

CHRISTIANITY, EDUCATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE ERA OF CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC IN NIGERIA: A REFLECTION

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Abstract

It is notable from several events in Nigeria that key issues in the country's democracy, spirituality and education in her governance structure are far from been determined. There were certain hindrances to sustainable human development. Man is challenged with the threat of coronavirus pandemic, modern slavery such as human trafficking, migration, and other associated dehumanization, and if he must overcome these challenges he must thirst for a new humanism and be eager to discover the integrity of man in order to avoid the cleavages of the past. Bad leadership yields nothing good in spirituality, education, and technically in economic growth of the society. This was consequent upon poor and discriminatory selection of those who man various government ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs), where squared pegs (leaders) are placed in round holes to the formation of unprogressive and irritant cliques which made it impossible for them to perform according to the yearnings of the governed. This paper adopted historical and phenomenological approach to highlight the failures of leadership towards quality education in the country. The findings show that there were certain hindrances to quality education in Nigerian public schools for sustainable human development and economic growth of the society which in turn affects the spiritual life of the citizens. The paper recommends quality leadership that would enhance the education sector for progressive and sustainable development. Man needs integral education which comprised morality, spirituality, and technological knowledge.

Keywords: Spirituality, education, development, corona virus

Introduction

The irony of education sector in Nigeria represents one of the opposite ways vis-à-vis Western predecessors and how Nigerian leaders operate the system. Educational institutions in Nigeria are sometimes operated by non-academic leaders or those who lack the basic adequate knowledge about education or have passion for it. In this case, right to quality education is casualty of their personal institution. The product of such attitude towards education are the Almajiris, tribal sentiments, nepotism (lack of merit in affairs of

governance/favouritism), terrorism, egocentricism, violence through undignified speeches, popularly called hate speeches, alongside other vices. Therefore, operating this weak education sector in spite of the people's interest portrays bad academic leadership. No nation can make considerable progress when mediocre are at the helm of affairs. When the right people who understand the efficacy of education for sustainable development are in position of leadership, the country will be put on the right track. No nation anywhere in the world can survive or embark on predictable economic, political, social, cultural and sundry developments when mediocre are in charge. We need urgent national redemption, restructuring and proper orientation in order for us to move forward. Some people are made refugees (internally displaced persons) in their fatherland. It is worthy to note that when leaders make reckless decisions, the citizens suffer. When the people feel victorious over their socio-economic endeavour or challenges, even the leaders rejoice; and this is what good leadership entails-making the people to make ends meet without duress or much stress under peaceful, conducive and secured enabling learning environment, when needed infrastructure is in place. In Nigeria, there are too much of blame games in education sector by the leaders, which more often than not give rise to strikes, disruption of academic calendar, turn out of mediocrities, and the likes.

Not so many people want to repay in kind. That is why we have abandoned projects, national assets and infrastructure littered all over the states of Nigeria. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has said that the corona virus pandemic had instigated a global economic downturn (even in education) the likes of which the world has not experienced since the Great Depression. Businesses are coping with loss of revenue and disrupted supply of chains as factory shutdowns and quarantine measures spread across the globe, restricting movement, education, fellowships in congregations and commerce.

Conceptual Framework

The phrase, "Sustainable development" has not been given adequate definition as a phenomenon in Nigerian development. This is consequent upon lack of ideology, mission and vision by respective governments in Nigeria. At a global level, it has been an issue of concern that has given rise to numerous world summits. When an issue is discussed and dismissed with frivolous approach or seen as trivial, but rebounds now and again, it remains crystal factor that it has a genuine problem but unsatisfactory solution. According to Obi (2011), the same is applicable to the concept of a sustainable development. It remains a prevalent issue for both the developed and developing countries. The quest for a sustainable development is all about a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It ties

together concern for the carrying capacity of natural systems with the social challenges facing humanity.

