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Awareness of the Economic Implications of aging in Oshiri Community Ebonyi State, Nigeria

Joseph Ogbonnaya Alo Ekpechu (Ph.D)
Department of Sociology
Federal University Ndufu-Alike Ikwo (Funai)
Ebonyi State, Nigeria
E-mail: ogbonnaya_ekpechu@yahoo.com
Ekpechu.alo@funai.edu.ng
+234 (0) 8064744193

Abstract

Aging is a source of concern to many. This is because if one is not an elderly person today he could become one tomorrow. It becomes imperative that adequate awareness of aging issues is accorded a priority. This is because if the individuals, the government and corporate organisations are adequately aware of these aging issues it would enable the policy makers to formulate adequate policies that would be favourable to the elderly people. Based on the above, this study aimed at finding the level of awareness possessed of the economic implications of aging in Oshiri community Ebonyi state, Nigeria. In doing this, there was a review of relevant literature which enabled the researcher to find out the findings of other researches and/or researchers on the issue. The social exchange theory was adopted as the frame for the study. This study was therefore carried out using the cross-sectional research design. The questionnaire method and the structured interview schedule were effective tools used in obtaining information from respondents. The questionnaire was administered to 642 respondents. It was found among others that the females had more knowledge of the economic implications of aging in Oshiri community Ebonyi state Nigeria than the males. Based on these findings, it was recommended that social pension should be provided to the elderly from 60 years of age and above. This would help to improve on the welfare of the elderly especially in Nigeria where yearly budgetary allocation to social welfare scheme is usually small (Word Count: 247).

Key Words: Aging, Awareness, Economic Implications, Females, Males

Introduction

From time to time people find themselves and/or family members, friends and relatives becoming elderly. Some of those who become elderly has and/or had the privilege of being looked after by some family members. These services could be rendered by the children, wife (wives), husband and other relatives. These people were always available to care for the elderly people in the family.

The world wide population of persons aged 65 years was an estimated 420 million, a 9.5 million increase from 1999 (Goulding, Rogers & Smith, 2003). For the world as a whole, the elderly will grow from 6.9% in 2000 to a projected 19.3% in 2050. Similarly, the elderly population would grow from 5.2% in 1950, 6.9% in 2000 to 19.3% in 2050; for the whole world (Gavrilov & Heuveline, 2003 p6; United Nations, 2001). However, in sub Saharan Africa, an area where both fertility and mortality rates are high, the proportion of persons aged 65 years is expected to remain small, increasing from an estimated 2.9% in 2000 to 3.7% in 2030 (Goulding et al, 2003).

Although, sub Saharan Africa's elderly population is not as large as in other regions of the world, it must be considered as a potential cause of concern, since the largest increase in the number of elderly in the world between 1980 and 2000 occurred in Asia and Africa (WHO, 2009). As Africa experiences population aging, there may be few younger ones left behind to care for the elderly.

That is why Adeokun (1986) and Ajomole (2007) see the near presence of population aging in Nigeria nay other African countries as posing a serious future challenge to the country. This is a country where some state governments find it difficult to pay workers' salaries, non-regular payment of pensions to the retired work force, the inadequate social services and health facilities to cater for the needs of the elderly. Poverty among the elderly seems to be the order of the day in the country.

Respect for the elderly has remained a tradition in the African continent. This has been enhanced by presence of the extended family system. This BBC Africa (2009) captured as being an envy of many in the Western world where many old people remain isolated and lonely. In agreeing with the above view, Kalasa (2001) stated that, in pre-industrial societies such as ours where the economic and political position of elderly persons is generally strong; where families are supportive of needs in old age.

The advent of modernisation is a success story for the whole world. Industrialisation and modernisation have produced changes and challenges with regard to where and how people live, creating many risks and problems that the elderly and families have to face over their life time (Kalasa, 2001). In Igbo land today, most of our youth migrate to urban areas in search of better conditions of living. This could have an adverse effect on the care of the elderly in our families. Owing to the negative effects of modernisation, Ajomole (2007) believes that older people's lives are characterised by growing inadequacies in customary family supports, social exclusion and non-existent social security targeted at them, thus being very vulnerable to poverty and diseases.

According to WHO (2009 p1), in almost every country, the proportion of people aged over 60 years is growing faster than any age group as a result of both longer life expectancy and declining fertility rates. The greatest increase in the number of older people, occur in the developing and middle income countries, which are now experiencing rapid shifts from high mortality and high fertility, to much reduced fertility and greater longevity (Ajomole, 2007).

Researchers had done little work on the awareness of the economic implications of aging in Africa in general, and Nigeria in particular. This necessitated this work, because to effectively meet the special needs of Nigeria's increasing elderly population, we need policy makers who are adequately aware of the economic implications of aging in the country. With such awareness, they may know where to focus attention on when making policies for the elderly.

The level of awareness the residents of Oshiri community had on the economic implications aging were examined by the study. Recommendations were given based on the findings of the study.

The Concept of Aging

There are different life stages the world over. As a result, every society has some system of age stratification and associates certain social roles with distinct period in one's life (Schaefer, 2001). Age stratification in any given society such as Nigeria, helps to differentiate individuals based on age. Based on such differentiations, certain roles are allocated to individuals in relation to their position on the social strata.

All living organisms pass through three broad stages from conception to death: maturation, maturity and aging (Atchley, 1997). However, death does not only come from aging, some people could die at first stage, while others may likely die at the aging process. Age too is a social construction. At any point in life span, age simultaneously denotes not only a number and a nurture of physical characteristics, defined by the norms specific to a given society to a specific point in history (Markson, 2003). For instance, it is those who have attained the age of 60 years and above, that are said to be old. This is based on our social construction.

While old age has typically been regarded as beginning at 65, which corresponds to the retirement age for many workers ... writers are beginning to refer to people in their 60s as the "Young old", to distinguish them from those in their 80s and beyond, the "old old" (Schaefer, 2001). Aging includes physical changes in our bodies, psychological changes in our minds and mental capacities, social psychological changes in what we think and believe, ... how we are viewed, what we can expect, and what is expected of us (Atchley, 1997).

Aging has many processes, whose outcomes could be positive or negative. Increasing age on the one hand, brings greater experience and wisdom. They are always knowledgeable in certain traditions of the land. For e.g.: mode of worships, marriage rites and rites of passage etc. on the other hand. Aging is usually associated with certain physical or mental impairments in society. For instance, isolation may result from death of spouse and when children are away for school. Some of the grown up children who have gained some gainful employments in townships could also lead, to the total neglect of the elderly parents at home. This will undoubtedly lead to isolation on the part of the elderly parents. This could be made clearer with the explanation of the social aspects of aging.

Economic Aspects of Aging

The aging process is often associated with some economic conditions. Most of the elderly at this period must have retired from their different fields of work. For instance, some could retire from: teaching, trading, foot balling and lecturing to name but a few. Even though organisations can no longer require mandatory retirement

at a specific age, employees approaching this age are often victims of potent, more subtle forms of discrimination (Brandt & Reece, 1996).

In some countries, the retirement age may be or less than 70 years of age. Some countries elongate the retirement age because, of the wealth of experiences the elderly involved may have. This may undoubtedly affect the youths vis-à-vis their employment opportunities. This is more so because, such jobs that the elderly ones continue to retain may make the youths to be out of job. This is because job opportunities will certainly become less. As a result, the inability of some youths to be gainfully employed may oftentimes lead to increase in crime rates. Armed robbery, kidnapping and pick-pocketing etc, may likely be on the increase.

However, instead of such youths involving themselves with some unlawful activities, they can as well become self-employed. With this they can help to employ others. This will even help them to remit some money to the elderly at home.

Notwithstanding, the workers approaching the age of retirement may have negative thoughts concerning their lives after service. This may be connected to the reasons why Brandt et al (1996), maintains that, they may be laid off, have their work load cut back, lose their eligibility for promotion or be given “make-work” projects that keep them out of the mainstream of the organisation. In Nigeria for instance, as these may be applicable to primary school teachers, the opposite may be the case for university professors whose wealth of experiences are highly needed in the academic environment.

Even when such professors retire, they may be called back on contract basis to work for some years. Work provides us not only with earning, it also figures prominently in our personal identity. Retirement from paid work often leads to reduction in income, diminished social prestige and loss of purpose in life (Chown 1977; in Macionis, 1995). Sometimes the above may not apply. Some people acquire much money while on service and may be happy to retire voluntarily to face their private businesses. The money he may earn from his private earnings is likely to surpass his monthly salary. This may invariably enhance increased income, enhanced social prestige and purpose in life, as compared to the above.

No wonder Pillari (1988), is of the view that retirement is an institutional separation of people from their occupational positions, with a continuation of income that is based on prior years of service ... Age is of primary consideration. However, retirement could also come from health issues and personal willingness to retire.

As people leave their occupations, a number of changes tend to occur in their lives. This is because, work is an important aspect of life and it provides people with their self-concept and self-esteem, as well as personal satisfaction (Cummings & Henry, 1961; Miller, 1965; Back, 1969; in Pillari, 1988). Losing these experiences through retirement is seen as being demoralising and may lead to other problems in older age.

In all societies three resources are valued: power or the ability to impose one's will on others; prestige or respect from others and wealth whether money, goods or knowledge (Markson, 2003). At this stage of life, most of the elderly people may become rich or poor financially. They may belong to the upper social class or the lower social class, or could be at the middle class in hierarchy of the individuals based on their positions in the social strata.

Gordon (1961) in Toby (1971) maintains that aging is conceived of as disengagement. This is defined as an inevitable process in which many of the relationships between a person and other members of society are altered in quality. However, the healthy and economically standing elderly people are not always disengaged in society. This is because; they may appear physically fit to fight their course. This is also necessitated often times by their better economic standing. A wealthy elderly person can always provide money for his regular check-ups in hospitals. But those who are poor may not have the money for regular check-ups. The lack of hospital check-ups may lead to some health deteriorations, which may invariably necessitate their disengagement in society.

