



IMMANUEL KANT ON GOODWILL AND THE MORAL CRISIS IN NIGERIA: A CRITIQUE

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Abstract

This study critically examines Immanuel Kant's notion of goodwill and its relevance to the pervasive moral crisis in Nigeria. Kant defines goodwill as the only moral quality that is intrinsically good without qualification, regardless of its consequences. Amid widespread corruption and governance failures in Nigeria, this study explores the applicability of Kant's ethical principle of duty-bound action motivated by goodwill. The objective is to assess how Kant's idea of duty driven by moral law can guide ethical reform in Nigeria. Using a qualitative analytical method, the study examines how Kantian goodwill can inform moral reform in Nigeria's ethical, political, and legal structures. It evaluates institutional shortcomings in the judiciary, law enforcement, and public service, arguing that the erosion of moral duty contributes to Nigeria's ethical crisis. The study shows that promoting moral actions based on reason and duty can foster ethical leadership and accountability. Findings suggest Kantian goodwill is a viable moral compass capable of redirecting Nigeria from ethical decline toward a just and responsible society by encouraging honest leadership and stronger institutions. It argues that actions guided by reason and duty, not personal interest, are essential for rebuilding integrity in leadership and public service. The study concludes that Kantian moral philosophy be integrated into civic education, leadership development, and public sector training to promote ethical responsibility. It recommends Kant's concept of goodwill as a foundation for moral and institutional transformation.

Keywords: Immanuel Kant, Goodwill, Categorical Imperative, Moral crisis, Corruption, Ethical Reform, Nigeria.

Introduction

Nigeria today faces an escalating moral crisis that threatens the very fabric of its national identity and development. This crisis is evident in widespread corruption, dishonesty, self-centeredness, and a blatant disregard for moral responsibility across political, social, and educational institutions. Despite various reforms and campaigns, the erosion of ethical values continues to weaken national cohesion and trust in public institutions. In response to this moral decay, it becomes imperative to explore philosophical frameworks that offer foundational principles for ethical renewal. One such framework is found in the moral philosophy of

Immanuel Kant, particularly his concept of goodwill. Kant's ethical thought centres on the idea that morality must be grounded in rational principles that apply universally to all rational beings. His notion of the Categorical Imperative, a principle that requires individuals to act only according to maxims they can will to become universal laws, offers a rigorous standard for moral conduct. At the core of this system is the concept of goodwill, which Kant identifies as the only thing good without qualification. Kant asserts that, "it is impossible to think of anything in the world, or indeed even outside it, that can be taken to be good without qualification, except a goodwill" (Kant, 2019, p. 393). For Kant, goodwill is not defined by the outcomes it produces but by the moral intention behind actions acting from duty, not personal interest.

This study critically appraises the relevance of Kant's conception of goodwill in addressing Nigeria's ethical challenges by emphasizing duty-driving actions that promote integrity, accountability, and moral responsibility in leadership and public service. By applying his framework of duty, moral autonomy, and universal moral law, the study seeks to underscore the importance of principled leadership, integrity, and rational moral choices in rebuilding Nigeria's moral compass. As Inoka (2006) notes, "Nigeria is sick and hence its susceptibility to collapse, because it is bereft of unshakable principles held from conviction" (p. 2). Through Kant's lens, this work explores how a return to moral duty and goodwill can serve as a catalyst for ethical transformation and national renewal in Nigeria.

Background to Kant's Thought

Immanuel Kant, one of the 18th century's most influential German philosophers who lived between 22nd April, 1724 to 12th February, 1804, is notable in moral literature for his deontological orientation to morality (Ekpoudom & Ekpoudom, 2020, p. 149). A central figure in modern Western philosophy, Kant was born in Konigsberg, East Prussia. His contributions to ethics, epistemology, and metaphysics were shaped by the Enlightenment, a period defined by the emphasis on reason, autonomy, and moral self-governance. According to Allison (1990), Kant's ethical theory emerged from this intellectual context, particularly as a response to the dominant empiricist and rationalist traditions of his time (pp. 3–5). Kant was educated at the University of Konigsberg, where he engaged with the rationalist thought of Leibniz and Wolff. However, it was David Hume's skeptical philosophy that deeply challenged Kant's assumptions about causality and moral knowledge. According to Lawhead (2002), "Although Kant was immersed in this system of philosophy, when he was in the middle of his career, he read David Hume's empiricist argument. This revelatory experience, in Kant's words, awakened him from his dogmatic slumber (p. 326)," leading him to reevaluate the foundations of reason and morality. This critical awakening became the foundation for his later works on practical reason and ethics. In *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785), Kant sets out to establish a supreme principle of morality. According to Kant (2019), "the only thing that is good without qualification is the good will, not talents or virtues, but the inner moral disposition to act from duty (p. 393). Kant, believes that actions have moral worth only when they are motivated by duty rather than by inclination or pursuit of personal gain. This reflects his belief that the moral law must arise from pure reason. Kant's ethical philosophy, therefore, reflects the Enlightenment ideal of rational self-legislation. It offers not merely a theory of right action but a moral vision rooted in human reason, freedom, and responsibility. In this light, his work provides a useful framework for assessing contemporary moral crises, such as those present in Nigeria's political and institutional life, where ethical failures often stem from a lack of principled leadership and commitment to duty.

