

# NATURE AND STRUCTURE OF MORAL EDUCATION IN WESTERN STATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Dr. J. Ade Akinpelu  
Department of Adult Education, University of Ibadan

The aim of this project was to find out what is being done with respect to the moral development of students in Western Nigerian Secondary Grammar Schools. There are 226 of these schools as of December 1971.

As school principals are generally regarded as the administrative and chief instructional heads of their schools, it was felt that they would be in a good position to describe what is taking place in the area of moral instruction of their students. Since there are only 226 of them according to the number of the then existing schools, it was decided to pool all of them through questionnaires administered by mail.

Secondary Modern Schools and Teachers (Training) Colleges have been left out because neither of these categories of institutions has featured to any prominent degree in the disturbances that have racked the State's educational institutions in the last few years.

A comprehensive questionnaire designed to tap both opinions of principals and their factual description of avenues of moral education was mailed to each school principal, with the alternative that the Vice-Principal could also fill it in in case the substantive head was not available or was otherwise engaged. The mailing of the questionnaires was followed by personal visits to some of the sorely afflicted schools in part of the State - the purpose of which was to get as much response from them as possible. These schools lie especially in Ibadan and Ondo provinces, the two provinces with the largest networks of schools in the State.

## Return of Questionnaires

The return of questionnaires has not been very satisfactory, on the whole, despite strenuous efforts to achieve a maximum return. The efforts included an advanced briefing and soliciting of the help and co-operation of most of the principals during their 3rd Annual Administration and Supervision Seminar held at the University of Ife in August 1971; mailing of questionnaires in December 1971 with stamped self-addressed envelopes enclosed; sending a reminder in February 1972; and paying personal visits to selected secondary schools mentioned above to "demand" return of forms whether filled or unfilled.

After all the efforts, only 74 questionnaire forms were returned out of the 226 mailed out, giving us 32.7% returns. (The 75th form to be returned crawled in when this report was being written, and so could not be used in the analysis.) 32.7% return appears to be low but then it is still an improvement over some fairly recent experiences. For example, in a similar project to survey the incidence of major offences in Nigerian Secondary Schools, O.C. Nwana reported: in all, 210 questionnaires were despatched, but after two reminders,

only 52 completed forms were received, i.e. about 25% response", and "of the 52 returned, only 31 were properly filled....." (see West African Journal of Education, Vol. 15 No. 2 of 1971 p.99). That is, only about 14.8% of the total population formed the basis of his analysis and conclusions in that study.

Of the 74 returned questionnaires in our own survey, 4 were returned blank - 2 of them with the wry comments "Return to Sender", printed on the envelopes. So, it is only 70 properly filled and returned questionnaires that form the data of this report.

It will be of interest to find out the source of the resistance and hostility of teachers, and especially school principals, to filling questionnaires even when the topic does not threaten their position, and even when they stand to gain most from the experiment as, hopefully, they do in this case.

### Analysis of Returns

Despite the low percentage of returns, the investigator is satisfied with the eventual "distribution" or "representativeness" of the 70 properly completed forms.

### Provincial Representation

There is no province or division in the Western State that is without representation in the final data. There is no province with less than 25% returned out of the total sent to that province. As a result of personal "campaigns" in Ibadan and Ondo provinces, the percentages of returns have been raised to 31.0% and 36.9% respectively. Perhaps one lesson that we can draw for the future is that most probably the investigator's personal visits to administer and collect back questionnaires would yield more substantial results. It will be more expensive but it will be more rewarding.

Province	No. Returned	% Return
1. Abeokuta	6	27.3%
2. Ibadan	22	31.0%
3. Ijebu	10	38.4%
4. Ondo	24	36.9%
5. Oyo	12	28.6%
Total	74	32.7%

### Denominational Presentation

Of the 70 schools which checked the boxes on religious or non-religious affiliation, 43 reported themselves as having been founded and still being run by one religious organization or another, while 27 reported themselves as being either private, local authority, Government, Community, or "secular voluntary" - to quote the exact phrase of one of the principals. This proportion compares favourably with the distribution of schools according to denomination in the Western State. Out of the 226 schools in the West, 123 are under one denominational control or another, while 103 i.e. 45.6% are either completely religiously neutral or, in a few cases, with very loose association. (An example of this

loose association is that in which a community founded a school but handed it over to the most popular religious organization in the area to run. In such a case, the religious organization often contributes nothing financially, and hence the school cannot be described as a denominational school.)

### Rural-Urban Distribution

In terms of rural-urban distribution, 37 of the schools are reported as being in the rural area, while 33 are in the urban.

### Incidence of Student Indiscipline

Of the 70 schools, 32 are reported as having had some disciplinary problems in the last 5 years, while 38 are without such incidents.

It hardly needs be over-emphasized that the degree of trust to be put in the conclusions, generalizations and inferences that will be made in this study is very much dependent upon the percentage of the returned questionnaire forms.

## CONCEPT OF MORAL EDUCATION

To find out the principals' conception of moral education, ten popular definitions were presented out of which they were asked to select 5 and rank them in order of importance or preference. The percentage results, are tabulated hereunder:

Moral Education is the inculcation of the	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice	5th Choice	Percentage Choosing
1. Habit of disciplining and controlling one's emotions and passions	12.9	10	18.6	15.7	14.3	71.4
2. Ability to distinguish between right & wrong	24.3	20	4.3	7.1	8.6	64.3
3. Attitude of "doing to others as you would that they should do unto you"	5.7	15.7	17.1	17.1	8.6	64.3
4. Habit of obedience to authority and respect for elders	2.9	14.3	10.0	22.9	11.4	61.4
5. Ability to maintain a proper relation with God	31.4	7.1	7.1	0.0	5.7	51.4

From the table above, it will be observed that the definition which receives the highest endorsement on the whole is that which conceives moral education as

"the inculcation of the habit of disciplining and controlling one's emotions and passions". 71.4% of the 70 principals responding chose this item on the whole, and their choice was evenly distributed throughout the five preference columns.

On the other hand, the item which defines moral education in terms of "the ability to maintain a proper relationship with God" comes 5th down the line with 51.4% selecting it on the whole; but it is significant to note that 31.4% of all the principals make it their first choice - as against 12.9% as first choice in the most frequently selected item noted above.

Also of interest are the results of another item which is not included in the table above but which needs some discussion in view of the popular belief about it. The item in question defines moral education as the "inculcation of the right and proper behaviour in matters involving the opposite sex". This item receives the assent of only 15.7% of the 70 principals and is ranked last among the 10 items offered. In view of the fact that the adults' criticism of youths' morality often boils down to an expression of dissatisfaction with their dress and their attitude to sex, one would have expected this to be reflected in the principals' table of priorities, but this is not so.