The United Nations 2005 World Summit Outcome Document refers to the “interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars” of sustainable development as economic development, social development, and environmental protection vis-à-vis cultural development. In spite of that, we see our contemporary African societies tilting towards what could be characterized as egoistic and non-futuristic development. Example of such a development can be seen in Nigeria where one chooses to enrich himself instead of executing a project that will have a positive impact on both the present and future generations, execution of projects with less quality in order to be contracted over and over again tomorrow.

Sustainable development denotes a definite and continuous growth in every sphere of the structure of the society such as education, economy, technology and infrastructural development. It is the putting in place of functional measures such as hard work, democratic ideals, strong electoral institution and judiciary. Christianity as part of the religions in nation building is discoursed as a natural element in a personal life of Christians in Nigeria. This implies that Christianity explains a social living and prevails in all spheres of Nigeria as a society. As a religion, Christianity in Nigeria has a pervasive and powerful influence on cultural, economic, social, psychological, political and spiritual activities in Nigerian society. Religious beliefs and practices are fundamental to nation building. They are based in establishing an affixed relationship between the controller and the sustainer of life in the universe for a healthy balanced and improved mutual relationship, certain rules, regulations, norms, values and covenant terms have been put in place for blessing and punishment of man and his society. The choice is that of man and society. Most times, critics especially of philosophical background criticize God for granting man such freedom and choice. Such philosopher did not realize that God has been in constant touch with man since the creation of the universe and emergence of Nigeria as a nation.

“Education”, according to Fafunwa (1974):

Is the aggregate of all processes by which a child or young adult develops the abilities, attitudes and other forms of behaviour which are of positive value to the society in which he lives; that is to say, it is a process for transmitting culture in terms of continuity and growth and for disseminating knowledge either to ensure social control or to guarantee rational direction of the society or both. (p. 17).

Here education created enlightenment among Nigerians that were exposed to European civilization and Christianity. Uchendu (1993) defines education as social process designed

to induct the rising generation into membership of their society. During the period of Christianity under review, there were two types of educations namely informal and formal education. Informal education is an indirect system of education whereby a child learns by observation and by imitation while formal education means direct education. As aforesaid, informal education could be defined as learning that takes place accidentally without premeditated schemes unlike formal education where everything is systematically planned.

Religion is a reality in human experience and pervades through life. It describes man's relationship with the supernatural world or the ultimate reality, generally referred to as God (Brown, 1980). What people call religion today refers to religions such as Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, Confucianism, African traditional religion (ATR) and the like.

According to Nmah (2011), spirituality, in wide variety of cultural and religious concepts, is itself often seen as incorporating a spiritual faith, along which advances to achieve a given objectives, such as a high state of awareness, outreach wisdom or communion with God or with creation. The spiritual journey is a path that may be considered a path of short duration directed at a special target, or a life time. On spirituality and religion, whilst, the term spirituality and religion can both refer to the search for the Absolute or God (or whatever name one wants to use), an increasing number of people have come to see the two as separate entities, religion being just one way in which man can experience spirituality. Religion may not be identical with spirituality; rather it is the form spirituality takes in civilization. Those who speak of spirituality outside of religion often define themselves as "spiritual but not religious" and generally believe in the existence of many different "spiritual paths"-emphasizing the importance of finding one's own individual path to spirituality. With respect to religion, this implies that spirituality takes on the following characteristics: faith becomes more personal, less dogmatic, more open to experimentation, and is based upon personal religious experience.

To Ukpong (1990), the concept of development has been discussed under various terms such as evolution, change, progress, modernization among others but summed under the generic term, "idea of progress" (p. 107). It is the growth in knowledge, essentially a legacy of the enlightenment to structural transformation at societal level. In the most liberal way, development means social, political, religious, cultural and economic changes in a society leading to improvement in the quality of life for all. Although this concept is not ideological, it nonetheless depicts development as a normative enterprise. According to Meler (1976), from this view, development is considered to be qualitative "growth plus positive change" applied to a particular human end (p. 6). The central element of

development is cumulative change which is highly complex and can only be achieved through different phases viv-a-vis cultural, economic, political, social, religious and so on operating in concert.

