

**CHRISTIAN PARENTING AND SOCIAL ETHICS: A NEW TESTAMENT APPROACH
TO ADDRESSING GET-RICH-QUICK SYNDROME AMONG NIGERIAN YOUTHS**

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Abstract

This study examines Christian Parenting and Social Ethics from a New Testament perspective as a response to the get-rich-quick syndrome among Nigerian youths. The study is motivated by the rising rate of unethical wealth acquisition among youths, reflecting a deeper erosion of moral values in contemporary Nigerian society. The problem addressed is the failure of moral formation within the family and society, leading many young people to embrace materialism and illegitimate means of success. The study adopts a qualitative methodology, using relevant scholarly literature and oral interview reports to provide a balanced analysis. The findings reveal that the get-rich-quick syndrome is driven by factors such as poor parenting, economic pressures, peer influence, and distorted religious teachings. It further establishes that the absence of intentional moral and spiritual upbringing has significantly contributed to the ethical decline among youths. The study concludes that Christian parenting, grounded in New Testament principles of discipline, instruction, love, and role modelling, provides a viable framework for addressing the problem. It also emphasises that social ethics must be reinforced through the combined efforts of the family and the church to achieve lasting moral transformation. Based on these findings, the study recommends reorienting parents toward effective moral training, reforming church teachings on wealth to emphasise ethical responsibility, and fostering collaboration among family, church, and society to promote value reorientation. The study affirms that sustainable solutions to the get-rich-quick syndrome lie in restoring ethical values and redefining success beyond material wealth.

Introduction

The increasing prevalence of unethical wealth acquisition among youths in contemporary Nigerian society has generated serious moral, social, and religious concerns. Popularly described as the “get-rich-quick syndrome,” this phenomenon reflects an intense desire for sudden affluence without regard for legitimate means, diligence, or ethical considerations. Manifesting in practices such as internet fraud (commonly referred to as “Yahoo Yahoo”), ritual-related activities, and other forms of economic malpractice, this trend has gradually eroded society's moral fabric and undermined the dignity of labour. In this context, the family's role, particularly through parenting,

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has come under renewed scholarly and theological scrutiny as a critical factor in shaping young people's moral orientation.

From a Christian perspective, parenting is not merely a social responsibility but a divine mandate rooted in New Testament teaching. It involves intentionally nurturing children to promote spiritual maturity, moral discipline, and ethical consciousness. The New Testament presents parenting as discipleship, where values such as integrity, contentment, hard work, and godliness are passed from one generation to the next. This framework stands in sharp contrast to the prevailing culture of materialism and moral compromise that fuels the get-rich-quick mentality among many Nigerian youths. Consequently, neglecting or distorting Christian parenting principles may contribute significantly to the ethical disorientation observed among young people today.

Furthermore, New Testament social ethics provide a robust moral framework for human conduct, especially regarding wealth, work, and interpersonal responsibility. Jesus' teachings emphasise the dangers of materialism, the importance of righteousness, and the need for contentment, while the apostolic writings reinforce the value of honest labour and moral uprightness. These ethical principles are not only theological ideals but also practical guidelines for societal well-being. However, in many contemporary Christian settings, a growing disconnect appears between these biblical teachings and believers' lived realities, particularly among youth. Socio-economic pressures, peer influence, and, in some cases, misinterpretations of religious teachings that prioritise prosperity over character and ethical responsibility often exacerbate this disconnect.

In the Nigerian context, the challenge is further complicated by economic instability, high rates of youth unemployment, and the pervasive influence of social media, which often glamorises wealth without accountability. Together, these factors create an environment where young people are tempted to pursue success through illegitimate means. While structural issues such as poverty and unemployment cannot be ignored, this study argues that the erosion of ethical values, particularly within the family unit, remains a fundamental driver of the problem. As the primary agent of socialisation, the family plays a crucial role in shaping children's worldview, attitudes, and behaviours. When parents fail to provide adequate moral guidance, discipline, and positive role modelling, youths are more likely to adopt values inconsistent with Christian ethics.

Against this backdrop, this study examines Christian Parenting and Social Ethics from a New Testament perspective as a viable approach to addressing the get-rich-quick syndrome among Nigerian youths. The study explores how biblical principles of parenting can be applied effectively to instil ethical values and counter the growing culture of materialism and moral decadence. By integrating theological insights with sociological realities, the study aims to contribute to ongoing discussions on youth development, moral regeneration, and religion's role in shaping societal values. Ultimately, the study underscores the need to reclaim and reapply New Testament teachings on parenting and ethics as a strategic means of fostering a generation of youths who are not only economically productive but also morally responsible and spiritually grounded.

