

AN APPRAISAL OF KANT'S DEONTOLOGY AS A REMEDY TO MORALITY CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA

AMADI, Uchendu Cyprian¹ NWINYA, Stephen Chijioke PhD² & OGBU, Chukwunonso Kingsley⁵

Department of Philosophy, Religion and Peace Studies

Ebonyi State University Abakaliki

Corresponding Email: nwinya.stephen@ebsu.edu.ng

Abstract

The moral fallout in our today society, particularly Nigeria, gets one irritated when pondered upon. Agreeably that, the experiences of the decades gone by in Nigeria has shown that the country has been faced with morality challenges in every facet of her existence, a situation that is deteriorating continually every passing day. The diverse cultural values of indigenous Nigeria have been neglected in favour of western values. Moral perversity is prevalent in the society, and there is conspicuous lack of sense of commitment among leaders. The quest to assume offices in the country is not for the sense of duty, but a crazy quest to amass and embezzling the public funds. Corruption has assumed a way of life, conspicuous in both private and public engagement. Moral values among the youths are in jeopardy as sense of morality, commitment and duty has been sacrificed on the altar of get-rich-quick-syndrome. More disturbing is the recent wave of "education is a scam". This height of moral decay affecting all facets of Nigeria's national necessitated this paper. The idea is that exposition of Kant's deontology with its call on individual to duty might sting Nigerians to moral evaluation of the engagement. This paper is timely in positing a moral sense of collective duty among every Nigerian citizen, as Immanuel Kant postulated in his deontology. No doubt, this will be a key to curb the morality challenges facing the country. To achieve this, this paper will be using expose Kant's deontology and critically analyse the sources of moral challenges in Nigeria and then conclude that emphasis on sense of morality and duty in all spheres of national life is the solution to moral challenges in Nigeria.

Key Words: Challenges, Deontology, Morality, Nigeria and Remedy

Introduction

Nigeria as a nation is not exempted from the moral turmoil prevalent in our contemporary society. But, a glance at the present state of the country shows that Nigeria's case seems to be more dilapidated. The country is so morally compromised that ethically conscious person feels the damaging effects of the moral depravity heavily. The moral complacency and depravity have resulted in the growing acceptance of lower moral standards in the society. People no longer care about violence, discrimination, harassment, or conflicts. Beneficiaries of the immoral state of the nation are just too busy doing their everyday work to show their commitment or try to defend the status quo. The extent of morality challenges in the country has reached alarming level that people longer freely identify themselves as Nigerians. At the international community, identifying oneself as a Nigerian is at the detriment of a supposed opportunity because of the bad image of the country.

Without equivocation, many of Nigerian sons and daughters are making positive exploits in several fields globally. But the general image of the country before the international community is gory. The country's internal discord, rancour, manipulation of religious differences and electoral processes, mismanagement of government assets, corruption, nepotism, tribalism, regionalism, clannishness, and absence of sense of duty, indeed poses moral challenges that continue to hamper the progress of the country.

The situation is even more worrisome recently as there continues to be a growing tension between the ruling class and the youths. While the youth accuse the elite of exclusion from policy making, governance, and management of common wealth, the ruling class sometimes refers them as lacking moral values and rascals (Sahara Reporters, 2020). Though, in the words of Alemu (2019), "It is difficult to imagine an older person who does not judge or blame younger generations for being unethical, or immoral. In the eyes of older generations, adolescents and young adults are too

aggressive, too ignorant, and too violent". The same trend of tension continued through the 2023 general election, where some Nigerians mostly the youth rallied under the ambience of the Labour Party presidential candidate, with the name "Obedient" to take the government to their side. But the country which is overly polarized during election period never allowed it to materialize.

The essence of this work is to give an ethical appraisal to Kant's deontology and show it as a panacea to the several morality challenges in Nigeria. This study is undertaking more so, to show that morality challenges in the country, such as indiscipline, embezzlement, degradation, injustice, and lack of sense of duty among the Nigerian people, is the reason for the country's backwardness. It aims at presenting Kant's deontology, which calls for the sense of duty among all, as pivotal in curtailing the embarrassing level of moral challenges in Nigeria.

No doubt, the dwindling fortune of the country is greatly connected to these morality challenges. Unarguably, if the morality challenges are not arrested the country is certainly navigating to doom. This write up is therefore, an effort to seek solution to the circumstances by critically analyzing Kant's deontology as a call to moral reawakening and reorientation.