Challenges to Functional Education

In Nigeria, there is the need for functional education for the promotion of a progressive, united Nigeria, to this end, school programmes need to be relevant, practical and comprehensive, while interest and ability should determine individuals' direction in education. One of the national education goals is the acquisition of appropriate skills and the development for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of his society. In consequence, the quality of the instruction at all levels has to be oriented towards inculcating the following values such as acquisition of competences necessary for self-reliance (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004). The implication of the above is that the nation expects a level of competence from every school leaver. He should be able to exhibit a level of competence in his field of specialization for him and the society, thereby fending for him and contributing to the development of the nation. Education is an indispensable asset by which a nation can effectively achieve its sustainable development. Education is, however, a product of teaching. For a man to achieve a sustainable development there is the need for effective guiding of the desired learning experiences as a principal means available to foster a deeper and more harmonious development. The church is an important institution in implementation and achieving of educational set goals and objectives. There are certain hindrances to guiding learning experiences for sustainable human development. Man is challenged with the treats of modern slavery such as human trafficking, migration and other associated dehumanization, and if he must overcome these challenges he must thirst for a new humanism and be eager to discover the integrity of man in order to avoid the cleavages of the past. Man needs integral education which comprises morality, spirituality, technology, social and cultural training.

However, some of the faith based schools and public schools are confronted with lots of problems that hinder proper guidance of learning experience which is central to development of human being for future relevance in their society. In working towards achieving sustainable human development, there is need for functional schools where its desired experience will be acquired. Most schools especially government owned schools are in a very poor state in terms of school plants such as classrooms/lecture halls, laboratories, workshops, instructional materials/equipment, libraries and municipal services. These facilities, according to Okwo (2009), are very essentials in the actualization of the desired experiences. Funds are required for buying teaching equipment, furniture and their maintenance as well as paying the teachers or lecturers. It is

obvious that most schools are being run at less than the maximum cost required for effectiveness to be achieved (Eya, 2009). Likewise, the teachers are not encouraged in terms of what they are being paid to carry out their duties effectively; thus, some of the teachers/lecturers perform one task out of the numerous tasks of a teacher/lecturer, which are geared towards sustaining human development. This therefore does not favour the sustainable human development.

Teachers' competence and commitment are obvious fundamental factor in guiding classroom learning experiences for a sustainable human development. Eya (2009) observed that most educational sectors harbour non-professional teachers. This situation breeds high rate of quackery in the teaching field in Nigeria. Since the teachers who are guiding the learners are still wallowing in the euphoria of quackery, they impact quackery, they impact quack knowledge to the future teachers, hence this threatens the development of sustainable future.

To Njoku (2011), poor supervisory personnel are a hindrance to quality education. Proper supervision is essential for sustenance of professional longevity of serving teacher. Poor supervision of teaching personnel has resulted to harbouring of quack or non-professional teachers in the school. A non-professional teacher or quack teacher will have nothing to deliver to the learner; hence there is positive relationship between a professionally trained teacher and the quality of what he delivered. These aforementioned challenges hinder sustainable human development in terms of guiding classroom learning experiences.

Rigid curriculum is a challenge. The curriculum of a programme of study indicates what the learners are to learn. It prescribes the standard or quality expected from the programmer. Consequently, poorly designed curriculum cannot provide learning experiences required for sustainable human development. This implies that curriculum and programme of study need to be planned in accordance with millenniums needs especially in this globalized society so that teachers would be able to provide learning experiences required for sustainable human development.