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Definition of Terms

Christian Parenting: According to Abogunrin (2021), Christian parenting is raising children through biblical instruction, moral discipline, and exemplary Christian living to develop God-fearing, responsible individuals.

Social Ethics: Kunhiyop (2020) defines social ethics as applying moral principles to human behaviour within society to promote justice, responsibility, and communal well-being.

New Testament Approach: According to Ademiluka (2022), the New Testament approach interprets and applies the teachings of Jesus Christ and the apostles as a standard for guiding ethical conduct and Christian living.

Get-Rich-Quick Syndrome: Korieh (2023) defines get-rich-quick syndrome as the pursuit of wealth through rapid, often unethical means, driven by materialism and impatience.

Nigerian Youths: According to Olukotun (2021), Nigerian youths are individuals in a transitional life stage whose values and behaviours are shaped by socio-economic and cultural influences in Nigeria.

Christian Parenting in the New Testament: Foundations for Moral and Ethical Formation

Christian parenting in the New Testament is fundamentally understood as a divine responsibility that involves intentionally nurturing children in line with the teachings of Jesus Christ and the apostles. Nigerian scholars emphasise that parenting within this framework transcends mere biological care and extends to moral and spiritual formation. Ademiluka (2022) argues that the New Testament presents the family as the primary context for instilling virtues such as obedience, discipline, love, and reverence for God. This implies that parents are not passive caregivers but active agents of moral instruction, and their role is central to shaping their children's ethical orientation.

Flowing from this is discipleship, which stands at the heart of New Testament parenting. Ojo (2021) explains that parenting is essentially a process of raising children as followers of Christ through consistent teaching and personal example. This model underscores that moral and ethical values are most effectively transmitted when parents embody the principles they teach. In practical terms, children learn integrity, patience, and self-discipline not only through instruction but also by observing their parents' lifestyle. Supporting this view, C. Okafor (personal communication, 4th January, 2026) reported that children who grow up in homes where parents consistently demonstrate honesty and the fear of God tend to develop a strong sense of integrity and are less inclined to pursue dishonest means of acquiring wealth. This submission aligns with the New Testament emphasis on exemplary living as a powerful tool for moral formation, reinforcing the idea that values are better “caught” than merely taught.

Furthermore, discipline remains a crucial element in the New Testament understanding of parenting, guiding children toward ethical maturity. Kunhiyop (2020) argues that discipline in the Christian context is corrective and formative rather than punitive, aimed at helping children

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internalise moral standards and develop responsibility. Such discipline creates a structured environment where children can distinguish between right and wrong and are encouraged to make ethical choices. However, the absence of this balanced discipline has contributed significantly to moral decline among youths. This is evident in an oral report from N. Eze (personal communication, 18th January, 2026), who observed that many parents prioritise material provision over moral instruction, thereby leaving children without proper ethical guidance. She noted that such children often resort to questionable means of acquiring wealth because they were not adequately trained to value integrity and patience. This perspective underscores the dangers of neglecting moral discipline in parenting and highlights the need for a deliberate and consistent approach to value formation.

In addition, love is presented in the New Testament as the foundational principle that undergirds effective parenting. Nwachukwu (2023) explains that Christian parental love is not merely emotional but transformative, expressed through guidance, correction, and sacrifice. Such love fosters a supportive environment in which children can develop virtues like humility, self-control, and perseverance. It also ensures discipline is administered in a way that builds, rather than destroys, the child's character. When applied properly, this form of love strengthens the home's moral fabric and equips children to resist negative societal influences, including the temptation to engage in unethical practices for quick financial gain.

Moreover, the New Testament framework of parenting emphasises transmitting values related to diligence, honesty, and contentment. Manus (2020) asserts that parents are expected to instil in their children a strong work ethic and a clear understanding of the dignity of labour. This involves teaching children to acquire wealth through legitimate, ethical means rather than shortcuts or fraudulent activities. Such value orientation is particularly relevant in the Nigerian context, where the get-rich-quick mentality has become increasingly prevalent among youths. By modelling and reinforcing these values, parents play a critical role in countering societal pressures that promote materialism and moral compromise.

Overall, Christian parenting in the New Testament offers a comprehensive, practical framework for moral and ethical formation. It integrates instruction, discipleship, discipline, love, and value transmission as essential components of raising morally upright individuals. Insights from both scholarly literature and lived experience show that when these principles are applied effectively, they help shape youths grounded in integrity and resistant to unethical behaviours. Therefore, restoring New Testament parenting principles remains a vital strategy for addressing contemporary moral challenges among Nigerian youths.