Conceptual analysis of Deontology

Deontology as ethical Theory is an ethical theory that says actions are good or bad according to a clear set of rules. Its name comes from the Greek word *deon*, meaning duty. Actions that align with these rules are ethical, while actions that don't are not. This ethical theory is most closely associated with German philosopher, Immanuel Kant. In Kant's (1785) ethical discussion, he argues that as a rational being, one not only ask the question "what shall I do", but is conscious of the obligation to act in particular ways that he ought to do something. He argues that when one considers what he must do, he is also considering what all rational being must do, for if amoral law or rule is valid for one as a rational being; it must be valid for all rational being (Stumpf, 2003:306). Oskari (2016) asserts that Kant is distinctive in deontological view, because, for him the moral law doesn't depend on any external authority, but, a sense of duty driven from 'individuals' reasoning alone (22). To further explain Kant's deontological view, he maintains that the moral law is a categorical imperative, based on human rational nature, that it is a law of nature which is intended to regulate human behaviour. As a rational being for him man ought to live according to his rational nature, though man finds it difficult to do so because he is not perfectly rational, hence, the moral law is for him, a necessitating law and a universal law. Kant formulated this law saying "Act only that Maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law" again "Act as to use humanity both in your own person and in the person of every other, always at the same time as an end, never simply as a means (See Omoregbe, 2008).

Most deontologists say there are two different kinds of ethical duties, perfect duties and imperfect duties. A perfect duty is inflexible. "Do not kill" is an example of a perfect duty. You can't obey it a little bit, it's either you kill people or you don't. There's no middle-ground. Imperfect duties do allow for some middle ground. "Learn about the world around you" is an imperfect duty because we can all spend different amounts of time on education and each be fulfilling our obligation. How much we commit to imperfect duties is up to us" (Roma, 2022).

The concept of morality, according to Sevim (2021), is "that conduct which is described as temperament, character, or manners, and expresses the established character structure in humans and the behaviours of individuals that occur under their own will" (135). Though over time it is envisaged that moral perceptions vary by time, society, and culture, they also exhibit mandatory and unchanging rules of behaviour. This is one of the most emphasized concepts in the field of philosophy. Many philosophers have tried to answer the question of what morality is and associated morality with different concepts. Some aver that morality can be a body of standards or principles derived from a code of conduct from a particular philosophy, religion or culture, or it can be derived from a standard that a person believes should be universal (Gert, 2002). This gives an understanding of moral deontology with the appropriation of code and universal. This is therefore appropriate for moral discuss because morality can't be contradictory or relative as some have assumed it be, it must be universal and more so binding to all. Morality undoubtedly may also be specifically synonymous with "goodness" or "rightness". It is also defined as

the group or network of beliefs, values, norms, orders, prohibitions, and designs which are involved in the life of a person, group, people, social class, nation, or cultural environment in a certain historical period and which guide their actions. (Ozlem, 2004:7)

For Omoregbe (2005:154), morality is the fundamental norms of human behaviour. Barrow and Kandhar (2023) summarize the tenet of deontology as ethical theory thus:

Kant's deontological philosophy stemmed from his belief that humans possess the ability to reason and understand universal moral laws that they can apply in all situations. Unlike many other ethical theories, deontology does not focus on the consequences of individual actions. Personal emotions behind actions also do not matter within Kantian deontology because Kant believed humans do not always have rational control over their feelings. Instead, the intent behind chosen actions holds far more importance. Therefore, deontology proponents judge actions based on what most people consider to be morally correct, regardless of actual consequences.

Hence, deontology as a moral theory that lays emphasis on duty becomes a viable moral theory to tackle the Moral abnormalities in the Nigerian space. This is because, among other moral theories, like subjectivism which emphasizes relativity of moral actions and utilitarianism which talks of benefits to the highest number both of which fecundate favouritism and marginalization of the minority, Kant's deontology identifies objective moral norms and duty as the hub for moral actions and imposes on every . And it is only when every Nigerian the moral obligation to imbibe the sense of duty in order to move the country forward.

Morality Challenges Facing Nigeria

The moral challenges facing Nigeria cut across every sector of her national life. Corruption has eaten deep into the fabrics of the governance system of the country. The leaders after being elected into various offices forget all the promises made during the electioneering campaigns. Instead of having their duties as utmost priority, they rather focus on all subtle means of embezzlement of public funds for enrichment of themselves and their cronies. Stories saturate national dailies of the monumental amount of fund recovered from one pass government officials. Yet there are no corresponding stories of how the fund is utilized for the better of the people. It is a kind of stealing from the thief or recovering the loot in order to re-loot. This is exemplified in the mess of the former Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria, Godwin Emefiele is embroiled in.

