

THE IMPACT OF HOLISTIC CHRISTIAN EDUCATION IN CONTEMPORARY NIGERIAN SOCIETY: PROSPECTS AND VALUES

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Abstract

The paper exposed the Nigerian educational system which is characterised by an increasing rate of moral decadence and corruption that destabilizes and stagnates the developmental efforts of well-meaning Nigerians. Examination malpractices, plagiarism, forged educational certificates backed-up by educational institutions, indiscriminate award of academic honours, and forgery of educational certificates at all levels of education have destroyed our educational system in Nigeria. This paper is therefore premised on establishing the impact of holistic Christian education in contemporary Nigerian society. Though religion could inspire violence and shatters the social harmony among people of different religious affiliations, the paper shows that it could also serve as a vital tool for the consolidation of social harmonies and peaceful coexistence among people. Therefore, Church schools could be avenues of character moulding and formation of persons who later become protagonists in the society. The paper further highlighted the virtues of holistic Christian Education in a contemporary Society. The paper therefore recommends a holistic Christian education approach to the teaching and learning of learners in Nigeria especially in the conflict affected areas as this will enhance character moulding at early stage of life. It further recommends that the School of Biblical Studies Jos, as a matter of urgency, invest in establishing secondary schools where holistic Christian education is taught.

Introduction

It is a great personal pleasure and honour for me to deliver this lecture to mark the 26th Graduation Exercise, of the School of Biblical Studies (SBS) Jos, Nigeria. I have in many capacities been friend with SBS, Jos, for a long time now but this is my major assignment in the School. I am one of the Elders in the Bauchi Ring Road Church of Christ, a companion in mission. I bring greetings from my Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sebastian S. Maimako of the University of Jos where this Institution is affiliated and also where I work as a Professor of Building. These and other reasons, borne out of my close objective observations about the progress and developments at SBS, form the basis of my accepting to be here today for this lecture.

It is believed that change is the only permanent factor in life and nothing is more permanent than change. These changes include growth in persons and thing which are commonly characterized by

events that are either pleasant or unpleasant, desirable or undesirable and sometimes necessary or unnecessary.

In a modern society like Nigeria, many contemporary social problems have emerged which are against the norms, morals and ethics of our society and of course, make life very uncomfortable. Such problems include our deviance behaviour toward the commandments of God e.g. as in our struggle for the control of available scarce resources wrongly and violently. This, in turn, creates problems in the society, especially among the, have and the have not.

The contemporary situation of the Nigerian nation is very averse to the integral development of the human person, especially in the area of formal education and socio-civic advancement of an individual. This problem is most often seen as being rooted in the political differences and intransigence among the political elites of the major ethnic groups of Hausas, Yorubas and the

Ibos (Onu, 2001). In as much as this is part of the problem, with a critical study of the parallel developments of the recent security situation in the country, one would easily realize that there are religious influences involved which are mostly the significant factors behind the whole problem. These religious influences would have Christian and Muslim religions at the crux of the situation. DAVID

Religion inspires violence and shatters social harmony among people of different religious affiliations. Nevertheless, as a “two-edged sword”, it could also serve as a vital tool for the consolidation of social harmonies and peaceful coexistence among people (Onu, 2001). However, between the two possible applications of religion stated above, the former is not far from what religion seems to mean in contemporary Nigerian society.

Current Security Situation of the Nigerian Nation

National security has been problematic in the Nigerian society. Since after the Nigeria-Biafra war in 1967-1970, the nation has continued to experience a constant state of political and religious unrest leading to a condition of persistent religious and political conflicts (Peter, 2016). This has caused irreparable damages in the areas of national unity and infrastructural advancement and the entire economy at large. Tragically, it has had adverse effects on religious freedom or freedom of worship and has deprived the populace of many among fundamental human rights. The Nigeria-Biafra war according to Peter (2016) destroyed inter-ethnic confidence and brotherhood, especially as regards national politics, inter-regional business investments. Most importantly, the unity of the country in her diversity, which the Nigerian nation boasts of in her national pledge, appears to be a mere mirage.