The closure of schools, colleges, and universities by the Federal and state governments was an urgent need of the then current situation which prevailed in most states in Nigeria. Nigerian government started taking preventive decisions on Covid-19 just after World Health Organization (WHO) recognized it as a pandemic disease. The shutdown interrupted academic year. The spread of Covid-19 through the globe from China initially spared Nigeria, like many other African countries, with zero record case as at January, 2020. By 28 February, Nigeria reported, however, its first case. Consequently on 23 March in a bid to contain the spread of the coronavirus, schools were closed. This prompted a set of questions: Do schools in Nigeria have the technology to carter for the

estimated 46 million students affected? Do households have the facilities to engage their children in remote learning? Do teachers have the skills and facilities to deliver lesson or record massive open online course (MOOC) styled lessons? Children being out-of-school has long been the reality in Nigeria education sector with about 13.2 million school-age out of school, the highest in the world. Even though the basic (nine) years of education are free and compulsory, many children are not in school due to factors such as poverty, gender gaps, religion and regional factors, among others. Nigeria allocated about 7 percent of her national budget to education, as opposed to the 15-20 percent recommended by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The drastic escalation of covid will not only affect learning; it will also compound the pre-existing education inequalities in Nigeria, with vulnerable and disadvantaged children at the receiving end. There is onus on the Nigerian government to put in place measures to ensure continuity, inclusion and equity for all learners during this pandemic.

Unlike her Western predecessors, the Federal ministry of Education's school-closure directive did not produce clear-cut policy measures on how to mitigate learning disruptions for children and how to address the digital divide. The Coordinated Education response of covid-19 pandemic on the landing page of the Ministry Website is vague and does little to address the learning needs of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.

While the efforts of the Federal and State governments in the health sector and in providing financial stimulus packages and emergency palliatives must be commended, ignoring the education sector would be disastrous. As emphasized by UNESCO, temporary school-closure comes with high social and economic costs, with severe impact on children from disadvantaged background. The covid-19 pandemic has exposed the huge social-economic inequalities in Nigerian education system. Many wealthy families in Nigeria send their children to private schools given the poor resources and facilities in public schools. These children might experience little disruption to their learning, because their private schools are well equipped with Information Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructures, and they can afford remote learning. Learners from vulnerable and disadvantaged communities, without access to computers and other devices outside school, will, however, be left struggling. In many cases, these children live in communities with poor or non-existent internet connectivity and epileptic power supply. Inevitably, this digital divide will exacerbate learning disparities among these children. The temporary school-closures mean educators, funders and policy makers are rethinking the way learning and policy makers are rethinking the way learning is delivered and accessed. In China, for instance, governments provided computers to students from low-income households and offer students mobile data packages and telecommunication

subsidies. In France, efforts are being made to lend devices to learners who do not have access to computers. Similarly, Portugal is partnering with the post office to deliver worksheets to students who do not have access to the internet at home.

In Nigeria, some state governments such as Anambra, Kwara and Lagos use local media channels such as radio programmes to reach out to learners in remote communities. The government could further mitigate the negative impact of covid-19 on education by investing in the provision of solar-powered educational gadgets, pre-loaded with offline academic resources to learners in disadvantaged and vulnerable communities. The government should also partner with the telecommunication companies to offer free or subsidized mobile data packages for learners.

The covid-19 pandemic is revolutionizing digital and online education globally but kids in rural and underserved communities in Nigeria are being left behind as they are not equipped to adopt or transition to the new methods of learning. However, for families that faced harsh economic realities due to the lockdown, the purchase of radios or television might be trade-off that they cannot afford. A suggestion to this problem was the provision of portable solar radios to help bridge the digital divide. One major issue that may, however, stem from this inequality is that these kids who currently cannot keep up with their peers because of inaccessibility to digital tools may never catch up and will continue to feel the effect of this gap long after the pandemic is over. This may result in severely diminishing pool of young adults who have not garnered the necessary skills to stay ahead in the future. With Nigeria already behind in preparing its young people for the workplace of the future the effects of the pandemic further exacerbate this issue. There are measures that must be taken to help bridge the divide when the urgent needs of the pandemic subside. They centre largely on Public-Private Partnerships (PPs) and government aid. PPPs can do much to improve the quality of, and increase access to education for poor children in underserved communities. The result of new schools opening would be a reduced burden on teachers, currently ill-equipped to handle the ever-burgeoning class sizes.