The moral challenges in public and private sector has gone bad that stories irritating to the mind can be thrown to the air as a means to siphon the public treasury, it's either we are told fire got the building or snake swallowed the money. Jamb spokes person were hardly believed in the case of Nmesoma and her Jamb result forgery because of how corrupt the Nigerian system is. How could a system which some of her staff could come up one day to tell the public that a strange snake swallowed millions of money (See Sahara Reporters, 2019) be believed even when they are saying the truth?

Akinnanso (2018) captures what is still relevant to this article in his view that,

Politicians complete the erosion of values and moral standards in their bid to accumulate wealth, by dipping their hands into the collective purse and making away with as much money as could feed millions of hungry poor for years to come.

Sense of morality and duty is so gone that immorality, dereliction of duty as well as nepotism ad ethnicism determine governmental decisions and distribution of common wealth of the nation. The country is so polarized during and even after elections, every government that enters tends to favour their region, appointments are done mostly by mediocre. Ones extent of allegiance to the ruling party secures him or her governmental positions. That is not to say that some does not merit positions they occupy, but averagely appointments in the country are done based on ones religious, regional, and political allegiance. While think an incoming government will be better, we are rather met with a worst and untold hardship. After walling the masses with naira redesign and other hardships by the past government, we are currently faced with subsidy removal, which was announced without plans to curb any challenges it might brought.

Everyone is involved in the high rate of morality challenges in the country, if not how can the government announce subsidy removal, and they became automatic unmitigated inflation of fuel price even when there were still months remaining for the already subsidized one? Akinnanso (2018) adds that "There is a pervasive loss of moral compass across the society, this is particularly evident in the people's participation in various economic activities." He acknowledges that the rate of moral decadence among the masses is caused by hunger and a struggle for survival. But the question is, should one struggle for survival at the expense of another or our shared duty? Is the mentality "those that does not have, even the little they have should be collected from them", morally right? The answer to these questions must remains "no", and that is the more reason one must have a moral sense of collective duty in the country.

Among the youth, there is the mentality of "make easy money syndrome" and a recent found slang "education is a scam" has compounded the moral probity. Many do not care about going to school. Even those who found their way into the university do not take studies seriously. What they consider necessary is obtaining certificate by any means. Even after school no one care of skill acquisitions of any sort, all that matters to them is how to have easy access to money. This has continuously increased the rate of crime and the bleeding moral situation of the country. Lamenting the rate of moral decadence among Nigerian youth, Ihwakar and Usende (2023) avers:

It has been noticed in recent times that cases of moral laxity have increased among Nigerian youths. Students in our institutions of learning are involved in secret cult activities, drug abuse, indecent dressing, armed robbery, examination malpractice, stealing, alcoholism and many other undesirable behaviours that are not condoned by the society. These problems have mounted a roadblock towards effective upbringing of our children. Parents and Teachers of our youths now point accusing fingers on one another for not performing their roles effectively.

Even religious leaders whose basic duty is to promote morality are themselves guilty of breaking the moral code. Their life style is in most case a total negation of their moral teachings. Nigeria is among the countries that have the highest religious houses which supposed to bring about moral uplift and rejuvenation but alas, it is not out of place to claim that the level of religiosity is inversely proportional to that of morality in the society. Regrettably, most religious leaders are too economically minded to worry about the morality bearing of the society.

From another angle, the rate of killings in the country is a practical evidence of devaluation of life and loss of sense of morality among Nigerians. According to Sasa (2019), the killing situation in Nigeria presently has made every average Nigerian not sure if he or she will end a day so well started by God's benevolent grace. Formerly, the country only has Boko Haram to contend with, but now it has migrated to herdsmen, and unknown gun men all across the country. The sacredness of human life is no longer valued. The worst of it is that some of the people who commit such in human act that were captured are sometimes granted pardon and integrated back into the society, with a tag name like "repented Boko Haram", because they are from a particular region of the country.

Commenting on the alarming rate of moral challenges facing Nigeria, Uzoigwe (2013) summarizes thus:

It has been observed that the Nigerian society in spite of her rich natural and human resources is characterized by different kinds of social vices and ills. These vices are felt at different spheres of the society. They include corruption, bribery, embezzlement, misappropriation of public fund, injustice and so on with their end product as moral degeneration. (163)

He further notes:

Records have shown that Nigeria, in spite of her astute human and natural resources, is morally bankrupt. There is an increase in wilful moral dethronement and immoral enthronement in our society. The youths as part and parcel of the Nigerian society are not left out in this morass that bedevils Nigeria. (Uzoigwe, 2013:168)

It therefore implies that no segment is exempted from the morality issues bedevilling Nigeria.