The word security has to do with freedom from danger, anxiety and fear; a situation which shows that a country is not exposed to internal sabotage or external attack (Amadu, 1989). In the broader sense, security is seen as the struggle to secure the most basic necessities of life, such as food, fuel, medicine and shelter (Obafemi, 2006). Any social unrest arising from the absence of these facilities according to Ushe (2012), can lead to human security problems. From the above text, national security therefore means,

The ability of nations to prevent all forms of threats to its survival ranging from external aggression to threats of economic, political, military and environmental insecurities, whilst grappling with the challenges of nation-building and good governance (Gbenga, 2006).

National security is the aggregate of the security interests of all individuals, communities, ethnic groups and political entities to guarantee safety and security, the prosperity of individuals within a nation (Ushe, 2012). The issue of national security must necessarily be present to guarantee the social survival and economic advancements of any nation. In this capacity, the just distribution of political power, economic sustainability, diplomacy and projection of power becomes a necessity.

Formal Education in the Contemporary Nigerian Society

As a very complex subject, education is quite difficult to define. However, there are various definitions of education by scholars in diverse fields of expertise and at different times. These definitions are all relevant but none has been universally accepted as the standard definition of education. Nevertheless, Lannap and Kazi (2003) defined education as the oldest discipline in human history, which deals with the art of imparting, acquiring knowledge through teaching and learning, especially at school or similar institution. This definition is adopted in this paper because it is precise and assimilating of the key points about formal education.

Education is certainly one of the sectors given the highest priority by any government for the all-inclusive development of a society. It is the central nub where other sectors like economy, health, tourism, industry, aviation, energy/power, etc. revolve and through which they find their place in society. However, the morality and sanctity of education determine the extent to which education can attain its goal of shaping the entire aspects of the life of any society. On the other hand, when the issue of the sanctity and morality of education is raised, religion is rightfully invited to play its indispensable role. The role of religion is very vital to the advancement of education and the impingement of educational values in the entire life of peoples.

Since education is the basis of development, it

seems to me that the Nigerian educational system needs radical religious intervention. The reason for this intervention is clearly seen in our day to day experience of the dysfunctional nature of education at all levels in the Nigerian nation. On a daily basis, the Nigerian educational system displays an increasing rate of moral decadence and corruption that destabilizes and stagnates the developmental efforts of well-meaning Nigerians. Examination malpractices, plagiarism, forged educational certificates backed-up by educational institutions, the indiscriminate award of academic honours, and forgery of educational certificates at all levels of education have destroyed our educational system in Nigeria. Ironically, many African nations still send their children to study in Nigeria. This is a threat to the future of the African continent. It is a clear manifestation of the declination and decadence of the educational system and its inherent values in our contemporary societies, especially in Nigeria.

The Collapse of the Educational System

While the prevailing education system in Africa is collapsing, that of Nigeria has totally collapsed.

To graphically demonstrate how our educational system has collapsed. A discussion ensues about TETFUND support giving to research in Nigeria that less than 40 per cent of the proposals are readable while only 15 per cent of the readable ones are successful. A recent interview was conducted to select, out of the supposedly First-Class degree holders in Engineering, suitable candidates to proceed to the UK for postgraduate training. Less than 10 per cent of these can be said to be marginally qualified. Let me state what you are already aware of with regard to teaching in our secondary schools. Many of those who teach in a number of our private secondary schools are school certificate failures. While only 20 per cent of those who sat for JAMB finally get admitted, less than 10 per cent of those who sat for NECO in 2011 passed with Credits in English and Mathematics (Jegede, 2013).

Refusal to admit the Obvious

The Nigerian is a wonderfully different breed who is either a diehard patriot or ignorantly arrogant (Jegede, 2013). The Nigerian never wants to hear that his country is being criticised. In fact, he gets more irate if he is being told by a foreigner of his

terrible negative, perhaps the near-death experience of his recent visit to Nigeria. Even when we know that these ills abound in the country, we do what we can to defend the indefensible. A case of an ostrich burying its head in the sand believing no one sees him. The usual slang is **'make una manage am now, it is well'**. For how long shall we continue to manage our collapsed educational system that keeps churning out morally decadent illiterates at all levels.