New Testament Social Ethics on Wealth, Work, and Contentment

New Testament social ethics offers a coherent moral framework that shapes how Christians view wealth, labour, and contentment within the community. Central to this framework is Jesus Christ's teaching, which consistently warns against excessive attachment to material possessions and emphasises the primacy of righteousness. Chitando (2020) notes that the New Testament's ethical thrust discourages materialism and instead promotes a value system anchored in spiritual integrity and responsible living. This perspective establishes that wealth is not condemned in itself, but its pursuit must be subordinated to moral and spiritual priorities.

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Closely connected to this is the New Testament emphasis on dignity of labour as a moral obligation. Ojo (2021) argues that apostolic teachings strongly advocate for honest work as a means of sustenance and self-worth. He explains that labour is not merely an economic activity but a moral duty that reflects obedience to God and responsibility to society. This ethical position discourages idleness and condemns any attempt to acquire wealth through illegitimate means. Supporting this view, E. Nwosu (personal communication, 10th February, 2026) stated that youths trained from an early stage to appreciate the value of hard work tend to develop patience and discipline, which prevents them from seeking shortcuts to wealth. This observation reinforces the New Testament principle that diligence and perseverance are essential virtues in ethical living.

Furthermore, contentment holds a central place in New Testament social ethics, safeguarding against greed and moral compromise. Adamo (2022) explains that contentment in the New Testament is rooted in trust in God's provision and the recognition that true fulfilment does not depend on material abundance. This teaching directly challenges the contemporary culture of insatiable desire for wealth, which often drives individuals toward unethical practices. In line with this, B. Okeke (personal communication, 25th February, 2026) stated that many young people feel pressured to display wealth because of societal expectations, but those who are taught to be content with what they have are less likely to engage in fraudulent activities. This submission highlights the practical relevance of contentment as a moral virtue that can curb the excesses of materialism. In addition, New Testament ethics strongly condemns greed and unjust gain, presenting them as threats to both individual character and societal well-being. Folarin (2020) asserts that greed is portrayed in the New Testament as a form of moral corruption that distorts human priorities and leads to destructive behaviour. He emphasises that the pursuit of wealth must be guided by principles of justice, fairness, and accountability. This ethical stance is particularly relevant to contemporary issues such as fraud and exploitation, which are often driven by the desire for quick financial success.

Moreover, the New Testament promotes stewardship as an essential aspect of social ethics, where individuals are seen as custodians of resources entrusted to them by God. Oladipo (2023) explains that this perspective encourages responsible wealth management and discourages reckless or dishonest accumulation. It also reinforces the idea that wealth should benefit others and advance the common good, rather than serve selfish gratification. This principle further strengthens the ethical foundation needed to counter the get-rich-quick mentality among youths.

Overall, New Testament social ethics on wealth, work, and contentment offer a balanced, practical guide for ethical living. It affirms the legitimacy of wealth while emphasising moral boundaries, upholds the dignity of labour as a divine responsibility, and promotes contentment as a safeguard against greed. Insights from both scholarly discourse and lived experience show that adhering to these principles can significantly reduce the tendency toward unethical wealth acquisition. Therefore, integrating these ethical teachings into the lives of Nigerian youths remains essential to fostering a society grounded in integrity, responsibility, and sustainable development.

Get-Rich-Quick Syndrome among Nigerian Youths: Nature, Causes, and Ethical Implications

Get-rich-quick syndrome among Nigerian youths has increasingly become a defining feature of contemporary socio-economic life, reflecting a deep-seated shift in value orientation from diligence and integrity to material acquisition at all costs. Nigerian scholars have consistently argued that this trend is not accidental but rooted in broader societal transformations, where wealth has become the dominant measure of success and social relevance. Adogame (2021) observes that modern Nigerian youth culture is heavily influenced by consumerism and public display of affluence, often detached from ethical considerations regarding how such wealth is obtained. He further explains that the glorification of luxury lifestyles in both religious and secular spaces has contributed to a redefinition of success, where character and moral discipline are relegated to the background. This development has created fertile ground for the emergence and normalisation of get-rich-quick tendencies, especially among youths still forming their identities and highly susceptible to societal pressures.