It is often assumed by the generality of people that to be moral is simply to act in accordance with the norms and prescriptions of the society in which one lives. These norms and prescriptions, in the Nigerian culture, include among others, items like:

- (i) the highest deference to, and reverence for, the older person both in public and private - this is manifested in outward behaviours like bowing, genuflection, prostration, and so on;
- (ii) the highest reverence or even awe for authority, as for example sprawling and crawling before our natural rulers and chiefs;
- (iii) the observance of utmost propriety in matters of sex, especially as between those who are related by blood or covenant, however, distant the relationship;
- (iv) living a godly life through observing the rituals that the gods demand through their recognized human agents like the Ifa or Shango priests;
- (v) maintaining good interpersonal relationship with others by sharing generously and cheerfully your good fortunes with others starting from your own children to the most distant relations in that order of priority.

(There are many others that one can mention but these are enough for our examples.)

It will be observed that the above examples emphasize overt behaviours, and not much of thinking or ratiocination over what is right or wrong. The cognitive exercise that is involved remains at the level of acquiring the knowledge of the patterns of behaviour through either observing the behaviours to be learned or being orally informed by an elderly member of the family as to what to do or not to do. The more complex cognitive task of reasoning and deciding on the rightness or wrongness of the required behavioural act is almost totally precluded. Indeed, to try to query the propriety or the reasonableness of the expected behaviour is to demonstrate that one has not been properly educated. This is the essence of the adult's complaint - that nothing is any longer sacred to the modern/present generation: they query or choose to disregard the mores maiorum.

In sharp contrast of this Nigerian (traditional) idea of morality and moral education enunciated above is the philosopher-cum-psychologists' viewpoint that moral education is essentially education in how to make personal moral judgments in one's living, how to make moral decisions and act upon them. The strong idea of individualism implied in this does not of course preclude caring for the welfare of the society to which the individual belongs. It is only that the society's norms and prescriptions come second in the scale of priorities, and may be queried or challenged on rational grounds. The ability to form one's own judgment about the reasonableness and morality of the society's traditions and customs, and on the basis of that to reform or reject the offending practices or principles, is in fact what philosophers-cum-psychologists regard as the true moral education. This conception definitely places a premium on intellectuality and rationality in moral decisions and on the individualism that goes along with it; but it does not forget the effective aspect of morality, as for example, the will-power or the "passion" to implement the moral decision that has been taken after rational processes.

It is in the light of these two contrasting viewpoints that we want to discuss the majority opinion of the principals about what moral education is.

It will be observed in the above that the five most frequently selected conceptions of moral education cover both the cognitive/intellectual and the affective/behavioural domains, with the emphasis patently on the overt behaviour. Even though the most frequently selected item on the whole is the one that defines moral education as the inculcation of the habit of disciplining and controlling one's emotions and passions, it is only 12.9% of the 70 principals who consider it important enough to be their first choice. Affording an interesting comparison is the item which was ranked second with 64.3%. This item defines moral education as the inculcation of the ability to distinguish between right and wrong - which is essentially in the intellectual/cognitive domain. 24.3% of the principals checked this as their first choice, in contrast to 12.9% who chose the first item mentioned above. Again 44.3% prefer the former as their first and second choices while 22.9% select the latter as their first and second choices. I think from these it could be inferred that though the principals would like to evaluate moral education through overt behaviour, they regard it as more than merely acquiring some ritualistic patterns of behaviour - they see it as also involving some cognitive or rational element - the ability to reason and decide between right and wrong.

Looking at the types of overt behaviours, the principals also show some discrimination. The traditional Nigerian practice places top priority on obedience to and respect for authority, but the principals rank this item 4 with 61.4%. Perhaps the most striking aspect of it is that only 2.9% make it their first choice for a definition of moral education, when as much as 24.3% make the ability to distinguish between right and wrong their first choice.

This, of course, does not imply that the principals are so enlightened as to make the observance of their school rules and regulations, and the respect for teachers and other school authorities a matter of the individual's idiosyncratic decision. No, I think a reasonable interpretation of their response is that while they would want their students to observe schools traditions and respect their teachers as something reasonable to do, they do not think that teaching it as a specific act is sufficient as content of moral education. I suppose they see moral education more in terms of principles than of specific actions.

At the back of their mind some such reasoning as this might have taken place: if a student learns how to discipline and control his emotions and has learnt how to recognize the right from the wrong - their two most frequently selected definitions of moral education - he is more likely to look at school rules and

regulations as necessary or essential for the peace and harmony of the learning community of which he is a member; and also to see its more experienced and usually older members, i.e. the teachers, as worthy of being listened to, even just as it is reasonable to listen to, and respect, the other person's point of view in any argument.

In fact, that the principals are not as individualistic in their conception of moral education as the philosophers-cum-psychologists is seen in their response to another item in the questionnaire. They were asked whether they would prefer that their students decide and act independently or autonomously, even if wrongly. Only 18.6% of them would encourage such an autonomous type of morality. On the other hand, 81.4% would prefer that their students follow the rules, regulations and traditions laid down whatever their private reservations. Obviously the "autonomous moral judgment" as preached by the philosopher-cum-psychologists appears too anarchistic to the principals in the existential school situation.

The principals would like to see the individual adjust to the whole group, and conform to the common pattern of behaviour. This tendency towards or emphasis on group behaviour in the moral thinking of the principals is further borne out from their reply to the question whether they would prefer to impose collective punishment on students where the culprit could not be easily or conveniently identified. Over 50% of the principals would cheerfully impose such a punishment, with many of them rationalizing that the group is, in fact, also guilty if its members are not courageous enough to point out the culprit!

In summary, the whole of the discussion seems to interpret the principals' conceptions of moral education as falling somewhere between the unmitigated heteronomous conception of the average Nigerian and the seemingly anarchistic, autonomous conception of the theorists.

Finally, a note on the definition of moral education in terms of maintenance of proper relationship with God. This item was ranked only fifth and with only 51.4% on the whole. Does this mean that the principals conceive of moral education only or mainly in secular terms? I think a reasonable answer to this question is that most of the principals including a sizeable number of those in charge of denominational schools appreciate that moral education can be defined other than in religious terms. The four definitions which they ranked above this item indicate that they see it more in terms of interpersonal human relationships on the mundane level than of relationship with some Supernatural Being.

### PURPOSE OF MORAL EDUCATION

What then is the nature of the moral education envisaged by the principals for their students? Is it the negative type of emergency reaction? Is it some learning of certain prescribed and sancrosanct moral traditions? In what light do they see moral education? What relationship do they see between the so called moral decadence of the present and moral education?

To determine what the principals see as the true purpose of moral education, a number of options were offered as to why anybody should care for the moral education of students. These options ranged from the completely altruistic and abstract reasons to the crash utilitarian and negative motives. The principals were requested to select and rank three of the preferred items in their order of importance and worthwhileness. The table below gives in percentages their response.