Please can someone help me, what are they really looking for?

I was at a function recently when I overheard a heated discussion between a Police Officer and his friend seated at the next table. The civilian was relating his experience on the Ijebu-Ode to Ore road where at every kilometre of the 200kilometres stretch, there is a police checkpoint with at least six to ten policemen. The questions the civilian asked his police officer friend were: what are they looking for that motorist will have to be subjected to a check at every kilometre? What is it that the previous group forgot to locate that the next must search for? if the next group finds incriminating goods when the previous one did not wouldn't this be an indictment on the training of the policemen on duty? The most disgusting aspect is not just the carting of logs haphazardly put on the road and abandoned in the night as risks for accidents waiting to happen, it is the police greeting and saluting you as many times as he would announce that *'your boys are on duty here, Sir'* or insist on wishing you a happy weekend when it is only a Tuesday. The civilian ended his conversation with the police friend he is told that it has become the most lucrative trade to be at the checkpoints rather than doing the normal policing of the community. He concluded, no wonder armed robbers and kidnappers are having a field day in the cities and villages abandoned by the policemen for greener pastures at the roadblocks. Kidnapping has become so lucrative in Nigeria that so-called **Educated ones** are into the said business.

Indices of illiteracy despite assumed educated evidence of a collapsed educational system

The recounted issues above and very many more can only happen in God's own country, a.k.a. Nigeria, despite the religiosity and the many Universities in the country. Recent statistics by NUC (2019) shows a total of 170 Universities in

Nigeria: 43 Federal Universities, 48 State Universities and 79 Private Universities. Somehow you wonder if we are all not play-acting believing the real thing is yet to come. But the sad reality is that all these are indices of an illiterate and acclaimed educated society. Is there any remedy, and if so, what is the solution?

Holistic Christian Education the way forward

Holistic Christian Education is assuredly the answer since it is based on the premise that each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to the community, to the natural world, and to spiritual values such as compassion and peace. It aims to call forth from people an intrinsic reverence for life and passionate love for learning. This is done, not through an academic "curriculum" that condenses the world into instructional packages, but through direct engagement with the environment. Miller (1988) asserts that holistic Christian education nurtures a sense of wonder and helps the person feel part of the wholeness of the universe.

Giussani (2001) makes four central claims on education. **First**, he proposes that education must be oriented towards what he describes as experience with total reality in which Christ can come to be seen as fulfilling what it is for us to be authentically human. **Second**, he posits respect for tradition as a necessary pre-condition for the possibility of education, since it is only from within the concrete specificity of a person's location in a family, culture, and society that one can face the question of reality and engage it in a truly critical way. **Third**, he suggests that the Christian community must play an important and intentional role in education by providing an ecclesial environment in which Christ is made known in relationships and actions. **Finally**, he sees the teacher as embodying the experience of reality in a particular way, with a coherence that carries with it a certain kind of authority, though not one that is perceived as external or imposed. In Nigeria, the four elements suggested by Guissani 2001 are lacking. Thus, the school graduates churned out lacks the basic skills of coping with life's challenges hence resulting in the kidnapping, killing and armed banditries.

Philosophy and Centrality of Christian Education

The role of Christian education is to enable students in church-sponsored schools to grow spiritually, intellectually, physically and socially. To be a responsible member of society a person must understand the world around him/her and recognize what it needs. In this way, Christian education helps students to be able to discern what is good and evil by imparting wisdom which offers students the ability to communicate and understand each other despite their social, religious, cultural and intellectual diversities. One is therefore led to agree with John Sturm, the great reformation educator who said that the goal of his Christian academy was to instil "a wise and eloquent piety".

Bogonko (1977) and Groome (1991) concur that the purpose of Christian education is to deepen spiritual understanding through belief in a divinely ordered universe as a necessary means of understanding oneself and one's place in the world. It encourages students to interpret their lives, relates to others and engages in the world in ways that reflect a faith perspective. It aims to make fundamental differences in how people should realize their being in relation with God, self, others and the world. This is the reason why teaching Christian education in church-sponsored secondary schools should engage all dimensions and dynamics of a human being.

