

## **Personality Development Among Contemporary Nigerian Youths: Psychoanalytic, Social Learning and Islamic Perspectives**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Personality as a behavioural make up and attitudinal uniqueness of every individual serves as means of distinguishing one person from others. As psychoanalysis theorists perceive behavioural manifestation majorly as a result of unconsciousness, heredity and early childhood experiences, social learning theorists on the other hand understand it as a result of consciousness and external influences. Youths, like other human beings do manifest different kinds of desirable and undesirable characters under the influences of both intrinsic and extrinsic stimuli. Majority of the contemporary Nigerian youths also manifest both moral and immoral behaviours. Therefore, this paper aims at uncovering the degrees of influences of both the psychoanalysis and social learning factors on the personality of contemporary youths. The paper also discusses the Islamic psychological position on personality development of the youths. Descriptive and analytical research methods were used in this work. The paper explains the ideal Islamic all-round personality development and also analyses behavioural modification using the Qur'ān, Sunnah and views of the Islamic scholars. The research findings reveal that both the psychoanalysis and social learning factors have significant influences on every individual personality. The paper, therefore, concludes by encouraging the parents, teachers and other stake holders to train the children in line with the Islamic laid down child upbringing teachings.*

**Keywords:** Psychoanalysis Theory, Social Learning Theory, Personality, Youths, Islamic position

### **INTRODUCTION**

Personality disposition either through verbal expression or body language says much about every individual because every human being is unique. Certainly, there are no two or more same persons; we can only have similar persons. This is responsible for having persons of different attitudes and characters. While some people are of good characters, many others are socially and morally bankrupt. Behavioural manifestation either morally or immorally, reveals the kind of personality of every individual.

Youths like other human beings have different kinds of characters. Some of them are morally upright, socially accommodating and emotionally stable while many others are morally bankrupt, socially nil, and emotionally naught. The cause of both moral and immoral attitudes of human beings in general and youths in particular is the bone of contention among the psychologists most especially the psychoanalysis and social learning theorists. Psychoanalysis theorists claim that personality of every individual is determined and influenced mostly by unconsciousness, heredity and early childhood experiences.<sup>2</sup> Thus, manifestation of both moral attitudes like truthfulness, humility, perseverance, kindness, piety, modesty, hospitality, kindness, punctuality, regularity, generosity, obedience, honesty, integrity, respect, tolerance, loyalty, respect for human life and dignity of persons, justice, and immoral characters such as cultism, stealing, fraud, cybercrime, corruption, drug abuse and addiction, pride, arrogance, sexual promiscuity, truancy, raping, robbery, indecent dressing, gay, disobedience, insurgency, examination malpractice, annoying, bullying, hostility of the present days youths are results of unconscious mind, genetic traits (biology) and early childhood exposure. While the social

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<sup>2</sup> Monte, F.: *Beneath The Mask* (New York: Praegar Publishers, 1877), Print (8)

learning theorists emphasize that characters either moral or immoral are extrinsically motivated through interaction with the immediate and distant environments.<sup>3</sup>

In Islamic perspective, personality which in classical terms means “nafs” which signifies “self”, is extremely important because for one to be able to co-exist and interact with other fellow human beings peacefully, he has to learn what factors influencing people’s behaviours and thinking processes. Allah’s knowledge encompasses every thing. He in His perfect wisdom understands personality disposition of every individual and He is acquainted with the factors predisposing every individual to manifest one character or the other. This is succinctly affirmed in the Qur’ān 67: 14 where Allah says:

*“How could He not know His Own creation? For He alone is the Most Subtle, All-Aware”.*

In Islam, many psychologists attach much significance to unobservable behavioural stimuli than the physical and the concrete that can be observed by the external sense organs. This assertion is borne out of the fact that to Muslims, matter is secondary to the spirit. Thus, knowledge in Islam is based upon the unity of truth, which devolves from the unity of God. Since God is truth and the revelation is His word, the implication of this is that the revelation is equivalent to truth also.<sup>4</sup>

Most contemporary youths nowadays are more of immoral behaviours. They often engage and manifest undesirable characters and rarely put on appealing attitudes. What might have instigated their personality dispositions is the concern of the researcher. Hence, this study is set to investigate the factors responsible for the personality of the contemporary Nigerian youths and suggest personality development mechanisms in line with Islamic dictates.