	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	Percentage (total)
1. Moral education is the source and foundation of good citizenship	42.9	35.7	18.6	97.1
2. It is through moral education that respectable personality can emerge	24.3	34.3	18.6	77.1
3. It is in the best interests of youths to be morally educated	17.1	8.6	28.6	54.3

From the above table, it may be concluded that the principals seem to be rather enlightened as to why they should engage in moral education. They talk of it in terms of being "the foundation of good citizenship", and of being the avenue of achieving "respectable personality". It is not surprising that the social advantages of sound moral education should take such a pre-eminent position in their thinking: the principals look on their school as a social unit, and more still as the microcosm of the larger and all embracing society. Viewed in this light, the development of good citizenship starts from being a good member of the school community. Thus, 97.1% of the responding principals select the item which sees the purpose of moral education as the laying of the foundation stone of good citizenship. Out of this percentage, a massive 78.6% select it as their first and second choices - which shows that it is of the highest priority to them.

The item which emphasizes the individual or personal advantage comes next with a differential gap of 20 units. 77.1% on the whole think that the emergence of respectable personalities is the main aim of moral education; while coming a poor third with 54.3% is the item which places the happiness and self-interest of the youth as the main purpose of moral education.

The three most frequently chosen reasons in the above table are practical and positive purposes of moral education, and they receive overwhelming support from the principals. In contrast to them are the items "on the fringe". An item (not included in the table) which puts the aim in a vague and abstract manner was selected by only 3 of the 70 principals i.e. only 4.3% of the principals chose it. Another item which says that moral education is simply to make students stop misbehaving and avoid getting punished - which is a negative reactionary aim - was selected by only 5 i.e. 7.1% of the 70 principals.

That the principals link moral education more to the personality development of the youth than to the bolstering up of some decaying moral fabric is confirmed by their response to another question. Asked to suggest ways of improving moral development of youths, 78.6% of them pick on Guidance and Counselling as a service that every school ought to have for its pupils; while another 64.3% call on the improvement of the emotional stability offered by the home.

## Factors responsible for the breakdown in youth morality

However, while the principals believe that moral education should be emphasized as a part of the normal personality development processes even when there is no moral crisis, it does not mean that they too are unconcerned at the moral malaise pervading the whole country. Perhaps they are more concerned than most others because they often see this general malaise translated into concrete acts of indiscipline, violence and vandalism on their campuses. It is understandable then that 87.0% of them attribute the current rash of student indiscipline directly to the inadequate moral education given to the youths. The principals believe, along with others, that there is a moral crisis at least among the youths. Some factors must be responsible for this situation (whether strictly in a causal sense or more loosely in an associational sense). The principals, we suppose, must have an idea of such factors before they can prescribe a remedy or cure.

To obtain the views of the principals on this issue, 10 popularly alleged factors contributing to (if not really causing) the current moral decadence among youths were suggested. The principals were asked to select and rank 5 of them in order of importance. Their response in percentage is given below.

	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice	5th Choice	Percentage (total)
1. Breakdown in our traditional value system caused by the assault of foreign cultures on our own	42.9	8.6	7.1	10.0	7.1	75.7
2. Decline in Commitment and devotion among teachers	2.9	10.0	11.4	17.1	14.3	55.7
3. Permissiveness in our child-rearing practices	7.1	8.6	12.9	10.0	10.0	48.6
4. Unprecedented influx of wealth and adults' display of that affluence	5.7	7.1	14.3	11.4	8.6	47.1
5. Youth unemployment in our cities	2.9	11.4	5.7	14.3	7.1	41.4

It is obvious that their overwhelming belief is that the breakdown in morality is attributable directly to the breakdown in our traditional value system due to the assault of foreign cultures on that system. 75.7% of the principals on the whole select this item, and out of this, 42.9% make it their first choice. In contrast, items which give "generation gap" and "innate moral perversity among youth" as the factors responsible for the breakdown of youth morality receive scant support of 14.3% and 15.7% respectively.



It is interesting to note that coming second to the most selected factor is that which attributes moral decadence of youths to the decline in commitment and devotion-to-duty among teachers. Though this factor comes a poor second - with 20 units difference, it is significant that, by selecting it, the principals register their belief that their schools and their teachers are important enough to influence the direction of youth morality. This may appear to be a very optimistic view of the role of the schools, but at any rate it offers a challenge to the schools to do much more than they are doing at the moment.

What are the schools doing at the moment and how adequate is their role? The principals had the opportunity to pronounce especially on the latter. In response to a question on the adequacy or otherwise of the role their schools are playing in the promotion of the moral development of their students, 97.0% assert that their schools are not adequately meeting the moral needs of their pupils and that they could do much better. Only 3.0% feel satisfied with their present performance.

When the principals were asked to suggest ways in which they could improve upon their present performance, there was not a dearth of suggestions. The most frequently suggested step is that the principals, the teaching staff and other authorities of the schools should present themselves as shining examples of sound moral living. This is followed at a respectable distance by the suggestion that more co-operation be developed between the home and the schools - in terms of the usual P.T.A.'s, and of informal contacts between parents and teachers. By making it one of the roles of the schools, the principals, presumably, are saying that the teachers (led by themselves) should take the initiative to promote more active rapport between the home and the school - which is a most welcomed suggestion.

Coming third in the list of their suggestions is that there should be adequate provision of incentive motivation for acts of good conduct or behaviour - through the awards of certificates and prizes, and through the keeping of a roll of honour which one particular principal reported to be most effective in his school. Also frequently suggested are: the establishment of Current Affairs Clubs through which matters of social and moral concern could be debated and judgment formed; the inclusion of moral and religious instructions as specific subjects on the timetable; the establishment and promotion of what one principal has christened "Moral Organizations" - in reference to youth organizations such as the Boy Scouts, Boys Brigade, Hi-Youth Clubs, Youth Work Camps, etc.; and finally making learning more pleasant or at least less frustrating.

All the suggestions above are internal arrangements or internal programmes which the schools could lay on without much help from outside bodies; they cost little or no money to set up, and hence call for no government or "external" aid.

### STEPS TO CHECK YOUTH MORAL DECADENCE

To check youth moral decay, however, demands more than the solo efforts of the schools. Remembering that the school occupies only about 8 hours of the child's day, 5 days out of the week, and only about 40 to 45 weeks out of the year; and considering other serious institutional and administrative handicaps that could and do hinder a school from exercising total influence on the growth of the child, there is need for other agencies to be actively associated with the task. These agencies include the government, the home and the adult society in general. They can take some steps of sponsor some programmes which could help in arresting the decay.

