

## Yorùbá indigenous folksongs as a veritable source for revitalizing moral education among pre-school children in Osun State of Nigeria

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**ABSTRACT:** One of the pillars of peace and prosperity for any society is a sound moral education which supposed to be inculcated in children early in life. However, the decadence of varying degree in the society raises a course for alarm to examine the issues of moral education. Children's sense of goodness, fairness, respect for others and the like is fostered through encouragement, motivation, examples and assistance offered by significant adults in their lives. One of such encouragement, motivation or assistance may come through folksongs which parents especially mothers could offer to children. Hence, this study therefore examined Yorùbá indigenous folksongs as a veritable source for the impartation of moral education in children. Two hundred grandparents and two hundred young mothers were sampled randomly for the study. The instrument titled, indigenous folksongs for moral education questionnaire (IFFMEQ) was used for the study. The findings were revealing and recommendations were proffered.

**KEYWORDS:** Yorùbá indigenous folksongs, moral education, revitalize, pre-school children.

### INTRODUCTION

Man is naturally a moral being and many of his perfect attributes are attained through moral values. Without morality grave problems face man especially in the social dimension and he is deprived of a happy life. Man will be a man in the real sense of the word when he respects the boundaries of morality and doesn't encroach upon them. In fact, one of the pillars of prosperity for a society is moral education (NBF News (2011); Zhu, (Ed.) (2014). Unfortunately, moral discourse especially among contemporary youths has witnessed a radical departure from its conception in ancient times. Several clarion calls have been made on Nigerians to inculcate moral discipline in youth. As a matter of fact, the launchings of War Against Indiscipline (WAI) by the Buhari-Idiagbon and War Against Indiscipline and Corruption (WAI-C) by the Abacha-Diya regimes respectively were meant to achieve this objective (Fasoro, 2012).

According to Nucci, (2001), children's sense of "goodness" is constructed through their own thinking about their experiences and through dialogue with others about what these experiences mean. This sense of goodness is fostered through encouragement offered by significant adults in their lives. One of such encouragement is the daily announcements that children should be kind to one another" (Comora, 2004). (Berkowitz & Grych, 1998) and Wyckoff, (2000), asserted that children should be helped to understand the reason behind rules, especially rules relating to such moral concerns as justice, fairness, and other aspects of human welfare. Not only that, reasons why one behaviour is preferable to another should be given (e.g, sharing a box of crayons is preferable to pushing another child away from the art area). In discussing these contrasting behaviours with a young child, the focus should be on how what the child does affects someone else (e.g., sharing crayons makes a play partner happy while pushing the child away makes the other child sad). Such discussions foster empathy, higher levels of moral reasoning, and altruism (Berkowitz & Grych, 1998; Wyckoff, 2000). These types of discussions also help children develop perspective-taking abilities in that it focuses on how someone else might think or feel in a given situation (Berkowitz & Grych, 1998; Wyckoff, 2000).

## DEFINITION OF MORAL

There is no clear cut definition of moral because each society divines moral as she viewed it. According to Oladipo (2009), moral is a right conduct, not only in our immediate social relations, but also in our dealings with our fellow citizens and with the whole of human race. It is based upon the possession of clear ideals as to what actions are right and what are wrong and the determination of our conduct by a constant reference to those ideals. Therefore, there is no gain saying that the definition of right conduct is relative, and that right or wrong conduct is defined by the society. Therefore, moral is defined as right conducts as guided by or defined by the respective society (Oladipo, 2009).

## MORAL EDUCATION

Moral Education is the inculcation of refined ideals, values, principles with a view to bring a purposeful behavioural change (Sadavarte, & Akolkar, 2010) among children in the society. Moral education involves education in morality with emphasis on what is morally good. What then is morality? Morality refers to a doctrine or system of beliefs, values, or principles that govern human conduct in two ways: by prescribing positive behaviours that benefit others and by proscribing negative actions that harm others. The positive behaviours, are called pro-social behaviours which include sharing, helping, and comforting. In terms of moral judgment, these actions are viewed as good and ought to be carried out. The negative actions, are inhibitory or negative behaviours which include violations of others' rights and welfare, such as hitting, harming, and otherwise injuring others physically or psychologically, actions viewed as bad which one ought not to do. (Jason, & Garcia, (2009). Therefore, morality is viewed as the "system of rules that regulate the social interactions and social relationships of individuals within societies and is based on concepts of welfare (harm), trust, justice (comparative treatment and distribution) and rights" (Smetana 1997). Therefore morality is germane in every aspect of our social life.