Christian education has a humanizing import in people's lives that informs and forms them in how to think critically, act responsibly and create imaginatively. The educators' task in Christian schools is to invite students to imagine the consequences of their praxis and envision how an aspect of it can or should be reshaped to promote the well-being of others. Veith (2006) discusses key principles students require to make worthwhile decisions: the creation of enabling environment, accommodation of other people's opinions, respect for other people's choices, following authorized procedures, doing interactive interrogation and consultation, facilitating group planning, maintaining support and being willing to take initiatives.

Christian education offered in homes, churches and schools must be Christ-centred and should be effective. It must take the Bible as its primary source and the only criterion for the truth. In

Christian education, all presumed facts and opinions are tested by the Word of God. Understanding of the nature of biblical revelation has tremendous implications for Christian education. Biblical revelation sets standards and provides the basis for all Christian education: content taught and methods of teaching applied. In so doing all education factors must be in harmony with the teachings of the Bible.

Christian education is said to be Christian when “it is an outgrowth of God’s revelation ... and... an outgrowth of the Christian worldview” (Ilori, 2005). Ilori adds that it is also Christian when its concepts are “derived directly from sources provided by Christian theology, the Bible and Christian philosophy”. Its curriculum should integrate the Bible in theory and practice with the Bible being a vital part of the content and integrated with all subject matter. Apart from being Bible-based, it must be life-related. As such, the relevant theologically sound material that addresses real-life issues become the means of improving, developing and nurturing students.

Christian educators must know the purpose of Christian education and the rationale of instituting church schools. Tolbert (2000) says that Christian educators should take teaching as a calling to inculcate the character of Christ in the hearts of students in the event of acquiring intellectual knowledge. He also maintains that educators in the class-room should endeavour to make students disciples of Jesus. This should be done through teaching them to love, respect and obey God and to live in accordance with biblical principles. Indeed, Moses as the educator for the Israelites sought to plant the image of God among the Israelites.

Hayes (1991) states that Christian schools are found all over the world. The schools occasionally are over-enrolled compared to secular ones because of the values they cuddle making parents and guardians choose them. Students are taught risks and effects of drug abuse, sexual immorality, lack of discipline and negative peer influences. While this is a commendable exercise, the teachings are not fully understood because as there are many cases of drug and substance abuse, riots and indiscipline cases among students despite the Christian perceived foundations. This raises doubts if the educators and students put the Bible at the centre and evaluate all they see in the world through the ‘eye’ of God.

Church Schools for Holistic Christian Education

Church schools are avenues of character moulding and formation of persons who later become protagonists in the society. In secondary schools, students are helped to develop a sense of ethical and moral judgment. By implications, schools should aim at enabling learners to become critical and creative thinkers when faced with technological, social and economic challenges. This may explain why educators in Nigeria County are expected to be role models.

The family as an institution is charged with the responsibility of educating young people the centrality of holistic development. Discussing the role of parents, siblings and schools in moulding a child, Mweru (2008) and Guissani (2001) state that the family is extremely important in the individual’s life as it interprets the meaning of reality, teaches life’s fundamentals and is generally the first place of education for a child. These authors further indicate that families and educators in church schools should collaborate to ensure consistency in holistic development content for students in both home and school. Giddens, Mitchell & Richard (2005) add that parents and elderly persons in both the nucleus and extended families have a responsibility to form solid foundations for moral, intellectual, physical and emotional education.

In Nigeria, students spend nine months in schools and three months on holidays. Teachers still use the holidays to load students with academic work in what is commonly known as home lessons. Holidays which should be utilized by families to equip students with social, economic, spiritual and emotional contents are used for remedial teaching, tests and evaluations to equip students for National examinations. This shows how teachers have interfered with holistic development objective of church schools by solely preparing students for academic excellence.

