

## RESILIENCE AS CORRELATE OF MORAL RECTITUDE AMONG SCHOOL-LEAVERS OF FAITH-BASED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OGUN-EAST SENATORIAL DISTRICT, NIGERIA.

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### ABSTRACT

Evidence abound across the globe attesting to high rate of immoral and unruly behaviours among youth and Nigeria is not an exception as well. Moral decadence and different forms of indiscipline are on the increase. It is presumed that teaching basic religious values to children will assist in addressing the problem, but contrary seems to be the case in Nigeria. This study examined resilience as a correlate of moral rectitude among school leavers of faith-based Secondary Schools in the study area. One research question and one research hypothesis was formulated and tested in this study. Two research instruments were used to data collection. The only hypothesis stated was tested using Pearson Moment Correlation statistic method. Descriptive research design was employed and sample of the study was selected using multi stage sampling procedure. One thousand nine hundred and twenty (1920) faith-based secondary school students form the sample size. The findings of the study identified significant correlation of resilience on moral rectitude of school leavers of faith -based schools in the study area. Result showed that resilience correlated significantly with moral rectitude of school-leavers of faith-based secondary schools ( $r = .84$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). In line with the finding of the study, it was recommended that for the society to address moral laxity among adolescents, moral education should be made compulsory in schools and colleges. Regular webinar should be organised for school counsellors to assist them better in discharging their roles of imparting values to students.

**Keywords:** Faith-based school, moral rectitude, correlate, religiosity, resilience, school-leavers.

### BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Across the globe, the period of adolescence have been recognised as a very unique and delicate period, it is a period that ushers in many physical and physiological changes in an individual. Developmentally, the adolescence period is a time when identity formation is challenged with exposure to new concepts, peer influence/pressure etc. At this period, adolescents learn to depend less on their parents or guardians for the formation of their belief systems. At this point in the adolescent's life, it is expected that the moral training the adolescent had received from home should be a supporting pillar for them to navigate life and successfully overcome the challenges they might encounter as they journey in life. It is presumed that receiving moral instructions from childhood should help in imbibing a sustained moral rectitude in adolescence and that receiving a 'sound' moral upbringing should address the myriads of problems most adolescents undergo. These moral values are expected to be taught to children by socialisation agents such as family, schools, religious institutions and the immediate society in which individuals live. When basic moral values are impacted early in life, it is expected to grow with them and help them to live a responsible and positive life during adolescent (this is more like what is written in the Bible: train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it Prov. 22:6 kjv).

Observation of events as they unfold in many cities across in Nigeria attest to the fact that the rate at which adolescents indulge in anti-social behaviours is alarming and these are lifestyles and practices that are not in conformity with decent moral and cultural values that were



supposedly transferred to the current generation of parents by the previous one. This study therefore, aimed to investigate the relationship between moral rectitude and resilience among school-leavers of faith-based secondary schools in Ogun-East Senatorial District. This is with the hope of being able to ascertain if any relationship exists between the two variables and to answer such a question as: Why adolescents who had received moral instructions, trained decently and brought up to abide by rules and regulations in the society from childhood do not live with the training they had received.

Adolescents are facing severe moral challenges in which many of them have abandoned moral rectitude and assiduity for pursuit of money, because the society appears to promote and appreciate wealth-acquisition-at-all-cost; as such many young people who are yet to 'make it' according to the unwritten standard more often than not generally resort to anti-social and nefarious behaviour to get rich (Sofadekan, 2016). The loss of moral and ethical values among adolescents may lead to catastrophe in the country. Adolescents have lost value for duty and hard work is no longer regarded as value. Organized crime becomes the biggest business of the day and it is increasing with such rapidity that is of concern.

Moral rectitude are principles or standards of good behaviour, a requirement which is not automatic, but is learnt and imbibed with sense of judgement for societal living and acceptance (Abdulrahman, 2020). It can be seen as something ethical, good, right, proper, honourable, just and principled (Adebisi, 2018). Emmanuel (2014) defined moral rectitude as issues that have to do with right and wrong, good and evil, acceptable and unacceptable etc. It is the mental disposition of characteristics of behaving in a manner intended to produce morally good results. Fruitful engagement of adolescents with moral values will help to develop a sense of responsibility in them with exhibition of sterling tradition of qualitative character in their community. This will help strengthen and renew the adolescents to help in eradicating the scourge of criminality among the citizenry. Schools, parents, public, religious institutions and significant other stakeholders can assist in inculcating the core values for excellent performance, healthy living and existential survival in this changing world. Good character with due integrity, perseverance and self-esteem will make our adolescents to desist from engaging in nefarious activities. In discharging our moral values, we are bound to face some challenges and difficulties, ability to adapt and move on in life is essential.