The major objectives of this study are to:

- a. identify factors that are responsible for the personality of the contemporary youths
- b. highlight the intensity of the effects of the both the moral and immoral behaviours of the contemporary youths
- c. discuss the Islamic perspectives on the factors that are responsible for personality dispositions of the youths.

This study is of great significance in that once the factors that are responsible for the personality of the contemporary youths are known, the findings will benefit the parents, teachers and counsellors by making use of the findings while training the youths at homes and teaching them in the schools. The government also can make use of the findings while making education policies and curriculum on child personality development.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research is a descriptive research. Descriptive research is concerned with conditions that exist; practices that prevail; belief, point of view or attitude that are developing. This study therefore, unveiled the factors responsible for the over-all personality development of human beings with particular focus on the contemporary Nigerian youths. It specifically revealed the influences of both intrinsic and extrinsic factors on the character make-up of every individual human being.<sup>5</sup>

Etymologically, the term "personality" is derived from the Latin word "persona," which means mask. In Psychology, personality connotes the complex of characteristics that distinguishes an individual or a nation or group of people especially the totality of an

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<sup>3</sup> Bandura, Albert: *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control* (New York: W. H. Freeman, 1997).

<sup>4</sup> Haque Amber: *Psychology of Personality: Islamic Perspectives*, *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*. 18:4 (2001), 147

<sup>5</sup> Cohen, J. and Orbuch, T.: *Introduction to Sociology* (Singapore: McGrawHill, 1990)

individual's behavioural and emotional characteristics.<sup>6</sup> However, different scholars define personality as they perceive it. Thus, it is quite difficult to characterize an entire personality. This is based on its variability in several works of literature and human endeavours. While Suryabrata defines personality as a dynamic body of characters that is unique to an individual's ability to adapt to his or her immediate environment and surroundings,<sup>7</sup> Sjarkawi in his opinion asserts that personality is a combination of the structural characteristics of behavior, attitudes, interests, potentials, values and talents that differentiate one individual from another. Alwisol on the other hand, stresses that personality is tantamount to self-concept which succinctly implies an awareness of humanity.<sup>8</sup>

In Islamic context, personality is referred to in Arabic as *Shakhaṣiyyah* which refers to a basic component of humanity, namely the spirit. This perception is obviously in contrast to western perception of the concept which limits itself to the physical world. According to Silahudin, personality is comprehensively defined as: "Personality in the Islamic idea is the integration of *aqliyah* (intellectual) and *nafsiyah* (spiritual) based on *aqidah* (belief)," from which conduct is created. In addition to that, Salminawati stressed that the sole aim of Islamic view of personality is to restore fundamental human nature in order for people to recognize and fear God<sup>9</sup>

In the Qur'ān, personality is divided into three, namely:

1. ***Nafs Al-Muṭmainnah***: Personality that propels human beings to goodness and leads to God's monotheism. This is mentioned the Qur'ān 89: 27 where Allah says:

*"Allah will say to the righteous, "O tranquil soul!"*

Salminawati and Dedi interpret it as a calm personality. Thus, personality whose characteristics are inclined to peace and tranquility, like to worship Allah, obedience, love, law abiding, conformity to ideal norms, values societal standard and very religious.<sup>10</sup>

2. ***Nafs Al-Ammarah***: Personality with destructive tendencies. This is in the Qur'ān 12: 53

*"And I do not seek to free myself from blame, for indeed the soul is ever inclined to evil, except those shown mercy by my Lord. Surely my Lord is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful."*

Salminawati and Dedi, understand it as a personality that usually encourages evil. The characteristics of this personality are arrogance, mischief, love of evil, disobedience to Allah, the Prophet and the constituted authority.<sup>11</sup>

3. ***Nafs Al-Lawwamah***: Personality who has a tendency towards moral-progressive. This is discussed in the Qur'ān 75:2 where Allah says:

*"And I do swear by the self-reproaching soul!"*

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<sup>6</sup> Merriam-Webster Dictionary: "Personality", Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/superstition> Accessed on 28 July, 2025

<sup>7</sup> Salminawati and Dedi Sahputra Napitupulu: Sigmund Freud's and Ibn Sina's Viewpoints on Personality and Their Implications on Islamic Education. *Journal of Al-Ulum*. Volume 22 Number 1 June (2022),148 <https://doi.org/10.30603/au.v22i1.2392>