The nature of get-rich-quick syndrome is therefore best understood as a pattern of behaviour driven by impatience, materialism, and a distorted sense of ambition. It is not merely about wanting to be wealthy, but about the urgency to attain wealth without going through legitimate processes such as education, skill acquisition, or honest labour. Kalu (2020) explains that this phenomenon is sustained by a cultural environment that celebrates outcomes without scrutinising processes, thereby encouraging shortcuts and unethical practices. It manifests in various forms, including internet fraud, identity theft, ritual-related practices, and other exploitative ventures that promise quick financial returns. This characterisation is further illuminated by S. Adeyemi (personal communication, 3rd March, 2026), who stated that many young people within his professional environment openly discuss strategies for online fraud as if it were a legitimate career path. He noted that such activities are often rationalised as necessary responses to economic hardship, and individuals who succeed in them are admired and emulated. He added that this normalisation has blurred moral boundaries, and unethical practices are increasingly seen not as deviant but as innovative means of survival. This account deepens understanding of the syndrome by showing how it is embedded in everyday conversations and social validation systems among youths.

Beyond its conceptual nature, the existence of get-rich-quick syndrome is clearly evident in the lived realities of Nigerian society, where numerous cases of sudden and unexplained wealth among youths have become commonplace. Williams (2022) points out that the rising incidence of cybercrime, financial fraud, and related offences among young people provides empirical evidence of this phenomenon's widespread nature. He further notes that the legal system is increasingly burdened with cases involving young offenders, indicating that the problem is both pervasive and escalating. This reality is vividly captured in an oral report by I. Musa (personal communication, 10th March, 2026), who described a young man in his neighbourhood who abandoned his university education after being introduced to internet fraud. According to him, within a short period, the young man began to display sudden wealth, including expensive cars, lavish spending, and a flamboyant lifestyle that attracted admiration from peers. He further stated that even after the individual was eventually arrested by law enforcement agencies, many youths in the community continued to admire his earlier success and expressed willingness to follow a similar path if given the opportunity. This narrative not only confirms the existence of the syndrome but

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also reveals the troubling extent to which society has become desensitised to its ethical implications.

The causes of get-rich-quick syndrome are multifaceted and interconnected, encompassing economic, social, and ideological factors. Okeke (2023) argues that structural challenges such as high unemployment rates, poverty, and limited access to economic opportunities create an environment of frustration and desperation among youths. In such conditions, the appeal of quick financial gain becomes particularly strong, as it offers an escape from prolonged hardship. However, economic factors alone do not fully explain the phenomenon. Cultural influences, especially peer pressure and social media, play a significant role in shaping aspirations and behaviour. This is corroborated by an oral report by Z. Bello (personal communication, 16th March, 2026), who stated that the constant exposure to images of luxury and success on social media platforms has created unrealistic expectations among youths. She explained that many young people feel compelled to match the lifestyles they see online, even when they lack the legitimate means to do so. As a result, they resort to unethical practices to bridge the gap between aspiration and reality. She further noted that peer validation often reinforces such behaviour, as individuals who display wealth are celebrated regardless of its source. This insight highlights the powerful role of social environment in shaping the motivations behind the syndrome.

In addition, religious misinterpretation has been identified as a significant contributor to the proliferation of a get-rich-quick mentality. Wariboko (2021) explains that certain strands of contemporary Christian teaching have overemphasised prosperity while neglecting the ethical demands of discipleship, hard work, and accountability. This has led to a distorted view of wealth as an automatic sign of divine favour, regardless of how it is acquired. Such teachings inadvertently legitimise the pursuit of wealth without moral constraints, thereby weakening the ethical foundation of young believers. Combined with existing socio-economic pressures, this religious distortion further intensifies the drive toward quick, unethical wealth acquisition.

The ethical implications of get-rich-quick syndrome are profound and far-reaching, affecting both individual character and the broader social order. Ike (2020) contends that the normalisation of dishonest wealth undermines society's moral fabric by eroding values such as honesty, trust, and accountability. He argues that when unethical behaviour becomes widespread, it creates a culture of impunity in which moral standards are no longer enforced or respected. This erosion of values has significant consequences for social relationships and institutional integrity. According to P. Ndukwe (personal communication, 23rd March, 2026), the rise of fraudulent practices among youths has led to a breakdown of trust within communities. She explained that people are increasingly suspicious of one another, particularly in financial dealings, because they fear being deceived. She also noted that this trend has damaged the reputation of Nigerian youths internationally, making it more difficult for genuine individuals to be trusted in global interactions. This account underscores the syndrome's broader societal impact, showing that its consequences extend beyond individual actions to affect collective identity and social cohesion.