Christianity and Sustainable Development in Nigeria in the Pandemic era

Nigeria has over the years craved for sustainable development. The successive Nigerian leaders have tried their hands on mapping out Directorate of Food, Road and Rural Infrastructures, Mass Mobilization for Social and Economic Recovery (MAMSER), War Against Indiscipline (WAI), National Orientation Agency (NOA), Code of Conduct Bureau, Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (I.C.P.C), Economic and Financial Crime Commission (E.F.C.C) of which failed to remedy Nigeria of her malady as a result

of corruption. Corruption is an endemic phenomenon in Nigeria that aided and abetted the bad governance that is characterized by greed, avarice, moral decadence, spiritual bankruptcy and insecurity.

From the foregoing, it could be observed that the quest for material things has expressions in shameless dishonesty, selfishness and unbridled looting of public treasury. Consequent upon this, Nigerian state in all intents and purposes is a society in trouble. There are unprecedented suffering for her citizens due to poverty, poor health institution, disease, weak education institution, unemployment, mal-administration, lack of essential amenities, weak economic policies, illiteracy, ethnicity and religious bigotries. Functionalism in this case makes the difference. It believes that every problem in society has a beginning. When one gets at the root of the problem, its solution is in sight. Christianity is one of such social institutions in the humanities that could make a consistent, committed and functional sustainable development in Nigeria and beyond. Christianity deals with the supersensible world. Through worship, prayer and praise, heaven could come down to human assistance. Similarly, Christian beliefs and practices such as covenant keeping, suspension, moral bond, filial deity obligation and devotion add colour to functional perspective of sustainable development in Nigeria. The mind-set and life-style of Nigerians has to change positively in the spirit of functionalism. The attitude that nothing works in Nigeria does not allow a functional flood of ideas that may promote sustainable development in Nigeria. To salvage Nigeria from social decay, extinction, disunity and the persistent lack of sustainable development, social dynamics of Christian religion are articulated under filial devotion, filial obligation, service-oriented sacrifice, servant-leadership and sincere or honest social re-orientation. They would form the main thrust of new Nigerian worldview. The richness and quality of Christianity in promoting sustainable development in the negative effect of corona virus pandemic would be ensured.

No society can develop under spiritual, moral and educational barrenness. Christianity introduced new faith, western education and civilization in Nigeria vis-à-vis Africa. From the aforementioned and discussion on Christianity and education in nation building in the era of coronavirus pandemic, it could be observed that Christianity is vital to nation building. Christianity can still sustain development in Nigeria in spite of endemic and systematic corruption and coronavirus pandemic affecting Nigeria. Christian beliefs and practices, norms and values are still relevant to preserve the awe-inspiring aspects of Nigerian cultural heritage, the needed technological, educational, democratic and economic development.

The Challenges of Education and Sustainable Development in Nigeria

There are observable challenges of sustainable development in Nigeria. They include misplaced priority in education policy, corruption, mal-administration, weak leadership characterized by ignorance and illiteracy, untutored mind, tabula rasa brain, ignorant and un-teachable advisers, commissioners and ministers, lack of modern facilities and infrastructures in education institution, lack of close monitoring for the execution of contracts awarded and how money budgeted for the contracts are been spent, poor funding and effective implementation of development projects. Inability to set our priorities right as regards economic, education, health, democratic, ideological and administrative policies by self-made messiahs or as a nation poses a serious challenge to the existence of Nigeria as one nation and that explains also the retrogression in human and social development in Nigeria. For instance, Nigeria is one of the world leaders in crude oil production. Exporting it and importing the refined product coupled with the devaluation of Nigerian currency is one of those noted misplaced priority. The inability in having functional refineries, health institution, predictable academic calendar and quality leadership in Nigeria have cast doubts in the minds of many Nigerians and external observers as to federal government sincerity in tackling fuel and educational crises in Nigeria.

