

Challenges of Religious Moral Development of Young Adults in Kenya: A Case Study of Selected Students of the University of Nairobi

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Abstract

The article focuses on religious moral development of young adults, some of whom upon joining universities due to peer pressure, new found freedom, lack of adequate supervision, urban life and secularization lapse in their moral behavior. The article argues that unlike in the traditional African society where moral empowerment was continued into adulthood, the newly introduced religions in Kenya have not developed appropriate programmes for moral development of young adults. The structures for moral development in universities are voluntary, formal and not as thorough as those in family and lower levels of education hence many young adults do not benefit from them. The article is based on research conducted at the University of Nairobi where one hundred, first, second, third and fourth year students were interviewed. The study recommends that structures in universities mandated with moral development should be strengthened to become pro-active to deal with moral challenges young adults undergo. Religious denominations should also combine efforts and come up with ecumenical moral programmes geared towards empowering young adults morally.

Introduction

For the last one hundred years Kenya, just like other African countries, has gone through drastic changes which have impacted on all aspects of life. Writing on what Africa has gone through Macharia (2007: 223) says: “The technological innovations of 19th, 20th and 21st centuries have changed human life in ways that are not easy to understand”. The African traditional institutions which were mandated with moulding individuals to become

responsible members of the society have been weakened or destroyed. Reflecting on such institutions Kinoti (2003: 8) observes, "Education in the traditional African society aimed at producing persons who upheld the values that helped society to remain integrated". For instance, initiation rites which were pivotal have been done away with in many societies. In instances where some communities continue them they are only symbolic of a past relic. They lack the elaborate educational value they had in the traditional African society. Apart from the physical cuttings on the initiates' productive organs, the other significant aspects are not accomplished.

Religious moral development in the African society was simple and effective. Writing on the benefits an individual derived from initiation rites Wandira (1971: 234) comments as follows: "The function of education lay in producing fully grown and balanced persons who would fit well in the society which they became a living part of". Apart from family, society and religion there were no other competition institutions hence whatever religious moral development that was impacted was not challenged by external factors. In most cases African societies operated in a fixed arena. It was also easy to manage and monitor the process of moral development. Deviation from moral obligations was easy to correct and punish. Each Kenyan society had its own elaborate methodology of ensuring that proper moral attitudes and practices were impacted on the youth. Hence this guaranteed that the majority of the members of societies were well behaved.

Since the arrival of new religions and other modern institutions in Kenya, the process of religious moral development has become complex. The arena of moral development has also shifted. Children are born in families but from tender ages are taken to boarding primary schools. After completing primary education they move to other areas to acquire secondary education and post-secondary education. In these new areas they interact with a variety of institutions. For example, they are removed from their families, religious denominations and communities and exposed to unfamiliar institutions. Their parents and religions are not able to monitor the new horizons of religious morals development.

The mass media has emerged as the single most significant challenge to religious moral development (Gakahu, 2005: 82). It is competing with the family, schools, religions and cultures in moral development of the youth in Kenya. Social media has emerged as a significant forum for moral and social

influence. The development of information technology in Kenya has expanded the horizon of social interaction to levels one would not have imagined in the last few years. Kenyan youth just like other youths in the globalized world are interacting with others in real time from all over the world.

This is generating a lot of challenges in the area of moral development. Depending on the stand view of individuals moral attitudes and practices are changing very rapidly. Commenting on media, Gakahu (2005: 80) observes the following: "The media is a major source of behaviour modeling which has become an extreme pervasive and omnipresent institutions in the world".