Aging to this end, according to Atchley (1997), affects income needs in several ways. Retirement reduces the amount of money needed for expenses connected with employment ... Increased physical frailty increases the need to buy services that formerly could have been provided by oneself or one's spouse. Several domestic tasks at this stage, like: washing of cloths and compound clearing etc are more likely to be hired than being done by the individuals themselves. This may affect their income needs negatively.

There could also be a relationship between health and wealth. As the nation prepares to re-design its medicare, medicaid, and social security policies, it still does not have a clear grasp of how health and socio-economic status (SES) interact and affect the lives of the elderly people (Smith & Kington, 1997). The economic status of an elderly person could affect his health positively or negatively. If an elderly person has a higher economic standing, he may appear healthier than those on the lower rung of the ladder of economic status.

However, wealth may not always translate to a status of good health. This is because; wealth could predispose an individual to eat so much of what may not be good to one's body. For instance, some elderly due to their affluence may eat more of sugary products than bitter ones. Such people may likely be predisposed to incidences of diabetes and hypertension etc.

Theoretical Frame work

The social exchange theory could be applied to the work. Of great interest to behaviorists are rewards (reinforcers) and costs (punishments). Rewards are defined by their ability to strengthen behaviour, while costs reduce the likelihood of behaviour (Ritzer, 2008). The proponents of exchange theory are: George Caspar Homans, Peter Blau and Richard Emerson (Ritzer, 2008). Exchange theory rests on the assumption that crucial to social organisation or human association, is the fact of exchange of goods and services between individuals or units (Nnonyelu, 1997:62).

Social exchange therefore involves giving and receiving. A person who gives something to another e.g. money, often expect something from the receiver (appreciation or simply thank you). There could be an interrelationship between economic exchange and social exchange, in this case money and appreciation.

One may wish to ask whether a lot of investments that our elderly parents invested on us are adequately paid back to them. Any person who gives out something to another person expects another thing in return, whether directly or indirectly. The present weakening of the extended family system in Nigeria and rapid urbanisation occurring in the country, have affected the way we care for our elderly at home. Some of our youths now travel to urban areas in search of better opportunities of living. Due to some economic hardships most of them face, they no longer adequately fulfill their obligations to the elderly. The little remittances supposed to be given them are not always done in recent time. The care for the elderly has been adversely affected. Since exchange mostly involves giving and receiving; our elderly seems not to be receiving what is due to them. Even some of them who have retired from the civil service are not adequately paid their pension and gratuity. They have served their fatherland for thirty five years of service, or 60 years of age. However, their efforts are not often recognised through the prompt payment of their pension and gratuity. All these negate the law of social exchange-giving and receiving.

These experiences are exhibited in our daily lives. Our elderly parents presently expect that their children should care for them. This is more so because, they have contributed in one way or the other to bring them up. However, some youths due to rapid urbanisation and economic hardships, are no longer able to care for the elderly. Therefore, the social exchange system is no longer favourable to the elderly at home. Even though they don't expect a direct reward from such; simply thank you or "Chukwu gozie gi" (God bless you), signifies a form of exchange. Exchange could either be physical or social. In this case, it is a social exchange.

Even though the elderly ones were doing this as their social responsibilities and not as a form of exchange, it is pertinent to note that blessed is the hand that giveth. They were truly doing this as their social responsibilities, but it is worthy of note that, these elderly ones who are now less privileged (some of them), should at least be helped by the younger ones. If a younger one is better placed in society and he fails to help his elderly ones, it will not enhance cordial social relationships.

Methods of Data Collection

The cross-sectional research design was used to carry out the research. This is because, cross-sectional survey aims at collecting information on certain variables like socio-economic characteristics of people, knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and opinions that facilitate the explanation of that behaviour. It was also used because of the widespread variables involved in the study.

The study was conducted in Oshiri community, Onicha L.G.A. Ebonyi state Nigeria. It has 15 villages namely: Agbabi, Amankalu, Amaokpara, Amegu, Amocha, Isieke, Isinkwo, Iyiazu, Mboji, Owom, Ufuezokwu and Umuimam. Others are: Umumboke, Umumbgala and Umuorie. The community was chosen for the study because; the researcher comes from the area and he wanted to study the level of awareness of the residents of the community on the issues stated above.

There were also no available data on research studies on aging in the community. This made it imperative for the study to be conducted in the area.

The questionnaire method and the structured interview schedule were used to collect data from respondents. The questionnaire was administered to 642 respondents, out of the community's total population of 21,439 persons. The simple random sampling technique was used in selecting the respondents. All the names of the villages in Ebia and Ugwu oshiri were written on pieces of paper and assigned numbers. The papers were

put into a container each and reshuffled. Three villages each were picked from each of the 2 containers. One hundred and seven respondents were selected from each village. In each village selected all the members of each household were written on pieces of paper and assigned numbers. The papers were put into a container and reshuffled. Any individual whose number was picked was chosen as a respondent. The researcher and two trained research assistants conducted the research.

Four key informants were closely interviewed. All the villages in each of the 2 provinces of Oshiri community (Ebia and Ugwu) were written on pieces of paper and assigned numbers. The papers each were folded and put into a container and reshuffled. Two villages will be selected using the simple random sampling technique. In each of the villages selected the names of the households will be written and assigned numbers. In each household selected its members were written on pieces of paper and assigned numbers. Any member whose number was picked was chosen as an informant.

Research Findings

Out of the 642 copies of the questionnaires distributed, 593 copies were collected. Out of the total number returned 505 valid responses were gotten. The data was analysed based on the number of the valid responses from the respondents. This is because, the researcher concentrated on the respondents who have the elderly people in their households, and those who have visited them. These people were closer to the elderly people. See table I for more details.

Table 1: Manner of Questionnaire Distribution and Collection

Location	No. Distributed	No. Collected	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Amaokpara	107	98	16.5	16.5
Isieke	107	98	16.5	33
Isinkwo	107	100	16.9	49.9
Owom	107	98	16.5	66.4
Umuimam	107	100	16.9	82.9
Umumboke	107	99	16.7	100
Total	642	593	100	

Source: Author's Field Work (2009)

Test of Hypothesis

H₀: Male respondents will not have more awareness of economic implications of aging than female respondents.

H₁: Male respondents will have more awareness of economic implications of aging than female respondents.

The male respondents did not have more awareness of economic implications of aging than the female respondents.

This is contained in table 2.

Table 6: Chi-Square Tests

Statistical Item	Value	DF	P-Value
Pearson Chi-Square	5.773	3	.123
No of Valid Cases	483		

Source: Author's Field Work (2009)

$X^2(3, N = 483) = 5.773, p = .123 > 0.05$

Discussion

The finding of Gavrilov et al (2003) that population aging is associated with poverty particularly in developing countries, did not show in any way that the males are not more aware of this economic problem than the females. Also, Smith et al (1997) found out that, there is a strong relationship between level of wealth and status of health. However, this did not agree with the finding of this study.

Brym et al (2003)'s finding that, women who are in the paid labour force tend to earn less than men when they retire, their employer pensions are generally inferior, is similar to this finding. However, it differs from it because; it failed to show the extent to which the males were not more aware of this issue than the females.

As a result, there are a greater percentage of the males (63.6%) than the females (36.4%) in the research setting. The younger respondents (60.0%) were higher than the older respondents (40.0%). The greater percentage of the males was married (49.1%). The respondents were mainly Christians (87.6%). Most of the respondents reside in the rural area (77.5%).

The 100 percent of the respondents had elderly people in their households. As a result, the 52% of the respondents were living with the elderly. Inadequate support by the family members (39.5%) is the greatest social problem, facing the elderly in Oshiri community. Poverty (56.1%) is the greatest economic problem facing them in the community.

The level of contacts with the elderly (37.7%), mostly create difference in awareness of aging issues. The family members (64.8%) should be responsible for the care of the elderly. However, the elderly were not well cared for by their family members (56.8%).

Conclusion

Females in Oshiri community possessed more awareness on economic implications of aging than their male counterparts.

Recommendations

There should be an intensive awareness campaigns on economic implications of aging in Oshiri community to be provided to all persons in the community. The social gerontologists should be involved in this campaign. The men should be the primary target of the social gerontologists because of their low awareness in same. Since the greater percentage of the elderly is poor in the community, social pension should be provided for those not receiving retirement benefits. This will help to empower them financially. It will also help them to receive adequate medical treatments. The social pension scheme (SPS), will also help to ameliorate the negative effects of the nuclear family system on the care of the elderly in the Nigerian society. This will also help the elderly not to rely solely on family members' care alone, which are rarely forth coming. Old people' home should be provided in all the communities in Nigeria. All these would help people to age optimally in the Nigerian society.

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Religious Affiliation and Infant Mortality in Onicha Local Government Area Ebonyi State, Nigeria

Joseph Ogbonnaya Alo Ekpechu (Ph.D)
Sociology department

Federal University Ndufu-Alike Ikwo Ebonyi State, Nigeria

E-mail address: ogbonnaya_ekpechu@yahoo.com

ekpechu.alo@funai.edu.ng

+234 8064744193

Abstract

The study focused on religious affiliation and infant mortality in Onicha Local Government Area Ebonyi state, Nigeria. The aim of the study was to examine the relationship between religious affiliation of the residents of Onicha Local Government Area and the occurrence of infant deaths in the area. The survey research design was adopted for the study. There was a review of relevant literature in order to bring out the theoretical direction and to fill the gaps in knowledge that were observed in the course of the review. The cognitive dissonance theory was adopted as the frame for the study. The Yaro Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size of 339 respondents from the research population. The questionnaire method was used to collect data from respondents. The systematic sampling technique was used to select the respondents who were issued with a copy of the questionnaire each. Hypothesis was formulated to establish the strength and relationship of religious affiliation and infant mortality in Onicha Local Government Area Ebonyi state, Nigeria. The Chi-Square statistical test of independence was used to test the hypothesis. From the hypothesis the strength of the relationship was clearly defined. The findings of the research revealed among other things that there were more infant deaths recorded in households whose heads were Christians. From the study, it is revealed that where the researcher/research had Christian heads of households the incidence of infant mortality was higher than was recorded in households headed by other respondents with other religions. It was concluded that infant health should be given prime consideration especially in the Nigerian society where yearly budgetary allocation for the health sector is usually small. Based on the findings, it was recommended that there should be adequate sensitisation of the residents of the Local Government Area on infant health issues (Word Count: 301).