To determine what other steps could be taken in this regard, the pages of some of the Nigerian dailies were scouted through (these include the Daily Times, The Sunday Times, The Sketch, The New Nigerian, The Post, and The Observer, and The Tribune). From the prescriptions offered by different correspondents at different times, 13 suggestions for keeping youths in the path of moral rectitude were selected and given to the principals to select and rank 5 of them in order of importance and effectiveness. The results, again in percentage, are as follows:

	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice	5th Choice	Percentage (total)
1. Establish Guidance-Counselling in all Schools	25.7	11.4	22.9	11.4	7.1	78.6
2. Conduct direct courses in moral education in all schools	14.3	14.3	15.7	10.0	12.9	67.1
3. Improve the emotional stability of the home	18.6	14.3	12.9	11.4	7.1	64.3
4. Make school education less frustrating	1.4	17.1	10.0	8.6	10.0	47.1
5. Give youths firm moral precepts/maxims to follow	8.6	10.0	10.0	8.6	8.6	45.7

The results show that 78.6% of the principals advocate the establishment of Guidance and Counselling Service in all schools. This is a step that could be taken only by the agency funding the schools i.e. by the government through its Ministry of Education or through the State School Boards.

Coming second with 67.1% is the suggestion that direct courses in moral education should be conducted in schools. This again is an institutional arrangement entailing the training, recruitment and employment of teachers to handle the subject effectively. Once again, it is the government and/or its accredited agencies that could initiate and execute the move to include moral instruction in the syllabus. Lagos State has blazed a trail in this direction.

Not far off in the third place is the appeal to the parents to improve the emotional stability of their homes. 64.3% of the principals indicate that this improved environmental stability of the home will help to arrest moral decadence among youths. This is a task properly laid at the door of the homes in which the children spend the most impressionable periods of their lives, and a sizeable portion of their school days.

It is interesting to note that such macabre suggestions as that "corporal punishment be restored in schools and homes" and the gruesome and sadistic one that "students be lined up to watch public executions by the firing squads" receive scant support - 30.0% and 2.9% respectively and are ranked 7th and 13th respectively in a field of 13.

More interesting, perhaps, is the finding that the principals think less of the influence of religious agencies - the church and the mosque - in arresting youth moral decay. Even though 61.4% of the schools reporting have some religious or denominational affiliations, the suggestions that Religious Knowledge be made compulsory for all students and that Sunday Schools and Koranic Schools (Ile-Kewu) be reinstated for school children receive the assent of only 24.3% and 5.7% of the principals respectively, and they were ranked 8th and 12th for effectiveness in a field of 13.

### AGENCIES OF MORAL EDUCATION

Indeed, the inference above that the church and the mosque and such other religious institutions are making inadequate impact on the moral education of students is confirmed explicitly in another section of the questionnaire. The principals were requested to rate seven most popularly recognized agencies or moral education according to their importance and effectiveness. Their response is tabulated below.

	Most Important	Very Important	Important	Hardly Important	Not Important at all
The Home	68 (97.1%)	2 (2.9%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
The School	16 (22.9%)	44 (62.9%)	10 (14.3%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Society-at-large	5 (7.1%)	23 (32.9%)	29 (41.4%)	7 (10.0%)	4 (5.7%)
The Church	9 (12.9%)	18 (25.7%)	31 (44.7%)	5 (7.1%)	2 (2.9%)
The Mass Media	1 (1.4%)	26 (37.1%)	29 (41.4%)	5 (7.1%)	2 (2.9%)
The Extended Family	1 (1.4%)	5 (7.1%)	23 (32.9%)	17 (24.3%)	12 (17.1%)
The Peer Group	3 (4.3%)	17 (24.3%)	19 (27.1%)	11 (15.7%)	6 (8.6%)

From the table, it can be seen that the church is ranked 4th, behind the home, the school and even behind the society-at-large as moulders of youths' morality. In terms of quality, while 97.1% rank the home under "Most Important", only 12.9% rank the church as most important.

More revealing still, when the principals were asked, hypothetically to name one of the 7 agencies to which they will prefer to trust the moral edification of their children, if they are restricted to only one agency, 46 (i.e. 88.5%), choose the home; 5 (i.e. 9.6%) choose the church. That is, the principals, now acting in their capacity as parents, would trust the home and the school to effect a better education of their children than the church!

Perhaps some caution is called for in drawing rigid conclusions from the above views of the principals. It is quite possible to read some element of prejudice and institutional rivalry into the response of the principals. If our clergymen were given the same question, we might have the school coming up a poor third, like the church now does in the hands of the heads of schools. The fact, however, that we have 61.4% of the schools with denominational affiliations among our samples seem to undermine the strength of this objection of prejudice, and to support the popular opinion that the church and the mosque, as presently constituted and managed, are not substantially reaching the youths.

This, of course, does not mean that the principals discount the connection between religion per se and morality. It is quite possible for them to be sceptical about the role of the present religious institutions but affirm religion, qua religion, as a cement for morality.

Before closing this section, we must touch briefly on the role of the Ministry of Education as perceived by the principals - since what happens in the school is often the brain-child of "the men from the Ministry". Again, it is an easily recognized fact that the Ministry officials, ranging from the Commissioner to the latest Education Officer recruit, talk much about moral education in schools; but the positive steps that they have taken or the firm and effective leadership offered in this area are what really matter.

In the omnibus questionnaire, the principals were given the opportunity to assess the role of the Ministry of Education vis-a-vis the maintenance of discipline in schools. All the 70 principals, including those at the head of Government schools, accuse the Ministry of failing to give any worthwhile leadership in this direction, and some even accuse it of positively hindering their efforts.

As to the ways in which the Ministry could help them in promoting the moral education of their students, there was not a dearth of suggestions from the principals. We have tried to group their suggestions into five, as follows:

- (i) Quick and prompt decision on disciplinary cases referred to them so that whatever punishment is meted out can be immediately related to the "crime" committed.
- (ii) Allow more powers of discipline to the school heads and their board of governors, and give them more trust and backing.
- (iii) Let the Ministry recruit its Education Officers from those who have spent some time in the classroom so as to make them more realistic as far as school discipline is concerned. At present, Ministry officials tend to be more theoretical and speculative in their approach.
- (iv) The Ministry should start to enforce discipline among its own officials - in terms of improving their work-attitudes - then go on to discipline errant teachers, to serve as practical examples to the students. Include assessment of moral character as a criterion in the recruitment and promotion of teachers.

- (v) Make the dismissal of a student from one school his dismissal from all schools receiving any grant or subvention from the government. (This is already the case in the South Eastern State, Kwara State, the Midwest and the Rivers State.)

Note: These suggestions are in addition to those already recorded - namely, that the Ministry should re-establish moral instruction as a specific subject in the timetable, (as the Lagos State Government has done), and that every school should be provided with Guidance and Counselling services.

### PRACTICAL PROGRAMMES OF MORAL EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

Our findings so far have been about the opinions which the secondary school principals hold in respect of moral education and how it could be put into practice in schools. This preliminary step is necessary as enabling us to find out what is possible or what could be done, in contrast to what is actually being done at the moment.

All the 70 principals believe that morality is teachable in some form or another, directly or indirectly. However, while only 20 (i.e. 28.6%) of the principals believe that it is teachable directly, like any other curricular subject on their timetable, more than twice that number (44 or 62.8%) believe that it is only teachable indirectly. By the direct method is meant the teaching of morality as a subject in and by itself with its own time-slot; while by the indirect method is meant using other curricular and co-curricular activities to draw attention to their moral issues, with a view to learning morality from them. The table below shows the proportion of support for direct and indirect methods of teaching morality.