Kant on the Categorical Imperative (The Concept of Goodwill)

Kant argues that reason defines morality, making his moral philosophy non-empirical. He asserts that the morality of an action depends not on its consequences but on the motivation behind it. This perspective aligns with deontologism, which judges moral actions based on duty rather than outcomes. In *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant states that “it is impossible to think of anything in the world, or indeed even outside it, that can be taken to be good without qualification, except a good will” (Kant, 2019, p. 393). He sets out to prove that goodwill is the only thing unconditionally good. Qualities like intelligence, courage, and wealth may be desirable, but they can become harmful if the will behind them is not good. Even virtues such as self-control and moderation can serve immoral ends if not guided by goodwill. For Kant, goodwill is good not because of what it achieves but because it is an end in itself. He emphasizes that “the good will is not good because of what it brings about or accomplishes, rather, it is good through its willing, and therefore good in itself” (Kant, 2019, p. 394). Even if a goodwill fails to accomplish its goal due to external circumstances, it retains its moral worth. Kant (2019) gives the following characterization of the good will as something that is good irrespective of effects thus:

A goodwill is good not because of what it affects or accomplishes, because of its fitness for attaining some proposed end: it is good through its willing alone, that is, good in itself. It is good without qualification. It is impossible to conceive anything at all in the world, or even out of it, which can be taken as good without qualification, except a good will (p. 393).

This idea is illustrated through historical examples, such as Mahatma Gandhi’s non-violent resistance. Despite facing violence, Gandhi maintained his commitment to non-violence, acting from moral duty rather than personal gain. Kant would view this as an example of goodwill “shining like a jewel” (Kant, 2019, p. 394). Unlike happiness, pleasure, or even virtues, which can sometimes enable immoral actions, goodwill remains the only thing that is always unconditionally good. Kant insists that goodwill is sought not as a means to an end but as an end in itself. While other qualities may contribute to a good life, they require the guidance of goodwill to be truly moral. Although goodwill is central to Kant’s ethics, he does not provide a precise definition of it. Nevertheless, his claim that goodwill is the only thing good without qualification is foundational to his moral philosophy, shaping his ethical framework around duty and moral law rather than consequences.

The Categorical Imperative and Moral Rectitude

Kant (2019) posits that there is only one categorical imperative: “Act only on a maxim that you can also will to become a universal law” (p. 422). This imperative evaluates moral worth not by consequences but by the intention behind actions, guided solely by duty and reason (Kant, 2019, p. 414). Unlike hypothetical imperatives which are conditional and depend on achieving specific outcomes, the categorical imperative applies unconditionally to all rational beings, irrespective of desires or ends. It prescribes what ought to be done simply because it is morally right, independent of personal interests or cultural context (Ebels-Duggan, 2011, p. 182). Kant’s notion of goodwill is intrinsically tied to this moral law. Goodwill, for Kant, is the only thing that is good without qualification. It acts in accordance with the moral law out of a sense of duty, not for reward or recognition. In the context of Nigeria’s moral crisis, marked by corruption, impunity, and institutional decay, the categorical imperative becomes especially relevant. The failure of public office holders to act from goodwill choosing instead self-serving maxims underscores the moral deficit at the heart of the Nigerian crisis. A Kantian appraisal demands a return to duty-

bound leadership and citizenry where actions are morally justified by their ability to be universalized.

