

Effect of Religiosity and Occupation on Moral Reasoning: A Study of a Nigerian Adult Sample

Adebayo, S. O.
Department of psychology
Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria
E-mail: lanryadd@yahoo.com

Abstract

There is paucity of research on moral reasoning using Nigerian participants. The present study is therefore intended to fill in this gap by attempting to investigate how religiosity and occupational group membership influence moral reasoning. The philosophical-psychological paradigm of Boyce and Jensen (1978) was used. Seven hundred and forty-five adults drawn from among five occupations, viz: medical, teaching, banking, police and civil service from the capital cities of Ekiti, Oyo and Kwara states in Nigeria responded to Religious Attitude Scale and Moral Content Test. Analysis of data using 2x2 ANOVA design and statistical method revealed that there is a significant main effect of religiosity on moral reasoning. High and low religious respondents significantly differed in seven of the nine ethical considerations; Viz: hedonism, rule-utilitarianism, act-utilitarianism, utilitarianism, deontology, rule-orientation and act orientation. Significant main effect of occupation on moral reasoning was also observed. Respondents significantly differed on the nine ethical considerations along occupation. However, interaction effect of religiosity and occupation was observed on deontology only. Findings were discussed in light of extant literature on religion, occupation and moral reasoning.

Keywords: Religiosity, Occupation, Moral Reasoning, Adult Sample, Ethical Consideration, Nigeria.

Introduction

Nigeria is a nation in moral crisis. Morality in general and moral reasoning especially, is at the lowest ebb in all the facet of human endeavour, from politics to security to religion etc. (Olugbade, 1993; Obasanjo, 2002). Gender differences has not also been a predictor for moral reasoning among adult Nigerian, men and women alike, have become agents of moral injustice in the country (Adebayo 2007; Walker, 1996). All the agencies and organizations set up by the government to control this menace as failed to have any impact on the moral reasoning and attitude of an average adult Nigerian. (Kunnu,1990). This study tends to assess the moral content of reasoning of an adult Nigerians. Moral reasoning has been regarded as one of the most important criteria of morality. (Rest,1983; Berkowitz, 1998). Berkowitz (1998) posited that moral reasoning is one of the valuable characteristics that make up a complete moral person. He regarded moral reasoning as the possession by the individual of a sense of logic and justice that makes him or her to figure out what is fair or just, and to be able to balance claims in a given moral conflict. Mundy-Castle and Buddy (1988) see moral reasoning as social intelligence, while Kohlberg (1980) sees it as an embodiment of morality.

Moreover, Drama (1998) has stressed the importance of moral reasoning to the polity to include, policy making, preparation of legislation and quasi legislation, interpretation of law and quasi law, exercising of administrative discretion when conscience demands disobedience, etc. Moral reasoning has been demonstrated to predict varieties of behaviour, some of which include business decisions (Haddad, Harison and Chow 2001), diligent behaviour (Mccolgan, Rest and Prnut, 1981), Political preference (Thomas, and Davidson, 1991) Cooperative behaviour (Jacob, 1975) Clinical performance of medical interns (Shoeman, Husted, Candee, cook, and Bargaen 1980), and support for civil liberties (Adraine and Apter 1995).