Together with the mass media are other factors such as urbanization, modernization, science and secularization which are presenting real challenges to the youth. In 2010 Kenya promulgated a new constitution which has given individuals a lot of freedom. For example, forms of punishment which were intended to bring in line those who veered away from expected moral standards have been outlawed. Children in schools have a lot of freedom and teachers cannot cane them as was the case a few years ago. In 2014 in Nairobi some male youths tried to force ladies to dress in less provocative ways. To enforce their endeavor they started undressing allegedly indecently dressed women. This generated a hot debate in the social medial culminating into the slogan "my dress my choice" several male youths were arrested for attempting to undress women and taken to court. In March 2016 a group of young adults organized a party dubbed "Project X". Posters appeared inviting young adults to a party somewhere in the so called green and leafy suburb of Nairobi (*Daily Nation*, 26 March, 2016). The announcement caused hysteria on social media in Nairobi. The government reacted by banning the proposed party. These events posed serious questions on the status of moral development among young adults.

In recent times in Kenya there has been an upsurge in cases of immorality such as rape and defilement of women, killing of children and spouses, drugs and alcohol abuse, pornography, sexual promiscuity among others. The question is why are immoral cases on the rise despite the elaborate religious moral development society and religions are providing? Why is it that young adults are engaging in wrong moral attitudes and practices? Religions and society have been equipping children and youth with moral education, a look at any religion one would notice the elaborate religious education programmes on offer for children and youth. Why is it that the investment put in moral

development seems not to be achieving intended objectives of bring up morally upright people? Why is it that some young adults though having been morally educated, the moments they gain their freedom get involved in immoral activities? Why is it that some children who are raised and taught to be God fearing and people of integrity are in mid-way running away from the values and practices taught to them?

This article analyses the challenges young adults go through that make some of them take a new direction in their moral perspective. It intended to bring out the various influences and challenges which make young adults get involved in religiously immoral activities. The article is a product of a field survey that involved selected students of the University of Nairobi. It mainly targeted students born and raised in conservative rural settings and aimed at finding out how moral attitudes changed the moment they joined the University of Nairobi.

Methodology

The study utilized the questionnaire and open ended questions method. The respondents were required to answer 14 questions with agree, strongly agree, disagree, strongly disagree and no comment responses. They also gave responses to questions touching on their personal lifestyles where they responded with yes, no or no comment. They also gave comments on six questions where they gave reasons and explanations.

100 questionnaires were distributed to 50 young men and 50 young women. 97 questionnaires were returned, 50 women and 47 men. Since Kenya is religiously pluralistic, 87 Christians and 8 non-Christians filled the questionnaires hence the majority were Christians. The respondents' ages ranged from 18-32 years of age. The majority were between the ages of 18-24 years.

The University of Nairobi was chosen because the study targeted young people brought up in rural areas and currently residing in urban centres. The University of Nairobi situated in the centre of Nairobi city was expected to have the greatest influence on young people owing to its multitudes of social attractions. Out of 97 students, 77 were raised in rural areas while 20 were raised in Nairobi. Stay in Nairobi ranged from less than one year to 24 years.

Thirty-two students were first and second years while 75 were 3rd and 4th year students. Filling and returning the questionnaires took one month.

Results

Decline in Moral Standards in Kenya

From the respondents it is evident that there is decline in moral standards in Kenya. 91 respondents representing 94% strongly agreed that moral standards are rapidly declining in Kenya. Six respondents representing 6% strongly disagreed.

Effectiveness of Nuclear Families in Moral Development

Questioned on the effectiveness of the family as a primary source of moral development, 51 strongly agreed representing 53% while 44 strongly disagreed representing 45%, 2 representing 2% had no comment. This means that the nuclear family is not overwhelmingly effective in moral development.

Extended Families Involvement in Moral Development

Forty-one respondents representing 42% strongly agreed while 56 representing 58% strongly disagreed. This shows that extended families are not as strong in moral development as they were in the traditional African society.

Role of Religious Denominations in Impacting Positive Moral Influence

Seventy-nine respondents representing 81% strongly agreed while 16 strongly disagreed representing 16% and 2 had no comment representing 2%.

Mass Media as the Most Influential Social Institution

Ninety-one representing 94% strongly agreed while 5 representing 5% strongly disagreed, 1 representing 1% had no comment.