Social and emotional education to students as Ogeno (2008) opines helps them to make decisions with adequate consultation before action. Such education as he further remarks enables students to develop a positive self-image, self-appreciation, self-understanding, self-forgiveness and self-acceptance. It also helps them to cope with academic, interpersonal, intercultural and social challenges. Discussing the urgency of

instituting more Christian schools, Hill (2006) asserts that the future of young people depends on how their spiritual, social and emotional foundations are laid especially in their **secondary schools' system**. It is for this reason that secondary school education should provide academic, intra-personal, interpersonal and social skills necessary for changing times.

Formation of character among students is the work of many people and institutions. Parents and teachers need to cooperate in taking responsibilities to facilitate character formation and introduce students to the knowledge that would make them efficient self-managers. Such knowledge would prepare students with skills to enable them to adjust to all situations and make worthwhile decisions without violating the rights of others. This will make them appreciate others in order to co-exist despite the social, cultural and religious diversities.

Prospects of Holistic Christian education

Religion and National Values (RNV) is a harmonized school subject has the following prospects:

- i. **Provision of a purposeful and robust value education programme.** The curriculum content of RNV is a deliberate and goal-oriented approach to value education in Nigeria. It provides for a well-structured and designed values education content that is appropriate in the present reality of the Nigerian society. This is in support of the view of Ajibade (2013) that there is a need for purposeful ethical regeneration and value orientation programme for the citizens.
- ii. **Development of national values in learners.** The subject emphasises national values like honesty, tolerance, love, justice, obedience, cooperation and diligence. This can help to inculcate national values in secondary school students and thereby change the negative behaviour of Nigerian youths. Ajere and Oyinloye (2011) express that negative attitude could be modified and changed to positive ones. An intellectual approach to change bad behaviour to positive ones is quite possible through the rebranding of Nigerians in the teaching of core values in

Nigerian schools for assimilation and internalization.

- iii. **Youth empowerment and re-orientation.** Many Nigerian youths have imbibed negative behaviours like disobedience, intolerance, laziness, injustice, covetousness and fraudulent practices. Locke, cited in Ayorinde, Amali and Yusuf (2011) is of the opinion that at the completion of the stipulated educational programme, a well-groomed and schooled child is expected to have developed character that will make him law-abiding and productive in the society. RNV is capable of achieving this goal by empowering Nigerian youths to become effective and responsible citizens. The subject can help to equip our youths with qualities like honesty, diligence, integrity, patriotism, patience and selfless service to the nation.

Virtues of holistic Christian Education in a Contemporary Society

Holistic Christian education for character formation should form essential pillars in the philosophy of education (Knight, 1983). Holistic Christian education to learners do not only benefit them but society as a whole.

Norvic (2002), Knoll (1992) and White (1968) emphasize on building character through an integrated curriculum. Hodge (2005) and Checkland (1981) believe that spirituality makes learners more human and godlier. It could be seen that; role modelling and counselling are the means to holistic development among the youth. Modelling and counselling are integrated into the six components of holistic character formation: physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, moral and social.

Miller (1998) says that: to achieve the intended objectives of holistic education, institutions must develop curricula with programmes for transmission of the intended contents. He advises that implementers of the curricula should carefully develop programmes which act as the agents of its transmission. Choice of the programmes should be guided by the environment, nature of learners and human resources. The curricula should be interpreted to suit the context in which they are applied. Miller further argues that challenges which face the holistic education curriculum result

from laxity of the stakeholders, pressure from secular curricula and facilitation costs. Religious organizations around the world have educational institutions which have developed their own holistic Christian education curricula.

Physical Competencies

Physical Education (PE) plays a central role in educating the whole student. It provides students with opportunities to become skilled mentally develop fitness and gain understanding about the importance of physical activities. The physical activities such as manual work, work programme, nature walk and physical activities/games. Development of physical competencies in students which will help them to develop a positive attitude towards physical activities and work.

Emotional Competencies

Students are faced with various challenges which affect their emotional development. They need skills to manage their emotions, both at home and at school. Emotional competencies provide them with a set of competencies in their daily life to increase their abilities consecutively and maintain superior relationships with others so as to develop a better outlook on life. The study will help the students to understand why human beings behaved differently to given situations, times and circumstances. It also made them learn to co-exist despite diversities. Further, it enabled them to know how to survive the challenges which interfere with their emotional wellbeing. This could be achieved through enlightening students on the effects of uncontrolled emotions, hasty reactions to various challenges and the importance of self-acceptance, self-worth, self-forgiveness and self-esteem.