The first formulation of the categorical imperative, known as the formula of universal law, asks whether a maxim can be willed as a universal law. Here, Kant believes that if everyone before carrying out any action wills that his intended action should be regarded as a universal law for everyone to follow, no one would say that theft, lying, or breaking promises could be morally justified. If the universalization of an action leads to contradiction or undermines societal cohesion, then it is morally impermissible. This principle can be applied to many of Nigeria's pressing ethical issues. For example, the widespread practice of bribery and nepotism in public institutions violates the principle of universalizability. If everyone acted on the maxim "I may give or receive bribes to achieve my goals," trust in public systems would collapse. This mirrors Kant's example of false promising, where universalizing the act of lying renders the concept of promise meaningless (Kant, 2019, p. 423). Kant also provides the example of a person considering suicide due to despair. While this action might seem justified by personal suffering, Kant argues that the maxim contradicts the principle of self-love, which is meant to preserve life, not destroy it (Kant, 2019, p. 422). Similarly, in Nigeria, where suicides linked to economic hardship and hopelessness are on the rise, Kantian ethics would urge individuals and society to act from goodwill that seeks to preserve and uplift human dignity rather than succumb to despair. Another of Kant's examples addresses the neglect of one's talents. In Nigeria, where brain drain and underutilization of human potential persist due to systemic failures and poor leadership, Kant's imperative suggests that every rational being has a duty to develop their capacities not only for personal fulfillment but also for societal progress (Kant, 2019, p. 425). Neglecting talents undermines societal development and reflects a failure to act from goodwill.

Kant further illustrates his principle through the example of a wealthy individual who refuses to help those in need. While survival may not depend on mutual aid, Kant insists that no rational being would will a world in which they are denied help in times of distress (Kant, 2019, p. 424). In Nigeria, where poverty coexists with extreme wealth and public resources are often hoarded or misused, the absence of goodwill in interpersonal and institutional relations perpetuates inequality and suffering. A moral society, guided by Kant's categorical imperative, would promote empathy, solidarity, and justice. The relevance of the categorical imperative to Nigeria's moral situation lies in its call for actions rooted in universal moral law, rather than individual or group preferences. Chukwujekwu (2017) emphasizes that "in Kant's ethics, moral worth is determined by intention rather than consequences" (p. 31). This ethical lens exposes the superficiality of reforms that prioritize appearances or political expediency over genuine moral transformation. As Lacewing (2017) notes, morality and rationality share a universal nature, reason dictates the same duties to all rational beings (p. 182). Thus, the application of Kant's categorical imperative offers a robust evaluative tool for Nigeria's moral and institutional behaviour. It provides a concrete moral framework to assess and correct the ethical lapses in Nigeria's public and private spheres. By demanding that individuals act only on principles that can be universally adopted, Kant's theory challenges the status quo of moral relativism and selective justice. The principle of goodwill, grounded in duty and rationality, becomes a moral compass capable of guiding Nigeria out of ethical decay toward a society anchored in integrity, accountability, and respect for human dignity.

Nigeria's Societal Crisis and Moral Decay

Nigeria continues to struggle with entrenched moral failures that cut across governance, education, religion, and everyday social life. These crises, while often discussed as political or

structural issues, are at their core ethical and philosophical in nature, rooted in a deviation from values such as justice, honesty, dignity, and responsibility. The nation's contemporary challenges reveal a breakdown in both public virtue and private conscience. One of the most pervasive manifestations of this moral decay is corruption, which remains a major impediment to national development. Corruption in Nigeria is not merely episodic but systemic, embedded in institutions, and reinforced by political culture (Oji, 2024, pp. 71–83). This aligns with Akinpelu's assertion that corruption has become normalized in Nigerian public life, where leaders often exploit power for personal enrichment (Akinpelu, 2005, p. 117). The regularity with which funds are embezzled, elections rigged, and contracts inflated reflects a society where ethical boundaries are routinely ignored. The educational system, which ideally serves as the moral and intellectual foundation of society, has also witnessed a significant erosion of ethical standards.

