prove this by the degree of tolerance and self-sacrifice.

Obilor (2010) emphasized that those who belong to religion should carry the practice into politics. He maintained that, “a politician who lacks the capacity to put into practice the basic rudiments of his or her religion should not be elected into office in Nigeria or elsewhere. Our hope for survival in Nigeria begins at the electoral practices” (p. 185). A politician should be the “keeper of the public conscience.”

Finally, Obilor (1999, p. 114) warned that the error of the past where religion was excluded from human activities should not be repeated. He said:

The error of the Renaissance was the dethronement of religion by human reason. The error of Darwinism was the replacement of the doctrine of creation with the theory of evolution. The mistake of the principles of the industrial revolution was to turn men’s heart to material comforts and physical conveniences. It was at that time that the idea of adequacy of man’s power to solve the evils of history captured the minds of people thus sending the unseen divine to a compulsory retirement.

Religion is very key to strengthening the democratic institution, encourage justice, equity, fairness and social reform in Nigeria. The moral teachings of religions, when applied, can weed off all the social vices seen in nation today. In the light of this, Ayankeye & Odeleye (2017, p. 7) speaking on the role of the religion, especially Christianity, noted that, “the church endeavours to teach the society the values of living good life which will benefit the society.” Appropriation of Christian moral values by leaders and followers will restrain them from bribery, corruption and all forms of social ills. The church should teach sanctity of life which is core among the moral values to be embraced by all and sundry. This is believed to curb the spread of violence and wanton killing which has characterized the Nigerian society today.

Highlighting the function of religion as a provider of moral values, Nmah (2004) says, “It is religion which tells what is right, and what is wrong... religion enriches people’s morale for the welfare of the individual and society at large” (p. 177). Adherence to religious ethical values is imperative for all religious practitioners. Interestingly, Nigerians are one of the most religious people in the world. Therefore, as posted by Omoregbe (1998), there is a need to live a moral life because it is commanded by God. Failure to do this will be counterproductive in the matter of social reform and national development.

Conclusion

This research started by examining religion and ethics as catalysts of social reform in Nigeria. The nation in a number of findings has steadily degenerated in almost all facets and sectors: political, economic, cultural and otherwise. The level of insecurity, poverty and the general crime rate in the land are alarming. Nigeria, as a nation is in total disarray, thus the need for social reform. Religion and ethics were seen in this work as *sinequanon* to social reform. To have the kind of change that drives development in this nation, the tenets of religion and morality have to be appropriated into the key factors of social reform which are: purposeful leadership, followership, accountability, social justice and human rights and freedom. Everybody has a responsibility to ensure the smooth running of the society, by doing what is right and beneficial to all.

The research therefore, recommends that religious and traditional leaders should continue to inculcate the moral principles that are capable of changing the behaviours of deviant individuals in the society. They should encourage godly members of the society to assume leadership positions at all levels, so as to bring the desired changes needed in the society. Political office holders should embrace justice, equity and fairness in the discharge of their duties. They should endeavour to create an enabling environment for good to thrive, by providing the necessary amenities for the citizens. This will drastically reduce the rate of crime in the nation and ultimately make for a reformed Nigerian society.

References

- Abogunrin, S.O. (1986). Religion and ethics, in S.O Abogunrin (eds.) *Religion and Ethics in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Dayster Press.
- Adetiba, T. C., & Rahim, A. (2012). Between ethnicity, nationality and development in Nigeria. *International Journal of Development and Sustainability*, 1(3).
- Agbom, T.A. (2010). Nation building and holistic ministry. Enugu: Digital Chris Press.
- Anowai, C.C. (2005). The secrets of success in leadership. Aba.
- Asekhanno, A.A. (2013). Justice, accountability, and social responsibility in Africa. In *Kpim of Morality: Ethics General, Special and Professional*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books (Nigeria) Plc.
- Ayankeye, S.O. and Odeleye, A. O. (2017). The church as moral agent in securing a prosperous, united and developed Africa. In Politics and the church in Africa. *Journal of the West African association of Theological Institutions*, 1(9).
- Azaki, M.B. (2016). The menace of bribery and corruption: The Magazine for the African Laywer. Retrieved from [www.http://thelaywerschronicle.com/the-men...](http://thelaywerschronicle.com/the-men...)
- Camara, H. (1971). *Spiral of violence*. London: Sheed and Ward.
- Casey, T. (1989). *Church management*. Washington D.C: Casey Treat Ministries.
- Clark, M. (2015). *Augustine on social justice*. New York: Lexington Books.
- Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology (1996).
- Danoye, O. (2006). *Religion, man and society*. Lagos: Intes training and educational services
- Ekanem, S.A. & Emejulu, J. (2024). Poverty, social injustice, religion and insecurity in Nigeria: The Imperative of Essencism as A Philosophy towards the restoration of democratic values. <https://rsisinternational.org/journals/ijriss/articles/poverty-social-injustice-religion-and-insecurity-in-nigeria-the-imperative-of-essencism-as-a-philosophy-towards-the-restoration-of-democ..>
DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRIS.2024.803102S>
- Esedeke, E.A. (2000). *Christians and Nigerian politics*. Aba: Effort Printers Nigeria.
- Essien, S.P. (2023). Biblical Christian ethics and social change: Towards re-orienting the Nigerian polity. From ResearchGate. Doi: 10.13140/RG.2.2.11061.04328
- Etim, F. (2001). Issues in philosophy of religion. Uyo: Inela
- Eze, P. J. (2013). *Corruption and deviant behaviour in Nigeria: Criminal perspectives* (ed.) Ugwu, C. O. T. Nsukka: Chuka Educational Publishers
- Ezeudu, R.N. (1972). "Can there be morality without religion?" Paper presented at University of Nigeria Nsukka.
- Fogothey, A. (1953). *Right and reason: Ethics in theory and practice based on the teachings of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas*. St. Louis: C.V. Mosby, Co.
- Forsyth, D.R. (2009). *Group dynamics*. New York: Wadsworth
- Ganusah, R. (2002) The impact of religion on morality in West Africa in Kudadjie (ed.) (2002). *Religion, Morality and West African Society*. Accra: Wesley Printing Press.
- Gilbert, A.D. (1980). *The making of post-Christian Britain*. London: Longman.
- Ilega, D.I. (2001). Religion: the key to national survival in Nigeria. *Journal of the Nigerian Association for the study of religions*. 13&14.
- Iroegbu, P. (2005). Ethics of leadership. In *Kpim of Morality: Ethics General, Special and Professional*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books (Nigeria) Plc.
- Iroegbu, P. (2005). Globalised ethics. In *Kpim of Morality: Ethics General, Special and Professional*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books (Nigeria) Plc.
- Iwe, N.S.S. (1979). *Christianity, culture, and colonialism in Africa*. Calabar: Saeprint (Nig.) Co.