Type of Schools	Teachable Directly	Teachable Indirectly	Teachable Directly and Indirectly
Schools with Disciplinary Problems	8	23	2
Schools without Disciplinary Problems	12	21	4
Total	20 (28.6%)	44 (62.8%)	6 (8.6%)

The table above shows what the principals believe about the teachability or otherwise of morality: but what, in fact, do they do to teach it? What programmes do they set up? How do they use the opportunities available? And with what results? These are some of the questions that we will be trying to answer in the following paragraphs.

Our analysis of the data reveals that while all the 70 principals in the sample believe that morality is teachable directly and/or indirectly, only 53 say they have concrete programmes of any type to teach it. This response can be interpreted to mean that only 53 either have specific time-slots in their timetable,

or consciously use other curricular and co-curricular avenues to inculcate moral education, or both. This is because there is no school that does not have curricular disciplines and co-curricular activities which are capable of being used to teach morality indirectly, but it is another thing for the teachers of the subjects or the organizers of the co-curricular activities to see and exploit the possibilities of the activities for moral education purposes. Conversely, those 17 principals who indicate in their questionnaire forms that they do not have any concrete programmes of moral education will be interpreted to mean that they do not consciously or overtly use the school activities concerned for moral edification.

Out of the 53 schools with programmes of any type, only 23 report having specific time-slots for moral education as a subject like any other curricular subjects. 15 of these devote one hour or more per week to the subject, while 8 accord it only 30 to 40 minutes a week. When one examines the content of their moral education as a subject, however, it is discovered that the vast majority of the 23 with specific time-slots indicate Religious Knowledge/Religious Studies as the content of the subject. The same majority indicate that the principals themselves or the Religious Knowledge teachers handle the subject. This is to say that the principals concerned identify Religious Knowledge/Studies with Moral Education: a course in religious education is a course in moral education.

This identification is, of course, a dubious one because, as many knowledgeable scholars in the field of religious education have rightly pointed out, the aims of religious education are not synonymous with those of moral education - the subjects have different logics of approach and different ends in view. (See especially M.V.C. Jeffreys: Religion and Morality 1967, and Edwin Cox: Changing Aims in Religious Education 1966).

Again, anybody tolerably familiar with the way that the RK/RS/RI is handled as a subject in the Nigerian Secondary Schools will testify to it that the moral dimension of the subject is hardly brought out. The students usually read up the subject for the cognitive and academic purposes of passing examinations. It is even only a matter of chance if any truly moral or religious emotion is experienced by the students in the course of the reading. And, in any case, in a pluralistic society such as Nigeria is, it will be highly improper for the RK/RS/RI curricular subject to be used for proselytization or conversion, be it from Christianity to Islam, or vice versa as it often used to be. Thus Religious Knowledge cannot be equated with moral education on the timetable, and we cannot therefore conclude with any confidence that the 23 principals who reported having specific time-slots for moral education do indeed have periods meant only and only for moral education purposes.

The next question then is: if we cannot even assert that the 23 principals out of 70 do indeed have specific time-slots for direct moral education, why is this so? Only 23 say they have specific programmes out of the 53 who assert that it is teachable. Why do the remaining 30 not put up programmes to teach it, when they believe it is teachable?

To answer this, we asked the principals concerned to give a number of reasons why they did not include Moral Education as a subject in their timetable when they believe it is teachable. The response was:

We have no programme because:

1. Moral Education is present in every activity of the school; it is an inseparable part of everything (37);
2. Moral Education does not lend itself to factual/formal teaching as maths, history, science etc. (24);

3. Morality is caught, not taught (21);
4. No specific/defined area of study or body of knowledge called Moral Education (21);
5. It may degenerate into indoctrination or parade of bigotry by the instructor (18); and
- (6) The timetable, as it is, is too crowded to include it (15).

Though we have included here the ranking of only six most frequently adduced reasons, there are some other interesting and revealing reasons worth mentioning. For example, some principals say that they do not have specific time-slot for moral education because, as a specific subject, "it will not be examinable" i.e. it will be problematic to assess or evaluate the product, e.g. should the "morally educated" product be judged by his behaviour or merely by paper and pencil tests?

Another group of principals exclaimed that it would require an Angel to teach it! Two of the principals, however, went out of their way to label the Ministry of Education as the stumbling block to their efforts to set up moral education programme. They did not say specifically why or how, but we may be reminded that all the 70 principals have passed adverse comments about the Ministry in terms of its lack of leadership in this aspect and in terms of even positive hinderance in the maintenance of discipline in schools.

#### Programmes of Indirect Moral Education

We have discovered that a majority of the principals believe that moral education is an on-going aspect of education which must be an intrinsic part of the whole school activities, and not an isolated or discrete part. (As a side comment, it should be remarked that this commonsensical view that moral values must be taught "holistically" i.e. through every curricular discipline need not prevent the inclusion of a specific time-slot for moral education with its own peculiar content and logic of approach. The two of them could go on pari passu to the advantage of the student.)

Since many principals believe, however, that the indirect method is the only feasible way of teaching the subject, it will be of interest to find out how they do, in fact, use the school activities to achieve their set-out objectives, and with what success.

The school, both as an academic institution and a social unit, offers immense opportunity for the development of moral character; and this opportunity comes at a time when the youths are experiencing what Eric Erickson has called the "Identity Crisis", and are therefore in need of guidance and direction. It is thus essential that all the various activities of the school be examined to see how and to what extent each of them promotes the moral development of students who participate in them.

For the purpose of finding out this, through the help of relevant literature a list of 20 school activities were identified and presented to the principals as an item in the omnibus questionnaire. These 20 activities have been found to be contributive to the moral development of students if the teachers or organizers took the trouble to use them as such.

The 20 activities were divided into 4 categories or headings thus:

- (i) The Curricular Offerings i.e. the formal school subjects or disciplines.
- (ii) The co-curricular activities, like sports and games etc.
- (iii) The Administrative activities e.g. Prefectship, Captaincy etc.
- (iv) The Socio-Moral organizations e.g. Boy Scouts, SCM, etc.

Each category contains 5 activities in which students generally participate.

The principals were then given 5 columns for the degrees of effectiveness of each activity which they have in their schools. The degrees range from the "Most Effective" to the "Not Effective". The principals were asked to check which activity existed in their schools as well as the degree of effectiveness of the school activity identified. The series of tables below present the results in terms of the total number of schools which in fact use the activities consciously for the purpose of moral edification, and of the degree of effectiveness.

### 1. The Curricular Offerings i.e. Subjects/Disciplines

The academic subjects are often regarded as good sources of teaching indirectly some form of moral education. Every teacher, it is often claimed, seeks to teach his subject with some intellectual integrity, and demands from his students honesty and objectivity in answering questions. That is, the teaching and learning situation is a moral one, and the method must indeed be moral.

