

## Moral Virtues in History Curriculum for Corruption Free Societies in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Nigeria: Assessment of Umaru Musa Yar ‘adua University Lecturers and Students

**Yusuf Danladi Mohammed**

Faculty of Education, Department of Educational Foundations  
Federal University Dutsin-ma, Katsina State – Nigeria

### **Abstract**

*The principal goal of teaching history in Nigerian schools is to help the generation of youths accomplish a higher degree of moral standing / behavior in order to enable them play their parts towards achieving societies that are free from corruption. This paper surveyed the difference among Umaru Musa Yar ‘adua University lecturers’ perception of teaching the moral virtues enshrined in history curriculum to enable students play vital role towards making the 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigerian societies corruption free. Two research objectives, questions and hypotheses were formulated to guide the research. A total of 116 B.A History students and 18 lecturers from department of history and security studies formed the population of the study. A sample of 107 B.A History students and 18 lecturers were selected. Lecturers’ Perception of Teaching the Moral Virtues in History Curriculum for Corruption free Societies (LPTMVHCCF) and Students’ Perception of Learning the Moral Virtues in History Curriculum for a Corruption free Societies” (SPLMVHCCF) were used for data collection in the study. And the data collected were analyzed using t-test statistics. The study findings revealed a significant difference among UMYU lecturers’ perception of teaching the moral virtues in history for equipping the generation of Nigerian students with morals needed to build up corrupt free societies.*

**Keywords:** Moral Virtues, History, Curriculum, Corruption free, Umaru Musa Yar ‘adua University.

### **Introduction:**

The term “morality stems from the Latin word ‘moralitas’ (manner, character, proper behaviour) meaning, the learning process of distinguishing between virtues and vices” (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy). Webster’s Dictionary defines morality as “the doctrine or system of conduct defining principles of right and wrong behaviour”. Ahmed (2007: 35) viewed morality as “human codes of behaviour that are acceptable in a specific group of people at a specific time and territory”. In the society, the moral virtues are represented as a collection of norms that are taught to the young learners through a series of classroom activities within the framework of the school system, and “enforced upon adults through the threat of sanctions and punishments that can be either subtle or extreme, arising from varied sources as culture, family and community” (Maududi, 1948, in Baffa 2014: 13).

Similarly, Ornstein (2009:156) opine that “a good man is a good society”. This implies that moral virtues play a key role in embellishing the personality features of individuals whom by extension, make up a corrupt free society in which social justice, fairness and equity prevail. The study of themes in Nigerian history in particular, and in the African history in general, embodied numerous parables that aim primarily, at equipping as well as acquainting the generation of Nigerian youths with such moral virtues as: “empathy, sympathy, trustworthiness, open-mindedness, tolerance, courage, activeness, fellow-feeling, compassion, politeness, fidelity, perseverance, co-operation, interdependence, integrity, diligence, obedience and magnanimity” that will make the 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigerian societies corruption free (Okam, 2012:106 and Maududi, 1948 in Baffa, 2014:12).

The above moral virtues are being inculcated into young history learners via an account of the Nigeria’s as well as Africa’s past, in order to help them fonder on and emulate them, not for eliciting the public praises, rather, for encouraging pro-social behaviour, empathy – related emotions, sharing, moral sensitivity and moral judgment in children, adolescents and adults who are the building – blocks of a corruption free societies, which will enable Nigeria withstand the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The concept of “history is a derivation from the Latin word ‘*hisfona*’, meaning what we know through inquiry” (Esebede, 2003 in Yusuf, 2017:67). History is defined as “the study of human actions and

inactions” (Gorge, 1997:34) which is specifically emphatic upon their causalities and effectualities in a complex social system. Yusuf (2018:5) viewed history as the “analytic study of cultural succession in human societies over time and space”. In view of this Espie (1969:4-5) rightly postulated that:

*history is largely the behavior of adult men – their purposes, glories, successes and failures, kindness and cruelties; it is a story of heroism, war and death, of subtle maneuvering amongst wise, foolish and often ruthless men and women; the quest for and exercise of power are recurrent themes, as is the long and complex tale of man’s attempt to conquer his environment; man’s beliefs and length she has been prepared to advance them.*

Based on the aforementioned exposition, one could understand that historical studies aim at unearthing, exposing and equipping Nigerian youths with the factors responsible for occurrence of certain morals that manifest in the themes of Nigerian and the African histories, and their aftermaths on the societies under review. For instance, the study of Nigerian history upto 1800 AD exposes the young learners to the moral virtues which culminated to successful emergence, growth and development of ancient Kingdoms and Chiefdoms like the Kanem – Bornu Empire, Old Oyo Empire, the Jukun Kingdom. And how the moral vices of the erstwhile British colonial masters strangled and jeopardized the political, economic and social development of these Kingdoms and Chiefdoms. Moreover, studying the history of Nigeria will sure-bet enable the young learners to grasp a good comprehension of remote as well as the immediate moral vices which resulted in outbreak of Census Crisis of 1959 and the Civil War in 1967, not only that but also, the devastating radioactive repercussions on the country. This is geared by the pressing need to urge the youths to shun any action or inaction that is capable of leading the nation to the recurrence of these unpleasant historical episodes.

Similarly, history tries via variety of classroom activities, to induce the generation of Nigerian youths to sleep over purposely to seek for eternal answers to the following questions: what are the moral virtues behind the longevity of certain dynasties in Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo lands? Why did heroes like Mansa Kankan Musa, Shaka the Zulu, Samore Toure, Sundiyata and Muhammad Ali become successful in transforming the socio-political and economic systems of their respective states to stand the test of their epoch? What are the moral virtues that bound the Nigerian nationalists together to champion Nigeria’s independence? What part should youths play so as to save Nigeria from bondages of neo-colonial economic and political systems?

Historical epistemology is aimed at tasking the young learners, through a variety of classroom engagements, to reflect on the foregoing with a view to uncovering, emulating and imbibing such morals as showing regards for the worth and rights of all persons, avoiding deception and dishonesty, promoting human equality, respecting freedom of conscience, working with people of different views, refraining from prejudice, seeking for social justice, recognizing interdependence among people, taking pleasure in helping others, working to help others reach moral maturity, striving for the fair resolution of personal and social conflicts, avoiding physical and verbal aggression, about the consequences of decisions, listen carefully to others, knowing when to compromise and when to confront, taking stances for moral principles, displaying moral courage, displaying self – regarding and other – regarding moral virtues – self – control, diligence, fairness, Kindness and honesty and civility in everyday life among others, that are germen for transforming Nigeria into a corruption free country and united polity with a stable political system and economic growth in order to withstand the challenges of the time.

Corruption and corrupt practices become an issue of great concern to generality of people in Nigeria. The 21<sup>st</sup> century posed numerous challenges to the country ranging from; armed robbery, armed banditry, kidnapping, hostage taking, drug abuse and trafficking, child abuse, child labour, human trafficking, pipeline bunkering, cultism, street – begging, forgery, political thugry, examination malpractice, yahoo business, 419, prostitution, lesbianism, school – drop outing, black – marketing, vagrancy, redundancy, boko – haram insurgency to mention a few; which elicit a radioactive effect on the social, economic as well as political spheres of the people. Education system is the only machinery

that would have planned and implemented lasting solutions to the aforementioned. However, the collapse in quality of classroom instructions as well as fallen education standards which resulted from the corruption of education policies and programmes, have made it far - fetched.