Life is full of transformational stages, in each stage, we as human beings are expected to grow and move on to the next stage. Within each of these stages, we encounter events that are unfavourable; with events becoming inevitable sources of hardship, stress, or trauma. Human beings encounter a variety of difficulties and challenges during the course of their lives, ranging from daily hassles to major life events. Childhood, youth, adolescence and young adult stages are each delicate stages of life, in which potentially traumatic events might occur, as a result of these inevitable events, many people demonstrate a range of psychological reactions. Ability to adjust positively within the environment when struck with adversity and move on in life is resilience. Each kind of social settings may offer a different set of threats that might target the smooth functioning of individuals and society.

The ability to adapt and overcome difficult situation at hand is called resilience. Hendriani (2018) defined resilience as an individual's ability to cope with stress and learn from negative emotional experiences. Resilience can also be said to mean positive adaptation, or the ability to maintain or regain mental health, despite experiencing adversity. Resilience is one of the quintessential factors in achieving subjective well-being (Erniati & Sari, 2018). Resilience is an individuals' process in surviving in the face of adversity or other conditions that cause the individual to feel depressed, miserable, or traumatized. Resilience generally refers to the human ability to withstand stressful challenges and retain or regain normal functioning. It is the ability to



cope effectively in the face of adversity, the ability to show positive adaptation in spite of significant life adversities and adapt to challenging life experiences.

### **Relationship Between Moral Rectitude And Resilience.**

Moral rectitude means keeping to the code of conduct put forward by a society or a group of people as it is embedded in their traditions, customs, and religious practices (Doreen, 2019). Moral rectitude standard could be established by individual families as well and most times, not establishing moral standard for children can lead to unhealthy character development (Mmaduakonam, 2018). During childhood, children are vulnerable to a lot of developmental disruptions that can negatively impact their personality and mental health later in life. Therefore, the family as one of the primary agents in the care and guardian of the child must put measures in place to enhance the proper development of the child and one of the measures is the moral training of children (Pujarat, 2018). Moral rectitude is a significant and indispensable part of almost all cultures, especially among the Yoruba in Southwest Nigeria, with the parent-child relationship being the earliest contexts through which children vicariously learn the moral demands and expectations of the society.

The role of the family in the development of moral rectitude in their children cannot be overemphasised. A child that has been given the right and acceptable form of training will eventually become the harbinger of joy and happiness for his parents as well as for the nation and vice versa (Namesh, 2014). Moral rectitude is the foundation for a sound social interaction. It does not only help build good rapport, with people, but also provides social satisfaction to individuals. The social adjustability gradually shifts by time and links to the sense of maturity in understanding and responding to situations. Exposing individuals to moral rectitude help to build socially interactive human, who are well-adjusted in the society. Resilience is defined as the ability of an individual to recondition and rebuild a steady psychological and physical state when challenged with major adverse life events (Seiler & Jenewein, 2019). It reflects the ability to maintain a stable equilibrium and relatively stable healthy level of psychological and physical functioning, at the face of highly disruptive stressful and traumatic events. Resilience has also been defined as the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or even significant sources of stress such as family and relationship problems, serious health challenges, workplace and financial stressors (Taormina, 2015).

The evolution of Science and Technology has led to tremendous changes in every aspect of human life. High level of courage and resilience are needed to survive to lead a daily functional life and everyone must develop excellent capability to comprehend and overcome the challenges and emotional turmoil resulting from various life experiences that occur daily. It is expected that children that are morally groomed from childhood should be able to weather the turbulent world when they get to adolescent age, with the said training assisting them to cope with challenges which they may encounter as they advance in life.

#### **Studies On Moral Rectitude And Resilience**

Athota and Malik (2019), Conducted a study on the Influence of personality traits and moral rectitude on employee's well-being, resilience and performance, through comparative cross-national studies in Australia and India. He Employed a quantitative survey method, whereby he generated data from 195 respondents in Australia and 257 respondents from India, he concluded that individualized moral rectitude is a better correlate of collective human well-being, resilience and job satisfaction than group moral rectitude. Building moral rectitude is therefore vital for individuals and people in organizations, especially in times of disruptive change, uncertainty and volatility in business environments.



Edwards, Catling and Parry (2016) in their study to identify whether exposure to adverse experiences, locus of control (LOC), academic delay of gratification and age could predict resilience in young students, sampled a total of 161 participants aged between 16 and 21, they reported that people's relationship with their parents or guardians predicted resilience. Also that, maintaining a good relationships with one's parents or guardians promoted resilient outcomes in young people who have experienced adversities such as parental divorce. Sambu (2015) in a Kenya based study to investigate the importance and effectiveness of social support in promoting resilience after trauma among Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Kenya. Reported that social support is a key element in building resilience in traumatised individuals.