Akinsanya et al. (2023) argue that Nigerian youths are increasingly desensitized to ethical concerns due to the systemic failures in education, including exam malpractice, sexual harassment, and cultism (pp. 190–194). Similarly, Omoregbe (1993) laments the collapse of moral authority in Nigerian schools, noting that integrity is often sacrificed in pursuit of certificates and social validation (pp. 142–143). This has created a generation inclined more toward results than values, a dangerous orientation for any nation's future. In the religious sector, the paradox of Nigeria's high religiosity coexisting with widespread moral collapse is particularly striking. According to Atoi, Sadiku, and Kume (2020), "religious institutions, instead of being moral anchors, are now increasingly driven by materialism and influence, promoting prosperity over piety" (pp. 115–122). Ehusani (2003) echoes this concern, noting that the moral authority of religious leaders has been weakened by their complicity in political corruption and their prioritization of wealth over truth (pp. 89–91). The result is a populace that is religious but not necessarily moral, where spirituality is no longer synonymous with ethical transformation. The public service and political leadership landscape in Nigeria also illustrates a deep moral void. Sunday, Elejo, and Idu (2021) observe that codes of conduct in the civil service are frequently ignored, with bribery and dereliction of duty being commonplace (pp. 112–118). Onigbinde (2007) adds that public office is often perceived as a reward rather than a responsibility, and governance as a platform for accumulation rather than service (p. 67). This absence of moral responsibility in leadership undermines both state legitimacy and citizen confidence. Beyond institutions, there is an alarming decline in respect for human life and dignity. Ritual killings, kidnapping, and extrajudicial violence have become disturbingly frequent. Ogundowole (2004) argues that the prioritization of tribal, religious, or economic interests over shared humanity results in social fragmentation and devaluation of life (p. 101). These societal issues to deepening poverty, inequality, and moral confusion, noting that the survivalist mentality fosters utilitarian ethics where the end justifies the means (Ziprebo & Obi (2024, pp. 45–58). Nigeria's moral crisis is shaped by a pragmatic, self-serving view of ethics where actions are judged not by their moral worth but by their benefit to the actor (Oke & Esikot 2012, pp. 98–99). This utilitarian mindset is incompatible with the Kantian ethical vision, where the value of an action lies in its motive, not merely in its outcome. Taken together, these examples illustrate a society in urgent need of moral reawakening. The challenges Nigeria faces, namely, corruption, weak leadership, moral relativism, and social injustice, require more than political reforms; they demand a revival of moral conscience. This sets the stage for a deeper philosophical engagement with Immanuel Kant's idea of goodwill and moral duty, as a possible remedy for the ethical drift that defines contemporary Nigerian society.

Youth mentorship and religious reorientation, emphasizing Kantian goodwill, are crucial for moral rectitude in Nigeria. The nation's corruption stifles progress, and fundamental

character-building principles have been abandoned from childhood to adulthood, creating a critical mass detrimental to society (Uno et al. 2018, p. 1). According to Cantrell et al., "mentoring refers to a dyadic relationship in which a mentor, a person senior in age or experience, provides guidance and support to a less experienced or younger person, the protégé" (DuBois & Karcher, 2005 cited in Cantrell et al). Psychosocially, a mentor can promote acceptance, role modeling, confirmation, friendship, and counseling (Smith-Jentsch, Scielzo, Yarborough, & Rosopa, 2008). Mentors act as a resource for socialization and academic management. For vulnerable youths and a country like Nigeria with high youth restiveness, unemployment, and crime, a caring mentor serves as a coping resource. Lindsay et al. states that "mentorship relationships entail the provision of ongoing guidance, instruction, and encouragement to promote competence. Mentoring reflects a unique relationship between individuals and is considered a learning partnership" (Lindsay, 2015, p. 2).

Nigeria's youth face threats as critical institutions, family, places of worship, and schools have neglected their core roles, necessitating mentorship. Challenges persist: what values should be instilled in the youth? How can a sense of duty and patriotism be cultivated? How can religious institutions address the problem of degeneracy and misplacement of values? These questions align with Kant's notion of goodwill. The need for values reorientation through family, culture, schools, leadership, and religious institutions is significant. Furthermore, attitudinal change via mentorship and religious institutions is essential for national development and is a key strategy for addressing moral degeneration. Uno (2018) asserts that:

The critical mass of Nigerian society is the youth in the primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions across the nation. They are neglected and abandoned to their fate, but any society that neglects this group makes a dangerous decision with grave consequences for the present and future. The society requires this group for generational succession as the older generation retires. Therefore, older generations must bequeath values that build rather than destroy what has been painstakingly established over the years. Achebe (1984) contends that the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely leadership, that there is nothing wrong with the Nigerian character but the unwillingness of the leaders to rise to their responsibility and to the challenge of personal examples which are the hallmarks of true leadership (p. 2).