<sup>8</sup> Salminawati and Dedi,152

<sup>9</sup> Salminawati, *Filsafat Pendidikan Islam: Membangun Konsep Pendidikan Islam Yang Islami* (Bandung: Citapustaka Media Perintis, 2016), 49

<sup>10</sup> Salminawati and Dedi, 152

<sup>11</sup> Salminawati and Dedi, 152

Salminawati and Dedi, construe it as a dynamic personality. The characteristics of this personality are rational, creative, innovative, striving for change but are often in a hurry to achieve desired goals.<sup>12</sup>

Islamic psychology also establishes that behaviours of youths like other human beings can be both overtly and covertly influenced. While overt behaviours can be easily studied by objective methods, covert behaviors like thoughts and feelings on the other hand are only intrinsic to the individual and cannot be studied objectively. The fact remains that instincts and the unconscious realm are seldom controlled and amenable to the person himself, making it harder for the theorist to study and describe such phenomena. This is due to the individual differences, personality uniqueness and the psychological make up of every person that propel and stimulate individuals to function the way they wish.<sup>13</sup>

The term “youth” implies the period of life between adolescent and adulthood, especially before a child becomes an adult. In terms of an individual’s level of dependency, youths are being identified in various ways according to diverse socio-cultural perspectives. Youths in many cultures, refer to young people who still rely on their family emotionally and economically. The United Nation describes anyone within the age of 15-24 years are categorized as youth. Meanwhile, the Common Wealth of Nations recognises persons within the age range of 16-29 years as youth.<sup>14</sup> In Nigerian context, any individual within the ages between 18-39 years is perceived as youth. Globally, the youths have the larger percentage of active population, in terms of their economic, social, educational and political roles. It is important to underline that youths represent a fundamental group to make Nigeria to be a greater nation.<sup>15</sup>

In Islam, according to Hanifi and Shafi’i schools of jurisprudence, the minimum age for puberty in boys is approximately 12 lunar years, and in the absence of puberty symptoms, approximately 15 lunar years to a maximum of 18 lunar years may be considered. Though, the variation in geographical region plays a significant role. In the case of boys, the observable signs of puberty are fragility of voice and masculine change, growth of pubic hairs, nightmares and semen discharge (wet dreams). Simultaneously, the minimum age of puberty for girls is approximately 9 lunar years and in the absence of puberty symptoms, it can be considered as approximately 15 lunar years to maximum of 17 or 18 lunar years, or may vary by geographical region of every individual youth. The observable characteristics or signs of puberty in girls are menstruation, increase in breast, wet dreams and the ability to conceive. However, according to an-Nawawi, attainment of age 15 of lunar year is self-evident for both boys and girls to become full adults.<sup>16</sup>

## **PSYCHOANALYSIS THEORY AND PERSONALITY OF YOUTHS**

Psychoanalysis theory is one of the earliest and prominent theories of personality. The theory was propounded by Sigmund Freud who was originally a medical practitioner who engaged in the study and treatment of patients in his clinic. His long practice and devotion to this sector of medicine made him realised and observed mental diseases of his patients. Gradually he became more interested in the study of psychology and more particularly psychology of the unconscious mind.<sup>17</sup> To Freud, a person’s behaviour is influenced and significantly determined

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<sup>12</sup> Salminawati and Dedi, 152

<sup>13</sup> Haque Amber, 147

<sup>14</sup> Andy, F.: *Youth Studies: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2012)

<sup>15</sup> Gandi, I.: *The Need for Youth to Be Patriotic to Become Self-Reliant*, News Analysis on Rima Radio Nasarawa, (2015).