Perhaps, one of the most influential pivots of moral reasoning in man is his/her religious beliefs. Gielen (1996), in his model of moral action listed religion as one of the twelve antecedent conditions that may influence the execution of moral actions. According to Argyle and Beit-Halami (1975) "religion is a system of belief in a divine or supernatural power and practices of worship or other rituals directed towards such a power." Spilka, Howard and Gorsuch (1985) posited that religious experience constitutes an important aspect of psychological reality. Pryser (in Collins, 1984) speculated, for example that the relationship between religion and behavior is a two-way traffic; religion influences and is influenced by all aspect of human behaviour. Many researches have supported the above assertion. Religion affects political behaviour (Lenski, (1963); ethnocentrism and racial prejudice (Bagley 1970; Herek, 1987); attitudes to social issues (Hadden 1963); mental health (Rokeach, 1960), etc. This has led Furharm and Heaven (1999) to conclude that the practice of religion is intimately connected to human values, feelings, experience and behaviour. In recent times, religious leaders (Islam, Christianity) etc. have appealed to religion to help rescue Nigeria from its moral crisis (Akande, 1986; Obaje, 1998; Adelowo, 1995; Osu 2000). Adebayo (2007) in his research has opined that there is a link between personality (which could be formed by religion) and morality. In contrasing opinion, many scholars have also argued against the relationship between religion and moral reasoning. They believe man does not practically need God to be human and capable of recognising right and wrong (Solarin in Aladejana and Obidi, 1991).

Occupational groups, in whose environment most Nigerian adults spend their lives and times are a likely psychological incubator of character, attitude and behavior. The suggestions of Durkheim (1961) that occupational groups set moral standard for the general society, and Kohlberg's (1980) insinuation that an individual cannot advance in moral maturity beyond the society in which he/she is a member makes it possible to think that occupational groups do impact on the moral reasoning of their members. Occupational group have over the years been accused of entrenching negative moral behaviours and debasing ethical values in Nigeria (Bichi 2000). Occupations have been said to differ in their moral ecology, some providing for high opportunity for role-taking and guided reflections than others (Smith and Miller 1998). Lind (2000) has suggested that medical training environment is low in opportunities provided for students for role taking and guided reflection. It has also been observed that teaching and business

occupations differ in their goals and purposes, (imparting knowledge versus profit making) thus making their quest for morality and justice to be different (Fenstarmacher, 1992; Sherwin, 1988; Schmidt, 1998).

The present study intends to investigate how religiosity and occupational group influence moral reasoning of a Nigerian adult sample.

Different models and measures of moral reasoning abound (Kohlberg, 1969; Boyce & Jensen, 1978; Forsyth, 1980; Lind, 1986 and Rest, 1986). The present study intends to employ the philosophical-psychological integration model of Boyce and Jensen (1978). Their model recognizes the variant nature of ethical consideration in an individual's moral reasoning that are not stage bound. Their model also avoids the inherent tendencies of other models to confuse moral content with moral structure. Furthermore the philosophical-psychological model rests on the two normative ethics in philosophy; teleology and deontology. It is from these two normative ethics that the nine dimensions of ethical considerations possible in an individual's moral reasoning are derived. These are egoism, hedonism, nonhedonism, rule-utilitarianism, act-utilitarianism, utilitarianism, deontology, rule orientation and act orientation (Boyce & Jensen, 1978, Adebayo, 2004).

The following hypotheses are put forward for testing:

1. There will be a significant main effect of occupational group on the nine ethical considerations of moral reasoning of adult Nigerians.
2. There will be a significant main effect of religiosity on the nine ethical considerations of moral reasoning of adult Nigerians.
3. There will be significant interaction effects of occupational group membership and religiosity on the nine ethical considerations of moral reasoning of adult Nigerians.

Method

Participants

The sample comprises of 745 adults drawn from among five occupations in the capital cities of Ekiti, Oyo, and Kwara, viz: Ado-Ekiti, Ibadan and Ilorin. The occupations are, medical, (100 nurses, 49 (doctors), teaching (60 from five secondary schools in Ibadan, 45 from five secondary school in Ilorin, 44 from five S.S in Ado-Ekiti) Banking (59 from Ibadan, 45 from Ilorin, 45 from Ado-Ekiti, they were drawn from five banks in each town). Police (60 personnel from Ibadan, 45 from Ilorin, 44 from Ado-Ekiti). Civil servants not below salary grade level 07 (60 from Ibadan, 44 from Ilorin and 45 from Ado-Ekiti). In all, 149 participants were drawn from each occupation. Also, of the 745 research participants, 294 were Muslim, while the remaining 451 were Christians. Their average age was 35.8 years with a range between 20 and 65