Mass Media as a Point of Reference for young Adults

Eighty-seven representing 90% strongly agreed while 6 representing 6% strongly disagreed, 4 representing 4% had no comment.

Contribution of Religious Organizations such as Christian Union, Christian Youth Society, Muslim Students Organization and Christian and Islamic Chaplaincies in Positively Influencing Young Adults

Seventy representing 72% strongly agreed while 25 representing 26% strongly disagreed, 2 representing 2% had no comment.

New Constitution and New Laws in Kenya Granting Young Adults unprecedented Freedom

Sixty-two representing 64% strongly agreed while 16 representing 16% strongly disagreed, 19 representing 20% had no comment.

Influence of Urbanization, Modernization and Secularization in Moral Deterioration in Kenya

Eighty-eight representing 91% strongly agreed while 7 representing 7% strongly disagreed- 2 representing 2% had no comment.

Redundance of Religious Denominations in Moral Development in Universities and Colleges

Sixty-nine representing 71% strongly agreed while 22 representing 23% strongly disagreed- 6 representing 6% had no comment.

Ownership of Sections of Mass Media by Religious Organizations and Its Influence in Neutralizing Negative Secular Media

Fifty representing 52% strongly agreed while 37 representing 38 strongly disagreed- 10 representing 10% had no comment.

Parents Too Busy to Give Quality Time to Young Adults

Ninety representing 92% strongly agreed while 6 representing 6% strongly disagreed – 1 representing 1% had no comment.

Frequency in Attendance of Religious Functions

Twenty-seven representing 28% rarely attended, 59 representing 61% frequently attended, 7 representing 7% did not attend at all and 4 representing 4% had no comment.

Frequency of Accessing Aspects of the Mass Media

Twenty-five representing 26%, accessed once a day, 63 representing 65% accessed several times in a day, 7 representing 7% accessed once a week, 2 representing 2% did not access at all.

Frequency of Reading Religious Scriptures

Forty representing, 41% read scriptures daily, 35 representing 36% read scriptures during days of worship, 20 representing 21% rarely read the scripture, 2 representing 2% did not read the scripture at all.

The Most Popular Media

Four representing 4% preferred FM radio stations, 1 representing 1% chose newspapers, 85 representing 88% choose social media, 7 representing 7% chose T.V. channels- none chose books.

Contribution of Religions in assisting in Making Moral Decisions

Seventy representing 72% were assisted by religion in making moral decisions, 26 representing 27% were not assisted at all 1 representing 1% had no comment.

Sufficiency of religious content in religious media in influencing young adults morally

Thirty-eight representing 39% said it is adequate, 50 representing 52% said it is inadequate 9 representing 9% had no comment.

Religious Media's Capacity to March Innovations and Creativity of Secular Media

Twenty-five representing 26% said the capacity is adequate, 53 representing 54% said the capacity is inadequate. 19 representing 20% had no comment.

Frequency of Parents Giving Religious Moral Guidance After Students Joined Universities

Sixty-one representing 63 said parents rarely gave moral guidance, 29 representing 30% said parents frequently gave moral guidance 7 representing 7% said parents did no at all give any moral guidance.

Discussion

The Dictionary of Psychology defines moral development as the process whereby individuals ... come to adopt and internalize the standards of right and wrong of their society (Reber & Reber, 2001: 444). Mugambi (2003:15) defines morality as the sum total of the principles that influence or should influence the behavior of an individual. Over the years and in various societies moral decisions are based on; religious ethics, ethics of respect, ethics of rights and virtue ethics.

In this article emphasis is placed on religious morals and ethics. Religion in Kenya just like in other African countries still remains very strong. Writing on continued influence of religion in Africa, Sarpong (1975:28) says: "Africa

remains so religious that in many cases not even the introduction of science and technology has been able to make in-roads into her religious fabric”.