<sup>16</sup> Al-Uthaymeen, Muhammad Salih: *Youths Problems* (Riyadh: International Islamic Publishing House, 2011), 45

<sup>17</sup> Mahroof Hossain, Md: *Psychoanalytic Theory used in English Literature: A Descriptive Study*, *Global*

by early childhood experiences. The implication of this assumption is that teacher, counsellor, nurse, social workers and others professionals base behavioural manifestations of the youths on in-built characteristics.<sup>18</sup>

Freud proposed that our mind has three distinct regions. He first postulated the psychology of psychoneurosis, dreams, jokes and what he called the psychopathology of everyday life, such as slips of the tongue and of the pens. His second postulation is a system of pre-conscious. By this Freud opined that man could become aware of certain thing once he tried to think of it. His third conjecture is a system of consciousness. His ideas were first presented in 'The interpretation of Dreams (1900). It has often been assumed that the evidential basis for these theories came from his study of dreams. It is the mind in which all our pleasant and unpleasant experiences are accumulated, synthesized and organized.<sup>19</sup>

Freud proposed three structures of the psyche or personality namely: Id, Ego and Super-Ego. According to him, Id refers to a selfish, primitive, childish pleasure personality. To him, it is an oriented part of the personality with no ability to delay gratification. Thus, any youth whose Id psyche prevails over him, will satisfy his selfish interest at all cost mindless of the consequence of his action. To Freud, Super Ego is basically on the ground of morality. He opined that youths' internalized societal and parental standards of 'good' and 'bad', 'right' and 'wrong' behaviour' are as a result of dominance of Super Ego. To Freud, Ego is perceived to be the moderator between the Id and Super-Ego which seeks compromises to pacify both. It can be simply viewed as man's sense of time and place.<sup>20</sup>

To Freud, behavioural manifestations of every individual human being depend majorly on three stimuli namely:

**1. The Unconscious:** Freud's claim is that characters and attitudes are not only inborn and unique far beyond what we are conscious of but also beyond what is preconscious in the sense of what we could become aware of once we tried to think of it. Thus, a major part of our mind is unconscious and this part is only accessible with psychoanalysis.

**2. Early childhood experiences:** Freud also stressed that most of the behaviours manifested by human beings are as a result of remembrance of early childhood experiences which are an amalgam of fantasy and reality that are characterized by passionate wishes, untamed impulses, and infantile anxieties. Thus remembrance of early wishes and fears result in conflicts which, where they cannot be resolved, are repressed and become unconscious.

**3. Psychosexual development:** Freud recognized that the progressive maturation of bodily functions centred on the erotogenic zones (mouth, anus, genitals) comes along with pleasures and fears experienced in the relationship with the care-taking objects, and these structure the development of the child's mind.

All the aforementioned discoveries of Sigmund Freud termed: psychoanalysis, revolves round the concept that youths characters and attitudes like other peoples' actions are determined by their prestored ideas of the recurrent events.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, the subject matter of Psychoanalysis theory is the assumption that the existence of unconscious internal states are the propeller of an individual's overt actions.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Michael Richards: The Problem with Using Psychoanalysis on Children. Published: December 18, 2018

<sup>19</sup> Das, Ritaman: Psychoanalytical Study of Folktale, Vol.19.10, (2014), 13-18

<sup>20</sup> Michael Richards, December 18, 2018

<sup>21</sup> Mahroof Hossain, Md. 41

<sup>22</sup> Monte, F., Print (8)

## SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY AND PERSONALITY OF YOUTHS

Social learning theory was propounded by Albert Bandura in 1977. Bandura postulated this theory based on his idea that people learn from interactions with others in a social context. He stressed that by observing the activities of others freely, people develop and manifest similar behaviours. Bandura further submitted that after observing the actions and attitudes of others, people assimilate and imitate the actions, especially if the observed experiences are desirable and positive ones or include rewards related to the observed action. According to Bandura, imitation involves the actual reproduction of observed motor activities.<sup>23</sup> The implication of this theory is that the contemporary Nigerian youths like any other human beings across the globe, do manifest learnt behaviours, actions and attitudes through their interactions with other people within their immediate environment.

