

The Effects of Moral, Ethical Values, Civility, Proper Etiquette, Manners, Common Courtesy and Respect Deterioration in Modern Society

Society is made of people from different backgrounds, regarding culture, education, social and economic backgrounds. Individuals in society have personal goals, and at times may not be in line with the communal goals. For individuals with different ambitions, interests, and goals to live with one another peacefully, moral values, ethical values, proper etiquette, manners, civility, acceptable courtesy and respect for one another is key (Bybee 78). Moral and ethical values guide a person to differentiate what is good and wrong, and provides an acceptable code of behaviors that all members of a particular society, such as the American people are supposed to follow so as to live in peace and harmony. On the other hand, civility, proper etiquette, manners, courtesy, and respect, allow people to live with one another as brothers and in love, and they define a good human being. However, every society has different sets of etiquette, manners, courtesy codes, ethical

and moral values that are acceptable to its people, and at times might not be acceptable in other societies. Nonetheless, there are those behaviors and values that are universally acceptable in every community and society in the world.

One of the biggest issues of concern that many sociologists today are faced with is the issue of deterioration of moral values, ethical values, respect, proper etiquette, civility and common manners in the modern society. In the digital age, most of the people lack basic etiquette of interacting with one another in a respectable way (Lumpkin 34). This is mainly common among the Y generation compared to the baby boomers generation. Deterioration of moral values, ethical values, respect, proper etiquette, civility and common manners have a negative impact on the modern society. This essay intends to discuss the way modern society is impacted in a negative way by deterioration of moral values, ethical values, respect, proper etiquette, civility and common manners.

Niebuhr (67) argues that in any given society moral and ethical values are instrumental in ensuring that people behave in certain ways that are acceptable by all. Moral values are principles that guide the society in determining what is right and wrong. On the contrary, ethical values can be said to be the set of behaviors that are morally acceptable in the society. The following image provides a pictorial explanation of what is ethic and morals;



Ethics, value, Moral

- Ethics are rules that help us tell the difference between right and wrong. They encourage us to do the right thing.
- Values tell us what is important. They help us make decisions about right and wrong.
- Morals are rules we use to decide what is good or bad.

There are different ethical and moral principles that guide individuals within the modern American society, such as integrity, honesty, human dignity respect and others. These are set of principles that are used to determine whether an individual is behaving an ethical way or not. The