### **Research Question**

What is the level of resilience among school leavers of faith-based schools in Ogun East Senatorial District, Nigeria

### **Hypothesis**

There is no significant correlate of resilience on moral rectitude of students from faith-based schools in Ogun East Senatorial District, Nigeria.

### **Sample and Sampling Techniques**

Sample of the study consisted school-leavers from one hundred and twenty-seven (127) faith-based secondary schools in Ogun East Senatorial District which consist 23 public and 104 private, day and boarding. Ogun East Senatorial District comprises nine (9) local governments (i.e. Ijebu-Ode, Odogbolu, Ijebu North, Ijebu North East, Ijebu East, Ogun Waterside, Ikenne, Remo North and Sagamu. There are four hundred and ninety-five (495) public and private secondary schools in Ogun East senatorial district, out of which one hundred and twenty seven (127) are faith-based secondary schools.

### **METHODOLOGY**

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design and multi stage sampling procedure adopted for sampling. In stage i, Purposive sampling techniques was used to select 127 faith based secondary schools out of the four hundred and ninety five (495) public and private secondary schools in Ogun East Senatorial District. Stage ii: Simple random sampling (ballot type) was used to select 64 faith based public and private secondary schools in Ogun East Senatorial District. Stage iii: proportionate random sampling was used to select thirty (30) school leavers from each of the faith based secondary school selected to give a total of one thousand, nine hundred and twenty (1920) school leavers of faith based secondary schools who constituted the participants in the study.

### **Instrumentation**

Two research instruments were used to generate data in this study. They are:

1. Resilience Assessment Questionnaire (RAQ)
2. Moral Rectitude Questionnaire (MRQ)

The scoring procedure was done using a Likert type scale, thus: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1. The face and content validity of the instrument were ascertained by experts in the field of counselling, test and measurement. The questionnaires were structured to be in two sections (A & B). Reliability test of the instruments yielded a reliability coefficient of .960, for RAQ and .76 for MRQ; confirming the instruments as reliable enough for use in the study.,

**Table 1.1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

Demographic Characteristics	Categories	School leavers from:				Total (N=1920)	
		Islamic schools (n=999, 52.0%)		Christian schools (n=921, 48.0%)		f	%
		F	%	f	%		
School attended	Day	785	78.6	446	48.4	1231	64.1
	boarding	214	21.4	475	51.6	689	35.9
Type of school	public	623	62.4	339	36.8	962	50.1
	private	376	37.6	582	63.2	958	49.9
Gender	male	616	61.7	182	19.8	798	41.6
	female	383	38.3	739	80.2	1122	58.4
Age (years)	16-20	189	18.9	83	9.0	272	14.2
	21-30	268	26.8	301	32.7	569	29.6
	31-40	249	24.9	210	22.8	459	23.9
	41-50	293	29.3	259	28.1	552	28.8
	above 50	0	0.0	68	7.4	68	3.5

Source: Researcher's Field Survey (2023)

Note. f= frequency, %= Percentage

**Research question:** What is the level of resilience among school-leavers of faith-based Secondary Schools in Ogun-East Senatorial District?

**Table 1.2: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of Respondents on their Level of Resilience (N=1920)**

Items	% Response				$\bar{x}$	S.D
	SA	A	D	SD		
When I make plans, I follow through with them.	36.7	51.3	9.5	2.6	3.22	0.718
I usually manage one way or another.	28.7	66.8	1.9	2.6	3.22	0.603
I am able to depend on myself more than anyone else.	46.5	43.5	2.6	7.4	3.29	0.839
Keeping interested in things is important to me.	37.8	50.7	3.8	7.7	3.19	0.829
I can be on my own if I have to.	42.6	47.8	6.3	3.3	3.30	0.731
I feel proud that I have accomplished things in life.	27.8	49.5	8.8	13.9	2.91	0.956
I usually take things in stride.	19.7	67.6	5.6	7.1	3.00	0.733
I am friends with myself.	31.4	46.0	15.9	6.6	3.02	0.859
I feel that I can handle many things at a time.	21.6	54.3	6.3	17.9	2.80	0.976
I am determined.	43.4	51.2	2.4	3.0	3.35	0.676
I take things one day at a time.	23.1	55.3	6.3	15.4	2.86	0.943
I can get through difficult times because I've experienced difficulty before.	24.2	61.7	6.9	7.2	3.03	0.775
I have self-discipline.	31.4	61.4	1.3	6.0	3.18	0.730
I keep interest in things.	29.2	63.5	2.4	4.8	3.17	0.693
I can usually find something to laugh about.	34.6	58.1	2.4	4.8	3.23	0.717