The principles of social learning are that human actions and characters are supposed to operate in the same way throughout life as long as observational learning takes place at any age and stage of life. This assumption is borne out of the continuous occurrence of exposure of man to new influential and powerful models who control resources at life stage; new learning through the modeling process is always possible.<sup>24</sup>

Social Learning Theory posits that youths like other people learn from one another, via:

**Observation:** To Social Learning Theorists, Personality makeup is as a result of observation of actions, attitudes, characters, ways and manners of other people because human beings are social animals. **Imitation:** After the observation, imitation of the observed actions follows. Thus, every sane individual imitates the observed attitudes and manners of doing things while lastly graduates to **Modeling:** This is the last stage of personality makeup when the observed and imitated behaviour is modeled thus, manifested and perfected.<sup>25</sup>

Some findings have established that social media such as face book, whatsapp, instagram, twitter, snapchat, google, skipe, messenger, telegram are the most influential determinants of youths behaviours in the present time. Thus, many youths consciously manifest behaviours learnt from social media.<sup>26</sup>

## DISCUSSION: ISLAMIC POSITION ON PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

Islamic perspective of personality makeup of every individual is an all-round perception as it encompasses some hypotheses of both the psychoanalysis and social learning perspectives of personality and goes further to include and emphasize “**Self**” that is inherent in every human being. Thus personality makeup in Islamic Psychology is a collection of contributions of three major factors vis-à-vis Self (major), Heredity and Environment.

### Self

Certain behaviours are being predisposed by some factors resident in every individual. In Islamic psychology, much emphasis is laid on the spiritual aspects of personality development

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<sup>23</sup> Bandura, Albert. “Self-efficacy: The exercise of control”,...

<sup>24</sup> Newman, B. M., & Newman, P. R.: Theories of Human Development (Lawrence Erlbaum 2007).

<sup>25</sup> Razieh, Tadayon Nabavi and Muhammad, Sadegh Bijandi: Bandura's Social Learning Theory & Social Cognitive Learning Theory · January 2012 (6) <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267750204>

<sup>26</sup> Wali, Ngozi Blessing and Kanaba, Dafe Richard: Analysis of Social Learning Theory on Social Media Life Among Nigerian Youth. Journal of Education in Developing Areas (JEDA) Special Edition Vol. 31, (2) October, 2023 ISSN: 0189420X

because human characters and conducts are guided by soul always. There are several stages of soul (self). The hierarchical categories of the soul (self) are as follows:<sup>27</sup>

**a. *Nafs al-ammarah*:** “The commanding self.” This is the lowest category of soul because it always propels people to do evil. This is vividly mentioned in the Qur’an 12:53 where Allah says:

*“And I do not seek to free myself from blame, for indeed the soul is ever inclined to evil, except those shown mercy by my Lord. Surely my Lord is All-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”*

Majority of the contemporary youths that are being influenced by this soul are always found engaging in the worst characters such as self-admiration, arrogance and pride, hardness of the heart, oppression of creatures, lack of contentment, constant complaining or nagging, lying, gossip, back-biting, envy, jealousy, bitterness, lack of gratitude, blindness to its blessings, lust and all worst characteristics that can be mentioned.

**b. *Nafs al-lawwamah*:** “The blaming self” This is the second category of self. This kind of soul is believed to be in its original state of birth into the world.<sup>28</sup> This soul is being referred to in the Qur’an 91: 7-10 thus:

*By the soul, and the proportion and order given to it;  
And its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right;  
Truly he succeeds that purifies it,  
And he fails that corrupts it”*

Majority of the contemporary Nigerian youths are of this category of soul. When they commit any sin, they blame themselves and repent. They then repeat the same scenario. It is clearly observed that those with this soul are constantly fluctuate between manifestation righteous deeds and evil deeds and between being obedient and disobedient. Maududi, in his explanation of the verse submitted that: *Tazkiyah* means to purify, develop and cultivate good habits. Thus to purify oneself of immorality (*fujur*) and develops it to the level of piety (*taqwa*) and cultivates in it the goodness that guarantees attainment of eternal success. Maududi further stressed that the word *dassaha* has been used infinitively as *tadsiyah*, which means to suppress, conceal, seduce and lead astray.<sup>29</sup> Youths who suppress the inclination of self towards good deeds instead of developing and cultivating it, who contrarily seduce it into doing evil, and make immorality of different kinds dominate over *taqwa* so as to cover it up completely like the dead body which is buried and covered with earth, the souls of such persons will be failure.<sup>30</sup> The youths like other people who possess this type of self will persistently be seeking for forgiveness as a way of purification regardless of its innocence or guilt. Though, they are still vulnerable to fall back to the previous lower stages (blame and Commanding).<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Ahamad Faosiy Ogunbado et al.; The Significance of Islamic Spiritual Ethics in Human Personality Development. *International Review of Management and Marketing*, 2016, 6(S8) 119-124, ISSN: 2146-4405, 121. available at <http://www.econjournals.com>

<sup>28</sup> Ahamad Faosiy Ogunbado, 121

<sup>29</sup> Maududi, S.A.: The Meaning of the Qur’an (Lahore: Islamic publication, 2007)

<sup>30</sup> Maududi, S.A.,...