The importance of railway system in a growing economy like Nigeria cannot be over emphasized. Alas, the rail transportation has been overtaken by road transport system despite poor network road in Nigeria, crumbling edifice, self-destruct turn that nation has taken (herders/farmers), this ripping division taken place in our modern society, communities are constantly ravaged by cattle marauders, women were raped and displaced in thousands and turned into beggars over all the landscape of Nigeria, pensioners are regarded as dead wood, the RUGA (literary; human settlement policy is a controversial Nigerian policy, introduced by the Muhammad Buhari presidency, aimed at resolving the conflict between nomadic Fulani herdsmen and sedentary farmers-Rural Grazing Area) policy to annihilate people from the land, lop-sided appointments to crucial positions in civil service and parastatals according to Wole Soyinka “dividers-in-chief” and “Dividers-in-law”.

Social Welfare

Another function of religion in promoting sustainable development could be seen in the area of social welfare of its members. It was this concern that inspired the Christian missionaries in Nigeria to provide schools, welfare programmes that saw the abolition of the killing of twins, human sacrifice and ritual killing. Christianity has consistently

established educational institutions from nursery to tertiary levels. By promoting education, Christianity empowers progress and sustainable development. Bowen University, Iwo, Wesleyan University, Ondo, Baptist University, Ogbomosho, Covenant University, Ottah, Redeemer University, Mowe, Ajayi Crowther University, Ondo, Madonna University, Okija, Paul University, Awka, Gregory University, Uturu and many more are universities approved by the National Universities Commission (NUC).

As centres of academic excellence, they conduct researches with the aim of contributing to national development. They especially contribute in the developments of high level manpower. By establishing institutions of higher learning, Christianity has joined hands as one of the best means of developing national consciousness. Similarly, researches carried out in these institutions make for a better understanding of Nigerian society. They have challenged Nigerians to look inward for functional solutions to their practical problems of everyday life. The application of research findings promotes intellectual curiosity, creativity and the best of knowledge (Uche, 2011). By applying what is acquired to the solutions of practical problems on ground research in these institutions aim at specific goals or results which may include the improvement of products and processes already in use.

Christianity through functional education articulates and inculcates the proper values orientation for the sustainable development in health care system in Nigeria. Religion introduced in Nigeria's educational curriculum has articulated also the development of intellectual capacities, skills, and balanced understanding of individual and moral needs of Nigerians.

Christianity, Agriculture and Sustainable Development

During the missionary era, Christianity introduced Bible and plough (a mechanized agriculture) based on a new faith. This is because Christianity is a faith with a prestige value. Christians were in the forefront of a new enlightenment throughout the African continent and they and their children set the fashion which the impressionable Africans followed. Missionary enterprise enabled people to earn their livelihood in 'clean jobs' a situation which was greatly exploited by the church. Chiefs become friends of missionaries and either professed Christianity themselves or surrendered their children for education and baptism, undoubtedly because of expected political, religious, moral or material benefits; but the church found this acceptable and rejoiced at it (Nmah, 2010). In his interpretation of Church Missionary Society (CMS) history, Henry Venn emphasized the close connection between the anti-slavery movement and society origins (Shenk, 1983). In his book titled, "The African slave trade and its remedy", Sir Thomas F. Buxton, the greatest leader of the abolitionists after the death of William Wilberforce, insisted that

the full ransom of Africa was to be found in her fertile soil. He suggested the establishment of a settlement at the confluence of the rivers Niger and Benue to act as an agricultural training centre for Africans. Christianity was to be introduced as a necessary aspect of his programme to bring about the moral and spiritual regeneration of Africans. Hence Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton advocated the principle of the “Bible and plough” slogan which caught the imagination of the next generation. Venn became an energetic exponent of the Buxton doctrine of faith and employment.