More significantly, however, certain subjects or disciplines have been identified as very potential sources of moral education, and as helping to develop certain skills needed for making moral judgments.

For example, Mathematics is deemed good for the development of logical reasoning. The ability to make "objective" historical judgment, which is the purview of history to develop is regarded as not too different from the ability to weigh facts and make moral judgments on the basis of evidence at hand; and the humanistic subjects, especially the aesthetic subjects, deal with the development of sensitivity - a quality also very much prized when one is making a moral judgment.

But, more directly still, some subjects do offer opportunities of coming across instances of moral situations needing moral decisions, of making moral judgments for oneself, and so on. Such subjects include Social Studies, Civics and Religious Knowledge. Here case studies can be made of instances of morality. (Social Studies and Civics are mentioned separately because the former is a relatively new arrival in the curriculum of Nigerian secondary schools and is, in fact, not yet widespread. It is gradually replacing the old Civics which also is not as popular in schools as one would have thought or expected. It is to be hoped that more and more schools will adopt the new Social Studies which devotees are making strenuous efforts to build into a discipline as rigorously academic and demanding Mathematics or the Languages.)

On the whole, from a galaxy of academic subjects in the schools, I have selected 5 that are most intimately connected with human beings and that most readily lend themselves to the teaching of morality, even if only as a second fiddle to the main logic of the discipline concerned. They are: Literature, History, Social Studies, Civics and Religious Knowledge. The results of the findings are as follows:



Subjects/ Disciplines	Most Effective	Very Effective	Effective	Hardly Effective	Not Effective at all	Over all No. & % of schools using it
Literature	4 (7.0%)	15 (26.3%)	24 (42.1%)	10 (17.5%)	4 (7.0%)	57 (81.4%)
History	1 (1.9%)	8 (15.4%)	26 (50.0%)	14 (26.9%)	3 (5.8%)	52 (74.7%)
Social Studies	3 (9.4%)	11 (34.4%)	10 (31.3%)	8 (25.0%)	1 (3.1%)	32 (45.7%)
Civics	4 (13.8%)	14 (48.3%)	9 (31.0%)	2 (6.9%)	0 (0.0%)	29 (41.4%)
RK/RS	19 (28.8%)	19 (28.8%)	16 (24.2%)	6 (9.2%)	6 (9.2%)	66 (94.3%)

The table above shows that 4 (i.e. 7.0%) of the 57 principals who have and use literature as a means of fostering the moral development of their students find that subject most effective, 15 find it very effective, 24 find it effective, 10 hardly effective, and 4, not effective at all. Altogether 57 (i.e. 81.4%) of the 70 schools reporting say that they have and do use the subject for moral education purposes.

One or two comments are called for. It is interesting to note:

(i) that 66 or 94.3% of all the sampled schools report Religious Knowledge/Studies as existing on their timetables and as being used for moral education;

(ii) that of this number, 38 find it most effective and very effective. That is, 57.6% accord it a high degree of effectiveness, placing it in the two highest columns.

This high percentage is not too difficult to explain. All schools with denominational affiliations are likely to report the subject as the best medium of moral education, and again devoted Christian or Muslim principals are likely to regard it as a good way of teaching morality if it is on their timetable. Generally it is on the timetable of almost all, if not all, the secondary schools in Nigeria because it is regarded by students as a "soft" option in their West African School Certificate Examination. This, of course, is not to say that all candidates pass this subject at all or pass it in flying colours. Some factors like bad teaching, unqualified teachers, and students' carefree and indifferent attitudes often result in failures for some students and low grades for many more.

## 2. Co-Curricular Activities

By these are meant activities which may or may not appear specifically on the school's timetable, but which, in fact, are usually engaged upon by students and are regarded as part of the educative experiences that the students acquire in schools. They are activities in which surely but almost imperceptibly the moral character of participants is built up. Most schools have most of them but it is possible for some principals not to see some of the activities as contributing anything to moral education or to the ability to make objective moral judgment. Included in this category of activities are: Dramatic Clubs staging plays, especially

morality plays, in which the participants cannot avoid taking sides and passing moral judgments; Scouting, Girl Guides, Boys Brigade, Red Cross and such other youth social organizations in which the ideals of altruism, co-operative spirit and selfless service are stressed; athletics and games in all their varieties, in which the virtues of honesty, impartiality, courtesy and self restraint are often stressed in addition to other physical (health) and social benefits; community voluntary services rendered regularly or periodically to the community in which a school is located - this is more in practice in the rural areas where most teachers and most students reside in the villages nearest to the schools, but less evident or not existing at all in most big urban schools; and finally the Student Representative Council (SRC) (or whatever passes for that in other schools) which 50% of the principals report as existing in their schools and in which students can play actual roles in social organization and self-government. Participation in such activities as are included in this category often help in promoting the student sense of social-responsibility, of healthy respect for law and due regard for others.

The findings in this category of activities are as follows:

Co-curricular Activities	Most Effective	Very Effective	Effective	Hardly Effective	Not Effective at all	No. & % of schools using it for ME
Drama	5 (16.1%)	8 (25.8%)	16 (51.6%)	1 (3.2%)	1 (3.2%)	31 (44.3%)
Scouting, Girl Guides, Red Cross etc	3 (6.7%)	16 (35.6%)	24 (53.3%)	2 (4.4%)	0 (0.0%)	45 (64.3%)
Athletics, Games & Sports	2 (3.4%)	22 (37.9%)	28 (48.3%)	4 (6.9%)	2 (3.4%)	58 (82.9%)
Community Voluntary Service	2 (7.7%)	10 (38.5%)	12 (46.2%)	2 (7.7%)	0 (0.0%)	26 (37.1%)
Students Representative Council	6 (17.1%)	11 (31.5%)	13 (37.1%)	5 (14.3%)	0 (0.0%)	35 (50.0%)

One or two points in the above table: it is interesting to note the scanty number of schools which have used Voluntary Service as a means of building up the sense of social responsibility of their students. This is perhaps not surprising in view of the fact that most schools are located in the urban areas where people look to the Town or City Council or even the State Government to provide all the community welfare services. The maintenance of the narrow road leading to the school may be regarded as the responsibility of the Government. Even in the rural areas where the government is not readily available, this virtue of community service is regarded as an "old virtue" and not in line with the modern fashion! Hence labourers may be hired to clear even the schools surroundings, and since many teachers routinely go to their village schools from the town every day, there

is not that personal involvement in the village life which can induce them to make their students engage in community services.

A second point is about the Students Representative Council which only 35 (50.0%) of the responding principals report as existing in their schools. It is surprising that as many as half of the principals do not much appreciate the influence of peer-groups as enforcers of sanctions against infringement of the rules and regulations to which they subscribe. Also, the advantages of participation and involvement which ultimately result in a deep sense of belonging and the avoidance of alienation are not realised and not exploited by many of our principals. Student Representative Councils can be very instrumental in identifying qualities of leadership in students and of promoting their social responsibility.