My belief in myself gets me through hard times.	31.4	57.6	2.5	8.5	3.12	0.815
In an emergency, I'm someone people can generally rely on	32.7	54.5	3.8	9.1	3.11	0.847
I can usually look at a situation in a number of ways.	26.6	59.9	3.8	9.7	3.03	0.832
My life has meaning.	27.9	60.1	1.8	10.3	3.06	0.839
When I'm in a difficult situation, I can always find my way out of it	62.4	33.3	2.4	1.9	3.56	0.638
I have enough energy to do what I have to do.	35.7	57.0	1.8	5.4	3.23	0.734
It's okay if there are people who don't like me.	27.3	63.5	1.3	7.9	3.10	0.768
<b>Cumulative Mean</b>					<b>3.14</b>	<b>0.784</b>

Note. SD= Strongly disagree, D= Disagree, A= Agree, SA= Strongly agree; %= Percentage,  $\bar{X}$  = Response mean score; S.D= Standard deviation score of responses. Decision rule: High resilience level of school-leavers (weighted mean score between 3.00-4.00), Moderate resilience level of school-leavers (weighted mean score between 2.00-2.99), Low resilience level of school-leavers (weighted mean score between 1.00-1.99).

Results in Table 1.2 showed the mean and standard deviation scores of respondents Majority of whom strongly agreed or agreed with all the items with mean scores ranging from 3.56 to 2.86. The cumulative mean score of all the items was 3.14 with standard deviation score of .784 indicating that respondents exhibited high level of resilience. This means that school-leavers of faith-based secondary schools in Ogun-East Senatorial District showed high resilience.

**Hypothesis:** There is no significant correlation between resilience and moral rectitude of school leavers of faith-based secondary schools in Ogun East Senatorial District. The result of Pearson Product Moment Correlation revealed that there is a significant correlation between the two variables  $r = .84$   $p < .05$ . as such, it implies that the higher the moral rectitude, the more resilient the students would be. In the light of this result therefore, the null hypothesis is dropped while the alternate hypothesis is accepted I.e. there will be significant relationship between resilience and moral rectitude of school leavers of faith-based secondary schools in Ogun-East Senatorial District.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The hypothesis that stated that there would be no significant correlation between resilience and moral rectitude of school leavers of faith-based secondary schools in Ogun East Senatorial District was not supported. The results of data analysis showed that there is a significant positive correlation between resilience and moral rectitude of school leavers of faith-based secondary schools in Ogun East Senatorial District. This means that resilience which is the ability of individual to adapt to changing and potentially adverse conditions will likely predict how an individual reacts to or relate with others in the society. In other words, the more resilient and individual is, the better they are able to hold the mora values they have been taught. This study affirms the research report of Rachel (2015) who opined that resilience had a strong positive correlation with all types of social support, sex and life satisfaction.

This finding also agrees with the work of Anthony, Bergeman, Bisconti & Kimberly (2006) who reported that the experience of positive emotions functions to assist high resilient individuals in their ability to recover effectively from daily stress. The reason for this may not be unconnected with the fact that respondents attended faith-based schools where they had been exposed to how to handle life challenges through their religious faith. People with a high degree of resilience are optimistic about life, while difficult and stressful situations are usually treated as challenges and new experiences. Such resilient people often hold positive thoughts about other people and care



about emotionally positive interpersonal relations. Resilient people are often optimistic about life, they are open to new experiences and have internal locus of control. Adolescents with high resilience are likely capable of regulating their emotions, which is the ability to remain calm in stressful conditions. They can become more optimistic, empathetic, and capable of analysing conditions that they encounter logically and accurately. If adolescents' resilience is high, their moral rectitude is likely going to be high. If adolescents have positive emotions, lower negative emotions and high levels of life satisfaction, its likely to affect how they react to situations and behave with people around them in their environment.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations were suggested based on the findings of the study:

1. Civic education should be made compulsory in schools and colleges.
2. Counselling units should be created in local government headquarters with the aim of handling matters that relate to juvenile delinquencies.
3. Psychologists and counsellors should consider moral talks and or trainings as tools for correcting some of the moral issues that are manifesting in some schools and colleges

### **Implications for Counselling Practice**

The implications of this study is that Professional bodies like Association of Professional Counsellors (APROCON) and Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) need to intensify efforts in organising regular trainings and capacity building for counsellors to imbibe values which can assist them perform their roles better in the society and equip them on how moral education training can be used to correct adolescent moral rectitude.

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