Leadership extends beyond politics or state institutions to mentorship, which is integral to leadership itself. Value reorientation and diligence to duty should be pursued not for nepotistic, tribal, or other consequentialist motives but for national development. DuBois (2021) highlights that mentorship programs prevent negative outcomes and promote strong moral fiber and resilience among youths. "Although diverse in their design and implementation, mentoring programs share a common aim of providing young people with structured support from older or more experienced people, such as adult volunteers or students at higher grade levels" (DuBois, 2021, p. 1). A mentor-mentee relationship rooted in Kantian goodwill fosters empathy, authenticity, and respect through consistent engagement. Studies indicate that such mentorship "supports a wide variety of behavioral, socioemotional, and academic gains. And those close, enduring bonds with a young person can ripple far beyond individual outcomes" (Perry, 2019, p. 1). Mentorship guided by ethical principles is essential for the development of both individuals and the Nigerian nation.

Goodwill, family, and cultural reorientation are crucial in addressing moral decadence in Nigerian society through Kantian goodwill. The family, as the nucleus of society, plays a

fundamental role in shaping moral values. Many sociologists and anthropologists argue that societal issues such as juvenile delinquency, teenage pregnancy, substance abuse, corruption, and religious bigotry stem from the socialization process within the family and society. Solutions to these moral problems must consider foundational institutions like the family and culture, particularly its immaterial aspects (Igwe 2021, p. 1). Culture, as shared values, norms, and ways of life learned from parents, family, peers, and schools, requires scrutiny. Cultural reorientation involves shifting away from dysfunctional practices and aligning with ethical values beneficial to the common good. It entails determining the current moral situation and guiding society in the right direction in line with duty rather than selfish interests. This involves reconsidering relationships and redirecting from ineffective cultural practices to more beneficial ones. The Kantian ethical framework, which emphasizes duty for duty's sake, is essential in achieving this. The failure of Nigerian citizens to carry out their duties has resulted in a dysfunctional society, making Kantian goodwill, family, and cultural reorientation necessary for addressing moral issues (Igwe, 2021, p. 2).

Application of Kant's Concept of Goodwill to Institutional Ethics and Reforms in Nigeria

Immanuel Kant's concept of goodwill is a cornerstone of his moral philosophy, encapsulating the idea that actions possess moral worth only when they are motivated by duty rather than by inclination or self-interest. In his *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant insists that "nothing can possibly be conceived in the world, or even out of it, which can be called good, without qualification, except Goodwill" (p. 393). Goodwill, for Kant, therefore, is the internal disposition to act according to moral law, irrespective of the consequences or personal gain. This conception, when applied to Nigeria's moral and institutional crises, presents a compelling framework for evaluating governance, law enforcement, and institutional ethics in a country deeply affected by corruption, inefficiency, and moral decadence. Nigeria's legal system, a mosaic of English common law, Islamic law, and customary traditions, is plagued by systemic corruption and weak enforcement mechanisms (Akinwale, 2017, p. 45). These challenges are not merely structural but moral in nature, revealing a lack of ethical commitment and public-spiritedness. According to Wood (2008), "the essence of goodwill is acting from duty without regard to self-interest" (p. 12). The widespread corruption in Nigeria's judiciary and law enforcement reveals a crisis of goodwill. Judges who accept bribes or allow political interests to sway their rulings betray the Kantian idea of moral duty. The manipulation of justice for personal or political gain is antithetical to Kant's deontological ethics, which insists that moral actions must stem from a sense of duty and universalizable maxims.

In this light, Nigeria's political and legal institutions reflect a deep moral crisis, a detachment from duty-bound action and a pervasive culture of utilitarian reasoning, where ends often justify means. The judiciary, the legislature, and law enforcement agencies often act not out of goodwill or duty to the constitution and citizens, but to serve the interests of a powerful few. As Ibeanu (2016) notes, judicial corruption has led to delayed justice and public distrust (p. 125). In Kantian terms, this undermines the very principle of justice as a categorical imperative, justice that applies universally and without exception. One of the most glaring signs of moral collapse in governance is the selective enforcement of laws by institutions such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). Although established to combat corruption, the EFCC has been criticized for targeting political opponents while ignoring infractions by allies of those in power (Akinyemi, 2019, p. 89). Kantian ethics denounces such partiality, as it violates the imperative to treat individuals as ends in themselves and not merely as means to an end. True

goodwill would require institutions to apply justice impartially, without consideration of political affiliation.