Generally, get-rich-quick syndrome among Nigerian youths is a complex and deeply entrenched issue that reflects a convergence of cultural, economic, and religious factors. It is characterised by impatience and moral compromise, evident in widespread real-life experiences; its causes are rooted in both structural and social dynamics, and its implications harm both individual integrity

and societal stability. Combined insights from scholarly literature and oral testimonies show that addressing this phenomenon requires a holistic approach that goes beyond economic solutions to include moral reorientation and ethical regeneration.

Parenting Failure and the Erosion of Ethical Values among Youths

Parenting failure has increasingly been identified as a critical factor in the erosion of ethical values among Nigerian youths, particularly in a context where the family is expected to serve as the primary agent of moral formation. Within the New Testament framework, parenting extends beyond providing material needs to intentional moral guidance, discipline, and value transmission. However, contemporary realities reveal a growing disconnect between this ideal and actual parenting practices. Gifford (2021) argues that many families in modern African societies have shifted their focus to economic survival and social mobility at the expense of moral instruction, thus weakening the younger generation's ethical foundation. This shift has created a vacuum in which youths are left to construct their values from external influences that may not align with Christian ethical standards.

A major dimension of parenting failure is the lack of intentional moral and spiritual training at home. Oguntoyinbo (2022) explains that when parents neglect their responsibility to teach values such as honesty, discipline, and accountability, children grow up without a clear moral compass. He further notes that moral development is not automatic but requires consistent reinforcement through instruction and example. In many cases, parents assume that schools or religious institutions will take over this role, thereby abdicating their primary responsibility. This gap in moral training often results in youths adopting values that are shaped by peer groups, social media, and other external forces, many of which promote materialism and unethical behaviour.

Nwosu (2020) emphasises that children learn more from what parents do than from what they say, making parental behaviour a powerful determinant of youth conduct. When parents engage in dishonest practices, display excessive materialism, or justify unethical actions, children are likely to internalise these behaviours as acceptable. This reality is reflected in an oral report from S. Eze (personal communication, 29th March, 2026), who stated that in his neighbourhood, he has observed several parents who openly celebrate wealth without questioning its source, even when it is evident that such wealth is acquired through questionable means. He explained that children raised in such environments grow up believing success is measured solely by financial status, leading many to engage in fraudulent activities to meet societal expectations. He further noted that some parents even defend their children's unethical actions as long as they bring financial benefits to the family. This observation highlights how negative parental examples can normalise unethical behaviour and weaken young people's moral judgment.

Another critical aspect of parenting failure is the lack of discipline and supervision, which leaves youths vulnerable to negative influences. Gwamna (2023) argues that effective parenting requires a balance between love and discipline, guiding and correcting children in ways that promote responsible behaviour. However, in many contemporary homes, discipline is either excessively harsh or completely absent, resulting in rebellion or moral indifference among youths. This concern is further illustrated in an oral report from G. Okonkwo (personal communication, 4th April, 2026), who said she has witnessed situations where parents are too busy with business or

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career pursuits to monitor their children's activities. She explained that in such cases, young people spend most of their time outside the home or online without supervision, exposing them to harmful influences and peer pressure. She added that some of these youths eventually become involved in internet fraud, drug abuse, and other forms of deviant behaviour, largely because there was no parental guidance to correct them at an early stage. This account underscores the importance of active parental involvement in shaping children's behaviour and preventing moral decline.

In addition, the growing emphasis on material provision as a substitute for moral responsibility has further compounded parenting failure. Ukaegbu (2021) notes that many parents equate good parenting with providing financial comfort, while neglecting the equally important task of character formation. While economic support is essential, it cannot replace ethical guidance and emotional connection. When children are raised in environments where material success is prioritised over moral values, they are more likely to adopt a utilitarian approach to life in which the end justifies the means. This mindset significantly contributes to the rise of unethical practices among youths, including the pursuit of quick wealth without regard for its moral implications.

Generally, parenting failure plays a central role in eroding ethical values among Nigerian youths, as it undermines the foundational processes through which moral principles are transmitted. The absence of intentional moral training, poor role modelling, lack of discipline, and overemphasis on material provision collectively create an environment in which unethical behaviour can thrive. Insights from both scholarly literature and lived experience show that when parents neglect their responsibilities, youths become vulnerable to negative societal influences that shape their actions and decisions. Addressing this challenge therefore requires a renewed commitment to responsible parenting that prioritises moral formation alongside material provision.