## FOLKSONGS IN YORUBA LAND

The Yoruba are a song loving people. No aspect of their life is devoid of song. In joy or in sorrow, time of meeting and departure, time of exhortation or rebuke and so on. There is always song to express the situation. In fact songs are seen as a powerful channel through which the Yorùbá people express their mind. Songs encompasses their daily lives and inspire them while at work. Songs among the Yoruba is a reflection of people's feelings and those feelings center especially around their world view. That the Yoruba enjoy expressing part of their world view through music shows the appealing nature of music in their society (Olagunju, 1997:24 - 25).

Kennedy (1980) defined folksongs as songs of unknown authorship passed orally from one generation to another, sung without accompaniment and often found in variants (of words and tunes) in different parts of a country. Folksongs used to be predominantly found among peasants or country dwellers, but have since spread to towns and urban cities where they chronicle the people's lives in terms of design, melody and rhythm; hence they have become traditional among them (Samuel, 2003). One of these media of moral education therefore was folksong in which various songs were sung by women both young and old while the young ones listened attentively draw conclusions and learnt some lessons as well. The moral consequences or implications of the songs were usually emphasized or highlighted. Some of these songs are:

Ki ni n o fole se laye ti mo wa	What will I do with stealing
Ki ni n o fole se laye ti mo wa	What will I do with stealing
Laye ti mo wa, kaka ki n jale	In this world, instead of stealing
Ma kuku deru	I will be a slave
Ki ni n o fole se laye ti mo wa	What will I do with stealing

The moral taught with this song is that stealing is not good. A robber is a dangerous person and so people do not want to associate with a robber.

Ofofo ile yii o yera	Busy-body should keep away from this house
Ka ma gbodo soro	should'nt we talk
Ka ma gbodo senu wuye	should'nt we whisper
Ofofo ile yii o yera	Busy-body should keep away from this house

Another lesson or moral drawn from this song is that it is not good to be a busy-body. They are always disgraced in the society.

Omode o e gbohun ti mo fe so      children listen to what I have to say  
Nibikibi ti e ba wa e gbo          wherever you are listen  
Ma se je koju kokoro mo e lara      do not allow covetousness become part of you  
Je kohun te ba ni te yin lorun      be contented with what you have.

The above song is a warning to the children. They are been advised not to allow covetousness in their life and that satisfied with whatever they have.

Moral education therefore begins from infancy and it continues in adult life through a variety of processes one of which is folksong. Thus folksong is used to correct and educate young and old, male and female, literate and illiterate (Lasis, 2012).

### **THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN THE MORAL EDUCATION OF THE CHILD**

One of the most consistent findings from research examining the family interactions that facilitate Kohlbergian moral reasoning stages is that the affective components or those interactions, such as parental warmth, involvement and support are related to moral reasoning development (Hart 1988; Powers 1988; Walker and Taylor 1991). Therefore, a warm, supportive bond between parents and children may enhance and motivate children to listen to and respond to parental messages through folksongs.

Parents are vital in the moral development of the child because they are the first moral teachers and role models that young people have. This they do by providing the necessary affective relationship and extensive interactions that facilitates moral development. Parents' responses to children's transgressions and moral dispute and their explanations of the reasons for rules and expectations may facilitate children's moral development.

Unfortunately families who are seen as the first moral teachers no more attach importance to moral education of their children and adolescents. Some parents focus their minds entirely on the academic education of their children and attach less importance to moral education. Education should not aim at academic aspects alone. Academic achievement does not make someone a real human being. Humanity is valued in terms of moral standards. The contemporary families do not pay due attention to the moral education of their children thereby abandoning their most fundamental duty towards them. To teach moral education therefore the best method in education is in the form of behavioural patterns, that is, parents should behave in such a way as to introduce their children to acceptable decent morality and sow the seeds of moral values in their minds. (NBF News (2011). Therefore preparing children for their moral responsibilities as adults is a crucial part of the education process that parents must give to their children.

This paper re-visits some of these teachings and attempts to impart moral education on the children among traditional Yoruba through folksongs as a way out of the present moral degeneration.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- Determine the knowledge of parents (grand and young) on indigenous folksongs
- Identify the moral value drawn by parents (grand and young) from indigenous folksongs
- Determine the perception of parents (grand and young) on indigenous folksongs as a tool for moral education in the contemporary time
- Assess the influence of demographic variables of parents (grand and young) on their perception of indigenous folksongs

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **THE RESEARCH DESIGN**

The study employed the descriptive research design.

## POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The study population is made up of young mothers .and grandmothers in Ife metropolis, Osun State.

## SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

The sample size was made up 200 young mothers and 200 grandmother randomly selected in Ife metropolis.

## INSTRUMENTATION

The design adopted for this study was a descriptive survey design using structured interview technique. Data were collected through in-depth interview sessions with young and grandmothers with the researcher's self-made questionnaire. The instrument consisted of sections A and B. Section A sought information on personal data of the respondents and teacher; while section B consisted of 5 item questions with Yes or No response to sought information on the relevance of Yorùbá indigenous folksongs in teaching morals in Yorùbá society.

## RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE INSTRUMENT

The face and content validity of the research instrument was ascertained by the researcher and an expert in Tests and Measurement to ensure that the items in the questionnaire were capable of eliciting the needed information. Test-re-test reliability of the instrument was found to be 0.89.

## HYPOTHESIS

There is no significant influence of parental category on their knowledge of Yoruba indigenous folksongs.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What moral values do parents (Grand & Young) draw from Yoruba Indigenous Folksongs?
2. What is the perception of parents (Grand & Young) on Yoruba Indigenous Folksongs as tools for moral education?
3. Will the demographic variables of Parents (Grand & Young) influence their perception?

## RESULT

### HYPOTHESIS

There is no significant influence of parental category on their knowledge of Yoruba indigenous folksongs.

**Table 1: Chi-square Analysis of influence of parental category on their knowledge of Yoruba indigenous folksongs**

Category	YES	NO	Df	$\chi^2$ -cal	$\chi^2$ -Tab
Grand Mother	150	50	3	52.51	7.52
	110	90			
Young Mother	80	120			
	100	100			

Table 1 above showed that the influence of parental category on their knowledge of Yoruba indigenous folksongs and it can be observed that the  $\chi^2$ -calculated value exceeds  $\chi^2$ -Table value at 0.05 level of confidence with degree of freedom of 3. Since the  $\chi^2$ -calculated value (52.51) is greater than  $\chi^2$ -Table value (7.52), the stated null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This result concludes that parental category significantly influence the knowledge of Yoruba indigenous folksongs.

**RESEARCH QUESTION 1**

What moral values do parents (Grand & Young) draw from Yoruba Indigenous Folksongs?

**Table 2: Response of parents (Grand & Young) on moral values draw from Yoruba Indigenous Folksongs?**

ITEMS	GRAND		YOUNG	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Can these songs address the following:				
(a) Honesty	165 (82.5)	35 (17.5%)	200 (100%)	-
(b) Hard work	177 (88.5%)	23 (11.5%)	200 (100%)	-
(c) Laziness	200 (100%)	- (-)	200 (100%)	-
(d) Cleanliness	180 (90%)	20 (10%)	150 (75%)	50 (25%)
(e) Truthfulness	120 (60%)	80 (40%)	180 (90%)	20 (10%)

From the above table 2, majority of the respondents 82.5% grandmothers and 100% young mothers agreed that folksong addresses honesty while 17.5% of grandmothers disagreed. For hard work, 88.5% grandmothers and 100% young mothers agreed that folksong can be used to instill hard work in the children while 11.5% of grandmothers responded negatively. All the respondents (100%) both grand and young mothers responded positively that folksong can be used to curb laziness among children. For item d, a large percentage of the respondents, 90% grandmothers and 75% young mothers opined that issue of cleanliness can be addressed by folksong while 10% of grandmothers and 25% young mothers disagreed. 60% of grandmothers and 90% young mothers asserted that folksong addresses truthfulness while 40% of grandmothers and 10% of young mothers responded otherwise. From the above finding, it can be concluded that moral values drawn from indigenous folksong include honesty, hard work, laziness, cleanliness and truthfulness.

**RESEARCH QUESTION 2**

What is the perception of parents (Grand & Young) on Yoruba Indigenous Folksongs as tools for moral education?