### 3. Student-Centred Administrative Arrangements

There is no gainsaying that the tone of a school as set by the principals in collaboration with the members of his staff, as well as the forceful examples of morality displayed by both of them, are most influential in promoting the moral development of students under their care. These are, however, a set of institutional or administrative arrangements which indeed set the pace of morality in the schools but in which the students directly have no part to play. Under the above heading, however, we want to focus our attention on those aspects of the administrative set ups in which the students actively participate and through which they develop their moral potentials.

Under this category, we include the school prefect, the form captain and the monitor systems; some disciplinary committee in which, at least, some students are represented especially where cases involving fellow students are being discussed; some staff-student welfare meetings in which problems of general welfare of all students (not just the chastisement of delinquents) are aired and discussed - regularly or occasionally; and guidance and counselling services. The last item may be run by specialist counsellors when they are available but, as evidence will show, this is only in very few schools; where they are not available teachers with some training in psychology and who have interest and the patience to study, understand and tackle youths problems may render these services. Guidance and counselling is under this category of student-centred activities because the therapy sessions are basically face-to-face, interpersonal interactions in which the students as the clients, actively participate.

The results of the findings under this category are as follows:

Administrative Activities	Most Effective	Very Effective	Effective	Hardly Effective	Not Effective at all	No. & % of schools using it
Guidance & Counselling	6 (26.1%)	11 (47.8%)	5 (21.7%)	1 (4.3%)	0 (0.0%)	23 (32.9%)
Prefect System	2 (3.5%)	8 (14.0%)	37 (64.9%)	9 (15.8%)	1 (1.8%)	57 (81.4%)
Captain/ Monitor System	2 (4.0%)	4 (8.0%)	26 (52.0%)	18 (36.0%)	0 (0.0%)	50 (71.4%)
Disciplinary Committee	1 (2.5%)	10 (25.0%)	19 (47.5%)	8 (20.0%)	2 (5.0%)	40 (57.1%)
Staff-Student Welfare Board	3 (12.5%)	11 (45.8%)	7 (29.2%)	3 (12.5%)	0 (0.0%)	24 (34.3%)

#### 4. Socio-Moral Organizations

The fourth and the last category of school activities to be considered is that which I have given the label "Socio-Moral" organizations. These include religious oriented clubs and societies like the SCM, the Catholic Youth Organization, Bible Study Groups, the Ahmaddiyah Youth Societies, and such other societies and clubs whose purview goes beyond the narrow theoretical study of the "holy books" to the actual practice of living the ideal life portrayed in those books. Also included are social and religious observances like the Morning and Friday Afternoon Assemblies, the Morning devotion, the Friday Islamic Services (the Jimo'h), the Sunday Schools and periodical 2 minutes of silent meditation (often observed in Roman Catholic Schools). There are also the Current Affairs discussion group known by different names in different schools. These may include the literary and debating society. Finally, many schools prepare handbooks/pamphlets containing the school rules and regulations and trying to inculcate especially in the new students the ethics and the traditions of the schools. Others call them the "Code of Conduct" books etc. They are included here more for want of a more suitable category because only in very very few enlightened schools do the students participate in drawing up such codes. Of course, it is also the responsibility of the students and especially their officials to see to the observance of the rules, regulations and traditions contained therein.

The results of the findings on the activities under this category are as follows:

Socio-Moral Activities	Most Effective	Very Effective	Effective	Hardly Effective	Not Effective at all	No. & % of schools using it for ME
Current Affairs Groups	6 (26.1%)	8 (34.8%)	8 (34.8%)	1 (4.3%)	0 (0.0%)	23 (32.9%)
Socio-Religious Clubs	7 (11.9%)	25 (42.4%)	23 (38.9%)	3 (5.1%)	1 (1.7%)	59 (84.3%)
Sunday Schools/ Jimo'h	4 (9.8%)	11 (26.8%)	19 (46.3%)	5 (12.2%)	2 (4.9%)	41 (58.6%)
Morning Assemblies	5 (8.3%)	19 (31.7%)	25 (41.7%)	7 (11.7%)	4 (6.7%)	60 (85.7%)
Book of Code of Conduct	0 (0.0%)	7 (18.4%)	16 (42.1%)	13 (34.2%)	2 (5.3%)	38 (54.3%)

#### The Index or the degree of effectiveness

Even though an X number of schools may report that they use a particular activity as an indirect source of moral education, yet we still need to know how effective each of the activities is as a whole or on the average. That is, we want to know which activities are found to be most effective on the whole and which, as at present taught, are assessed to be least effective.

For this purpose, the degrees of effectiveness were quantified in which "Most Effective" is weighted 4 points; "Very Effective" 3 points; "Effective" 2 points; "Hardly Effective" 1 point; and "Not Effective" with zero point. By multiplying the quantitative points allotted to each effective column by the number of people checking that column, and adding up all the 5 columns for each activity, we get the total points scored for that activity. By dividing this total points by the total number of people who checked that activity, we get the average point of effectiveness for the activities. We may express this by the formula:

$$\text{Index of effectiveness} = \frac{\sum (4a + 3b + 2c + d + 0)}{\sum (a + b + c + d + e)}$$

- Where a = No. of principals checking the "Most Effective" column
- b = No. checking the "Very Effective" column
- c = No. checking the "Effective" column
- d = No. checking the "Hardly Effective" column
- e = No. checking the "Not Effective" column

Take Literature as an example: 4 principals say it is most effective. Since "Most Effective" is scored at 4 points, Literature has  $(4 \times 4) = 16$  points under "Most Effective".

Under "Very Effective" which is checked by 15 principals, the total points under this are  $(3 \times 15) = 45$ ; under "Effective" which is also checked by 24 principals the total points are  $(2 \times 24) = 48$ ; under "Hardly Effective" which is scored by only 10 principals, the total points are  $(1 \times 10) = 10$ ; and since 4 principals found it "Not Effective" at all, the point under this column is  $(0 \times 4) = 0$ , since if it is not effective at all, it is as good as not existing on the timetable as far as the indirect moral education is concerned. Thus the total points for Literature

$$= \sum (16 + 45 + 48 + 10 + 0)$$

$$= 119 \text{ points, scored by } \sum (4 + 15 + 24 + 10 + 4) = 57 \text{ principals.}$$

When the total points are divided by the total number of principals, we have the average degree of effectiveness which is  $\frac{119}{57} = 2.1$

This means that Literature comes up only in the average or medium range of effectiveness.