Christian Parenting as a Corrective Framework: Applying New Testament Principles to Youth Behaviour

Biblical Foundation of Christian Parenting as Moral Correction: When properly grounded in New Testament teachings, Christian parenting offers a viable corrective framework for addressing the moral and behavioural challenges confronting Nigerian youths. The New Testament presents parenting as an intentional process of shaping character through instruction, discipline, and example, with the ultimate goal of producing individuals who live in accordance with God's will. Nigerian scholars emphasise that this framework is not merely theoretical but practical, providing clear guidelines for influencing youth behaviour in a morally constructive direction. Abogunrin (2020) argues that Christian parenting functions as a transformative system in which children are guided to internalise values such as honesty, self-control, humility, and accountability. He maintains that when these values are consistently taught and modelled, they serve as a strong foundation for resisting unethical tendencies, including the desire for quick and illegitimate wealth.

Moral Instruction and Renewal of Youth Mindset: A key component of this corrective framework is deliberately teaching biblical values to reshape youths' moral consciousness. Adeyemo (2021) explains that New Testament principles emphasise renewing the mind by replacing negative thought patterns with godly perspectives. In the context of youth behaviour, this implies that parents must actively teach their children the ethical implications of their actions,

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particularly regarding wealth, work, and social responsibility. This approach goes beyond instruction to include ongoing dialogue and moral reasoning, helping youths understand not only what is right but why it is right. Supporting this perspective, in an oral account from E. Obi (personal communication, 8th April, 2026), he stated that in families where parents consistently teach their children about integrity and the consequences of wrongdoing, young people tend to develop a strong sense of responsibility and are less likely to engage in fraudulent activities. He noted that such children often demonstrate patience and are willing to work for their success rather than seeking shortcuts. This observation reinforces the idea that intentional moral instruction plays a crucial role in correcting deviant behaviour.

Discipline as a Tool for Behavioural Transformation: Another important dimension of Christian parenting as a corrective framework is discipline's role in guiding behaviour. Nwoye (2022) asserts that discipline in the New Testament is designed to correct, instruct, and restore rather than to punish. He emphasises that effective discipline helps children to develop self-control and accountability, which are essential for ethical living. In applying this principle, parents are expected to set clear boundaries and enforce them consistently in a way that promotes learning and growth. This perspective is illustrated in an oral report from H. Sule (personal communication, 15th April, 2026), who stated that she has observed that children who are raised in homes with consistent discipline and guidance tend to be more respectful and responsible in their behaviour. She explained that such youths are less influenced by peer pressure because they have been trained to evaluate their actions based on moral principles rather than immediate gratification. This account highlights discipline as an effective tool for correcting behavioural deviations among youths.

Parental Role Modelling and Ethical Influence: Beyond instruction and discipline, the New Testament framework emphasises the importance of parental role modelling in shaping youth behaviour. Akinade (2023) notes that parents serve as living examples of the values they seek to instil, making their actions a powerful influence on their children. He argues that when parents demonstrate integrity, diligence, and contentment in their daily lives, they create a moral environment that encourages similar behaviour in their children. Conversely, inconsistency between parental teaching and behaviour can undermine the effectiveness of moral instruction. This principle is particularly relevant in addressing the get-rich-quick mentality, as youths are more likely to reject unethical practices when they see their parents uphold honest means of livelihood despite challenges.

Value Reorientation and Identity Formation in Youths: Furthermore, Christian parenting as a corrective framework involves nurturing a sense of purpose and identity in youths that is rooted in Christian values rather than societal expectations. Oladele (2021) explains that the New Testament encourages believers to define their worth and success in relation to their relationship with God rather than material possessions. When this perspective is instilled in young people, it reduces the pressure to conform to societal standards of wealth and success that often drive unethical behaviour. Parents therefore have a responsibility to guide their children in developing a worldview that prioritises character over material gain, equipping them to navigate societal pressures with moral clarity.

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Generally, Christian parenting grounded in New Testament principles provides a comprehensive and effective framework for correcting negative youth behaviour and promoting ethical living. Through intentional teaching, consistent discipline, positive role modelling, and nurturing a value-based identity, parents can significantly influence their children's moral direction. Integrating these elements creates a supportive environment in which youths are equipped to resist the temptation of unethical practices and pursue success through legitimate, morally acceptable means. Combined insights from scholarly perspectives and lived experiences affirm that applying New Testament parenting principles remains a critical strategy for addressing contemporary behavioural challenges among Nigerian youths.