Instruments

In this study two instruments were used, they are:

- i. Religious Attitude Scale (RAS)
- ii. Moral Content Test (MCT)

The religious Attitude Scale (RAS) is an 18 item inventory, originally developed by Poppleton and Pilkington (1963). It was originally developed for a Christian population but revised for the purpose of this study to accommodate the Muslim population. In revising the scale five items (item no 2, 3, 10, 12, 18) were reworded to take care of the Muslim research participants. In scoring the religious attitude scale, the Likert 5 point scale was used. Positively worded items were scored directly, strongly agree being 5, Agree being 4, undecided beings 3, Disagree being 2, strongly disagree being 1. Negatively worded items were scored in reverse order. The norms of the means scores are the basis for the interpretation the scores of client. Scores that fell below the median were categorized as low religiosity while those whose scores fell within the median or above were categorized as high in religiosity. The psychometric property revealed reliability co-efficient of 0.97 Poppleton and Pilkington (1963), 0.75 for Christian, 0.97 Muslim (Adebayo, 2004) while the concurrent validity coefficients for the revised version when correlated with Attitude Towards Christianity Scale (Francis, 1978) and Attitude Towards Islam Scale (Wilde & Joseph) are; .88 and respectively (Adebayo, 2004).

The Moral Content Test (MCT) is a 10 item inventory, originally developed by Boyce and Jensen (1978). The instrument is capable of tapping the normative ethics of teleological and deontological moral

reasoning. It measures nine ethical considerations, namely; egoism, hedonism, nonhedonism, rule-utilitarianism, act-utilitarianism, deontology, rule-orientation, act-orientation and utilitarianism. It also contains five moral dilemmas; drug, deserter, dying loved one, taxes and mine shaft. A scoring grid was prepared for each respondent and scoring was according to the instructions in the manual. Scores of respondents on each of the nine ethical considerations was in percentages. The psychometric property reveals that it has internal consistency alpha reliability co-efficient for each ethical consideration as follows, Egoism, .64; Rule-utilitarianism, .89; Act-Utilitarianism, .84; Nonhedonism, .65; Hedonism, .64; Rule-Orientation, .83; Act-orientation, .83; Utilitarianism, .82; Deontology, .68; (Boyce and Jensen 1978). Adebayo (2004), also reported a test - retest reliability coefficient for each ethical consideration as follows; Egoism. .80, Hedonism .79, Nonhedonism .89, Rule Utilitarianism .83, Act-Utilitarianism .92, Utilitarianism .8; Deontology, .91; Rule-Orientation, .95; Act-Orientation, .92. Also Boyce and Jensen (1968) revealed the following divergent validity coefficients on each ethical considerations; Egoism -48, Hedonism, -22; Nonhedonism, -28; Rule Utilitarianism, 13; Act-Utilitarianism, 15; Deontology, -09; Rule-orientation, 08; Act-orientation, -19; Utilitarianism, -17.

Procedure

A total of 1050 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to respondents, 907 were retrieved, and 745 research participants-whose questionnaire were property filled were analysed. Survey method was used in the study through a purposive random sampling method. The whole of the 1050 social issues inventory contain four sections, (i.e, Biographic, Religious attitude scale, EpQ and moral content Test. The “Lucky – dip” techniques were used to select the banks, schools and Ministries and respondents sampled in the study after their consent has been sought.

Design/statistics

The study was carried out by means of a survey method. Based on the fact that we have two independent variables, a 2x2 ANOVA design was used to test the three hypotheses.

Results

The study made use of Analysis of Variance Statistics in data analysis. Based on this analysis the following findings were made.