Key Words: Household, Infant Mortality, Infant Health, Sensitisation, Religious Affiliation

Introduction

It is often a thing of joy when infants are given birth to. This is because one person has been added in the family of birth. However, the reverse could become the case when an infant dies. This is usually associated with weeping and wailing in order to mourn the death of the baby. This form of death known as infant mortality is a global phenomenon though its rate of occurrence varies across countries. This was clearly captured by UN (2007) when it stated that 475,000 infants died in 2007, from the average annual rate of birth of 5,000,000 across the world. The World Health Report similarly gave a global nature of the phenomenon. This it did by categorically stating that there 4,000,000 infant deaths the world over yearly before they reached four weeks old. This could be one of the factors that made infant deaths to contribute up to to 40 per cent of death of children who were below 5 years old across the globe. There were also 3.3 million stillbirths yearly across the globe (The World Health Report, 2005).

A 19 year period from 1990 to 2009 witnessed a sharp decline in death of children who were less than 5 years old. The former declined from 12.4 million deaths to 8.1 million deaths over the same period (UNICEF, 2010). Infant death rate in a like manner reduced from 100 to 80 deaths between 1990 and 2000 (Global Monitoring Report, 2004: 40).

The greater percentage of infant deaths occurred in Africa. Sub Saharan Africa (SSA) is undoubtedly one of the worst hit in infant mortality rate. Nigeria a sub Saharan African country continued to experience high infant mortality rate with wide geographic disparities (UNICEF, 2010; Mojekwu & Ajijola, 2011). The deathrate for

children below the age of 5 for Nigeria was 198 in 2003. There was 75 infant deaths for the country in 2008. Ninety five infant deaths were recorded for the South Eastern Nigeria over the same period (The World Health Report, 2005, NDHS, 2008).

Religion is as old as mankind. There are various religions found across the world. These include Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Shintoism, Judaism, Confucianism and the African Traditional Religion (ATR) to name but few. Usually, one could be free to choose to belong to or not to belong to any religion. Countries in Africa are not an exception. Nigeria is a country which is rich in religious activities. Nigerians profess different religions due to the freedom of worship entrenched in the Nigerian constitution. Central to religious affiliation in Nigeria are Christianity, Islam and the African Traditional Religion (ATR). Others who are not Christians, Muslims or adherents of the African Traditional Religion would choose to become atheists. Any religion one professes gives one the opportunity to marry and beget children. Therefore infants could be found in various families nor matter one's religious affiliation.

This study therefore examined the relationship between religious affiliation in Onicha Local Government Area Ebonyi state, Nigeria and the rate of death of infants in the area. Recommendations were given based on the findings of the study.

Religious Affiliation and Infant Mortality

Infant mortality is a regular occurrence in many parts of the world. For instance, the phenomenon occurs in Nigeria, Ghana, USA, Israel and Japan to name but a few. Its rate of occurrence however differs from one country to another. This may have necessitated different infant death yearly rates for the various countries in the world. For example, there were 3.7 million infant deaths in 2004 the world over. It was also revealed that these infant deaths occurred within the neonatal period (Edokwe, 2011). Edokwe (2011) also believed that more than half of these infant deaths occurred in the poor and tropical settings in the world. Nigeria an African cum developing nation has a fair share of these infant deaths. However, Edokwe (2011) could not link his findings to global religious affiliation. It would have in clear terms spoken in the ears of readers how these infant deaths were distributed in figures per religious affiliation of people in different parts of the world.

Arevshahana, Lwanga, Misore, Nduwne and Sewardf (2007) agreeing with Edokwe (2011) categorically stated that over 10 million children in less developed countries died before reaching 5 years old on yearly basis. Itimi, Dienye and Ordinioha (2012) in total agreement with Edokwe (2011) and Arevshahana et al (2007) were of the view that death of children less than 5 years old in Nigeria is still very high when compared to those of other countries. However, following the postulation of NDHS (2008), it is worthy of note that death of infants has reduced from 42 deaths in 1990 to 40 deaths in 2008 in Nigeria. Post neonatal deaths also reduced from 45 to 35 deaths over the same period in Nigeria. These seem to be a good development for the country. That notwithstanding, it was also reported by NDHS (2008) that infant death rate for the country in 2008 was 75. Agreeing with the above point, USAID (2012) observed that there were 77 infant deaths in Nigeria in 2012. According to Central Intelligence Agency report (2014) there were also 96.14 infant deaths in Nigeria in 2013. It is pertinent to note that no mention was made of the number of infant deaths per religious affiliation of individuals in the country.

The latter also applies to Edokwe (2011)'s finding that there were 86.3 perinatal deaths in Abakaliki South East Nigeria. It was found that in Abuja there were 13.3 per cent deaths within 18 months period. Ibekwe, Ugboma, Onyire and Muoneke (2011) in a similar study found that there were 62.7 perinatal deaths in Southern parts of Nigeria. The states located in the Southern part of Nigeria include those of Ebonyi, Enugu, Abia, Akwa Ibom, Lagos and Edo states to name but a few. Reduction in infant deaths has also been reported in Brazil. In writing about this reduction, Macinko, Guanais and Souza (2006) pointed out that death of children less than year old reduced from 49.7 per cent to 28.9 per cent from 1990 to 2002. This is a good omen for infant survival rates in Brazil. This may have emanated from the positive outcome of changes which were targeted at infants in Brazil. This could be also be attributed to the fact that the growth of a child is usually affected by both socio-economic and biomedical factors. By so doing the former gradually replaces the latter as the major cause of death of infants (Da Vanzo, Butz & Habitch, 1983; in Frankenberg, 1993). However, there was no close examination of the effects religious factors would have on these infant deaths in Brazil.

Religion could be a major factor in infant mortality differentials. Joseph (2008: 248) vividly stated that religion involves seeking the intervention of supernatural powers or sources for the resolution of conflict of living. Towing this path, Kaduuli (2007) observed that Moslem women had more number of infant deaths than women who were Christians. This may be connected to the different religious rituals undertaken by each of the religious groups. For instance, some Nigerians forbid their infants from being immunised against the six child

killer diseases namely polio, diphtheria, pertussis, tuberculosis, tetanus and hepatitis B. Even though Peikin et al (2000) observed that people could be exempted from vaccination based on religious, philosophical and medical reasons in USA, same could not be the case in Nigeria. It is not obtainable in Nigeria because unlike in USA there is no state law backing it up in the country. Some Nigerians could just choose not to immunise their infants out of their own personal volition. This is not to say that their personal volition is being given support by any federal or state law or local government bye laws. However, medical certificate of an infant could be an exemption from immunisation.

In Igbo land South East Nigeria the *ogbanje* phenomenon may still be believed as being responsible for death of some infants in the area. This could be in relation to their total world view and religious inclinations. Some religious groups could detest such beliefs as being merely superstitious. Others could believe in it. However, scientifically speaking such infant deaths may have been attributed to incidences of sickle cell anaemia in that part of the Nigerian society (Radio Nigeria Unity FM News, 09/05/12; Okorocho, 2001; Brichard, Vermynen, Ninanne and Cornu, 1996).

Theoretical Framework

The cognitive dissonance theory propounded by Leon Festinger in 1951 could be applied to the work. It is a communication theory adopted from social psychology. Cognitive is thinking or the mind and dissonance is inconsistency or conflict (Festinger, 1957). Cognitive dissonance is the psychological conflict from holding 2 or more incompatible belief simultaneously. In a state of dissonance people would avoid information and situations that might increase the dissonance (Festinger, 1957). The information one gets so late could lead to dissonance. Norms of the place one finds himself could also lead to dissonance. Inconsistency on what the things should be could also lead to dissonance (Festinger, 1957).

Religious affiliation of individuals go with certain religious norms depending on the kind of faith one professes. At one time such religious norms could favour the utilization of certain infant life saving health measures including immunisation services. At other times it could not. Conflict of deciding whether to use it or not could often arise. Sometimes some religious faithful could some some immunization ad hoc workers all in a bid to frustrate the process. Some religious faithful could also devise other means of discouraging people from using the vaccines. These acts could lead to an increase or decrease in the use of immunisation vaccines by infants in an area such as Nigeria.

Infant deaths could be precipitated by some religious doctrines usually being inimical to provision of information on infant welfare services. For instance, such acts could be applied by the religious faithful in order to discourage their members from accessing relevant information from health workers. These acts if favourable to infant health and well-being could lead to low infant deaths in an area. If on the other hand, these acts become unfavourable to infant health and well-being could undoubtedly lead to more infant deaths in same.

Research Methodology

The survey research design was used in this research work. The study was carried out in Onicha Local Government Area Ebonyi state, Nigeria. It is located in Southern Senatorial District of the state. It was created in 1989 and also has 8 autonomous communities namely Abaomege, Anioma Isu, Igboeze Onicha and Ishinkwo communities. Others are Isu, Onicha Igboeze, Oshiri and Ukawu communities. The area was chosen for the study because there have a number of infants who have died in the area. There is also no available data on religious affiliation and infant mortality in the local government area between 2009 and 2013, when the study was carried out.