Reconstructing Social Ethics in Nigeria: The Role of Family and Church in Combating Get-Rich-Quick Mentality

The persistence of the get-rich-quick mentality among Nigerian youths reveals a deeper crisis in society's moral structure, necessitating a deliberate reconstruction of social ethics. Social ethics, particularly from a Christian perspective, provides the framework through which values such as honesty, responsibility, and justice are sustained within a community. Falola (2021) argues that contemporary Nigerian society is experiencing a moral dislocation in which traditional and religious values that once regulated behaviour have been weakened by modern economic pressures and cultural shifts. This condition has created an environment where unethical practices are increasingly normalised, thereby reinforcing the get-rich-quick syndrome. Consequently, reconstructing social ethics is not optional; it is necessary to restore moral order and guide youth behaviour toward responsible living.

The family remains the foundational institution for transmitting and reconstructing ethical values in any society. Within the Nigerian context, it is the first environment where children encounter moral instruction and develop their understanding of right and wrong. Obasi (2022) explains that ethical consciousness is initially formed within the family through processes of socialisation, discipline, and role modelling. When families intentionally instil values such as integrity, diligence, and contentment, they lay a strong foundation that can counteract societal pressures toward unethical behaviour. This is supported by an oral account from P. Nwankwo (personal communication, 22nd April, 2026), who said that in his neighbourhood, children from homes where parents consistently emphasise honesty and hard work tend to avoid fraudulent activities. He explained that such youths often display a sense of responsibility and are less influenced by peers who engage in quick-money schemes. This observation highlights the critical role of the family in shaping ethical resilience among youths.

Beyond the family, the church plays a significant role in reconstructing social ethics by providing moral guidance and reinforcing biblical values within the wider community. Adewale (2020) notes that the church functions as a moral institution that shapes members' consciences through teaching, preaching, and discipleship. In the New Testament tradition, the church is expected to uphold standards of righteousness and challenge behaviours that contradict Christian ethics. However, the church's effectiveness in this role depends on the consistency and integrity of its teachings. This is reflected in an oral report from E. Daniel (personal communication, 27th April, 2026), who stated that she has observed that in churches where teachings emphasise both prosperity and moral responsibility, youths are more likely to pursue legitimate means of success. She added that when

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churches fail to address ethical issues directly, young people may misinterpret religious messages in ways that justify unethical behaviour. This insight underscores the need for the church to maintain a balanced, ethically grounded approach to its teachings.

Reconstructing social ethics becomes more effective when the family and the church work in strong synergy. Ayantayo (2023) argues that ethical transformation in society requires collaboration between private and public institutions, particularly the family and religious organisations. While the family provides the foundational training, the church reinforces and expands these values within a broader communal context. When both institutions work together, they create a consistent moral environment that supports ethical behaviour and discourages deviance. This collaborative approach ensures that youths receive the same ethical messages at home and in religious settings, thereby reducing confusion and strengthening moral conviction.

A key aspect of reconstructing social ethics involves reorienting youths' values away from materialism and toward integrity, responsibility, and service. Albert (2021) explains that value reorientation requires deliberate efforts to redefine success in terms of character and contribution to society rather than mere accumulation of wealth. Both the family and the church have a responsibility to promote narratives that celebrate hard work, patience, and ethical conduct. This involves not only teaching these values but also recognising and rewarding behaviours that reflect them. When youths are exposed to alternative models of success that prioritise integrity, they are more likely to adopt ethical lifestyles and resist the temptation of quick wealth.

Generally, reconstructing social ethics in Nigeria is essential to address the growing challenge of a get-rich-quick mentality among youths. The family, as the primary agent of socialisation, and the church, as a moral and spiritual institution, both play indispensable roles in this process. Through intentional value transmission, consistent teaching, and collaborative engagement, these institutions can create a moral environment that promotes integrity and discourages unethical practices. Integrating insights from scholarly perspectives and lived experiences shows that a holistic approach, one that combines family influence with church reinforcement, is necessary for sustainable ethical transformation in Nigerian society.

Conclusion

This study examined Christian Parenting and Social Ethics from a New Testament perspective in response to the growing get-rich-quick syndrome among Nigerian youths, and it established that the crisis is fundamentally moral and value-oriented rather than merely economic. The findings show that youths' increasing involvement in unethical practices such as fraud and other forms of illegitimate wealth acquisition is closely linked to the erosion of ethical standards within the family and society at large. While economic hardship and social pressures contribute to the problem, the study shows that the lack of intentional moral formation, particularly through effective parenting, remains a central factor in shaping deviant behaviour among young people. Drawing on New Testament teachings, the study showed that Christian parenting is a deliberate process of moral and spiritual formation, in which children are nurtured through instruction, discipline, love, and exemplary living. These principles provide a solid foundation for raising youths who are grounded in integrity, contentment, and the dignity of labour. However, the study observed that many contemporary families have shifted their focus toward material provision at the expense of ethical

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training, thereby creating a gap that exposes youths to negative societal influences. This parenting failure has significantly contributed to the normalisation of the get-rich-quick mentality, as young people increasingly adopt values shaped by peer pressure, social media, and distorted cultural expectations. Furthermore, the study found that New Testament social ethics offers a corrective framework for addressing issues of wealth, work, and contentment. It emphasises that wealth must be pursued through legitimate means, that labour is a moral responsibility, and that contentment is essential for resisting greed and materialism.