Intellectual Competencies

Intellectual growth is the progression from ignorance to the consciousness of things, challenges, and concepts. Intellectual competence among the students is attained through interaction with other talented colleagues in academics, teachers during curriculum coverage and their life experiences as they practise what they learn in class. Holistic Christian education for character formation helped students to become aware that not all knowledge was certain. Intellectual competence gained through holistic Christian

education could be revealed to the public that Christian education did not only prepare learners spiritually but also intellectually. programmes such as Bible drills, home health education, arts, crafts, design and creative writing were offered. These programmes are brain tasking, required high concentration and memorization of the already learned materials. The programmes helped students to sharpen their intellectual competencies.

Social Competencies

Social competence refers to the social, emotional and cognitive skills that students need for successful social adaptations. It describes the student's effectiveness and ability to establish and maintain a high quality of mentally satisfying relationships with others. Development of social competence among the students in schools through holistic Christian education for character formation enabled students to establish and maintain social connections during and after school. It also increased tolerance and cohesion among the students to reduce hatred, malice, antagonism and other social pressures which were witnessed in schools. Programmes such as sharing talents and skills through exhibitions, students' camporees, pathfinder club and inter-house tournaments created opportunities for students to come together as teams. That enabled them to build teamwork and valued one another consequently established their social bonds.

Moral Competencies

Moral competence refers to how students might be brought up to develop virtues expected of good citizens. It makes them be responsible for the choices they make and treatment of friends of both sexes. Moral teachings to the students enhance their moral fibre. Moral teachings could be provided through programmes such as human reproductive health and safety education, gender awareness, equality and responsiveness of the consequences of female circumcision. The moral competencies equipped students with skills on how to maintain moral uprightness which aimed at helping them to portray a Christ-like image in the school, homes, church and society

The synergy between Holistic Christian Education and contemporary Nigerian Society

The grave issues in our times-ethnic conflict,

violence, terrorism, genocide, war, massive displacement of peoples living in subhuman conditions, poverty, hunger, disease, ignorance, addiction, environmental decay, increase in juvenile crimes, child abuse-not only remain unsolved but have grown in almost uncontrollable proportions, despite the so-called scientific and technological advancement. How can we continue to talk about the quality of education when we cannot even begin to alleviate the human condition? How can we continue to work towards development in a violent, unjust and turbulent world? There can be no development without peace, just as there is no peace without development.

A massive radical change is needed in our egoistic lifestyles, our irresponsible production and consumption patterns, our destructive ways of ravaging our environment. We must work together towards a re-education of humankind, an attitudinal and behavioural revolution of the mind, heart and will if we want to save humankind from total disaster.

The challenges posed by our rapidly changing world and the major tensions that we face have been addressed in many ways. The new educational paradigm of Lifelong Education (i.e., learning how to learn, based on the four pillars of education: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be) is the master key to meet the challenges of our century (UNESCO, 2006).

Education should be viewed as fundamental for personal and social development, as well as an instrument for peace and tolerance, non-violence and international understanding. Quality of education will then be considered not in fragmented or purely pragmatic and instrumental terms, but in a more holistic manner, the development of all the talents of the individual; the formation of the whole person, the full flowering of all the human powers and faculties (physical, intellectual, affective, aesthetic, ethical, and spiritual), and the transformation of society.

No doubt the phenomenal advances in science and technology, the information and communication revolution have made dramatic breakthroughs in our lives; but they have not prevented the breakdowns in the social moral order, the upsurge in crime and violence, the erosion of human, ethical, cultural and spiritual values (Joseph,

2009). This was supported by Cox (2007) when he calls for values dimension in education and society. Stressing that science with a conscience and technology with a human heart at the service of humanity is needed for millennium education. In other words, there is a need for the holistic and integrated Christian education of the human person in a learning society.