The population of infants was Onicha L.G.A. was 2,228. Systematic sampling was used in the administration of questionnaire on respondents. The first element was picked was picked randomly and others were picked at regular intervals predetermined by the researcher. For instance, when the house number 5 was randomly picked at first, the house numbers 10, 15, 20, 25 were picked and so on until the whole households were covered to obtain a truly representative sample. Questionnaire was then administered to respondents from the selected households for their responses.

The Yaro Yamane formula was used to arrive at a sample size of 339 respondents. The questionnaire was administered to respondents by the researcher and 2 trained research assistants. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used in coding the responses and testing the hypothesis.

Findings

Seven respondents (2.4 per cent) were adherents of the African Traditional Religion (ATR). Two hundred and seventy respondents (92.8 per cent) were Christians. Fourteen respondents were Muslims. Since the probability value (.816) is greater than 0.05 we accept the null hypothesis. Therefore, there was no significant relationship between religious affiliation and infant mortality in Onicha Local Government Area Ebonyi state, Nigeria. See tables 1, 2, 3 and 4 for more details.

Religious Affiliation of Respondent	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
African Traditional Religion	7	2.4	2.4	2.4
Christianity	270	92.8	92.8	95.2
Islam	14	4.8	4.8	100.0
Total	291	100.0	100.0	

Source: Fieldwork (2013)

No of Infant Deaths	Religious Background of Respondent		Total
	Christianity	Islam	
1	12	1	13
	70.6 per cent	100.0 per cent	72.2 per cent
2	2	0	2
	11.8 per cent	0.0 per cent	11.1 per cent
3	3	0	3
	17.6 per cent	0.0 per cent	16.7 per cent
Total	17	1	18
	100.0 per cent	100.0 per cent	100.0 per cent
X ²	.407		
Degree of Freedom	2		
Probability Value	.816		

Source: Fieldwork (2013)

No of Infant Deaths for Partially Immunised Infants	Religious Background of Respondent		
	Christianity	Islam	
1	8	1	9
	80.0 per cent	100.0 per cent	81.8 per cent
2	2	0	2
	20.0 per cent	0.0 per cent	18.2 per cent
Total	10	1	11
Total X²	100.0 per cent	100.0 per cent	100.0 per cent
Degree of Freedom	1		
Probability Value	.621		
Source: Fieldwork (2013)			

No of Deaths for Non-Immunised Infants	Religious Background of Respondent	Total
	Christianity	
1	8	8
	100.0 per cent	100.0 per cent
Total	8	8
	100.0 per cent	100.0 per cent
Source: Fieldwork (2013)		

Discussion

The respondents belonged to many religions. This is because seven respondents (2.4 per cent) were adherents of the African traditional religion. Two hundred and seventy respondents (92.8 per cent) were Christians. Fourteen respondents (4.8 per cent) were Muslims. The probability value (.816) is greater than 0.05. For example, 12 Christian respondents (70.6 per cent) and a Muslim respondent (100.0 per cent) had an infant death each in their households. Two Christian respondents (11.8 per cent) had two infant deaths each in their households. No Muslim respondent (0.0 per cent) had such infant deaths in their households. Three Christian respondents (17.6 per cent) had three infant deaths each in their households. No Muslim respondent (0.0 per cent) had such infant deaths in their households as contained.

The probability value (.621) is greater than 0.05. As a result, eight Christian respondents (80.0 per cent) recorded an infant death each for infants who were partially immunised. Two Christian respondents (20.0 per cent) recorded two infant deaths each for infants who were partially immunised. One Muslim respondent (100.0 per cent) recorded an infant death for an infant who was partially immunised. No Muslim respondent (0.0 per cent) recorded two infant deaths for infants who were partially immunised in their households. Eight Christian respondents (100.0 per cent) had an infant death each in their households for infants who were non-immunised.

However, despite the fact that infant deaths occurred in different households where people with different religious affiliations occupied, the rates at which these infant deaths occurred varied from one household to another. The greater percentage recorded for infant deaths (100.0 per cent) were higher for the Muslims. The lower percentage of the Christians (70.6 per cent) recorded infant deaths in their households. Undoubtedly, 12 Christians recorded an infant death each over the period. This could be more so because out of the 14 Muslim respondents one respondent had an infant death. However, 11.8 per cent Christian respondents had 2 infant deaths each in their households, while the Muslims had 0.0 per cent. Three Christian respondents also had 17.6 per cent infant deaths for 3 infants each. The Muslim respondents had 0.0 per cent of such deaths. From the gathered statistics, the Christians recorded more infant deaths than the Muslims and the African Traditional Religion adherents.

Conclusion

Religious affiliation is not a major determining factor in the rate of occurrence of infant deaths in Onicha Local Government Area Ebonyi state, Nigeria.

Recommendations

There should be an adequate sensitisation of the residents of the local government area in the churches, village squares and households in the need adopt health enhancing strategies for the infants. This would help to save the lives of the infants in the area.

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The Theory of Reincarnation in African, Eastern and Western Philosophies: A Comparative Analysis

Abel, Idagu Ushie
Department of Philosophy
University of Calabar
Calabar

[08131316821](tel:08131316821), [08055210322](tel:08055210322)

&

Umezurike John Ezugwu
Department of Philosophy
University of Calabar
Calabar-Nigeria

Email: umezurikejohnezugwuyahoo.com

[08060488970](tel:08060488970), [09092684241](tel:09092684241)

Abstract

, Mm,,life, more disturbed by the question of what becomes of him at death, whether death is the end of man or just a painful or peaceful means to a new life. This paper argued that reincarnation exist but has been misunderstood by so many people in the African, Eastern and Western world. It contended vehemently that resemblance, behavioural pattern and intellectual ability, are not solid evidences of reincarnation or rebirth. The paper using Philosophical method of critical analysis, to evaluate the doctrine of reincarnation, established the convergence and divergence relationship among the African, Eastern and Western Philosophies, on the theory of reincarnation. It ascertained that there is a nexus to a reasonable extent, between the African notion of reincarnation and the Western notion of reincarnation than that of the East. This is because the Easterners see the doctrine of reincarnation as a burden, while in the African and Western Philosophies, reincarnation is a good omen and a fruitful creed that cannot be overemphasized.

Key Words: Reincarnation, Immortality, Theosophy and Spiritism

Introduction

Reincarnation as a doctrine has engaged so many scholars in the world into a wide debate. This is because reincarnation to a good number of people is real and undisputable, while others maintain that there is nothing like reincarnation or life after death. According to the reincarnationists, the soul or spirit, after biological death, can begin a new life in a new body (<http://en.m.wikipedia-org/wiki/reincarnation>). This doctrine is the central tenet of the Indian religions. It is also a common belief of various ancient and modern religious such as Theosophy, Spiritism and Eckankar, and is found in many tribal societies around the world, in places such as Siberia, West Africa, North America and Australia.

One of the opponents of reincarnation, John Weldon, argues that there is only one thing that makes a future life worthwhile, the preservation of the consciousness of personal identity and uniqueness. Yet, in reincarnation, personal identity and uniqueness are forever obliterated (95). Moreover, the idea that in reincarnation that the soul passes through a series of embodiments, stands in contrast to the dominant Western Christian idea of a single corporal embodiment, followed by resurrection, that is, reunion of the soul, with a spiritual body and life with God in heaven. Reincarnation is often associated with transmigration; the idea that at death, the soul might pass into the body of animal, a plant, or even an inanimate objects such as stone, tree and mountain (Fisher 35). Furthermore, the belief in reincarnation was tied to moral categories in ancient religions, especially the Eastern concept of Karma, which viewed the present life, as the working out of consequences from previous lives. By implication, future embodiments are determined by the consequences of this present life. Here, it is advised that one must remove himself from the realm of consequences through spiritual activity or be struck in the endless cycle of reincarnation forever (<http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/reincarnation.aspx>). He who lived well would be returned to his native star, and would there have a blessed existence; but if he lived ill, he would pass

into the nature of woman, and if he did not then alter his evil ways, he will be engrossed by fire (Oluwole 39). This kind of belief is fundamental to both Hinduism and Buddhism, and has some popularity in the ancient Mediterranean basin. However, the Buddha maintains that all humanity is wandering from life to life through countless rebirths (Samsara) and suffering the consequences of actions past and present (karma) (Edet 46).

This paper attempts to compare the African, Eastern and Western philosophies on reincarnation, and at the same time, answers some of the questions that arose on it. As a matter of fact, it insightfully engages itself in the doctrine of reincarnation, in a bid to critically show the different dimensional approaches, similarities and dissimilarities in the African, Eastern and Western worldviews on reincarnation. Philosophical method of critical analysis was used to drive home the thesis of this research paper.

The Concept of Reincarnation in African Point of View

Here, it is of ultimate importance to highlight on the African notion of being, before we can deliberate effectively on the concept of reincarnation in Africa. The essence or nature of anything is conceived by the African as “force”. There is no idea among Bantu of ‘being’ divorced from the idea of ‘force’. Without the element ‘force’ ‘being’ cannot be conceived.... Force is the nature of being, force is being; being is force (Tempels 1). For Africans, there is a clear distinction and essential differences between different forces or inner realities of beings, just as there are differences between categories of material visible things. “When you say in terms of Western philosophy, that beings are differentiated by their essences or nature; Africans say that forces differ in their essences or nature. There is the divine force, terrestrial or celestial forces, human forces, and vegetable and even mineral forces” (2).

In addition to various categories of forces, Africans maintain that these forces follow a hierarchical order such that God precedes the spirits; then come the founding fathers and the living-dead, according to the order of primogeniture; then the living according to their rank in terms of seniority. When a person dies, the traditional African does not say that the “soul” of the dead has gone to the spirit-world. It is not the “soul” or “part of man” like the East or West held, that has gone to the world of the spirits but the whole man, though not in a visible but invisible state.