The Nigerian Police Force (NPF), critical to law and order, suffers from low morale, poor training, and endemic corruption. Officers often prioritize personal enrichment over public service, demanding bribes and engaging in extrajudicial practices (Akinlolu, 2017, p. 63). Kant's ethical framework demands respect for human dignity and autonomy, values grossly violated when officers abuse power. Agboola (2019) advocates incorporating Kantian ethics into police training to instill accountability and reinforce duty-based conduct (p. 126). This moral education could recalibrate the values of officers, steering them toward service rather than exploitation. Institutional ethics also suffer from political interference and lack of autonomy, as seen in agencies like the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) and the Standards Organization of Nigeria (SON). These agencies are vital for public health and safety, yet bureaucratic inefficiencies and corrupt practices hinder their effectiveness (Onuoha, 2018, p. 45; Oyebanji, 2016, p. 33). For Kant, institutions must be guided by principles of rational autonomy and duty to the public. Political appointments based on loyalty rather than competence undermine this ethic and reinforce the moral crisis.

Furthermore, Nigeria's oil and gas sector, especially the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), embodies the moral decay of public institutions. Financial mismanagement and the prioritization of personal gain over national interest have persisted for decades. Nwachukwu (2018) criticizes the lack of independent audits and transparency (p. 63), a violation of Kant's insistence on truthfulness and accountability as universal duties. The failure of the NNPC to act with goodwill has led to environmental degradation and socio-economic hardship, particularly in the Niger Delta, reflecting the consequences of abandoning ethical responsibility. The way forward lies in a moral reorientation rooted in Kant's concept of goodwill. Governance must be restructured around the principle that laws and policies should reflect moral duty, not expedience or patronage. Akinyemi (2017) suggests that prioritizing duty over personal gain would significantly improve governance outcomes (p. 48). Similarly, Oke (2020) emphasizes that ethical governance restores public confidence and promotes law-abiding behavior (p. 103). For reforms to succeed, they must cultivate a culture where leaders and citizens act from a sense of moral obligation to the common good. Kant's notion of goodwill offers a profound ethical lens through which Nigeria's institutional and moral crises can be critically assessed. The failures in governance, law enforcement, and public administration are not merely technical, they stem from a deep erosion of moral consciousness. Restoring goodwill at all levels of public life, as Kant envisions, is essential for rebuilding institutions, restoring trust, and achieving genuine reform. Only when duty and moral law replace corruption and personal interest can Nigeria begin to emerge from its current moral quagmire.

Summary and Conclusion

This study examined Immanuel Kant's concept of goodwill in relation to Nigeria's ongoing moral crisis. It focused on Kant's belief that the moral worth of an action lies not in its consequences, but in the intention behind it. According to Kant, goodwill is the only thing that is good without qualification, regardless of circumstances. This idea underpins his categorical imperative, which requires individuals to act only on principles that can be consistently universalized. By applying Kant's framework to Nigeria's context, the article explored how the country's moral decline, expressed through corruption, institutional decay, and social injustice, reflects a deeper ethical failure, not merely structural dysfunction. In sectors such as governance, education, and religion, the lack of goodwill and commitment to moral duty has disrupted societal cohesion and

hindered national development. The analysis demonstrated that Kantian moral philosophy could offer useful ethical guidance, encouraging a return to integrity, responsibility, and principled leadership. In practical terms, the article identified mentorship, religious renewal, and cultural education as pathways for nurturing moral consciousness among young Nigerians. Within institutions, Kant's emphasis on justice, dignity, and duty presents a philosophical foundation for ethical reform. Ultimately, Kant's ideas were shown to provide both a critique of Nigeria's current moral challenges and a vision for building a more responsible and virtuous society.

In conclusion, Kant's ethical theory, particularly his conception of goodwill and the categorical imperative, offers essential insights into the kind of moral transformation Nigeria urgently needs. Hence, it should be integrated into civic education, leadership development, and public sector training to promote public responsibility. In a society where, personal gain often eclipses public responsibility, Kant's focus on motive and moral universality serves as a powerful corrective. The nation's ongoing crises ranging from corruption and poor governance to youth disillusionment signal a broader moral collapse. Addressing this crisis requires more than institutional reform; it demands a cultural and moral reawakening. Families, schools, religious institutions, and public leaders must recommit to building character, responsibility, and civic virtue. By internalizing Kant's ethical ideals, Nigerians can begin to act not out of fear or self-interest, but from a genuine commitment to moral duty. In this way, goodwill ceases to be an abstract ideal and becomes a necessary principle for national renewal, anchoring justice, accountability, and collective dignity.

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