Tracing the sources of Moral Challenges in Nigeria

The height of moral challenges in Nigeria today did not grow overnight. It took time to build up owing to commission and omission of certain responsibilities by individuals, families, education, religious bodies, the State and the external world.

To start with, it may not be out of place to heap a huge quantity of culpability of moral decadence in Nigerian society on the colonial masters and how they brought about the entity called Nigeria. Arguably, Nigeria got her independence from their colonial masters sixty three year ago and could have within the said period redressed issues breeding moral challenges in her society. However, it is also good to note that the foundation was from the beginning established in crackly way. Hence, we can as well blame them for the heavy morality challenges in Nigeria. This can be deduced from the fact, as Omolewa (1986) rightly pointed out, that the progenitors of the amalgamation did not seek the consent of the various tribes in Nigeria and were not concerned on unifying the people. They were rather concerned for their business enterprise. Therefore, ways of conducts, morals values and norm to guide Nigeria during and after their ruling were not clearly spelled out and inter-tribal and regional suspicion originating from this marriage of convenience has become the epistemic and ethical determiner of what is true or false and right or wrong respectively.

Apart from the above, the moral foundation of most Nigerians is unstable. The home is described as the first stage of impacting knowledge, which includes moral values on children. Failure to direct children on the right ways of conduct will only let them grow to constitute nuisance not just for the family, but, the society at large. The family remains the cell of the society Many homes in Nigeria lacks proper moral up bringing leading to several moral conflicts existing in the country. Many parents have abdicated their roles in moral formation of their children in their quest for economic advancement. Worse still, the life styles and activities of many parents have constituted their homes into training camps for breeding moral devaluation in their offspring. Ihwakar and Usende (2023) corroborate this thus:

First and foremost, parents' lukewarm attitudes to the moral upbringing of their children is one of the causes of moral laxity among our youths. Most Nigerian parents have neglected their role of supervising their children. These youths are left alone to do as they wish. Some parents feel that hence we are practicing democracy as at now, the children should be given a wide range of freedom to operate on their own. To such parents, antisocial behaviours are not punished at all. They prefer to spare the child and save the rod.

Consequently, this misplacement of values got to be corrected. For there to be sustainable development in Nigeria there must be a paradigm shift of focus from economic boost to a profound and fundamentally ethical and human development. To realize this, families have significant roles to place, as the environment where ethical and cultural values are first achieved in a natural way. As basic and essential building blocks of societies, families have a crucial role in moral development. They bear the primary responsibility for the education and socialization of children as well as instilling values of citizenship and sense of belonging in the society. Hence, failure in this part by some families contributes to the morality challenges in the country.

Similarly, moral challenges in Nigeria especially among the youth are worsened by the negative consequences of revolutions in information communication technology which have exposed many to monumental unanalyzed and unverified information. No exploration of the media's impact on moral values could neglect the role of social media in particular. People of all ages constantly use Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, and other media. Many people have expressed anxiety over the impact of all this on societal values and moral development. They feel these media hinder the development of morals and healthy values.

A series of surveys on the topic has revealed many people believe negative character traits and values dominate social media. Some people are of the opinions that values like self-control, forgiveness, fairness, honesty, and humility were lacking on social media. Aside these are also negative character traits like hostility, anger, hatred, ignorance, and arrogance that are frequently demonstrated in the

media. As such, a complex society like Nigeria is much affected by these media influences in her moral values. Onah and Nche (2014) stress this and hold that

Amidst all the benefits of Social media, the phenomenon has inadvertently given rise to moral issues in Nigeria. While they have fuelled or deepened the level of immorality among the youths in the country; new acts of immorality have cropped up as result of the negative influences available on these social sites. (5)

They enunciate these acts of immorality concomitant upon over exposure to, and wrong use of, social media to include: sexual promiscuity, internet crime, indecent dressing and sexual harassment, loss of sense of sacredness of human life and neighbourliness, and impatience and quick syndrome (5-7)

Chinedu, V. and Ozioma (2020) capture other negative moral influences of media in the Nigerian society. For them, the channels of Cable Networks, foreign movies, Nollywood home videos and so on have consistently debased sex and sexual activities, promoted cultism, rituals, kidnapping and other vices through their programmes. Music, other video chips and even some product adverts have so much glorified sex, nudity and rascality and made them look like all-comers affairs. The effects and consequences of these are the alarming moral degeneration in the society today.