Table 1: Mean scores of research participants on the nine ethical considerations as influenced by level of Religiosity and Occupation Group

Occupation

	Medical		Civil service		Banking		Teaching		Police	
	Religiosity		Religiosity		Religiosity		Religiosity		Religiosity	
	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	low
Ethical consideration										
Egoism	27.31	27.2	20.4	22.3	18.4	21.6	28.2	29.2	24.22	26.38
Hedonism	31.52	33.7	32.7	32.5	32.7	36.9	30.3	33.1	28.88	32
Non hedonism	38.23	37.9	35.9	35.6	34.2	34.8	36.9	36.4	34.59	40.43
Rule-utilitarianism	43.41	40.5	39.5	35.9	39.4	35.6	46.4	38.4	37.48	37.5
Act-utilitarianism	17.98	23.2	27	31.3	29.0	34.3	12.4	21.8	17.3	28.69
Utilitarianism	43.69	45.4	49.5	49.2	47.3	48.7	40.1	42.2	40.8	46.59
Deontology	52	49.9	50.1	51.7	54.9	47.6	56.5	53.7	59.15	48.42
Rule-Orientation	54.28	48.6	48.9	46.0	51.7	44.7	60.5	50.7	53.97	46.9
Act-orientation	35.19	41.1	42.5	46.6	44.5	46.4	28.9	38	37.2	42.8

From the table 1 above it would appear that the most egoistic group of research participants were the teachers low in religiosity (M = 29.16) while the group with the least score were bankers low in religiosity were the most hedonistic (M = 36.89), also the police group with high religiosity score was the least hedonistic (M = 28.88) . It can also be deduced in the table 1 above that the police low in religiosity were the most nonhedonistic group (M = 40.43) while bankers high in religiosity were the least non hedonistic (M = 34.24). Highly religious teachers scored the highest on rule Utilitarianism (M = 46.3) while Civil Servants with low religiosity scored the least on rule-Utilitarianism (M = 35.92). Bankers with low religiosity were also found to be the most act Utilitarianism in moral reasoning (M = 34.28) while the highly religious group of teacher were the least act-Utilitarian (M= 12.36). The highly religious group of civil servants were the most utilitarianism (M = 49.53) while teachers who were low in religiosity were the least in Utilitarianism (M 40.12). Also police who were highly religious scored the highest on deontology (M = 57.15), while the banking group loving religious scored the least on deontology (47.6). Moreover, teacher who were highly religious were the most rule-oriented of all the groups (M= 60.45) while the low religious banker were the least rule-oriented (M = 44.73). However, the most act-oriented group seemed to be the civil-servant groups, with low religiosity (M=46.6) while highly religious teachers scored the least in act-orientation (M =28.89).

Table 1.1: A Two-way ANOVA Examining the Main and Interaction Effects of Religiosity and Occupation on Egoism

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p
Occupation	7933.86	4	1983.47	8.47	<.001
Religiosity	462.103	1	462.10	1.97	n.s
Interaction	201.56	4	50.39	.215	n.s
Residual	172117.99	735	234.17		
Total	180292.8	744	242.33		

The table 1.1 above clearly indicated that occupation had a significant main effect on egoism. The teaching group had the highest mean score (M = 28.57) followed by medical group (M =27.29), police (m =25.46), civil service (M = 21.1) and banking (M = 20.67). No significant effect of religiosity on egoism was observed among the research participants. Furthermore, occupation and religiosity did not have a significant interaction effect on egoism.

Table 1.2: A Two-way ANOVA Examining the Main and Interaction Effects of Religiosity and Occupation on Hedonism

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p
Occupation	1841.42	4	460.36	3.65	<.01**
Religiosity	939.53	1	939.53	7.45	<.01**
Interaction	354.91	4	88.73	.70	n.s
Residual	92748.44	735	.703		
Total	96309.944	744			

The results presented in table 1.2 above clearly indicate that occupational grouping had a significant main effect on hedonism. The Banking group had the highest mean score (M =35.7) followed by civil service group (M = 32. 65), medical group (M = 32.17) teaching group (M= 31.45) and the police group (M = 30.67) in that order. F value for main effect of occupation was (f (4,735) = 3 65, p < 0.1). The results also revealed a significant main effect of religiosity on hedonism. Research participants low in religiosity significantly scored higher on hedonism (M = 33.65) than those high in religiosity (M = 31.26). F value for effect of religiosity was (f (1,735) = 7.45, P<.01). No significantly effect of occupation and religiosity was, however, revealed, f (4, 735) = 0.70, P> 0.05).