Today, our society is experiencing terrorism and the like. Most of the violent crimes carried out in Nigeria such as armed robberies, riots, endsars protests, demonstrations, political thuggery, militancy and among others, are done consequent upon being instigated, but the remote cause is hunger and unemployment coupled with maladministration. The ethno-religious crises in the North and agitations in the West and South are done not because the people hate their political elites but they could not provide food and employment for people especially the graduate unemployed youths.

These leaders occupied themselves in amassing wealth at the detriment of the populace. The protests in the North Africa to remove most of the long serving president and tenure elongation are done not because their citizens hate them, but because they could not provide food and employment for the people. Sudan is a case in point, followed by Mali, Zimbabwe, Egypt, Libya, Malawi, Guinea and so on. Outside Africa, one can cite Lebanon, Yemen, Syria and among others.

Corona virus Pandemic in Nigeria and its Spiritual Effects

As the faithful around the world celebrate Passover and Easter, religious institutions adapted and changed in response to the corona virus pandemic. Religious group responded to the corona virus pandemic with virtual services and calls to help the most vulnerable and why others are defying orders not to congregate and calling the outbreak “God’s judgment”. Many congregations put their services online. Every day, there are online options for kids, adults and seniors. There is singing, praying, exercise and meditation. They even offer bedtime stories and of course, Bible study. Local religious groups provided assistance as well as bring people together at this difficult time. Creating community is the sweet spot for most religions. Churches were somehow able to reach people via online tools and programming. Nigerians were not only seeking community, but they were also looking for things to keep them busy when they were stuck at home. There were not much spike in people’s religious activities and new commitment to do something. A recent survey said that people are praying more. People pray when they are stressed and they really want something. The covid-19 may be the biggest religious story

of our time. It raises metaphysical and epistemological questions, why is this happening? How did it happen? What does it mean? Questions like that can lead prayer. The virus also confronts us with moral questions: Do I wear a mask? Should I go to the market or country side? How can I help my neighbour without endangering my life? We are confronted with life and death choices, not just about our own wellbeing but also about our communities. Who gets a ventilator? Why are groups of people more susceptible than others? We are also realizing that we have very little control over our fate, which is frightening. And so, whether or not someone sees themselves as conventionally religious or not religious at all, it is hard not to be engaged with the spirituality and ethics of the pandemic-and to pray.

The coming of holidays for the Jews and Christians at this period has profound resonance during this current crisis. Passover celebrates the exodus from Egypt and Jews recall their passage from bondage to liberation. It is easy to see the present moment as one of the constraint and to look forward to when we can leave our homes and resume our lives. So, the epidemic speaks to the Passover message. It is also a time to recognize that other people remain in bondage-whether to poverty, spirituality, prejudice, addiction, political circumstances, domestic violence, or sickness. Those of us with homes, job security and food on our tables are lucky. Many people are risking their lives to help others- such as medical workers, care givers, medical professionals, service workers or as delivery people. Passover reminded us that we have to be mindful of those who are risking their own well-being for the sake of their families and their communities. The celebration of Jesus' resurrection is a time of sober reflection, to think about how God acts in our lives and what God calls us to do. The interesting thing about religion is that anyone can claim anything because most religious texts are open for interpretation. Slave owners used the Bible to justify slavery just as abolitionists used scripture to condemn it. Some religious leaders called covid-19 "God's judgment" because they viewed bad things as examples of divine wrath. Before this virus, they claimed God punishes us with tornadoes, bad leadership, earthquakes, illnesses and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). It is a particular theology that sees God messaging us through nature, and the news is never good. At this period, there are themes, service and freedom. There are also takeaways from the virus: we are bound together and interdependent. We are dependent on medical providers, who we will never meet, and we rely on men and women, who do not know us, who deliver the mail, run the grocery stores and make home deliveries. The people working at the frontlines of covid-19 are true heroes.

Recommendations

The research work has unveiled the weaknesses of Nigerian education system and therefore recommends the following.