Myint (2000: 33) views corruption as the “use of public office for private gain, or in other words, use of official position, rank or status by an office bearer for his own personal benefit”. Tanzi (1998:8) defines corruption as “the abuse of public power for private benefit”. From the aforementioned exposition, it could be inferred that corrupt practices revolve around any use and or diversion of official functions / utilities for personal purposes. It includes any form of action and or inaction that circumvent the established regulations. Frankly, corrupt practices became very rampant in Nigerian schools, as it is clearly seen in such instructional aspects as curriculum management, development, implementation and evaluation while its adverse effect persistently impede effective learning for moral formation. This, perhaps is the reason behind which moral vices perennially strangled Nigeria’s national integration as well as national development needed in order to keep-face with its sisters in the 21<sup>st</sup> century global and regional science, technology and economic races.

In a nutshell, historical studies fundamentally expose the young learners to the fact that empires, Kingdoms, chiefdoms and nations disintegrated, collapsed and fell apart whenever their people imbibe any of the following moral vices: cheating; cruelty; criminality and brutality; disloyalty; laziness; lies telling and falsehood; ruthlessness; injustice and inequity; fraud; treachery; hypocrisy; breach of trust; self-aggrandizement; exploitation (Maududi 1948, in Baffa 2014:12). The forgoing, therefore, have all been condemned and cursed via human actions and thoughts as exemplified in Old Oyo Empire during the Yoruba Civil War of 19<sup>th</sup> century, when Alafin Awole cursed and sent Afonja, the then Are-one-kakanfo on exile, on the account of compromising the empire's security. This paper intends to uncover the prospects of morals perspectives of history curriculum, as the best ‘moral education’ to be inculcated into the generations of youth purposely to gear their minds towards obligatory functions in building a corruption free Nigeria in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Statement of the Problem**

History is an instructional instrument designed to promote national unity among the diverse ethnic and cultural groups that made up Nigeria (Yusuf, 2018:6). However, the eroding image of history subject matter resulted in its relegation down to the background (Esebede, 2013). As a result of that, therefore, Nigerian societies continue to experience of bloody ethno – religious conflicts as well as clashes which constitute a major impediment to the country’s national development and integration of its people (Ihenetu, 2013:231). The problem of the study is to find out the difference among Umaru Musa Yar adua University lecturers’ perception of teaching the moral virtues in history curriculum instrument for achieving corruption free societies among Nigerian students.

### **Objectives of the Study**

**The objective of this study is therefore to:**

1. Find out the difference among Umaru Musa Yar adua University lecturers’ perception of teaching the moral virtues in history curriculum for achieving corruption free societies in Nigeria.
2. Find out the difference among Umaru Musa Yar adua University B.A History students’ perception of applying the moral virtues in history curriculum for achieving corruption free societies in Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

**The following research questions were put forward to guide the study**

**R<sub>Q1</sub>** what is the difference among Umaru Musa Yar adua University lecturers’ perception of

teaching the moral virtues in history curriculum for achieving corruption free societies in Nigeria?

R<sub>Q2</sub> what is the difference among UMYU B.A History students' perception of applying the moral virtues in history curriculum for achieving corruption free societies in Nigeria?

**Research Hypotheses**

**The following null hypotheses were formulated to be tested in the study**

H<sub>01</sub> There is no significant difference among Umaru Musa Yar adud Uuniversity lecturers' of teaching the moral virtues in history curriculum for achieving corruption free societies Nigeria.

H<sub>02</sub> There is no significant difference among Umaru Musa Yar adua University B.A History students' perception applying the moral virtues in history curriculum for achieving corruption free societies in Nigeria.

**Methodology**

The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. A descriptive survey design is concerned with describing events as they are without a manipulation of what caused the event or what is being observed.

The total of 116 B.A History students and all 18 lecturers in Department of History and Security Studies, Umaru Musa Yar 'adua University Katsina state formed the population of the study. All the eighteen (18) history lecturers were purposively sampled because the number is manageable.