Table 1.3: A Two-way ANOVA Examining the Main and Interaction Effects of Religiosity and Occupation on Nonhedonism

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p
Occupation	1511.88	4	377.97	3.24	01**
Religiosity	235.67	1	235.67	2.02	n.s
Interaction	1052.36	4	263.09	2.26	n.s
Residual	85646.45	735	116.526		
Total	88281.53	744	118.658		

According to table 1.3 above, occupation has a significant main effect on nonhedonism; medical group had the highest-mean (M = 38.14) followed by the police group (M= 37.93) the teaching group (36.65), the civil service group (M = 35.8) and the banking group (M = 36. 65) the civil service group (M = 35.8) and the banking group (M =34.63). F value for main effect of occupation is (f (4, 735) = 3.24, P< 01). The effect of religiosity on nonhedonism was not significant ditto the interaction effect of occupation and level of religiosity on nonhedonism.

Table 1.4: A Two-way ANOVA Examining the Main and Interaction Effects of Religiosity and Occupation on Rule-utilitarianism

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p
Occupation	3256.286	4	814.07	2.5	< .05*
Religiosity	2613.518	1	2613.518	8.04	<.01**
Interaction	686.801	4	171.7	.528	n.s
Residual	238567.15	735	325.02		
Total	246746.05	743	332.09		

From table 1.4 it is observed that occupation had significant main effect on Rule-Utilitarianism. Teaching group had the highest mean score (M = 43.16) followed in descending order by medical group (M = 42.57), police (M = 38.35), Civil service group (M = 38.15) and Banking group (M = 36.69). F value for main effect of occupation was (f (4,735) = 2.5,P < 0.5). The level of religiosity also had a significant main effect on rule-utilitarianism; the highly religious group significantly scoring, higher (M = 47.2) on nonhedonism than the group with low religiosity (M = 37. 57), (F (1,735) = 8.04, P >.01). No significant interacting effect of occupation and Religiosity was however observed (F (4, 735) = .528, P>05).

Table 1.5: A Two-way ANOVA Examining the Main and Interaction Effects of Religiosity and Occupation on Act-utilitarianism

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p
Occupation	19913.7	4	4978.43	13.22	<.001***
Religiosity	8609.06	1	8609.06	22.86	<.001***
Interaction	1355.77	4	338.94	.9	n.s
Residual	276756.59	735	376.54		

Total	312760.88	744	420.37		
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Table 1.5 reveals that the type of occupation had significant main effect on act-utilitarianism. The Banking occupation had the highest mean score (M = 32.73) followed in descending order by Civil services occupation (M = 28.63), police (M = 23.8, Medical (M= 19.51), and Teaching (M = 16.15), F value for main effect of occupation on Act-utilitarianism is (f (4,735) = 13.22, P< 001). Also revealed was that the level of religiosity had a significant main effect on Act-Utilitarianism. Finding further revealed that religiosity also had a significant main effect on utilitarianism; the highly religious group scored significantly lower on utilitarianism (M = 44.29) than the low religious group (M = 6.39), (f (1,735) = 5.46, P<.02). Occupation and religiosity did not have a significant interaction effect on utilitarianism. Participants high in religiosity significantly scored lower (M = 73) on Act-Utilitarianism than those low on religiosity (M = 34), f (1,735) = 22.86, P<.001). A significant interaction act of occupation and religiosity on act-utilitarianism was not, however, observed.