From the results from the University of Nairobi (3:13) 61% of the students interviewed still attend religious functions frequently. In this article young adults are understood to mean young people in the early years of 20 years to early thirties. While defining young adults Moloney (2013:9) writes: “There is still a sizeable group in education up to mid and even late twenties”. Kenya has embraced many religions of the world although Christianity and Islam have the largest following. In the results 94% (3.1) of the respondents are in agreement that Kenya though still being a very religious country moral standards are declining rapidly. Mwikamba (2003: 86) attributed the decline to among other factors the fact that African traditional morals have been replaced or displaced by other moral systems. When the missionaries arrived in Kenya they assumed that the culture and ethics of the missionary is “Christian” and “good” where as that of the prospective converts is “non-Christian” and “evil” (Mugambi, 2003:14). In the development of Christian morality in Kenya as in other parts of Africa, African values and morals were discarded while western Christian values were given the priority. In the teaching of morals, the various denominations operating in Kenya emphasized their interpretation of morality. On the conflict in moral and ethical teachings, Mugambi (2003: 15-16) writes: “The lack of moral consensus among Christians has produced a crisis in Christian moral education joint Catholic/ Protestant secondary education panel endeavored to formulate a syllabus for ethics at A level. The task proved very difficult owing to lack of consensus. In the end plurality, was acknowledged”.

Although African religion is very rich in morals and values upon conversion many African Christians do not adapt their cultural values and morals in the Christian ethics that emerge. In the traditional society moral development was a continuous process. For example among the Akamba of Eastern Kenya, there was a special initiation ritual that was intended to empower young adults. (*Nzaiko Nene*) (Mbiti, 1969: 123). In contemporary Kenyan society after students finish form four and join colleges and universities parents and religious denominations cease or drastically reduce their provision of moral guidance. Public universities in Kenya admit some of most well behaved students but upon admission some of the students’ morals take turn for the worse. In a study carried out in Moi University among first year students Sorre (2005: 86) found out that peer influence and newly acquired freedom are the

main causes of behavior change. He found out that emancipation from parental authority and emotional dependence upon parents also causes behavior change in an individual. Sorre (2005: 89) observes that most of these changes have negative implications on the students’ social and academic life.

When the selected students of the University of Nairobi were asked why some of them were involved in immoral activities, they gave the following reasons; peer pressure, extreme poverty levels, curiosity, poor parenting, ignorance, too much freedom, experimenting in new experiences, lack of supervision, aping others, influence from social media, idleness, to earn a living, rebellion and disobedience, living beyond means, affluence, financial constraints, erosion of moral values, easy access to drugs and alcohol among others.

Students who join university before they are admitted come from situations where they are effectively supervised. All of sudden they find themselves in universities where there are no rules, no prefects or monitors. Immediately driven by the above reasons they begin engaging in immoral practices. On young adults, Sorre (2005:89) writes: “New experiences and cognitive abilities that emerge during their interaction, with other students prompt them to redefine their behavior in a way that changes their world view and hence change in behavior element”.

Maloney (2013:19) writing on the challenges young adults in contemporary Kenyan society face says: “Differences related to decision making and inadequate support ... often major life decisions about career, going to college and whom to marry are made during early adulthood”.

Among many African societies there were support systems at every developmental stage. For example, among the Maasai and kikuyu there were age-groups. These assisted when one was in doubt. Moloney (2013:19) says in contemporary Kenyan society it is commonly assumed that a young adult is neither a child nor adolescent so he has no need of help. When young adults find themselves in this kind of situation depending on their level of maturity and responsibility some surrender and move to extremes. The students of the University of Nairobi said although in the university there are structures such as Christian union, young Christian society and others they tend to be evangelistic than giving advice or counseling. The chaplaincy in the university is not pro-active. It only intervenes when things have gone bad. Most of these organizations are too formal- hence most of students interviewed said they

simply ignored them. Writing on the dilemma students find themselves Moloney (2013:20) observes: "After secondary school in college and university support structures either do not exist or they tend to be in personal and mainly geared towards academic performance". The implication of this is that young adults often lack the necessary information and advice which may be the key in enabling them to make informed decisions. Some of the expectations students content with include pressure of unrealistic and unachievable expectations from parents, peers and society, difficulties in establishing and sustaining health relationships and challenges related to the pursuit of a career (Maloney, 2013: 20).