Table 1: List of Academic Staff in Department of History and Security Studies

S/N	Rank	Tenure	Visiting/Sabbatical	Total
1.	Professor	1	2	3
2.	Associate Professor	1	0	1
3.	Senior Lecturer	3	0	3
4.	Lecturer I	1	0	1
5.	Lecturer II	7	0	7
6.	Assistant Lecturer	2	0	2
7.	Graduate Assistant	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>16</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>18</b>

Source: Department of History and Security Studies, Umaru Musa Yar 'adua University – Katsina State, Nigeria, 20 / 05 / 2016

And 107 B.A History students across the levels 1, 2, 3, 4 & the Spillover were randomly sampled for the research on whom the lecturers perception of teaching the moral virtues implicit in historical studies will be noticed. The students are sample is presented in the table below:

Table 2: List of Students Population and Sample

S/N	Students	Male	Female	Total	Sample
1.	Level 100	20	2	22	19
2.	Level 200	17	1	18	15
3.	Level 300	38	1	39	33
4.	Level 400	24	10	34	29
5.	Spill – over	11	2	13	11
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>107</b>

Source: Department of History and Security Studies, Umaru Musa Yar ‘adua University – Katsina State, Nigeria, 20 / 05 / 2016

The proportionate sampling technique was used when selecting the students sample from levels 100, 200, 300, 400 and spill-over. This was meant to ensure a proportional representation of all levels in the sample. While a purposive sampling technique was used to select all history lecturers for the research. The sample size of the 107 was arrived at using a table of sample determination prepared by Morgan and Kreycie (1971). This research was carried out using two different questionnaire instruments. The first is a 30 items questionnaire instrument titled “Lecturers’ Perception of Teaching the Moral Virtues in History Curriculum for Corruption free Society Among Students” (LPTMVHCCS). The 30 item instrument was divided into five (5) sections; A, B, C, D and E. The second was a 20 items questionnaire instrument titled “Students’ Perception of Learning Moral Virtues in History Curriculum for Corruption Free Society in Nigeria” (SPLMVHCCSN). The 20 item instrument was divided into four (4) sections; A, B, C and D. The instruments were validated by a lecturer in the Department of Education, Umaru Musa Yar ‘adua University, Katsina state to determine their suitability, reliability co-efficient of the first instrument 0.839 and 0.878. And that of second instrument 0.768 and 0.798, were obtained at the pilot study, using test-retest method. The items of the instruments were mounted beside a five-point Likerts' scale ranging “Strongly Agree” (SA) (5); “Agree” (A) (4); “Undecided” (U) (3); “Disagree”(D) (2); “Strongly Disagree” (SD) (1). Respondents were required to indicate their perceptual levels of attainments with reference to the various aims, objectives, needs and requirements demonstrated in each of the items of the questionnaire instrument.

**Result and Discussion**

The analysis was carried out with respect to each hypothesis formulated.

**Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of difference among Lecturers’ Perception of Teaching the Moral Virtues in History Curriculum for Achieving a Corrupt Free Societies in Nigeria.**

The table 3 presents result of Umaru Musa Yar’adua University lecturers’ perception of teaching the

Groups	n	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean of Diff.
Senior Academics’ Perception	11	8.33	3.15	4.94
Other Academics’ Perception	17	6.89	2.43	2.48

good moral virtues implicit in history curriculum as a tool for fostering national integration among the culturally and ethnically diverse Nigerian students. It showed that senior lecturers have the mean score of 8.33, STD 3.15 and mean diff. 4.94, while, other academics have the mean score of 6.89, STD 2.43 and mean diff. 2.48 of perception regarding the teaching of good moral behaviours in history curriculum. This implies that senior academics differ with their junior counterparts in the perception of teaching good moral behaviours in history curriculum purposely to foster national unity among Nigerian students.

**Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation of Difference Among Students’ Perception of Learning Moral Virtues Implicit in History Curriculum For Achieving Corrupt Free Societies in Nigeria**

Groups	N	Mean	St. Deviation	Mean of Diff.
Fresh Students’ Perception	37	31.52	5.24	7.9
Continuous Students’ Perception	69	48.13	8.36	9.6

The table 4 presents results of Umaru Musa Yar’adua University B.A History students’ perception of learning the moral virtues implicit in history curriculum as a tool for fostering national integration among them. It showed that fresh B.A History students have the mean score of 31.52, STD 5.24 and mean diff. 7.9, while, the continuous B.A History students have the mean score of 48.13, STD 8.36 and mean diff. 9.6 of perception of learning the good moral behaviours in history curriculum. This implies that continuous B.A History students differ with their fresh counterparts in the perception of learning and applying the moral behaviours in history curriculum purposely to achieve corruption free societies in Nigeria.

**Hypotheses Testing**

**Table 5:** t-test Analysis of Lecturers’ Perception of Teaching Moral Virtues in History Curriculum for Achieving Corruption Free Societies in Nigeria

Groups	N	Mean	Std.	t	Df	p	Decision
Senior Academics’ Perception	7	8.33	3.15	8.31	16	0.01	Sig.
Other Academics’ Perception	11	6.89					

The table 5 reports the result of t-test analysis of difference in lecturers’ perception of teaching moral behavior in history curriculum for achieving national integration the ethnically and culturally diverse Nigerian students. The result shows that t-value of 8.31 was obtained and the p-value is 0.01 at the 16 degree of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis is rejected because  $p < .05$ . This reveals that there exists a significant difference amongst Umaru Musa Yar ‘adua University lecturers’ perception regarding the teaching of good moral virtues / behaviours implicit in history curriculum for motivating the ethnically and culturally diverse Nigerian students towards achieving corruption free societies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigerian societies. This difference may be ascribed to long-time of teaching experience, qualifications and expertise.

**Table 6:** t-test Analysis of Difference in Umaru Musa Yar ‘adua University B.A History Students’ Perception of Learning and Applying the Moral Virtues in History Curriculum for Achieving a Corruption Free Societies in Nigeria

Group	n	Mean	df	t	p	Decision
Fresh Students’ perception	37	40.03	104	13.24	0.01	Sig.
Continuous students’ perception	69	24.17				

Table 6 reports the result difference among Umaru Musa Yar ‘adua University B.A History students’ perception of learning and displaying the moral virtues implicit in history curriculum as instrument to enable them play their parts towards national unity in Nigeria. The indicates that t-value of 13.24 was obtained and the p-value is 0.01 at the 106 degree of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis is rejected because  $p < .05$ . This shows that there is a significant difference amongst Umaru Musa Yar ‘adua University B.A History students’ perception of learning and displaying the moral virtues / moral behaviours implicit in history curriculum for achieving corruption free societies among the ethnically as well as culturally diverse Nigerians. This agrees with Maududi (1948), Banks and Cleggs, Balliu, M. (2015) and Chowdhury, M. (2016) that “moral education distinguishes the school – age with the following humanitarian qualities: respect for human dignity, care about the welfare of others, integrates individual interests and social responsibilities, demonstrates integrity, reflect on moral choice and seeking peaceful resolution of conflicts”.

**Discussion of the Findings**

The study investigated the difference among UMYU lecturers’ perception of teaching the moral virtues in history curriculum as an instrument for achieving corruption free societies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigeria.

The findings showed a significant difference amongst UMYU lecturers' perception of teaching the moral virtues in history curriculum as an instrument for transforming the later into prospective citizens that will play a vital role towards building corruption free societies in the 21<sup>st</sup> Nigeria. This implies that there is a significant difference between the senior academics and their counterparts in their perception of teaching the moral virtues in history subject matter as instrument needed for transforming the generation of students into prospective citizens that will be the building bricks of corruption free Nigerian societies with a strong economy and united people. This is to infer that senior academics in the Department of History and Security Studies, Umaru Musa Yar 'adua have a higher perception of exemplifying such moral behaviours as showing regards for the worth and rights of all persons, avoiding deception and dishonesty, promoting human equality, respecting freedom of conscience, working with people of different views, refraining from prejudice, seeking for social justice, recognizing interdependence among people, taking pleasure in helping others, working to help others reach moral maturity, striving for the fair resolution of personal and social conflicts, avoiding physical and verbal aggression, about the consequences of decisions, listen carefully to others, knowing when to compromise and when to confront, taking stances for moral principles, displaying moral courage, displaying self – regarding and other – regarding moral virtues – self – control, diligence, fairness, Kindness and honesty and civility in everyday life, during a history classroom instructions to encourage students emulation in daily life. And this is meant to gear the minds of the youths towards accomplishing higher degree of good moral standing in order to make 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigeria a corruption free nation. This difference may be as result of the long time of teaching experience, qualifications and expertise.