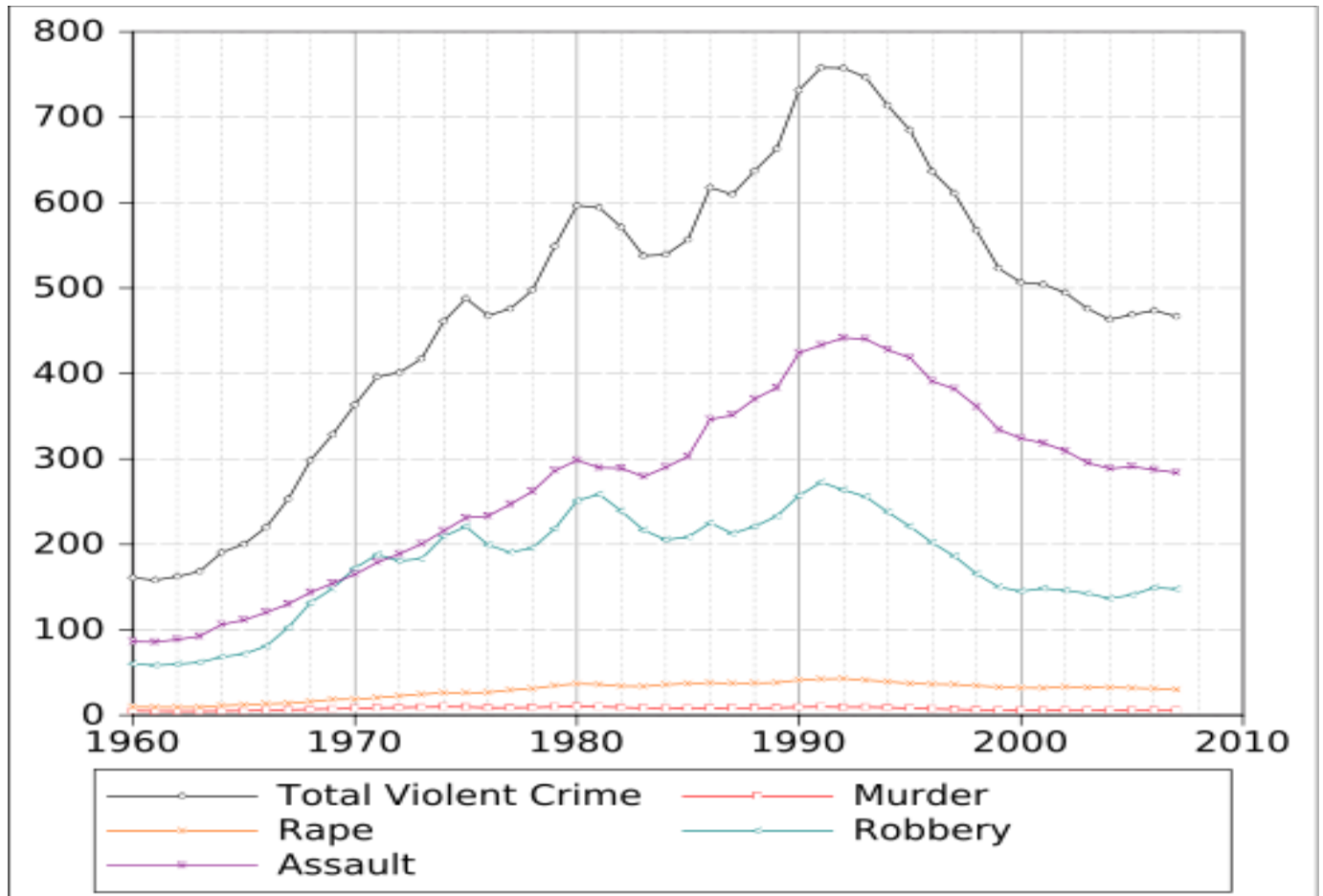
modern American society cannot be compared with the older one as most of the people have corrupted their ethical and moral values. Today, many individuals are concerned about their welfare and no longer care about others. Williams (45) notes that existence of moral and ethical values is usually to ensure that people act in a way that the care for others in their respective behaviors. For example, when working in an organization as a manager, being honest is aimed at ensuring that customers are provided with safe products and interest of the shareholders are always protected. It means that moral and ethical values are the basis of building a strong and peaceful society.

However, despite morals and ethics being of great importance, the individuals in the modern society do not observe them, and as a result, many negative things can be seen. First, failure to act in a moral and ethical way has resulted in many people being greedy and less concerned about humanity. What differentiates humans from an animal are the ability to act in a humane way, and ethical as well as moral values are the strongest tools of ensuring a person is better than an animal. When

individuals fail to observe the acceptable moral and ethical values in the society, it means that they can do anything, even harming their fellow human being as long as they are going to benefit personally. This is the case in the business world. Some business has been found guilty of offering unsafe products to customers, such as Samsung in the recent case of its Note 7 smartphone batteries exploding. On the other hand, managers in the business world have acted in the unethical way leading to the collapse of giant multinational companies making many individuals jobless due to their greed. For instance, the collapse of Enron and Lehman Brothers, which collapsed due to senior managers' greed for better bonuses, forcing them to manipulate financial figures, eventually resulting in the collapse of these two organizations and if, the managers, could have observed moral and ethical values, and then they would have acted in the right way.