<sup>31</sup> Ahamad Faosiy Ogunbado, 121

c. *Nafs al-mutta'inah*: "The secure self" This is the Godly self that has entered pathways towards intimacy, contentment, love of the Creator and the manifestation of moral character, attitudes and manners.<sup>32</sup> The Qur'an 89: 27-30 says about this stage of self thus:

*"To the righteous soul will be said: "O (thou) soul, in (complete) rest and satisfaction!"  
"Come back thou to thy lord, well pleased (thyself), and well-pleasing unto Him!"  
"Enter thou, then, among My devotees!"  
"Yea, enter thou My Heaven!"*

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) also emphasized the significance of soul as a principal propeller of human attitudes and characters. Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet said (صلى الله عليه وسلم):

*"Indeed, Allah does not look at your appearance and physical appearance, but He looks at your heart and deeds."<sup>33</sup> (Muslim)  
Also in another hadith, N'umān bn Bashīr said: the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:  
"Indeed, there is a definite organ in the body, (which) if it is virtuous, the whole body tends to be virtuous, and if it is poor, the whole tends to be poor. Indeed, that is the heart."<sup>34</sup>*

The two traditions above establish the fact that hearts of human beings play major role in navigating them towards manifestation of either moral or immoral characters. This is the basis for Al-Ghazali's belief that a person's happiness is gained through tazkiyah al-nafs and its perfection. Thus, purifying the soul through practice (riyadah) and the battle against desires (mujahadah al-hawa) helps a lot in the context of behaviour shaping, because the cure to eliminate illness, subsequently gaining health and goodness relating to the spirit and bettering the personality is by treating the soul. To Al-Ghazali, the health of the soul is very important and needs to be taken care of because a pure and clean soul will produce decent behaviour. The contemporary Nigerian youths are what they are attitudinally due to the state of their hearts.<sup>35</sup>

Tajulashikin Jumahat, citing Ibn Taymiyyah, stressed that al-aql (mind) is the innate endowment given by God to human-beings so as for them to unconditionally and independently understand and apprehend the truth of the revelation and the purpose of their existence in this world.<sup>36</sup> This is recurrently mentioned in the Qur'an such as 22:46 where Allah says:

*"Have they not travelled throughout the land so their hearts may reason, and their ears may listen? Indeed, it is not the eyes that are blind, but it is the hearts in the chests that grow blind"*

The significance of heart as a major workstation of human behaviours is also emphasized in the Qur'an 67:10.

<sup>32</sup> Ahamad Faosiy Ogunbado, 121

<sup>33</sup> Muslim bn al-Hajjāj: *Sahih Muslim*, (Cairo: Dārus-Salām, 2007)

<sup>34</sup> Muslim bn al-Hajjāj,

<sup>35</sup> Al-Ghazali, Muhammad A: *Mizan al-'amal* (Bayrut: Dar al-Kitab al- 'Arabi, 1983)

<sup>36</sup> Tajulashikin Jumahat: *Exposition To Islamic Psychology: A Psycho-Spiritual Approach.s The Mind of World Philosophy Day 2019*

*“And they will lament, “If only we had listened and reasoned, we would not be among the residents of the Blaze!”*

This shows that the contemporary Nigerian youths like other human beings, are divinely given by Allah, the required faculty to comprehend his purpose of existence and He has never forsaken humans without guidance.