Tempels observes:

What lives on after death is not called by the Bantu by a term indicating part of man. I have always heard their elders speak of “the man himself”, or it is “the little man” who was formerly hidden behind the perceptible manifestation of the man; or Muntu which at death has left the living...Muntu signifies vital force endowed with intelligence and will (4).

It is crystal clear following the above excerpt that the African concept of reincarnation does not accept that there is an exclusive dichotomy between the soul and the body, such that at death, the soul of a man is taken to have gone to the spirit-world, and not the man himself. As a matter of fact, it is believed that “the man” still exists as this person in a spiritual invisible form. His bodily energy may not be there again, but his vital force continues and get stronger persistently. In line with the hierarchy of “forces” the dead ancestors assume an enhanced vital superiority of intelligence and will over the living. According to Tempels, the departed must therefore have gained in deeper knowledge of the forces and nature (5) and because of the ontological relationship existing among members of the clan, they interact with the living. For him, what interacts with the living is “the man himself” who is now essentially “force”. Vital force grows or weakens through the interaction of forces. A person is “really dead” when his vital force is totally diminished.

However, it is worthy to note that man is not the first or creative cause of life, but he sustains and add meaning to the life of the forces, which he finds below him, within the ambience of his ontological hierarchy. Though, man in Bantu thought, in a more limited sense than God, is also a causal force of life. This is the philosophical basis for the African claim that a certain ancestor has been reborn in one or several living members of the same clan. What the African mean by ‘return’ or ‘reborn’ cannot be translated by ‘reincarnation’ because for them, the child or children are not identified with the dead, since the birth of the little one(s) in no wise puts an end to the existence of the deceased ancestor in the spirit world. This becomes clearer still when one realizes that Africans do not hold that conception is caused by the spirit of the ancestor. The biological conception of the child results from the concurrent act of God and the parents. The influence of the ancestor, which has been called reincarnation, comes later on. It is the human being, who already possesses life in the womb of his mother (by divine influence), who finds himself under the vital, the ontological influence of a predestined ancestor of a spirit (Tempels 9). Explaining this paradox, in a more detailed manner, Idowu identified in the belief of the Yoruba people that deceased persons do “reincarnate” in their grandchildren and still continue to live in after life (19). In Igbo land, there is a strong belief that one does not die and remain in the

spirit world forever. For the Igbo people, therefore, “Ilo uwa” is a truism and cannot be denied. The theory of ontological metaphysics of Yoruba, Igbo, Isoko and Akan of South Africa, explains how the deceased ancestor can be in the spirit world, and yet his presence is felt in the land of the living.

Eastern Perspective of Reincarnation

The notion of reincarnation is usually associated with India. In the orient, reincarnation is viewed as an overwhelming fact of life, although a regrettable one. The Asian often sees life as a dreary burden. The wheel of “rebirth” and suffering is a phrase often used in the orient, and rebirth simply means more hard times, not a wonderful and bounteous opportunity (Albrecht 12). This is directly connected to the sheer difficulty of physical existence of many Asians. In the thought of Hinduism, the soul is an immortal entity that has continuity through eternity, but falls into material existence and is trapped in the illusion that this physical world is ultimately real. Through multiple lives, the soul becomes subject to Karma or consequences. Good Karma leads to noble truth, bad karma to a lower birth, even to rebirth of an animal.

The idea of Karma and reincarnation was integral to social organization in the caste system, and thus had practical application in everyday life. The caste system in turn dictated proper action that was sanctioned by the rewards and punishment of Karma (Head 17). Again, the classic statements relating to reincarnation are to be found in the Hindu scripture Bhagavad-Gita, which stresses: “the soul is never born or dies nor does it exist on coming into being, for it is unborn, eternal, and primeval. Though, the body is slain, the soul is not” (Banerjee and Oursler 20). The succession of lives of the soul in different bodies is regarded as one indivisible life. The soul uses the experience of each incarnation as an opportunity for expiating sins in former lives, balancing bad Karma with good, and perfecting the soul, through a process of evolution, so that further incarnation will not be necessary and the individual soul can be absorbed in the divine plan. Until then, the body of the next life, whether human or animal is shaped by actions in the present life. Moral striving is the means of gaining good Karma. Nevertheless, all lives may be seen as illusions of consciousness. This form of thought which called for good life, rather than the more traditional form, calling for withdrawal from life, influenced Western visitors to India, and was ultimately imported to the West, through Theosophy and the various Indian teachers, who successfully established themselves in the United States, notably *Swamis Vive Kananda* and *Yogananda*. Some religions like Hinduism and Buddhism teach that reincarnation is not always immediate, but that some souls may enjoy a period in a transitional state, either heavenly or purgatorial, before rebirth. The notion of reincarnation, though not Karma, is also found in some early Greek philosophers, including that of Pythagoras and Plato. In the fourth century, Plato’s Phaedrus presents a reincarnation myth that seems to have been derived from the Ophite religion. A pre-existence soul falls from the realm of the gods into early existence, where it migrates from one body to the next, for some ten thousand years before it returns upward to a place of judgment. Plato also talked about the possibility of a transmigration of the soul into an animal. This shows that Plato was strongly influenced by the earlier philosophical schools of Orphism and Pythagoreanism.

The Notion of Reincarnation in the West

The major reincarnationist teaching in the West, during the twentieth was about Theosophy. This is the belief that various manifestations in the flesh are merely small portions of one whole. The Westerners are of the belief that after physical death, the individual passes first to the astral world, then to the heavenly portion of the mental world. According to them, reincarnation could be imposed for the purposes of retribution or it could be undertaken for the fulfillment of a mission. (Blavatsky <https://blavatskytheosophy.file.wordpress.com>). For the West, reincarnation does not happen immediately. As a matter of fact, it is not a case of the soul leaving one body and then instantly entering that of the baby which is about to be born. This implies that there is always an internal period, during which the soul experiences its own personal state of “Heaven”, created unwittingly out of its own consciousness and matching exactly the afterlife the person had believed in and expected, during the life time just ended.

Furthermore, the teaching of Theosophy refers to this state under the Tibetan name of “*Devachan*”. This lasts in exact accordance with the amount and force of good or positive Karma that the soul created during the life time just ended. When the soul has reaped the full fruit of this good Karma in its blissful *Devachanic* experience, the process of reincarnation occurs (Blavatsky <https://blavatskytheosophy.file.wordpress.com>). The rate at which this happens varies from soul to soul and depends on a number of factors, chiefly, on amount of good Karma for the last incarnation and how spiritual and pure the soul is. Some may not reincarnate until hundreds and even thousands of years have passed while others may even reincarnate in few years. In other words, there is no hard or set rule. From the above excerpt, one can say that most of the Westerners believe in reincarnation. Hence,

many of them see reincarnation as the classic explanations for why some people suffer misfortune, while others enjoy in life: the misfortune can be explained as the result of one's misdeed in a previous life.

The Theory of Reincarnation in African, Eastern and Western Philosophies: A Comparative Analysis

The question of the origin (*arche*), purpose (*telos*) and destiny of man, remains a puzzling one, in all traditions of philosophy. Such questions as who is man? Of what stuff is he made? Where does he come from? To where is he tending? Is there any tendency of him coming back after his life on earth? Will he be coming back the same or as a different person entirely? And generally, what happens after life?, are no doubt issues that have enmeshed scholars in the web of unending debates and controversies. According to Uduigwomen, the belief in reincarnation has engaged the attention of great Western philosophers for ages. From Pythagoras, through Epicurus, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, St. Augustine, down to the contemporary period, varying views on reincarnation have been held. The belief in reincarnation also exists in African traditional thought (15-19).

For the Africans, spirits are reincarnated, both good and bad spirits. The good spirits are welcomed while the bad spirits call *abiku*, *ogbanje*, *ndem*, are either exorcised or rejected. The Africans through divination or other esoteric means claim to be capable of detecting which spirit has returned (Ozumba 20). Right from time, even before the arrival of the white men with their religions, and Western civilization, our forefathers in Igbo land, Yoruba land and other part of the African tribes knew about reincarnation. In Igbo language, reincarnation is called "*ilo uwa*" that is, a return to the world. Igbo people believed in life beyond. This they call "*ala-muo*" by "*ala-muo*", they mean the inner realms not just the fairy land of folk stories. Amakulo strengthening this asserts that:

It is at '*ala muo*' that they imagine their noble ancestors to be living and interceding for them before "*china-eke*" (the God that creates) and "*ofo-na-ogu*" (gods operating force) that balances things in nature including the yearly climatic conditions vital for their agriculture. It is at the same time "*ala-muo*" they believe their dead relations to be residing after physical death and from there would reincarnate probably to those that were their kin in their past life (252).

By implication, *Igbo* people believe that if a person dies, the death of that person is not the end of his entire life. Hence, he will later be reincarnated. Their conviction on the actual process by which men reincarnate varies. Some hold that man reincarnates with his former body and its characteristics, of height, strength and complexion, while many are of the opinion that at death our bodies become food for worms, only the deathless spirit of God in the man would reincarnate. The same group holds further that merits and demerits in one's former life would determine one's parentage on reincarnation in a new infant body, capable of growing and unfolding to adult body. Again, there are many factors that led the *Igbo* people to the belief of reincarnation.

- i. Appearance of bodily marks of deceased persons on the body of new born baby.
- ii. In the circumstance of mentally ill people who were violent in a past life, and were constrained wearing handcuffs or ankle restrains for a longtime before they died; it is believed that the scars of burns appear on the body of some such cases upon reincarnation.