- Iwe, N.S.S. (1986). *The history and contents of human rights: A study of the history and interpretation of human rights*. New York: Peter Lang Pub. Inc.
- MacCallum, J.S. (2013). Followership: The other side of leadership. *Ivy Business Journal*. Minotoba. <http://ivybusinessjournal.com/author/jmccallum>. Retrieved on 10/02/16
- Madu, J.E. (2003). *The paradox of the "one" and the "many" in religion*. Nkpor: Globe communications
- Obire, M.O. & Chiemekwe, S.C. (2025). Ethnicity and development issues in Nigeria. *Kashere Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 3(1).
- Maxwell, J. (2000). *The 17 qualities of a team player*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.
- Meziobi, K.A. (1992). *Themes in social studies education in Nigeria*. Warri: Whyte and White Publisher
- Michlin, G. (2008). *Understanding human rights*. Chicago: UPI.
- Muddassir, A. G. & Sanusi, A. (n.d). Challenges militating against reform policy, economic growth and development in Nigeria: Reflections on the transformation agenda of Goodluck Jonathan's Administration. *Saudi Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences* Dubai, United Arab Emirates.
- Newman, B. (1997). *10 Laws of Leadership*. Benin: Marvelous Christian Publication.
- Nkom, S. A. (2005). Our cultural legacy as a foundation for purposeful leadership. 60th Anniversary of the Enthronement of the Chief of Kagoro, Kaduna State, Nigeria
- Nmah, P. E. (2004). *Basic and applied Christian ethics: An African perspective*. Onitsha: Gucks systems Int'l.
- Nwabuisi, E.M. (1986). *Philosophical and sociological foundations of education*. Nsukka: Institute of Education
- Nwankwo, S.C. (2011). Traditional rights and attitudes towards women in Arondizuogu. Unpublished Work. Department of Religious Imo State University Owerri Nigeria.
- Nwankwo, S.C (2014). A socio-religious and ethical roles of Igbo women in nation building. An Unpublished Ph.D Dissertation Submitted to Imo State University Owerri.
- Nwankwo, S.C. (2018). *Understanding religious ethics: An exercise in Afrocentric ethicalism*. Beau Bassin: Lambert Academic Publishing
- Nwankwo, S.C. and Peters, C. P. (2025). Revival of idolatry in Igbo land: implications to contemporary Christian praxis. Unpublished paper submitted to Lead City University, Ibadan.
- Obaje, Y.A. (2002). Religion and morality as instrument of transformation in West African society. In Kudadjie (ed.) (2002). *Religion, Morality and West African Society*. Accra: Wesley Printing Press.
- Obaje, A.F. (2018). *Religion and society Vol.2*. Lagos: Distinct Prints
- Obilor, J.I. (1999). Religion as the bedrock of a University. *Journal of the Humanities*, 1.
- Obilor, J.I. (2010). *Many religions, one God*. Owerri: Maats Printers.
- Olaosebikan, J. (2023). Religion and ethical standards: The nexus in Nigeria's democratic system and social-entrepreneurship perspectives. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4620479> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4620479>
- Omoregbe, J. I. (1998). *Ethics: A systematic and historical study*. Lagos: JERPL
- Omoregbe, J.I. (1999). *Ethics: A systematic and historical study*. Lagos: Joja educational research and publisher
- Oxford English Dictionary (2007) 2nd Edition

- Rawls J. (1971). A theory of justice. Retrieved on 11/02/16 from www.http://wikipedia.org.
- Riggio, R.E. &Bluman-Lipman, J. (eds.) (2008). *The art of followership: how great followers create great leaders and organization*. San Francisco CA: Jossey-Bass
- Scheduler, A. (1999). *Conceptualizing accountability*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Thomas, M.G.S.J. (1963). *Ethics in business*. New York: Sheed and Ward.
- Uche, A.C. (2011). *Christian and Islamic Ethics and the Development of Nigeria, 1960-1999*. Owerri: Applause B Ltd.
- Yinger, J.M. (1970). *The scientific study of religion*. New York: Macmillan