When parents and other institutions involved in moral development slow down, the vacuum they create is filled by mass media and bad company. Young adulthood is a time of many positive and negative experiences. During this time they enjoy, complete independence from parents and teachers. As they interact with their peers, mass media and personal experiences they encounter in the cities, young adults are slowly drawn away from the deeply religious environment they were used to. On why young adults change quickly, O-Donovan (2000: 207) writes: "Youth are always looking for new ideas and excitement. They are easily influenced to change in ways that adults would never consider".

On the challenge society faces in moulding young adults, Mwiti (2005:1) writes: "We face a twofold challenge: how to enable young people to enjoy a satisfying morally health life and at the same time help them to grow into truly mature and responsible men and women. This is necessary for the good of individuals, families and nation".

On the same subject O-Donovan (2000:2015) argues as follows: "The majority of Africa is becoming younger every year. Youth represent one of the greatest unmet of needs in the Church today. Churches need to drastically change their programmes in order to address the needs of the youth".

Mass Media and Young Adults

Although most of the mass media such as radio, television, newspapers and films are either partially owned by Kenyan investors or wholly owned by foreigners the content in the mass media is mostly dominated by western cultures. Gakahu (2000: 80) observes the following: "In Kenya, most of the

content in electronic media is geared towards sexual graphics, sexual language and sexual relations".

When Kenya launched digital broadcasting, various television channels, fm radio stations started broadcasting in English, Kiswahili and vernacular languages hence increasing mass media options. Many of these target mainly the youth and young adults and are dominated by issues of sexuality and relationships. On the capacity of the youth and young adults to critically accommodate the content of the mass media, Gakahu (2005: 80) says: "By the fact that youths are quite malleable the scenes of sexual material in our electronic media may have adverse effects on their behaviours".

As shown in the results (3.6) the mass media has become a point of reference, most youth use it as the yard stick on which to base their dressing, mannerism, behavior among other aspects. Young adults are attracted to social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, Instagram and many others. Kenya as a country has not formulated adequate policies that guard against destructive content in electronic media. Gakahu (2005:8) observes that: "The exposure to media message of all kinds and the influence of those messages have increased over the years".

Due to the reduced involvement of parents and religions in giving alternative views the mass media is literally dominating young adults to the extent that most of them spent a lot of time checking what is in the media. In the study conducted at the University of Nairobi showed that 63% of parents rarely give their children moral guidance after they join Universities. Many young adults consult the mass media more than they consult religious scriptures and even books. In particular parents have been slow in providing sex education and female and male relationships. In recent years there have been reports in the media of young adults assaulting or even killing their boy or girl friends in the universities. On the failure of parents to provide education on sex and relationships, Gakahu (2005: 80) writes: "In Kenya the youth tend to turn to sources outside the family because a culture of silence surrounding most productive health issues. Many adults in the country including parents and school setting are uncomfortable and reluctant talking about sexuality with their youth, prompting them to turn to the media".

When asked about some of the immoral activities young adults are involved, the students of the University of Nairobi listed the following: sexual

immorality, prostitution, homosexuality and lesbianism, fornication and adultery, sexual promiscuity, abortion, going to strip clubs, group sex, watching pornographic materials, drug and alcohol abuse, drug trafficking, robbery and theft, use of vulgar language, terror attacks, sexual harassment, money laundering, killing of girl and boy friends, pick pocketing, indecent dressing among many others. Although the majority of the students who were involved in the survey may not have participated in the above activities they had come into contact with several students in the halls of residence who were involved. To the students who were involved they saw these activities as normal. Actually apart from a few criminal activities, the majority of the others are only considered as immoral by religions.