Moreover, the *Yoruba* people believe in *Atunwa*, reincarnation within the family. The names "*Babatunde*", meaning the recently death father has returned, "*Yetunde*", mother returns, "*Babatunji*", father wakes again and "*Sotunde*", the wise man returns. All these offer vivid evidences of the *Ifa* concept of familial or lineal rebirth. Here, the spirit that returns does so in the form of a guardian *ori*. One's guardian *ori*, which is represented and contained in the crown of the head, represents not only the spirit and energy of one's previous blood relative, but the accumulated wisdom he or she has acquired through a myriad of times. The *Isoko* on the other hand, see the soul as the moving force in man. For them, the soul gives life to man and animates the body, which continued its existence after the death of the body (Abakare *Death as a Continuum: A Comparative Analysis of Platonic and Isoko Metaphysics* <http://nandigitallibrary.wordpress.com/tag/reincarnation>). The soul controls man's life and ignites the body. At death, the body rots but the soul continues to exist ad *infinitem*. Here, the question of immortality is closely linked with reincarnation.

Reincarnation has been an essential element of Hindu and Buddhist thought. It has been in existence even before Christ, and it constitutes one of the central presuppositions of the oriental world-view. The East consider reincarnation as a bad omen while the Western Europe believe in reincarnation and take it as a good possibility. However, the concept of reincarnation in the West is considered different from its conception in the Orient. Reincarnation in the Orient simply means difficulty, not a wonderful and bounteous opportunity. This is directly connected to the sheer difficulty of physical existence of many Asians. This pessimistic view of life has

its root in antiquity. Gautama Buddha's central concern was the problem of pain and suffering. He thought that the source and genesis of the human ups and downs lies in the attachment of the mind and body to the physical realm or, more precisely, to the existence itself. Hence, the logical solution is to cease existing, and of course, to stop being reborn. The concept of reincarnation held by Western reincarnationists is quite different. Their view has been shaped out of a different cultural and philosophic outlook. After the paganism and the mystery religious died out and Christianity became the order of the day, in the fourth century, the Christian teaching of resurrection became the clear consensus in Europe as well as in those parts of the world influenced by Islam.

Furthermore, following the Western ontology, man is made up of substance and accidents; the substance is the soul or spirit, the accident is the body or matter. In Cartesian language, man is a mind/body dualism (Onyewuenyi www.afrikaworld.net/.../atre.reincarnation). The body as an accident may change, decay, and cease at death, but the substance-soul, spirit, mind-the reality that is, for man subsists. For Christians, this soul goes to either heaven or hell, depending on how it conducted its operations during its earthly existence. For the believers in reincarnation, this soul informs another body for another span of life. Considering the fact that the soul is substance that is unitary and static, when once it informs a new body whether human, animal or tree, it ceases to exist in the spirit world. Frazer testifies to this in the religious life of primitive European peoples thus: to the savage the world in general is animate and trees and plants are no exception to the rule (108). Here, trees, plants and the world are seen as having equal role to play in the process of reincarnation. A comparative analysis of the African, Eastern and Western philosophies on reincarnation have shown that African conception of reincarnation is closely related to the notion of reincarnation in the West, than that of the East. This is because both Africa and the West believe that there is life after death, and again that reincarnation or rebirth as the case maybe, is not a bad omen as seen by the East but a source of joy and peace to any home that experiences it, especially when the reincarnated person was known to be good in his first journey to the world. The both only differ in that in Africa the conception that the soul of the dead has gone to the spirit world, tree, hill, plant, animal or mountain, without the whole man, though not in a visible but invisible state is not factual. It is believed in Africa that at death, both the soul and body, in fact, all the entire components of man, depart together to an unknown place, after which the soul alone will reincarnates, and the body is used by the worms and termites. For the Easterners, reincarnation or rebirth was seen as an untold disaster, and a perverse occurrence that has injected out peace, and enthroned difficulty in the life of the people of the Orient. To a large extent, therefore, the tenets of reincarnation is revealing and insightful in Africa and in the West, while it is taken to be a doctrine full of hard lucks and misfortunes in the East.

Evaluation and Conclusion

This paper rejects the notion of some reincarnationists that resemblance, behavioural pattern, intellectual ability, are solid evidences of reincarnation or rebirth. If what the reincarnationalists is arguing is true. What happens to the identical twins in the process of reincarnation? Does it mean that a particular soul reincarnated into two bodies? Or those two souls entered into one body, and makes up twins? If all what enumerated above are believed to be the case, do we still believe in environmental and climatic factors?. In the case of resemblance as argued by the recarnationists; what happens to two persons that are both alive and yet resemble each other? Who reincarnated who in this case? Is reincarnation the theory of life after death or life after life? More so, in the case of behavioural pattern, can we now say that if Mr A was a bad person before that Mr A will reincarnate to be bad? If this is true; what do we think of the scholars who are of the view that reincarnation is a process of rebirth, which encourages those that lived badly to have a rethink and live a good life? Finally, if intellectual ability should be counted as a way of establishing the truth about reincarnation, why is it that one who is said to have been reincarnated, sometimes, will not be as intelligent as the so called person he came to represent on earth?

The belief that at the point of reincarnation that one reincarnates with his real body and soul is fictitious. This is because this claim cannot be proven scientifically. This paper, therefore, contends that reincarnation or rebirth exists, but disagrees with the position that one reincarnates with his same body and soul. Conclusively, this paper following the above arguments and conceptions of reincarnation from the African, Eastern and Western perspectives, establishes that there is more connection between the African notion of reincarnation and the Western notion of reincarnation than that of the East. Hence, the Easterners see the doctrine of reincarnation as a weary burden, while in the African and Western Philosophies, reincarnation is a wonderful thing that can happen to the soul of a deceased person for continuity.

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The Biblical Teaching of Restitution: A Paradym Shift in the Anti-Graft War

Ven Dr Lucky O Ikechiamaka
Department of Christian Religious Studies
Federal College of Education. Zaria.
ikechiamaka@yahoo.com
2348028435382

Abstract

Corruption is a persistent virus in Nigeria that grows with the masses, it is reflected in every facet of our national life it has become such a celebrated vice that the few who refused to join the bandwagon are seen as uncivilized, unpopular and mediocre. This vice has not only crippled Nigeria in every area but has successfully crippled the economy of this nation. The government has put several structures in place to fight this virus, yet corruption has continued to grow. This paper seeks to suggest a paradigm shift in this fight by repositioning the neglected biblical teaching of restitution. Through synthetic method this paper discovers the positive impact the practice of restitution will bring on our economy, and therefore posits that the practice of restitution will greatly de-popularize corruption and improve our economy.

Introduction

The concept of corruption has become a giant that defiles every scheme put up by every government in Nigeria. It has grown to a frustrating stage that President Muhammad Buhari described it as the greatest form of human right violation. It is such a big challenge that the present regime saw it as one major goal that must be achieved. Corruption has eaten deep into our national life that it is reflected everywhere and in every part of our National life. It is daily perpetrated both in the big and small sectors of the economy. Corruption has become so viral and domesticated that even religious institutions who should provide hope and solace to the nation have been in the front burner in the indictment of corruption. This is why this paper through synthetic approach will trace restitution as a theological theme through the strata of scriptures noting its progressive development and to present it as God's demand not only in righting the wrongs in our land but also in healing the economy of Nigeria.

Synthetic Study of Restitution

Restitution as a noun is an act of making amends, it is the act of returning or restoring to someone what is his, it is the restoration of something to its proper owner or its original state. Pittelli (2004) adds that restitution involves reparation for injury or damage. Restitution is a balancing of the accounts and an act of making good. Kumuyi (2014) opines further that restitution is making amends for wrongs done against our fellowmen, restoring stolen things to their rightful owners, giving back where one defrauded. Kumuyi believes that this is to be done whether the person wronged knew or not for God knows. (Heb 4:13). The doctrines of restitution as a precept and practice spans virtually through all the dispensation of God's dealings with man till the present day. According to DeMar (2010) Restitution includes compensating a person for stolen or damaged property or physical harm done to someone. Restitution laws cover a variety of circumstances, assault (Exodus 21:18-19) bodily injury (21:26-27) liability (21:33-36), theft (22:1-4), property damage (22:5-6), irresponsibility (22:7-13) and the loss or damage of borrowed items (22:14-15). Demar further explained that there are categories of restitution like voluntary restitution which require the return of the item plus "One fifth more (Lev 6: 1-7), and some cases of double restitution. There are some crimes that require payment of four (2 Sam 12:6) or five times the loss or injury. Campbell (2009) argued that the result of restitution was that the victim was restored to a better position than before his loss and the law breaker was punished by having to make right his wrongs in a manner that cost more than his potential gain. Restitution is part of the moral law for most sins committed by men are against God as well as their neighbours. This means that repentance towards God should include restoration to man of all properties gained by fraud, lying or pretense. This was so crucial that rulers in Israel did not only embark but also reflected restitution in their dealings (2 Sam 16: 5-8, 19:16-23, I Kings 20:34) so restitution was part of the people's lives that marks the peak of true repentance.

It is however noteworthy here that restitution is an unfamiliar and often uncomfortable concept to several people. It is often a surprise to the offenders to be told to undo the damage they did, it is also a surprise to the victims who probably don't believe they have the right to expect someone who wronged them to fix what they spoilt. So biblically speaking, the Lord clearly instructs restitution be made. Pittelli (2004) contends that the Biblical model for restitution is retuning what was taken and adding to it. According to Leviticus 6:1-7

The Lord said to Moses. If anyone sins and is unfaithful to the Lord by deceiving his neighbours about something entrusted to him or left in his care or stolen, or if he cheats him, or if he finds lost property and lies about it, or if he swears falsely, or if he commits any such sin that people may do when he thus sins and becomes guilty, he must return what he has stolen or taken by extortion or what was entrusted to him or the lost property he found, or whatever or it was he swore falsely about, he must make restitution in full, add a fifth of the value to it and give it all to the owner on the day he presents his guilt offering, and as a penalty he must bring to the priest that is to the Lord, his guilt offering and he will be forgiven for any of these things that made him guilty.