The print media on the other hand, has flooded our nation with pornographic materials like photographs and other graphic arts designed to stimulate sexual activities. Such sexually explicit materials are sexual arousing to both adults and adolescents. Such materials are usually watched or read in the secret by the youth and there by learning and exhibiting decayed moral behaviours on daily basis.

On a more serious note, administrative lapses are contributing in no small measure to moral delinquency in Nigeria. Since independence Nigerians have hardly enjoyed viable administration. Just as noted earlier, the common interests of the nation were not clearly defined. The 1999 Constitution still does not share proper national interests, hence, many calls for its amendment. Interferences and manipulations of the three arms of government of the country have continued to create and administrative lapse. National conferences have been held to discuss some issues of national interest, but the ability to implement its resolution remains the key problem. While some regions are treated as a sacred cow, some feel relegated to the background. Same goes to religion. Nigeria claim to be a secular state but in action a particular religion is calculative driving in as the state religion, where other people's religious idea does not matter thereby creating the sense of superiority, inferiority and complacency respectively, in adherents of various religions. Sogolo (2019) accedes to this point when he summarizes the causes of moral degeneration in Nigeria thus:

Failure of the educational system/other socialisation processes to inculcate in the individual moral principles that sustain inter-personal and group relations; Failure in governance and loss of faith in the state; Severe conditions of material needs provoked either by man-made or natural causes, and Cultural invasion such as military conquest or colonial incursion, resulting in the imposition of alien social values or violation of the existing value systems.

These and many other administrative lapses have resulted to killings, destruction of properties and other sources of livelihood wasted, moral challenges that need be checkmated before it escalate to another civil war. The country cannot afford to enter into another form of civil war.

Lastly, in a society riddle with corruption as in Nigeria, moral challenges abound because corruption devalues everything. Morals are sacrificed for the lucre. Corruption is one of the most serious and dangerous social threats that directly affects the country's stability, security, and social system in Nigeria. The consequences of corruption are palpable and range from decline in moral values to loss of confidence in public institutions, to threatening the proper functioning of the market economy and democratic institutions, to deepening of social inequalities and to violation of the principle of equal opportunities.

Corruption occurs in a variety of historical and cultural contexts, in all types of state arrangements, including consolidated economies and advanced democracies. It can be stated that since time immemorial, there has been a tendency in human society to spoil good manners at the cost of

utilitarianism by actions that we now call corrupt. Corruption does not respect borders, does not distinguish any nationality, its harmful impact on society is a global problem that needs to be addressed at national, as well as international community level.

Deontology as a Panacea to Nigeria's Morality Challenges

As noted earlier, deontology is an ethical theory that upholds that some duties are naturally obligatory and binding on us and that the nature and universal obligatoriness of such acts give them their moral status. For Nigeria to tackle the morality challenges facing her society, there must be a general reorientation towards sense of duty and commitment to the supposed acts that promote morals. Kant's deontology accepts only as moral those acts that have universal sense of duty or obligation attached to it. Ochulor (2011) notes that "to do it makes one morally good and to refrain from it is morally bad". That is to say that for there to be a working Nigeria where moral conducts are well observed every individual person, both the ruling class and the governed must be duty bound to those acts that are universally obligatory. And also be aware of those types of morals that help to bind society together, such as morals of punishment and obedience, morals of fairness and equities, morals guided by expectations and rules, morals of law and order, morals of socialization, and then morals of universal and ethical principles. Ochulor (2011) further notes that in relation to deontological ethical system, one sees that corruption is a morally bad action or an immoral act. As deontology discusses and accepts only those actions that are ideal to reasons, corruption goes contrary to right reason that one should not appropriate what is meant for the public to assuage one's private interest or that one should use his position as a public servant for self aggrandizement or for private gain, at the detriment of the common good. Right reason cannot also tolerate other forms of immoral action because it goes contrary to the natural law enshrined in the universal human moral sensibility. Those morally bad actions go against the supreme moral principle and the natural sense of duty that is enshrined in man. Though some to justify their immoral actions can argue on the side of moral relativism but it is pertinent that deontology, which this paper appraises, jettisons any form of moral relativism and upholds a universal morally ethical duty.