## **Heredity**

### **a. Inherited Traits**

In Islamic psychology, there are evident proofs that some behaviours, attitudes and manners are biologically easily transferred from the parents to the children as claimed by the psychoanalysis theorists. Thus, certain genes may increase the risk of developing either negative or positive psycho-social attitudes and religious inclination of the contemporary youths and the life situation of the inheritors may trigger it. These are being referred to as traits.<sup>37</sup> Some youths unconsciously inherit some traits like laughter, snoring, voice, introversion, extroversion and other desirable or undesirable characters, attitudes and manners from their parents. Also, exposure of pregnant women to environmental stressors, inflammatory conditions, toxins, alcohol or drugs can sometimes predispose youths to negative psycho-social attitudes. The situation of the people of Prophet Nuh is an obvious proof as it is succinctly elucidated in the Qur’ān 71:26-27

*Noah had prayed, “My Lord! Do not leave a single disbeliever on earth  
For if You spare any of them, they will certainly mislead Your servants, and give birth only to wicked sinners, staunch disbelievers*

Prophet Nuh was so insightful for him to have prophesied the likelihood of the unborn offspring of the unbelievers among his people. This is a clear indication that certain behaviours and manners could be unconsciously and biologically inherited.

### **b. Brain Chemistry.**

Islamic psychology is also in accord with the psychoanalysis perspective of personality makeup that brain chemistry plays an important role in personality development as it can cause both positive and negative psycho-social behaviours. Neuron-transmitters are naturally occurring brain chemicals that carry signals to other parts of the brain and body. When the neural networks involving these chemicals are impaired, the function of nerve receptors and nerve systems change, leading to depression and other emotional disorders.<sup>38</sup> The forebrain is responsible for voluntary actions like drinking, eating, telling truth or lies and starting or stopping movements. Allah categorically affirms this in the Qur’ān 91:15-16

*“But no! If he does not desist, We will certainly drag him by the forelock”*

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<sup>37</sup> William, J Mayo: Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research (MFMER). (Rochester: Neighbourhood, 2023) <https://history.mayoclinic.org>

<sup>38</sup> William, J Mayo: Mayo,..

*“A lying, sinful forelock”.*

The psychological implication of these verses is that man is consciously aware of his attitudes and actions ever before he manifested them as he sanely processes every action in his brain through nervous system before manifesting it.

## **Environment**

Environment as an agent of socialization plays a significant role in the development of individual personality. The subject matter of the social leaning theorists is that behaviours are consciously learnt through interaction with both the immediate and remote environments. Personality development of a person can develop simplest in social surroundings, through interplay with other unfastened selves.<sup>39</sup> However, Nigerian youths' upright personality development is realizable only if the nation as a whole is primarily based on justice and strives for positive human character development and acquisition of higher values.

Islam, as an all-encompassing religion also affirms the importance of environment as one of the major factors influencing personality development. Both the immediate and remote environments include:

### **a. Home**

Home, as an immediate environment plays a major role in developing the personality of the youths. The influence of parents (home) in molding youths' characters is far reaching. This is the major reason Allah orders and enjoins the parents to educate their children towards the ideal way of Islam that will guarantee their success in this life and hereafter as contained in the Qur'ān 66:6

*“O ye who believe! Save yourselves and your families from a Fire whose fuel is men and stones, over which are (appointed) angels stern (and) severe, who flinch not (from executing) the commands They receive from Allah, but do (precisely) what They are commanded”*

A child's character is the direct product, almost a direct reproduction of the way his parents treat him. The child is first made at home before he enters school. This is corroborated by the tradition of the Prophet reported by Ibn 'Umar thus:

*“All of you are shepherds and each of you is responsible for his flock. A man is the shepherd of the people of his house and he is responsible. A woman is the shepherd of the house of her husband and she is responsible. Each of you is a shepherd and each is responsible for his flock”<sup>40</sup>*

In another ḥadīth, Abu Hurairah said that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

*“Every child is born in a state of fitrah (natural disposition), then his parents make him a Jew, a Christian, or a Zoroastrian,*

<sup>39</sup> Sajid, Tanveer Zia et al.: The Human Personality Development: An Analysis in the light of Quranic Teachings. *Rahat-ul-Quloob* / Vol.4, Issue.1 (Jan-Jun: 2020),68

<sup>40</sup> Abu Dawood, S. *Sunnah Abu Dawood*. Beirut: al-Maktabah l-Asryah, Sayda, 1997), Book19, Hadith 2922.

*just as an animal gives birth to a whole animal. Do you see any among them mutilated?"<sup>41</sup>*

The two traditions support the social learning viewpoint on personality development of every individual through the observation of the parents, imitation them and finally modelling the learnt and acquired behaviours.