It is noteworthy here that God particularly specified deception, swearing falsely like false assets' declaration by public servants. God expects that the offender even when he has confessed to God of the wrongdoing should also repent toward and confess to the victim. These are the two basic requirements for God's forgiveness. Numbers 5:5-8 states it clearly that restitution with interest must be made to the victim except where the victim or a relative cannot be found then restitution to God will be accepted. Exodus 22:3-7 added another crucial part to the issue of restitution:

A thief must certainly make restitution, but if he has nothing he must be sold to pay for his theft. If the stolen animal is found alive in his possession whether ox or donkey or sheep, he must pay back double. If a man grazes his livestock in a field or vineyard and they stray and graze in another man's field, he must make restitution from the best of his own field or vineyard, if a fire breaks out and spreads into thorn bushes so that it burns shocks of grain, the one who started the fire must make restitution. If a man gives his neighbour silver or goods for safekeeping and they are stolen from the neighbors' house, the thief, if he is caught must pay back double".

One relevant point here is the matter of grazing which has generated so much heat in Nigeria so much that even lives and properties have been lost. The law of Restitution demands that those grazing in another man's field must retribute from the best of his field.

The Bible contains several principles that guided the Jewish Judges in enforcing restitution. (Exodus 22:1-15) stealing was already condemned in the Decalogue yet Exodus 22 Stipulates principles that could be applied in the demonstration of justice among the people. "If a man steals an ox or a sheep, slaughters or sells it, the thief was required to restore what he stole plus additional penalty. Kaiser (2012) contends that in this passage, the penalty could be anywhere from 500% (he shall restore double) the reason for fivefold penalty in the case of stealing an ox is probably because one man stole the means of another man's livelihood. The principle would extend to taking any of the man's plowing or cultivating employments. This is a punitive approach to the punishment of criminals because it puts them to productive restitution and compensating the victims of their theft. This punitive approach seems absent in the administration of justice in Nigeria. Meyer (2010) opines that this chapter is full of restitution of which there is far too little in ordinary Christian life. We try to make amends for injury done to another by an extraordinary amount of civility but we are resistant in so many words to frankly confess that we have done wrong and make proper reparation for the act or speech.

Moreover as regards grazing mentioned earlier, the law makes the owner of the animal to be responsible for the grazing of his animals, the same law expects him to respect the property of his neighbours so to Kaiser (2012) "Thus man is held responsible, not only for the harm they do, but also for the harm they occasion, even though they may not have purposely designed the damage ensued". Restitution puts into cognizance that we wrong another not only by what we do, or permit to be done, but in what we carelessly fail to do. The grazing law demands that restitution must be made of the offender's best field and the best of his own Vineyard. Pittelli (2004) sees this as a fair punishment significant enough to give a farmer reason not to allow his animals to carelessly and destructively graze in another man's field. According to Morgan (2006) these laws also began by laying emphasis on the guilt of carelessness. The truth emphasized is that no man must live his life on the basis of selfishness or wholly alone and that wrong inflicted on neighbour by neighbour in the material realm becomes sin against God in the moral realm. This mosaic legal system demanded also that he who kindled fire that razed neighbours' property down shall surely retribute. This is a case of vandalism and

foolish negligence so the law had a high view of personal responsibility even with the property of others. It is clear that restitution is a bible practice which must be encouraged because it ensures that we have right relationship with our fellow men after we are reconciled with God.

Moreover restitution is rooted in Old Testament and supported in the New Testament. Kumuyi (2014) described it as the doctrine of Christ. Setting the Zacchaeus' encounter of Christ as an object of lesson, Zacchaeus resisted whatever that can stand between himself and his salvation, not even his ill-gotten wealth. The Apostles in the early church also practiced and taught restitution, (Philemon 7-12). It is even higher demand under the dispensation of grace than those in the Old Testament. This is because restitution is part of the gospel just as salvation and baptism in water is. As a practical step towards restitution mentioned earlier in the case of Zacchaeus, it is pertinent we take a closer study: Luke 19:8 states "And Zacchaeus stood and said into the Lord: behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I will restore him fourfold". He volunteered restitution and according to the Law he is to pay one fifth of the value of the thing restored (Leviticus 6:5, Numbers 5: 6-7). Here is the indication that Zacchaeus having met the lord Jesus and having repented was ready to compensate now for whatever wrong he had been done before. Barnes (1870) commented as follows:

This was the evidence of his pertinence and conversion to God. And here it may be remarked that this is always an undisputable evidence of a man's conversion to God. A man, who has hoarded ill-gotten gold if he becomes a Christian, will be disposed to do well with it. A man, who has injured others, cheated them or defrauded them even by due forms of law must, if he be a Christian be willing as far as possible to make restoration. Zacchaeus for anything that appears to the contrary, may have obtained this property by the decisions of courts of justice, but now felt that it was wrong and though the defrauded people could not legally recover it yet his conscience told him that in order to his being a true penitent he must make restitution. One of the best evidences of true conversion is when it produces this result and one of the surest evidences that a "Professed" penitent is not a "true" one, is when he is "not disposed to follow the example of this son of Abraham and make proper restitution".

It must be noted that the fact that the fight against corruption often loses at the court of justice, the criminals who succeeded to bend the hand of justice should listen to their conscience which confirms to them that such wealth is still ill-gotten. Zacchaeus before the Lord Jesus was made sensible of his covetousness and hardness of heart towards the poor, of his extortion and oppression and so resolved upon an effectual reformation. Zacchaeus volunteered a fourfold restitution of all he unjustly had taken. According to Gill (1999) "I restore him fourfold" is the same that was done in case of sheep stealing (Exodus 22:1) but in such case as this, the law only required the principal with the fifth part added to it, but Zacchaeus proposes as much as in the case of theft and which was rarely used". This was done by Zacchaeus to show the truth and reality of his repentance.

Beza T, (1560) opined that Zacchaeus was the right example of true repentance which is known by the effect. "By falsely accusing any man", and this agrees most fitly to the master of the tax gatherers. For commonly they have this practice among them when they rob and spoil the commonwealth, that they claim to be concerned for nothing else except the profit of the commonwealth and under this pretense they are thieves and to such an extent that if men reprove them and try to redress their robbery and thievery, they cry out that the commonwealth is hindered".

Legal Position of Restitution in the Anti-Graft War

The legal Dictionary (2014) states that in Law, restitution is often ordered by courts to achieve fairness, preventing the unjust enrichment of one party to a civil lawsuit. In addition, restitution is often ordered in criminal sentencing, requiring the defendant to make monetary amends or perform some act that benefits the victim of the crime, or public in general. Restitution in a criminal setting is usually made in addition to fines and or jail term. So in the civil court an order of restitution is referred to as civil damages. The amount of restitution is to be calculated according to the type of the case. It is agreed that in the case of contract, damages should be awarded in the amount of the contract or in the amount required to return the prevailing party to his financial position prior to the incident. This is to make the party whole. In personal injury case the injured party may be awarded damages in the amount of his medical bills, an amount to cover damages of his personal property if applicable and he may be awarded a monetary amount for pain and sufferings. It is so pathetic that in Nigerian private sector, consumers are treated as if they have no rights. This is more rampant in the network services where consumers are defrauded with reckless impunity through monetary deductions

without any authorization. This according to Adeniyi (2016) is usually small that consumers usually ignore such fraud but when put together having been taken from millions of consumers amounts to millions. He lamented that MTN fraudulently debit and steal money from its millions of subscribers, by charging them for services they never subscribed to. Restitution should be used in this contractual situation where one party has conferred a benefit on another. Hill, Gerald, and Hill T. K. (2005) described restitution as a legal demand for the return of property to the proper owner or monetary value of loss, restitution is made part of a judgment in negligence and or contracts cases. In criminal cases, one of the penalties imposed is return of stolen goods to the victim or payment to the victim for harm caused. Restitution may be a condition of granting defendant probation or giving him/her a shorter sentence than normal. This is neglected in Nigeria and so the masses are defrauded with impunity. The Wikipedia free encyclopedia (2016) putting restitution in English law describes it as the law of gain-based recovery. The law of restitution concerns action in which one person claims an entitlement in respect of a gain acquired by and another rather than compensation for loss. The English law is divided into the three broad categories (Wikipedia 2016) which will include restitution for unjust enrichment, restitution to vindicate property rights or asset declaration and restitution for wrongs. These categories seem not to be fully pursued in the Nigerian anti-graft war.

The restitution for unjust enrichment occurs when one person has acquired a benefit at the expense of another in circumstances that are unjust with no applicable defense. The law imposes an obligation upon the criminal to make restitution. The English law of the unjust enrichment according to the same Wikipedia should cover the attempts to recover mistaken payment, recovery of money paid in total failure of consideration, recovery of money paid under duress. This is the major challenge facing Nigeria in the anti-graft war because Federal Government is losing billions of Naira daily to this type of corruption where public servants are unjustly enriched. "The restitution for wrongs" refers to a remedy where a gain can be taken away or "stripped" "disgorged" from a defendant who has committed a wrong, either a torts, breach of contract, breach of fiduciary duty or breach of confidence" (Wikipedia, 2016). One is therefore left to wonder what happened to such laws in Nigeria with the rate of irresponsibility displayed by our politicians and public servants in failing in the confidence reposed on them by the public.