Using this calculation for all the activities, we have the following results presented in the descending order of effectiveness:

List of Subjects	No. of schools having & using for MI in the timetable	No. of schools not having or not using for MI in timetable	Index/ Average degree Effectiveness of Usage
Guidance & Counselling	23 (32.9%)	47 (67.1%)	3.0
Current Affairs Period	23 (32.9%)	47 (67.1%)	2.8
Civics	29 (41.4%)	41 (58.6%)	2.7
RK/RS	66 (94.3%)	4 (5.7%)	2.6
Socio-Religious Club	59 (84.3%)	11 (15.7%)	2.6
Staff/ Student Welfare Committee	24 (34.3%)	46 (65.7%)	2.6
Community Voluntary Service	26 (37.1%)	44 (62.9%)	2.5
SRC	35 (50.0%)	35 (50.0%)	2.5
Drama	31 (44.3%)	39 (55.7%)	2.5
Scouting/Girl Guides etc.	45 (64.3%)	25 (35.7%)	2.4
Athletics/ Sports	58 (82.9%)	12 (17.1%)	2.3
Social Studies	32 (45.7%)	38 (54.3%)	2.3
Sunday School/ Mosques	41 (58.6%)	29 (41.4%)	2.2
Morning Assembly/ Meditation Hour	60 (85.7%)	10 (14.3%)	2.2
Literature	57 (81.4%)	13 (18.6%)	2.1
Prefect System	57 (81.4%)	13 (18.6%)	2.0
Disciplinary Committee	40 (57.1%)	30 (42.9%)	2.0

List of Subjects	No. of schools having & using for MI in the timetable	No. of schools not having or not using for MI in timetable	Index/Average degree Effectiveness of Usage
Captains/ Monitors	50 (71.4%)	20 (28.6%)	1.8
History	52 (74.3%)	18 (25.7%)	1.8
School Handbook/ Code of Conduct	38 (54.3%)	32 (45.7%)	1.7

Obviously, some comments are called for because of some surprising results. First, there is the RK/RS which has often been touted as the avenue, par excellence, for the teaching of morality. 66 of the 70 schools polled have it as a subject on their curriculum. We have seen above that some even claim it as the equivalent of their moral education programme. The way it is often talked about, one would have expected it to score highest on the index of effectiveness, but really it is in the 4th position with an index of 2.6. That is, it lies between ordinarily "Effective" & "Very Effective". In the same range of effectiveness are other religious-oriented activities like Socio-Religious Clubs e.g. SCM with 2.6, Sunday School/Koranic Schools with 2.2, and Morning Assembly and Meditation Hours with 2.2. Thus, while religious activities are regarded by our principals as promotive of good moral character, they are not ready to rank it the best or the highest source, nor to regard it as the lowest.

The highest index of 3.0, which places it in the column of "Very Effective", is reserved for Guidance and Counselling. Though this is a new service that is available only in very few schools (23 out of 70 schools polled), yet it has been found by those who have it as most helpful in the personality development of their students. This goes to confirm our earlier finding, under the principals conceptions of moral education, that the principals see the problem of moral education, more in socio-psychological terms than in metaphysical-religious idiom. Morality stays at the level of human personal interaction - which may of course be sanctioned by some supernatural agency, but it is not first and foremost the structuring of the relationship between man and his god.

The curricular disciplines have not fared too well either. History and Literature are usually supposed to present students with cases of moral dilemma in which the students are called upon to form their own judgments and take sides, and in general experience the dilemma emphatically. Yet History has an index of only 1.8 and Literature 2.1. Civics and Social Studies fare better most probably because the topics discussed in them are current and do affect the students more immediately. The "lessons" of history and literature are rather remote in points of time and the personality involved. We are not surprised, then, that Current Affairs period recognized by only 23 of the 70 schools receives the second highest weighting of 2.8.

On the disappointing side are the Prefectship, the Captaincy, the Monitorship, and the issuance of Schools Handbooks or Schools Code of Conduct. The principals find them not as helpful in character formation as many people would have thought. In any case, the table has revealed to us those school activities which the principals found to be sources of moral education, and the degree of their effectiveness.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Even though extensive discussions and commentaries have taken place simultaneously with the analysis of the data, it is necessary to draw the loose ends together so as to focus on the salient points for emphasis. It can scarcely be over-emphasized that the interpretations and the conclusions drawn, even though expressed in positive terms, have to be taken with caution in view of the percentage of questionnaire returns noted earlier.

These then are some of the highlights in our findings:

- (i) Our investigation of the principals' conception of moral education reveals that they conceive of it more in terms of interpersonal relationships than of observance of relationship with some supernatural being. They see it as the process of developing the social dimension of human personality.
- (ii) While moral education should be a normal part of the student's personality formation and therefore to be approached more positively, it was discovered that the schools, the home, and the Ministry are, so far, playing inadequate role in the moral education of students.
- (iii) We discovered that even though all the principals believe that morality is teachable somehow, a majority believe that it is only teachable indirectly; that is, as a by-product of other school activities. Only a few believe it is teachable directly and only a few have any such programme of moral education. When we examined the content and the personnel involved in the teaching, we discovered that the direct programmes referred to are in almost all cases religious education courses, which are not strictly direct moral education courses.
- (iv) Majority of the principals believe that moral education can be done only indirectly and report that some of their schools' activities are used to this effect. We examined a number of such school activities and some of the highlights in our findings include the discovery that the Religious Knowledge or Religious Instruction so much touted as the avenue of moral instruction has only a medium range of effectiveness as an avenue of moral education in schools. On the other hand, guidance and counselling claims pride of place as the most effective way of promoting students moral development. It was found also that making the student participate in current socio-moral discussion groups also rates highly in its impact on student development of the moral sense. Unfortunately, it was discovered that only very few schools have these two avenues that have been found very effective by those who have them. Only 23 out of the 70 schools polled have either of the two most effective avenues, whereas as many as 66 out of the 70 have Religious Knowledge which has only a medium range effectiveness.
- (v) Even though the degree of effectiveness of each subject as a source of moral education has been noticed, it is pertinent to observe that the subjects are not as fully exploited for their moral potentialities as they should. The argument is familiar enough: mathematics, history, and science have their own logic or methods of approach different from the logic of morality, and so the subject should not be prostituted to serve other ends. The argument looks strong enough but in this day and age when the emphasis is on helping the child to operate in his environment, the apostle of purism in disciplines cannot escape the call for relevance.



Even if the logic of a particular discipline takes the first priority of the specialist teacher, that aspect of his subject which touches most closely on human life should also receive substantial attention. The moral dimensions of curricular subjects should not be just by-products but rather should be regarded as highly as any other aim of the discipline.

(vi) Finally, even though only a few believe in a direct moral education course, there is a mounting evidence that it is teachable as a course by itself with its own content and logic. Such a direct course need not absolve other teachers of the responsibility to emphasize the moral connotations of their subjects. Rather, a multi-disciplinary or cross-disciplinary approach in which the moral education teacher with his expertise, explores moral issues with teachers from other disciplines will be most fruitful.

Future line of research should therefore be directed towards deeper exploration of the potentiality of each school activity, especially the curricular disciplines, for developing the moral capacity of the students; and towards the investigation of the possibilities of direct moral education and the design of a viable, teachable, and, if necessary, examinable syllabus, not only for secondary schools but equally important for Teachers Colleges.