In the same vein, UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy (2002-2007) Draft 31 C/4 Contributing to peace and human development in an era of globalization has defined as its first domain of action: Culture of peace through education, and pointed out poverty and conflict as the prime causes which put human security at risk, and endangers human dignity and social justice.

All of the leading holistic thinkers identify the crisis of our time as an epistemological crisis. We are not arguing against technology as such, or against capitalism in itself. I am saying that underneath our political, social, and economic arrangements, the way modern culture defines and understands reality itself is faulty, and this flawed way of knowing gives rise to distorted, we might even say cancerous, forms of technology and economic organization.

The purpose of holistic Christian education either in Nigeria or any other place is to prepare students to meet the challenges of living as well as academics. Put differently, holistic education aims to call forth from young people an intrinsic reverence for life and passionate love of learning. This is done, not through an academic „curriculum“ that condenses the world into instructional packages, but through direct engagement with the environment.

Holistic Christian education does not simply instruct young people about what is true and what is false, but enables the learner to inquire: what does this mean? How is this experience, or this fact, or this advertising message related to other things I know? If I act on my understanding, how will that affect other people or the habitat of other living beings? This encourages young people to care about the world they live in. Other people matter, the natural world matters. Cultural heritage, social responsibility, and ethics matter.

In the case of conflict-affected areas in Nigeria, holistic Christian education according to Kaigama and Audu (2014) aims to call forth from people an

intrinsic reverence for life and passionate love of learning. In this wise, to educate young people in Nigeria means helping them bring forth their creativity, their compassion, their curiosity, their moral and aesthetic sensitivity, their critical intellectual skills, their ability to participate in a robust democracy. In other words, holistic Christian education aims at the wholeness of the learner in order to promote the common identity and goal of Nigerian society.

Conclusion

From the above, it could be surmised that in holistic education, the teacher is seen less like a person of authority who leads and controls but rather is seen as a friend, a mentor, a facilitator, or an experienced travelling companion. Schools are seen as places where students and adults work towards a mutual goal. Open and honest communication is maintained and differences between people are respected and appreciated. Cooperation is the norm, rather than competition. Thus, many schools incorporating holistic beliefs do not give grades or rewards. The reward of helping one another and growing together is emphasized rather than being placed above one another.

A holistic and integrated education towards a complete human person may seem to be an unrealistic and an impossible task since the things that count cannot be counted, and what matters most may be invisible to the eye. It is only when we have the power to value that we will be able to distinguish the essential from the non-essential and to realize that the dignity of the human person and the excellence of the human spirit are the ultimate criteria of quality.

At this point, it may be said that standards of quality in this age of globalism and IT can be met only through a holistic approach to education which veers away from rigid compartmentalization of content to a more multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary view of reality; authoritarian teacher-centred teaching strategies to more democratic, participatory, interactive learning methods; content-focused teaching to a holistic cognitive- affective-behavioural teaching-learning cycle; prepared and fixed modules to flexible and adaptable guides to teaching and learning; values-free to values-integrated subject matter with emphasis on the valuing process; mere information to formation and transformation;

academic excellence alone to moral excellence, character building and personality development.

Finally, in holistic Christian education, the classroom is often seen as a community, which is within the larger community of the school, which is within the larger community of the village, town, or city, and which is, by extension, within the larger community of humanity.

Recommendations

Having gone through the state of insurgency in Nigeria, it is obvious that conflict and violence affect the internal workings of schools. While education could either be used to promote peace and stability or to inculcate nationalism it can also perpetuate ethnic or religious hatred. This paper recommends a holistic Christian education approach to the teaching and learning of learners in Nigeria, especially in the conflict-affected areas. Because, it is strongly believed that if properly implemented and monitored, holistic Christian education blends and interfaces local wisdom with global knowledge, values and skills, which will develop the student to become a citizen of his/her country as well as a citizen of the global village. It is also recommended that the School of Biblical Studies, Jos as a matter of urgency, invest in establishing secondary schools where holistic Christian education is taught. This will enhance character moulding at an early stage of life.

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