Also, failure of individuals observing moral and ethical values has resulted in cases of crime rising, such as homicide, theft, rape and drug trafficking. Due to deterioration of morals and ethics, most of the

individuals in the modern society engages in criminal behaviors without fear. The following figure summarizes crimes rates in the U.S;



The above figure indicates that different forms crimes remain high, in the modern society and this should be an issue of major concern. Young people are easily joining criminal gangs, which are terrorizing innocent citizens through raping women, stealing, and murdering people. Shafer, Kyoko, and Grace (269) note that the society has failed completely in

shaping the direction in which the modern society is taking, especially by not educating the young generation acceptable moral and ethical behaviors. This is why the cases of young people taking part in crime have been on the rise. For instance, the society has failed to educate Generation Y on the importance of working hard so as to generate a living. Instead, they have been brought up thinking that everything comes easy. Hence, they opt for engaging in crime as a quicker way of becoming rich or making a crime. The cases of people selling drugs to children and youths and making them useless are due to greed and lack of morality in the modern society. If people observe ethics and morals, they would know that engaging in crime is wrong. Thus, cases of various forms of crime in the American society would be few, but this is not the case as most of the individuals no longer value morals.

Furthermore, deterioration of morals and ethics is to be blamed for rising cases of corruption in the 21st century. The numbers of giving and taking bribes both in the public and private sectors have been on the rise in the recent times. Carroll and Buchholtz (134) while doing business in

a developing world, most of the businesses has to give out bribes to get licenses, or their products are approved for sale. This clearly shows that levels of corruption in the business front and public service in the majority of the modern societies have been on the rise. The high cases of corruption, in the police force, public offices and business institutions are to be blamed for the lack of moral and ethical values. Individuals no longer observe ethics and morals, and that is why the global community is trying to fight corruption due to the negative impact that it has when it comes to the economic and social development of a nation.

Civility and courtesy are foundations of building any society where individuals respect one another (Bybee 34). They form the basis on which individuals can manage to form strong relationships with people of the same age, different ages, social classes, and gender. Civility requires one to act in a polite and courteous way when interacting with other people. One need to be polite when interacting with people, as determines the levels of respect that people develop for one another in a particular relationship. Given that human beings are social animals, for

one to socialize in the right way with different personalities acting in civility and courteous many is very critical. Civility requires one to understand that people are diverse in nature and it is through diversity that a strong society is built. Lægaard (10) points out that in a multicultural society, civility is instrumental in making individuals live in harmony. It makes people act in a courteous manner to people from all backgrounds. Also, it ensures that people do not undermine others by their cultural, ethnical or racial background, but rather people are supposed to be polite to one another despite certain differences.

However, despite courtesy and civility being critical for maintaining of strong human relationships, nowadays people no longer observe certain important courtesies. For example, people no longer talk in a polite way to their elders in the workplace. Civility and courtesy demand that people talk to their elders in a polite way, as a sign of respect, but the young generation no longer observes this, and this has created generation rift between the young and old generation. Acting in a polite and courteous manner, when interacting with an older person

ensures that a strong bond is built and this is basis of ensuring that old and younger generations can interact and learn from each other. Also, courtesy is critical in ensuring that people who come from different gender can maintain strong relationships. Civility and courtesy are critical for any strong relationship to be built between men and women. When the society observes courtesy and civility during interactions of women and men, this ensures that there is respect. However, some of the youths have grown in society, where women are not respected and taken just as objects. Consequently, they have developed a culture of not being polite and courteous towards women. This is why gender equality, abuse will not come to an end very soon, despite most of the people having acquired formal education.

Lumpkin (35) argues that civility is crucial in ensuring that people live in harmony despite coming from different racial backgrounds. The cases of racial violence being experienced today, especially in the case of U.S following the presidential elections can be blamed largely on deteriorations of civility standards, as people no longer act in a polite

way towards their fellow human beings by the color of their skins. As a result, a bridge has been created between various races, and this can only be addressed if people can learn to observe courtesy and civility at the same time. Furthermore, relationships in the workplace have been affected negatively due to lack of courtesy and civility among people. For individuals to be highly productive in the workplace, they need to work as a team. However, teamwork cannot be built if individuals within an organization do not know how to be polite toward each other. Lack of civility has resulted in many organizations in the modern era to have many interpersonal related problems. This problem is on the rise due to lack of civility, and the young generation needs to be taught civility and courtesy so as to learn how to build strong relationships with others in the workplace.