The findings showed a significant difference amongst UMYU B.A History students' perception of learning and displaying the moral behavior / virtues in history curriculum as an instrument needed for becoming effective citizens that will play a vital role towards helping the 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigerian societies become corruption free. This indicated a significant difference between UMYU fresh B.A History students' and their continuous counterparts' perception of learning and displaying the attitudinal attributes in history curriculum as an instrument necessary for transforming the youths into prospective citizens who will contribute positively towards national unity among the ethnically as well as culturally diverse people of Nigeria. This is to say that continuous B.A History students (the 200 level, 300 level, 400 level Spillover) in the Department of History and Security Studies, Umaru Musa Yar 'adua have a higher perception of learning applying such moral behaviours which are worthy of emulation in history classroom instructions. And it helps them to accomplish a higher degree of good moral standing needed to be imbibed by prospective citizens who are the building – bricks of a corruption free Nigerian nation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This agrees with Maududi (1948), Banks and Cleggs (1976), Balliu, M. (2015) and Chowdhury, M. (2016) that “moral education distinguishes the school – age with the following humanitarian qualities: respect for human dignity, care about the welfare of others, integrates individual interests and social responsibilities, demonstrates integrity, reflect on moral choice and seeking peaceful resolution of conflicts”.

## Conclusion

Corruption and corrupt practices have strongly institutionalized itself as the singular bottleneck to socio – economic and political development of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigerian societies. Education would have to re – emphasize on the morals edifice to complement Anti – Corruption agencies in fighting to ameliorate this havoc. Based on the findings of this study, it was confirmed that the senior academics in Umaru Musa Yar 'adua University differ significantly in their perception of imparting students very positively, with moral virtues implicit in history curriculum as instrument for creating effective citizens that will transform Nigeria into corruption free society in the 21<sup>st</sup> century than their junior counterparts. The difference perhaps is ascribed to the long time experience of teaching, expertise and qualifications. Equally, continuous B.A History students in Umaru Musa Yar 'adua University have a higher perception of learning and applying moral virtues in history curriculum as an instrument necessary for transforming the youths into prospective citizens who will contribute

positively towards achieving corruption free societies among the ethnically as well as culturally diverse people of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Nigeria than their fresh counterparts.

### Recommendations

Based on the study findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Department of History and Security Studies in Umaru Musa Yar 'adua University should consider utilizing the team – teaching strategy in order to allow the Senior Academics an opportunity of mentoring their junior colleagues on vital issues regarding the classroom teaching, research and community service.
2. History lecturers should engage in series of public lectures and media interviews with a view to reducing the general public anxiety in history and increasing the later attitude towards the course, being a moral education that changes people's behavior to themselves and to other people.
3. The government, at all levels should give all necessary supports in terms of resources; teaching force, latest edition (Nigerian, African and World) history textbooks, maps, Atlases, projector, film strips, slides, videos to mention a few which are needed for the accomplishing the objectives that prompted renaissance of historical studies within the framework of Nigerian education system.
4. The stakeholders in Nigerian education, especially, the parents should encourage children to willingly enroll in the study of historical studies at all levels for the purpose of helping them learn and apply the morals implicit in history curriculum. This will definitely help generation of Nigerian youths become effective citizens who play a key role towards building corruption free societies.

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