In some instances religious denominations differ on what is to be called immoral. Mugambi (2003: 3) argues that different denominations emphasize morality as understood by their mother churches in Europe or America. For example, when it comes to drinking alcohol and smoking, the Roman Catholic Church allows their members to smoke or drink while the Protestants are totally prohibited from smoking or drinking. Mugambi (2003:3) writes: "This lack of consensus among Christian denominations in their approaches to ethics has led to a crisis in moral education in contemporary Africa". Emphazing the same point, Macharia (2007: 226) says: "As a result, some are socialized negatively because of copying foreign values that are incompatible with their own cultures, religion and society in terms of morality". Some young adults think that by abusing drugs and engaging in promiscuous behaviour they are proving to be powerful just like the powerful characters they watch on T.V.

Religious Activities and Programmes mounted by Religions for Young Adults

When the student surveyed in the study were asked about the programmes their religious denominations provide for them, they gave the following: Sunday schools, sports and games, seminars and workshops, bible study, retreats, missions and fellowships, Friday night activities, inspirational and motivational talks, keshas, campaign against drug and sexual immorality (CADAS), Daawah community preaching service (for Muslims), Quran recitation, annual church meetings, among others.

From the list of the activities provided by religious denominations it is obvious that the majority are designed for children and the youth of up to 18 years of age. There are very few programmes in the university or denominations

strictly designed for young adults. Some of the students cited Mavuno Church as an example of a denomination which has relevant programmes for young adults such as Mizizi, simama, ombi, hatua, adoption of new leisure activities, leadership development opportunities and frontline initiatives which help young adults to positively change their lives (Njoroge, 2012: 72). Commenting on the scarcity of religious programmes specifically designed for young adults, O-Donovan (2000: 207) says "If the church does not change its emphasis to include a serious ministry directed towards young people, it will lose the present generation of youth. If it loses the present generation of youth, it will lose Africa".

The challenges most young adults find themselves in is that of moving to other denominations which have relevant programmes for them. The mainline denominations in which young adults have been socialized in have little to offer them. Those who have courage move to new denominations while others simply abandon church attendance. On such movements O- Donovan (2000: 209) writes: "In the area of religion it is young people who will most quickly follow new unusual religious movements, cults and self-proclaimed prophets".

As shown in the results (3.10) some religious denominations have become redundant hence their followers look for alternatives either in new religions or they immerse themselves in immorality.

Impact of Modernity, Urbanization and Secularization on Moral Development of Young Adults

Proponents of the modernization theory argue that the contemporary world is strongly characterized by twin aspects of modernity and modernization that are expressed in technology, differential patterns of economic development and social institutions, political ideologies and modes of protest and participation (Eisenstadt, 1987: 2). Modern change was introduced in Africa by the missionaries and colonialists. The former influenced by social Darwinism and idea of 3cs (civilization, Christianity and commerce) advocated for by Dr. David Livingstone, came to African with the intention of introducing western culture. They were heavily prejudiced against African culture which they considered inferior and satanic. They believed that they had a responsibility to westernize and transform a backward African society. Kenyan converts to Christianity were encouraged to abandon their culture and embrace western culture.

Mwiti (2005: iv) writing on missionary activities in Kenya says: "With the coming of education and Christianity, the old was done away with but it was never adequately replaced. Schools taught Maths, English, Geography but not values and living". Mwiti (2005: v) goes further and writes: "The church preached the gospel but discipleship, -the art of drilling expectations, educating and preparing for life, passing on values and impressing them chastising, reprimanding correcting and reproof were left out".

The approach used by the missionaries ended up creating a society with a values vacuum. Mugambi (2003: 3) argues that the missionaries completely ignored African traditional morality which they viewed as satanic and evil. Hence the missionaries ended up promoting western values some of which were not in tandem with African value system. This has been the causes of some of the moral challenges in Kenya.