Table 1.6: A Two-way ANOVA Examining the Main and Interaction Effects of Religiosity and Occupation on Utilitarianism

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p
Occupation	6271.33	4	1567.83	10.84	<.001***
Religiosity	789.85	1	789.85	5.46	<.02*
Interaction	746.26	4	186.56	1.29	n.s
Residual	106269.18	735	144.58		
Total	114471.42	744	153.86		

Again table 1.6 reveals a significant main effect of occupation on utilitarianism, the civil service occupation being the highest on utilitarianism (M = 49.39) followed in descending order by the banking occupation (M = 48.26), the medical (M = 44.19, police (M = 44.12 and teaching (M = 40.94). the F value for main effect of occupation was (f 4, 735) = 10.84, P <.001). No significant interaction effect of religiosity and occupation on Utilitarianism was observed.

Table 1.7: A Two-way ANOVA Examining the main and interaction effects of Religiosity and Occupation on Deontology

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p
Occupation	2513.20	4	628.30	2.35	<.05*
Religiosity	3149.32	1	3149.32	11.79	<.001***
Interaction	3327.65	4	831.91	3.11	<.02*
Residual	196352.38	735	267.15		
Total	205563.18	744	276.29		

According to the results presented on Table 1.7 occupation had a significant main effect on Deontology. The teaching occupation had the highest score (M = 55.4). Followed in descending order by the police (M = 53.01), the medical group (M = 51.39), the civil service group (M = 50.7) and the banking (M =49.74), f (4,735) = 2.35, P <. 05). Religiosity also had a significant main effect on Deontology; the group high in religiosity scored significantly higher on deontology (M = 54.52) than the group low in religiosity (M = 50.29), (F (1,735) = 11.79, P <. 001). Table 1.7 also reveals a significant interaction effect of occupation and religiosity on deontology. The F value for the interaction effect was f (4,735) = 3.11, P <. 02).

Table 1.8: A Two-way ANOVA Examining the Main and Interaction Effects of Religiosity and Occupation on Rule-orientation

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p
Occupation	6472.06	4	1618.02	4.49	<.001***

Religiosity	6851.45	1	6851	19.03	<.001***
Interaction	831.13	4	207.78	.57	n.s
Residual	264655.76	735	360.08		
Total	280996.02	744	377.68		

The results presented on table 1.8 reveal that both occupation and level of religiosity had significant main effects on rule-Orientation. On the effect of occupation, the teaching occupation had the highest mean score (M = 56.53) followed in descending order by the medical occupation (M = 52.6), the police (M = 49.93), the civil service (M = 47.77), and banking (M = 46.78). The F value for the main effect of occupation on Rule-orientation was (F (4,735) = 4.49, P<.001). On the main effect of religiosity, the highly religious group scored significantly higher (M= 53.84) on Rule-orientation than the low religious group (M = 47.38), (F 1,735) = 19.03, p<.001). No significant interaction effect of religiosity and occupation on Rule-Orientation was, however, observed.

Table 1.9: A Two-way ANOVA Examining the Main and Interaction Effects of Religiosity and Occupation on Act-orientation

Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	p
Occupation	13367.12	4	3341.78	10.91	<.001***
Religiosity	4176.14	1	4176.14	13.64	<.001***
Interaction	899.26	4	224.82	.73	n.s
Residual	225058.85	735	306.20		
Total	246454.62	744	331.26.		

The analysis presented on table 1.9 reveals that occupation had a significant main effect on Act-orientation; the banking occupation being the most act-oriented (M = 45.84), followed by the civil service group (M = 44.04), the police group (M = 40.02), the medical group (M = 36.93) and teaching group (M = 32). The F value is (F (4,735) = 10.91, P <. 001). Also revealed in the table is that religiosity had a significant main effect on act-orientation; the group low in religiosity scoring significantly higher on Act-orientation (M = 42.78) than the group high in religiosity (M = 37.2), F value is (f (1,735) = 13.64, P <.001) However, both occupation and religiosity had no significant interaction effect on Act-orientation.