**Table 3: Response of parents on the perception of parents (Grand & Young) on Yoruba Indigenous Folksongs as tools for moral education**

S/N	ITEMS	GRAND		YOUNG	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1.	Are these songs relevant to today's children?	100 (50%)	100 (50%)	80 (40%)	120 (60%)
2.	The contemporary song has no moral value.	175 (87%)	25 (12.5%)	100 (50%)	100 (50%)
3.	What is your suggestion about these songs:				
	(a) Discard	- -	200 (100%)	20 (10%)	180 (90%)
	(b) Revitalize	200 (100%)	-	185 (92.5%)	15 (7.5%)
	(c) Use in Schools	200 (100%)	-	200 (100%)	-

Table 3 above showed that 50% and 40% of the respondents, grand and young mothers respectively confirmed that indigenous folksongs are relevant to contemporary children while 50% and 60% of the respondents, grand and young mothers respectively responded negatively. Also, a larger percentage of the respondents 87% and 70% of grand and young mothers respectively agreed that contemporary song has no moral value while a smaller percentage 12.5% and 30% responded otherwise. Both the grand and young mothers 100% and 90% respectively suggested that folksongs should not be discarded while 10% of the young mothers responded otherwise. A larger percentage of the respondents 100% and 92.5% of grand and young mothers respectively agreed that folksongs should be revitalized for moral development while only 7.5 % of young mothers responded negatively. All the respondents agreed that folksongs should be incorporated into the school curriculum to teach morals in schools. From these findings, it can be concluded that both parent type have the same perception on the use Yoruba Indigenous Folksongs as tools for moral education

### RESEARCH QUESTION 3

Will the demographic variables of parents (Grand and Young) influence their perception of indigenous folksongs?

To answer this research question, parents' demographic variables such as age, occupation, educational qualification, and number of grand children were cross tabulated with their respective perception while Chi-square and p-values were also obtained. The result is presented in Table 4.

**Table 4 : Chi-square Analysis of Influence of Demographic Variables of Parents (Grand and Young) on their perception of indigenous folksongs**

	Socio-demographic Variables	Young Mother			Grand Mother		
		$\chi^2$	df	p	$\chi^2$	Df	P
Perception	Occupation	155.000	4	.000	-	-	-
	Educational Background	136.000	3	.000	155.556	1	.000
	Age	-	-	-	97.143	2	.000
	No of grand Children	-	-	-	98.413	2	.000

Table 4 shows the influence of demographic variables of parents (Grand and Young) on their perception of indigenous folksongs. It can be observed from the table that all of such variables as the case applied had significant influence on perception of indigenous folksongs. For instance, perception of indigenous folksongs and occupation for young mother,  $\chi^2$  (n = 200) = 155.000, df = 4, p = .000; and perception of indigenous folksongs and educational qualification,  $\chi^2$  (n = 200) = 136.000, df = 3, p = .000. Also, for grandmother: perception of indigenous folksongs and educational qualification,  $\chi^2$  (n = 200) = 155.556, df = 1, p = .000; perception of indigenous folksongs and age,  $\chi^2$  (n = 200) = 97.143, df = 2, p = .000; and perception of indigenous folksongs and number of grandchildren,  $\chi^2$  (n = 200) = 98.413, df = 2, p = .000. Since the p-value is less than .05 thresholds across board, the result therefore concludes that demographic variables of parents have significant influence on their perception of indigenous folksongs.

### DISCUSSION

In this study, Yorùbá indigenous folksongs are used as a veritable source for revitalizing moral education among pre-school children. The findings have shown that parental category significantly influence the knowledge of Yoruba indigenous folksongs with the young mothers having low knowledge of the songs. This could be as a result of the generational gap between the grandmothers and the young mother's knowledge of folksongs. The grandmothers still remember some of the folksong they sang for their children whereas the young mothers could not sing these songs. This was corroborated by Ukrainian Winnipeg.ca (2014) that people knew all the symbolism of folksongs which seems to have been forgotten over the ages. Another finding is that moral values drawn from indigenous folksong include honesty, hard work, laziness, cleanliness and truthfulness. This supported the work of Aluede and Buraimah (2005) who pointed out that folksongs can perform different functions such as economic, political, social and moral inclusive. Also it was found out that both parent types have the same perception on the use of Yoruba Indigenous Folksongs as tools for moral education. This is in line with Pakarsky (1998) who recognized the role of culture above other variables in the moral education of the child. The mothers in Yoruba setting recognized the role of song especially folksongs in the moral development of the child. Samuel (2013) also identified folksongs as a source to impart worthwhile values in the society and called for teachers to serve as preservers and transmitters of cultural heritage including folksongs.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This paper has examined folksongs as a tool for the inculcation of moral education in children in this present society that is permeated with various vices. Moral education was held in high esteem in the African traditional community and diverse means like folksongs were used to inculcate the values. However, in the contemporary society, it has become an aberration; though our educational system advocate the inculcation of moral education but it has not been pursued appropriately to achieve the desired level that could make it have impact in our pupils and students as well as in the society at large. It is therefore recommended that teachers should adopt folksongs in the classroom. This will not only preserve or transmit cultural heritage but also impart moral education in children in lively way.

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