### **b. School**

School, as a remote environment also contributes a lot to personality makeup of the youths. The personality of the teachers influence the students -at times- more than that of the parents. This is in line with the opinion of Muhammad bn Sirin (tab'i) who once said:

*"This knowledge is a religion so look from whom you take your religion"<sup>42</sup>*

### **c. Peer group**

Peer group pressure is another environmental factor that could either positively or negatively determines individual's personality makeup. As the youths try to conform to the peer dictates, values and norms, they forcefully manifest behaviours that are endorsed by the associates not considering the morality or immorality of the acts. This is as a result of their love for sense of belongingness and fear of being isolated if they behave contrary to the norms, standards and dictates of the group. Allah describes the type of friends and associates the believers should keep as mentioned in the Qur'an 9:119

*"O ye who believe! Fear Allah and be with those who are true (in word and deed).*

Associating with cult group and bad friends that is so rampant among the contemporary Nigerian youths, only makes the youths irresponsible, irrespective, morally, socially and religiously ill. Consequentially, this has leads to destruction of both the youths and the society. The consequence of this is punishment on the Day of Judgment. Allah says in the Qur'an 25:27-29

*"The Day that the wrong-doer will bite at His hands, He will say, "Oh! would that I had taken a (straight) path with the Messenger. "Ah! Woe is me! Would that I had never taken such a one for a friend! "He did lead me astray from the Message (of Allah. After it had come to me! Ah! The evil one is but a traitor to man!"*

Abu, Musa al-Ashari said that the Prophet(صلى الله عليه وسلم) said:

*"Verily, the likeness of good and bad companions is like the bearer of Musk and blower of bellow (blacksmith). The bearer of musk will either give you some free of charge, or you will buy from him or you will smell its pleasant fragrance, and the blower*

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<sup>41</sup> Al-Bukhari, Muhammad Bin Ismail: *Ṣaḥīḥu'l Bukhari* (Riyadh: Maktab Dar-us-Salam, 1994)

<sup>42</sup> Muslim bn al-Hajjāj, ...

*of bellow will either burn your clothes or you will find a bad smell”<sup>43</sup>*

#### **d. Environment**

An ideal and Godly environment produces pious, committed, dedicated, religious and well behaved youths. This is so because it is only a fertile land that can produce good crops. Allah affirms this in the Qur’ān 7:58

*“From the land that is clean and good, by the will of its Cherisher, springs up produce, (rich) after its kind: but from the land that is bad, springs up nothing but that which is niggardly: Thus do we explain the Signs by various (symbols) to those who are grateful”.*

Environment affects youths’ behavioural manifestations in a very significant way. Characters of Nigerian youths are being significantly influenced by the environment. The effects of this are immoral acts such as fornication, drug abuse, cultism, delinquency, theft, examination malpractices, aggression and many other social vices that are so common among the contemporary Nigerian youths today.

### **CONCLUSION**

The paper has discussed various ways that a youth can enhance his or her personality based on the psychoanalytic, social learning and Islamic perspectives. In other words, it explains the significance and importance of Islamic spiritual ethics in human personality development. This development is holistic as it must include intellectual, spiritual, physical and moral aspects. Dealing with worldly affairs is indistinguishable from religious affairs as the goal of both should be attainment of happiness in this world and the Hereafter. The uniqueness and beauty of Islamic all-encompassing personality perspective are also expressed in the analysis of this study.

In light of the fore-going findings, analysis and discussion on the personality make up of the contemporary youths the following recommendations are hereby made;

- i. parents and guardians should be good model in moral and character for their children to emulate.
- ii. parents should try as much as possible to know their children friends, home and places of work and if possible phone numbers of their children friends.
- iii. teachers should be of exemplary characters for the youths to emulate
- iv. religious organizations should improve on its moral training programmes and welfares of the contemporary youths.
- v. government and other stake holders in the society need to start rewarding good character publicly to serve as reinforcement and motivation for others to join in having good character.
- vi. media houses should help in positive moral training through their programmes.
- vii. the youths should always be in Godly environments for them to be able to observe, emulate and model desirable behaviours.

Further studies should be carried out on areas like:

- i. Islamic Remedial Approaches for the management of personality disorder of juvenile

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<sup>43</sup> Al-Bukhari, Muhammad Bin Ismail, ..

- ii. Islamic Correctional Measures for the management of the Inmates Across the Nigerian Correctional Homes.

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