From the tables presented above the following general observations were noted. Firstly, hypothesis 1 is upheld for all the nine ethical considerations. Secondly hypothesis two holds for seven out of the nine ethical considerations it does not hold for egoism and non-hedonism. Lastly, hypothesis 3 holds for only deontology, it does not hold for Egoism, Hedonism, Non-hedonosim, Rule-utilitarianism, Act-Utilitarianism, Rule-orientation, and Act-orientation.

Discussion

This study hypothesized and tested for the significant main and interaction effects of occupation and religiosity on nine ethical considerations having been informed by both anecdotal and empirical evidence in the literature on relationship between religion, occupation and morality (Durkheim, 1933, 1961; Herberich, 1995; Feenstra, 1991; Adelowo, 1995; Linderfeld, 1960; Wright and Cox, 1967; Burwell and Cole, 1999; Krueger, 1998; and Schmidt, 1998).

The results of the main and interaction effects of occupation and religiosity revealed that occupation had significant main effects on the nine dimensions of moral reasoning or ethical considerations. When the mean scores were compared teaching occupation had the highest on egoism, rule utilitarianism, deontology and rule orientation while the banking occupation was highest on hedonism, act utilitarianism and act orientation. On the other hand the medical occupation was highest on nonhedonism, while the civil service was highest on utilitarianism. What this seems to suggest is that each occupation engenders more of a particular ethical orientation in its members. This observation corroborates Durkheim's (1933,1961) thesis that occupational groups influence the moral order of the society and supports Kohlberg's (1980) position

that individual moral maturity is a recapitulation of the moral evolution of the society in which individuals belong. It also confirms Herberich's (1995) study that reported differences in advancement in moral judgement competencies among people in different fields of study.

The observation that teaching occupational group in this study scored highest in egoism, deontology and rule orientation appears to be contradictory especially in Kohlbergian paradigm where egoism seems an inferior moral reasoning and deontology and rule orientation appear to be superior. In Boyce and Jensen's paradigm, however, there is no contradiction. There is room for such oscillation in between different ethical considerations and the case of the teaching group in the present study is an evidence corroborating this theoretical position.

The results also showed that religiosity has significant main effects on seven out of the nine considerations; viz: hedonism, rule utilitarianism, act utilitarianism, utilitarianism, deontology, rule orientation and act orientation. This indicates that religious people differ from nonreligious in their moral reasoning thus corroborating some previous findings in the literature (e. g. Webb & Steentsma, 1983; Burwell & Cole, 1999). It also lends credence theories of scholars that have attempted to link religiosity with morality (e.g. Fowler, 1981; Feenstra, 1991; and Adelowo, 1995). Findings did not however support Erie (2001) who reported that religiosity is not a good predictor of morality.

There exists the problem of interpreting the observation that high religious people are more rule oriented than low religious people. Using the Kohlbergian paradigm it would seem that rule oriented moral reasoning is a conventional reasoning hence high religious people are less morally mature than the low religious. This position cannot be carried too far. The fact that high religious people are more deontological, giving higher consideration to nature and consequences of acts in judging right and wrong, suggests that they are cognitively complex in moral judgement. Feder(1984) has argued against the supposedly conventional morality of rule-oriented religious people. He posited that Kohlberg's six-stage paradigm of moral development has ignored religious people with commitment to religious beliefs and prescriptive ideas. To Feder religious people are oriented towards supererogatory judgement and behavioural pattern that can only belong to a stage seven not accounted for in Kohlbergian paradigm. Religious people "are prepared to let their own autonomous principled judgment be challenged by a critical alter-ego" (Feder, 1984).

It is noteworthy that it is only on deontology that the interaction effect of religiosity and occupation was observed. Why this is so lies in the nature of deontology as an ethical consideration. The ethic requires putting into consideration the nature and consequences of acts in determining right and wrong. This suggests a more cognitively complex ethical consideration that may be shaped by more than one social experience of being a member of an occupation or being religious. The two social realities may be necessary in deontological moral reasoning.

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