Another critical aspect of the modern society that has deteriorated is proper etiquette and common manners. Nowadays most of the people do not observe the acceptable manners when interacting with others, such as eating habits while in official meetings, greeting of people and

other areas of life. Smith and Davidson (231) notes that manners and etiquette are important as they indicate someone is polite and aid in building a healthy relationship at home, in a party, school or workplace.

When acting in a proper etiquette one is usually trying to show respect to other people as well as requesting respect from fellow family members or colleagues in the place of work. Manners are an acceptable code of behaviors when one is interacting with others in the certain environment. Manners enable a person to earn respect from the society and make it easy for one to create friends.

Despite etiquette and manners being crucial in aiding in the process of building healthy relationships and enabling people to earn respect from their fellow human beings, a large number of people, particularly from the Y generation do not observe proper etiquette and proper manners. The following image summarizes how etiquette has become a rare thing in the modern society;



The above image indicates that people nowadays are no longer etiquette and those who act in a polite manner are confused to be trying to flirt with others. As a result, it is difficult for them to build healthy relationships and this is why they always act in an offensive manner. Smith and Davidson (231) notes that when young people lack etiquette in life, they find it difficult to engage with others in social situations and try to compensate this deficiency through behaving in an offensive manner. This is why most of the teenagers will always be engaging in fights with one another, high cases of bullying due to people lacking proper manners and etiquette, which are critical in ensuring that people in the society respect one another.

On the other hand, most of the young people are failing to succeed in life, particularly in the modern society due to lack of proper etiquette and manners. Smith and Davidson (231) argue that a person needs to show some etiquette so as to achieve success in life. When a person respects his or her seniors at school or place of work, they will give unlimited support and guidance that is crucial for one to make steps toward the path of success in life. This means that parent in the modern age have a responsibility of training their children from a younger age basic manners and etiquette so that they gain respect and success from others. Additionally, acting in a way that one observes etiquette, as well as the common manner, is essential in enhancing an individual's confidence in life. For example, if one is polite to others, they will always treat him in a respectable manner, but when one is rude, he will never be respected by others. When one does not have respect for others in the society, the person will always be left behind when certain social functions are being organized, and this form of isolation impacts negatively on an individual's self-worth and confidence. Therefore, to make ones' life easier it is important to act in the proper manner and

observe basic life etiquette, such as in eating, greeting elders and others (Gentleman 43).

Finally, respect is of great significance to the survival of human beings. Lægaard (7) notes that respect aids in showing a person value others and at the same time honor their respective personal dignity and rights as human beings. Therefore, respect is instrumental in ensuring that people learn to respect the rights of others. However, those who fails to respect others end up having few alliances and friends and many people do not enjoy being close to them. Respect for one another has deteriorated in the modern age, where most of the people do not have respect for one another, especially young individuals. Lack of respect affects the society in a negative way. First, it creates racial related discrimination and violence due to the failure of individuals respecting others culture and ways of life. In spite of cultural and racial differences, people have failed to learn the art of respecting others, respecting their dignity as human beings and this has lead to the reemergence of racial violence and discrimination in the society. Also, high cases of people

disrespecting others through engaging in inappropriate behaviors, such as sexually harassing them are on the rise. This can be solely blamed on lack of etiquette among the members of the society.

In conclusion, it is quite clear that deterioration of moral values, ethical values, common manners, respect, civility and proper etiquette have impacted negatively on the modern society. Lack of morals and ethics has resulted in individuals being selfish, greedy and corrupt. On the other hand, lack of respect, civility, proper etiquette and a manner have made it difficult for many young people to maintain healthy relationships and interactions with others. The older generation, especially parents have a major responsibility in ensuring that younger generation learns proper manners, ethical and moral values, respect and act in a civil manner so as to make their life easier. Educating people appropriate social behaviors from a young age is the only way to go, so as to build a strong society in the future.

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