These ethical principles directly challenge the mindset that drives the pursuit of quick and unethical wealth. When properly integrated into parenting practices, they can reshape youths' attitudes and behaviours, guiding them toward responsible, morally acceptable ways of achieving success. In addition, the study highlighted the need for a broader societal approach, emphasising the complementary roles of the family and the church in reconstructing social ethics in Nigeria. While the family serves as the primary agent of moral formation, the church reinforces and sustains these values within the wider community. Together, these institutions create a consistent moral environment that promotes ethical behaviour and discourages deviance. This holistic approach is necessary for achieving lasting transformation, as it addresses both the individual and collective dimensions of the problem.

Overall, the study affirms that the solution to the get-rich-quick syndrome among Nigerian youths lies not only in economic reforms but, more importantly, in restoring moral and ethical values through Christian parenting and New Testament social ethics. Parents must urgently reclaim their role as moral educators, churches must uphold sound ethical teachings, and society must redefine success in terms of character rather than material accumulation. Only through such a comprehensive, values-driven approach can a generation of youths be raised who are not only economically productive but also morally responsible and spiritually grounded.

Recommendations

Reorientation and Capacity Building for Christian Parents: There is a critical need for intentional reorientation and training of parents to embrace their role as primary agents of moral and spiritual formation. Churches and faith-based organisations should organise regular parenting seminars, workshops, and discipleship programs that equip parents with practical skills in biblical instruction, discipline, and value transmission. They should emphasise modelling integrity, teaching the dignity of labour, and guiding children toward contentment. When parents are properly equipped, they are better positioned to counter negative societal influences and raise youths who uphold ethical standards.

Reform of Church Teaching on Wealth and Ethical Responsibility: Churches in Nigeria must adopt a more balanced, responsible approach to teaching on prosperity by integrating a strong ethical emphasis on hard work, accountability, and righteousness. Religious leaders should intentionally address the dangers of greed, fraud, and materialism, while promoting New Testament values of contentment and stewardship. This reform will help correct distorted views of wealth and ensure young people understand that true success is rooted in character, not merely material acquisition.

Collaborative Ethical Reorientation through Family, Church, and Society: Families, churches, educational institutions, and community leaders must work together to promote ethical reorientation among Nigerian youths. Moral education should be integrated into school curricula, while community-based programs should be established to celebrate integrity, hard work, and responsible living. Such collaboration will create a consistent value system across different spheres of influence, thereby reducing the appeal of get-rich-quick practices and fostering a culture of ethical responsibility in society.

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Oral interviews:

Name	Age	Gender	Location	Occupation	Date	By Whom
Chinedu Okafor	52	Male	Awka	Teacher	4/1/26	The researchers
Ngozi Eze	45	Female	Enugu	Trader	18/1/26	The researchers
Emeka Nwosu	48	Male	Onitsha	Trader	10/2/26	The researchers
Blessing Okeke	27	Female	Port-Harcourt	Fashion designer	25/2/26	The researchers
Sola Adeyemi	34	Male	Lagos	ICT Consultant	3/3/26	The researchers
Ibrahim Musa	40	Male	Abuja	Civil Servant	10/3/26	The researchers
Zainab Bello	29	Female	Kano	Entrepreneur	16/3/26	The researchers
Patience Ndukwe	50	Female	Owerri	Trader	23/3/26	The researchers
Sunday Eze	55	Male	Enugu	Civil Servant	29/3/26	The researchers
Grace Okonkwo	48	Female	Onitsha	Trader	4/4/26	The researchers
Emeka Obi	50	Male	Onitsha	Trader	8/4/26	The researchers
Hadiza Sule	42	Female	Kaduna	Teacher	15/4/26	The researchers
Peter Nwankwo	54	Male	Awka	Civil Engineer	22/4/26	The researchers
Esther Daniel	47	Female	Abuja	School Administrator	27/4/26	The researchers