1. Education is the bedrock of real sustainable development and a freedom from ignorance. Therefore government should invest much money in quality education in order to move the country to the next level.
2. Nigeria should make knowledge oriented education policies that will engender progress in the society.
3. Quality education should not for the elites' children in the society. It should be accessible to all citizens who want to learn.
4. Nigerian government should set aside 20% of her annual budget for the provision of quality education. This will ameliorate infrastructural deficiencies in education sector.
5. There should be proper monitoring mechanism on how the money budgeted for the education is utilized.
6. The Nigerian Federal government should give take off grant for those universities that have received theirs such as University of Uyo, Uyo, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka and among others. This will engender massive building of staff quarters, students' hostels, lecture halls, offices for the staff, libraries, laboratories and other vital structures.
7. Workers' welfare is non-negotiable. Reasonable minimum wage is not a luxury, but a necessity. Money in the pockets of hardworking workers is needful and imperative. The workers in Nigeria endure so much hard times without remonstrating whereas they make great sacrifices even during the corona virus pandemic for the growth of the nation. The lecturers were not given corona virus palliative rather the payment of their salaries from the months of February-May, 2020 were stopped. Again, as if that was not enough, their July-October salaries were withheld and that during the heat of the corona virus devastation of lives and economies. To be a worker in Nigeria is to be a perpetual slave to the employer. This is one of the determining factors responsible for corruption in Nigeria. Hence there should be adequate remuneration for Nigerian tertiary staffers.
8. As regards economy, it needs technology. Many of the communities in Nigeria are not even internet connected and therefore are left behind in the issue of online learning and globalization. Hitherto, the Nigerian government should make internet connection or facilities available with free data to such communities for the sake of ideological globalization. They should be carried along.

9. The government should consider provision of school plants as a matter of need and not want. This could be done by providing adequate finance for the procurement and management of school plants and payment of teachers' salaries and allowances.
10. The national supervisory boards should do their work without bribery or favouritism. In other words, schools at primary, secondary and tertiary levels whose plants are not functional should be closed down. This will help to render professional regulatory mechanism for ensuring programme quality and high standard so that the desired experiences are properly guided for sustenance of human development and the progress of Nigerian society. 3

Conclusion

In contemporary Nigerian society, educating students or children is a critical or influential task especially with the complex and acute socio-economic and political change with diverse view about education. The teacher in the present dispensation is faced with the major tasks of how to transfer the desired experiences to their learners. A new teacher in the face of this challenge has to consider his role not only as an instructor, but as guidance of learning experiences with regard to classroom management. The ability of a new teacher to carry out effective teaching depends on his prowess to handle classroom activities. The teacher as a key instrument to educational changes moves further than restructuring of schools, composition of national and regional curricula, development of benchmark assessment to proper guiding of classroom learning experiences. This means that the teacher is not only to develop the curriculum, but deliver and interpret it to the students. Furthermore, it is what teachers do at the classroom and outside the classroom that ultimately shape the kind of learning that students will experience, thereby help in sustaining the future human hope economically, socially, morally, and politically. Guiding classroom experience is primarily a job of well-trained teacher.

A new teacher needs, however, to develop his professional philosophy by thinking about the type of teacher he may like to become and decide what he needs to do to actualize it. The new teacher needs also to possess certain amount of administrative skills that are entrusted in him as school manager for the better development and sustenance of man's future.

Christianity believes in the essential quality of education, morality, spirituality and economic development in eliminating poverty, bad leadership, retrogressive education policies, ignorance, and character bankruptcy in Nigeria. In concrete terms this means that, in spite of inevitable human diversity, some measure of the capability of participating equally in quality education, economical, social, political and cultural

dimensions of life in society is necessary in the interest of social justice. If Nigerian government will be serious with the fighting of corruption, poverty alleviation, terrorism, ethno-religious bigotries, provision of energy and adequate security, human development, better remuneration to workers, and concrete quality education, foolishness and ignorance will be a history in the Nigerian society.

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