To curb the menace of immorality in Nigeria there must be a grass root nurturing of young minds, hence, parents should be adequately oriented to inculcate moral values and norms in them thereby making their children responsible in the society. These moral values include honesty, loyalty, respect, self-reliance, self-discipline, patience, kindness, gratitude, forgiveness, personal responsibility and sense of commitment. Our educational system should be overhauled. There are three generally accepted domains of educational objectives – the cognitive, the affective and the psychomotor domain. Regrettably, the quest for job propensity has made Nigeria's educational system to relegate the development of the affective domain to the background to the detriment of societal morals. This loss of bearing must be corrected if there should be moral rejuvenation in Nigeria. This entails total reevaluation of socialization apparatus with deontological tendencies, generating utilitarian ideals that emphasize the common good – the greatest happiness to the greatest number.

Sequel to the foregoing, the ruling class must also act in a way that the masses will see reasons to be patriotic for the country. The youths should not be used majorly as a means to ascend governmental posts, only to be dumped after every election. They should be given opportunities for active participation in the policy making of the country. Imbibing the ideals of deontology elicits utilitarian disposition which inhibits embezzlement of public fund and the use of public offices for self aggrandizement or fulfilment of private selfish interests. Once a society is blessed with leadership that is beyond moral probity, the ground becomes fertile for the control of moral apprehensions and the growth of moral virtues through mentorship and emulation.

The religious leaders should also imbibe the deontological ideals and de-emphasize material prosperity. As true custodians of the moral values, the morals they preach should be reflected in their daily lives.

The youths must uphold deontological moral values and regain the sense of duty lost to the quest to make it as fast and easily as possible. They must learn to develop themselves properly and embrace the ideal of possessing only that which they worked for. In the same vein, the youth must learn from deontology that they are ends in themselves and should not allow anyone to use them as means to

other ends. The realization by the youth of their natural duty towards themselves and the society at large can go a long way towards invigoration of moral values in Nigeria.

Evaluation

The morality challenges are prevalent in the country, Nigeria, affecting every sector and everyone. The youth are mostly involved and affected. Research has shown that they are all engaging in various immoral activities, such as cultism, violence, cyber crimes, underage sexual activities and examination malpractice, among others. Most people in Nigeria, whether in the political realm, civil and public services or other forms of engagement in the country are all of the delusion that for one to succeed they must engage in any form of immoral activities. And this is actually eating up the Nigerian society. Thus, if something is not done to curb it, and urgently too, the chances are that moral challenges will destroy the Nigerian society, already paying dearly for them. This is evident in the level of crimes and criminalities in the country. This calls for moral reorientation rooted on Kant's deontological idea since it is an ethical principle based on reasoning that is not subjective but categorically imperative, as Ocholor (2008) reviews, "Act only on the maxim through which you can, at the same time, will that it should become universal law".

The second categorical imperative deontological ethics requires all to "Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end". If every citizens of Nigeria can, through their reasoning, seek that which can be a universal norm and as well only engage in those acts which benefit the citizens who are ends in themselves, there will be drastic positive changes in Nigeria that will redirect the moral situation of the country.

Furthermore, since this paper has identified lack of moral upbringing and ethical values in the family, poverty, media influences, corruption and others as the reasons for morality challenges in the country, it follows that there should be a set of rules to guide our moral education as an aspect of socialization. Consequently, all hand must be on deck in the quest to achieve moral redirection and reinvigoration in the country. This is the sense of duty which underlies deontology as ethical theory. The duty of restoring moral rectitude, the absence of which is threatening the collective aspiration of Nigeria, is a moral obligation to every rational being.

Conclusion

This paper began by identifying what morality is because to sieve out the morality challenges in the country, we necessarily need know what ought to be, that is not in place. The paper delineated the nature of moral challenges facing Nigeria as well as the source of the ugly trend. It argued that the morality challenges facing the country have placed her in red line of moral depravity that includes but not limited to embezzlement of public fund and misappropriation of the nation's patrimony, outright stealing, wanton destruction of lives and property, sexual abasement, and other moral debasement. Analysis of Kant's appropriation of deontology which emphasizes sense of duty and categorical imperatives of universalization of actions and rectification of man as an end in himself that should never be treated as a means to any other end, shows that the ideals of the ethical theory are fundamental and indispensable to rectifying the moral challenges facing Nigeria.

The paper therefore calls on every Nigerian to moral introspection and to sense of duty that will elicit in all moral attitude lack of which is responsible for the palpable retrogression of all sphere of national life in Nigeria.

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