With Christianity and modernization came the development of urban centres. Urbanization in Kenya was facilitated by the construction the Kenya Uganda railway line. Several towns developed along the railway stations. Urbanization is a progress of population concentration. Kenyans left their rural homes to the emerging urban centres. Urbanization created a discontinuity for individuals and communities. In the towns communal ties which ensured upholding of community values were worsened. Kenyans in urban centres live a carefree life. There is no big brother watching over. On urbanization in Kenya Shorter (2004: 255) says:

The migrants to towns and cities found that they were no longer members of a coherent community, in which church going was an accepted practice" Christianity also came in Africa with secularization. Secularization is the process in which a culture turns more and more towards scientific and rational pursuits. There is a corresponding turn away from religious values.

Shorter (2004: 253) defines secularization as the situation in which religion loses its hold both at the level of social institutions and at the level of human consciousness.

Anyanga (2012: 346) argues that the missionary enterprise introduced into Africa notions and processes which removed the African from traditional understanding of community as well as the total separation of religion and state. Young adults find themselves in situations of modernization,

urbanization and secularization. These features alienate them from their traditional values. O-Donovan (2000-201) writes: "It is the youth who are most affected by the influences of modernity. It is the youth who are most permanently changed by western world view, Western music, western education and western technology".

Christianity has contributed a lot to social transformation in Africa but is has not helped Africans to resolve moral contradictions arising from that impact. In fact some secular approaches have been proposed in Africa (Mugambi, 2003: 4). Since each denomination in Kenya emphasize its interpretations of morality, it has been difficult to come up with suitable role models. Kenyan society can be seen as contradiction of morality.

In the contemporary Kenyan society, a lot of social evils such as corruption, nepotism, divorce, spouse bartering, robbery with violence, abortion, kidnapping, among others are reported in media all the time. Most of these are perpetuated by adults. Actually the adults are equally involved in immoral activities just like young adults. The question is how do the old adults have moral authority to lecture on young adults on morality? Writing on moral modelling Macharia says: "It is a well-known fact that children learn by modeling what they see from adults in society. When society models wrong values, these are copied and demonstrated by children and youth in their behavior especially in matters of authority, social norms and religion".

Conclusion

From the above discussion it is evident that young adults are not adequately facilitated by their parents, religions and institutions of higher learning in their religious moral development. As indicated by the respondents most parents are too busy and majority cease giving moral instructions and guidance to the young adults the moment they joint universities and colleges. In the universities the programmes that are intended to provide moral development are voluntary, formal and not as thorough in giving moral guidance as those in lower levels of education hence young adults ignore them. The result has been some young adults engaging in immortal practices which have negatively affected their social lives and academic performance.

Young adults have also to contend with modernization, urbanization, mass media and secularization which have created a liberal society where upholding

religious moral values is a big challenge. Denominational religions in Kenya emphasize their individual interpretation of morality hence they have created moral contradictions. Christianity has tended to view traditional moral values negatively. During the missionary period, Christianity condemned Africa traditional morality as evil and satanic. There has not been an effort to harmonize the two moral systems. This has resulted in a situation where moral standards have gone down. The mass media has reported several incidents of moral vices such corruption, nepotism, tribalism, theft of public resources, domestic violence, and political violence, among others. The Kenyan society has not provided adequate role models on moral integrity. Most of those involved in these vices claim to be religious. This leaves young adults in a dilemma. The society has become materialistic emphasizing individual success while religions are still teaching ideals of moral integrity. There is a big gap between the moral ideals and the reality on ground.

The article recommends that religions in Kenya should unite and come up with ecumenical religious programmes to be provided to young adults in universities. The universities should also strengthen their programmes involved in moral empowerment so that their content is appropriate for young adults and proactive so that they may deal with moral challenges facing young adults.

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