Restitution and the anti-graft: The paradigm shift

Corruption is the dishonest or fraudulent conduct by those in power; it is the illegitimate use of power to benefit a private interest. Morris (1991) contented that corruption include the giving of bribe to an official so that the truth will not be told. It is the embezzlement of public fund for personal use and any act which is considered to be criminal act according to the law of a particular society. A review of the state of corruption in Nigeria will suffice at this juncture: Nigeria as the most populated in the continent of Africa is also ranked high in corruption by Transparency International and other notable organizations that monitor corrupt practices around the globe. This high ranking either rightly or wrongly affects almost all Nigerians wherever they migrate to in the world. The emergence of the new government headed by President Mohammed Buhari came with the high faith that corruption in Nigeria will be minimized especially because of the campaign promises of the All Progressive Congress (APC). However one year down the line Nigeria has not come up better in a better ranking. Corruption in Nigeria is hydra headed and multifaceted. This has caused pains to several Nigerians because poverty and hunger have been on the increase for the money that would have improved the lots of many Nigerians are being pocketed by few.

The current \$2.1 billion arms deal which has continued to connect several Nigerian leaders is a typical example. This was supposed to be used to purchase arms in the fight against the Boko-Haram insurgence, yet few Nigerians pocketed this money and so incapacitate the military in their fight against insurgency. The law of restitution describes all those involved as thieves and must retribute in four-fold.

Moreover, corruption manifests in politics in fact according to Morris (1991) it is because of the wicked level of corruption that makes both young and old struggle to find themselves in one political party or other, they believe that once they occupy any position in politics even the smallest, they will use corrupt tricks to fill their pocket with public funds. This is why corruption has become popular and normal. Corrupt political system eventually produces corruptible leaders in Nigeria who embezzle public funds. The elections in Nigeria have always been characterized by different types of corruption ranging from ritual killings to the use of thugs who snatch and stuff ballot boxes in favour of their party, changing figures and winning before elections. The democracy in Nigeria has been the decision of few imposed on the masses. The law of restitution expects those who got into political offices through corrupt means to vacate such offices. The political leaders whose elections

were fraudulent have always paid a lip-service to the anti-graft war because how can a leader who came to power through corruption fight corruption.

The police forces are strong weapon to fight corruption, but the story is different in Nigeria because the police force is characterized with bribery, intimidation, twisting the truth especially to favour of the rich. Their escapees at our check point are something else. Their forceful and compulsory collection of money from motorists, tricyclists and cyclists has continued shamelessly. They are used by the politicians to perpetuate their corrupt practices. Zacchaeus volunteered to pay back fourfold whatever he forcefully collected from people. The police should be bold enough to support the anti-graft war by desisting from forceful collection of money from road users but should stand to identity and bring to book all criminals.

The educational sector is not left out because corruption has destroyed the standard of education. Students from secondary school are groomed in passing Senior School Examinations through corruption and various examination malpractices, it become overwhelming at the tertiary level. Both teachers and students are neck-deep into corrupt practices, teachers and lecturers sale marks either for cash or kind and thereby produce functional illiterates in our society. Dike (2014) reported in Sun News online about 15 Born again Christians who restituted by returning their certificates to West African Examinations Council (WAEC). These persons followed the law of restitution because they paraded in the past certificates fraudulently gotten. This is the best approach to the fight against corruption.

Recommendations

- This present of APC government led by President Buhari should be down to earth in her fight against corruption by looking inward to sanitize herself of every form of corruption. They should set the good example of restitution by correctly declaring their assets, returning all their ill-gotten wealth and by vacating their political offices where they got in through fraudulent elections.
- Corruption in whatever form is evil because it is the major cause of poverty in Nigeria, so the Buhari government should ensure the proper channeling of the recovered loots to fight against poverty.
- The government and indeed all those in political offices should demonstrate their sincerity in this anti-graft war by taking the lead in restituting their wrongs.
- The government and indeed the society should celebrate those who restituted as an encouragement to others.
- Restitution is a major Bible doctrine that has been relegated to the background it is hardly preached or taught in churches. So church leaders should as a matter of urgency inculcate this teaching and encourage followers to make it up to whoever they wronged.

Conclusion

Restitution as the requirement of God in righting the wrong in our society has been a forgotten and an abandoned practice. This is legally enshrined in our civil law yet the society does not see this as a drive injunction. This is why even the court fight against this with all kinds of laws. So as both doctrinal and legal requirements, the government in the war against corruption should explore the practice of restitution. This practice when encouraged will heal our economy because all those who embezzled our public fund and forcefully enrich themselves will be made to retribute all that they stole. Restitution as a practice will sanitize our relationships and heal wounds in our interpersonal, inter-tribal and inter-ethnic relationships.

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Towards an African Philosophical Anthropology

Kanu, I. A., Ph.D
Veritas University of Nigeria, Abuja
Ikee_mario@yahoo.com

Abstract

Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection in the middle of the 19th century drew attention to a couple of areas, especially as it concerns the understanding of the human person. With this development, emerged very strongly the field of Anthropology as an independent and systematic field of study. As different thinkers began to study anthropology from different backgrounds also emerged different anthropological perspectives. The idea of an African philosophical anthropology is an attempt to study anthropology from an African philosophical perspective. In our time of globalization, this study has become very significant for the purpose of authenticity and identity. In the collection and analysis of data, the historical and phenomenological methods of inquiry have been employed. Taking from the African worldview or cosmology which provides the context for this discourse, this piece submits that there is an African philosophical anthropology.

Keywords: African, Philosophy, Anthropology, Man, Humanism.

1. Introduction

Anthropology only began to emerge as an independent and systematic field of study in the middle of the 19th century. This emergence is linked to Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection- it drew great attention to the study of the human person as it became widely accepted among many scientists. By the 20th century, as different persons began to delve into the study of anthropology, different areas of anthropology also began to emerge. As philosophers began to study anthropology, the idea of a philosophical study of anthropology under the name- philosophical anthropology emerged as well.

Audi (1999) defines philosophical anthropology as "a philosophical enquiry concerning human nature, often starting with the question of what generally characterizes human beings, in contrast to other kinds of creatures and things" (p. 667). More simply, Mundi (1998) defines it as the philosophical study of man. Bergamino (2007) refers to this discipline as a "philosophical research that seeks to gather the essence of man, that is, the precise modality of being that confers the essence of 'manness' to any human subject and permits him to be such in more varied changes that besiege his existence" (pp. 13-14). This study would involve integrating the findings of scientific researches on the human person, and thus the need for openness to the findings of science, such as biology.

The study of what consists of the human person from the western perspective reveals the emergence of two schools: the vitalists and the mechanists (Mondin, 1998). The general tendency of vitalists is to consider life as a singular original phenomenon, irreducible to matter. They posit that in the living organism are found phenomenon of self-construction, self-conservation, self-regulation and self-repair, which are not found in machines. The representatives of this school are basically of the Judeo-Christian Tradition (Ebeh, 2010).

However, with the triumph of mathematics and science, philosopher-scientists began to give a mechanistic interpretation to life. They observed that the human body is a well contrived machine, with its levers (bones), its pumps (heart), its bellows (lungs), etc. Descartes and Leibniz proposed the analogy of living organisms and machines, in particular the clock. From this perspective, the human person is understood as a singular organization of matter. With the dawn of modernism, animated by the Cartesian anthropological philosophy, which overthrew the theocentricism of the medieval world, practical philosophies began to feature prominently on the landscape of philosophy, giving greater impetus to science and technology: 'the conquest of nature'. This has further promoted the mechanistic concept of the human person, thus, giving less value to the vitalist position.

With this development in Western philosophical anthropology, the circumstance has arisen which questions the position of African philosophy on who the human person is. This has become even more important in our own generation of globalization when there is a growing need to be in communication with regional characterization

in virtually every field of human endeavour. The drive of this piece is, therefore, to philosophically investigate the concept of the human person from an African perspective. Before such an investigation, it would be worthwhile to first study and establish the meaning of African Philosophical Anthropology.

2. Defining African Philosophical Anthropology

African philosophical anthropology can be understood as a discipline that deals with the questions of the metaphysics and phenomenology of the human person, and interpersonal relationships from an African perspective. The idea of the concept “Africa” in African philosophical anthropology speaks of or provides the *locus* or *locale* for doing the philosophical anthropology called African. Thus, for it to be an African philosophical anthropology, the human person must be studied from an African perspective. By Africa, Ki-zerbo (1981) refers to the land of sunshine, of black race and mostly refers to the sub-Saharan regions of the Negroes, encompassing the territory about the city of Cartage and the Sub-Saharan Africa. It is the second largest of the Earth’s seven continents, covering 30,244,000 sq km (11,677,000 sq mi), including its adjacent islands with 54 countries. It encompasses 23 percent of the world’s total land area. In 2000 some 13 percent of the world’s population, an estimated 797 million people, lived in Africa, making it the world’s second most populous continent, after Asia. Knappert and Pearson (1976), state that its peoples are divided into more than 1,000 ethnic groups, with different languages, social customs, religions and way of life. Izu (1997), articulated the geographical identity of Africa thus:

It covers an area of 11, 617, 000 square miles. It is three times the size of Europe (10, 400, 000 square kilometres and 4,000, 000 square miles) and contains about four hundred million inhabitants. Africa is divided into twenty five major ethnic groups speaking about seven hundred languages. It contains within it every known type of topography and climatic condition, except the Arctic cold. There are in the North the Sahara, and in the South the Kalahari Desert, with permanent snow in the Kilimanjaro. Also found in Africa are jungle areas, temperate zones, swamps and Savannah. Finally, some of the highest falls and longest rivers in the world- the Nile, Niger, Zaire (now Congo), and Zambesi rivers- are also found in Africa. (p. 16).

African philosophical anthropology, therefore, focuses basically on the philosophical analysis of the African understanding of the human person. Whatever reflection that falls outside of this may not be considered an African philosophical anthropology.

3. The Humanistic Character of the African Universe

African cosmology is heavily anthropocentric. Man is at the centre of the universe, more central than God. According to Mbiti (1969), “Man is at the very centre of existence and African people see everything else in its relation to this central position of man... it is as if God exists for the sake of man” (p. 92). Corroborating with Mbiti, Metuh (1991), avers that “Everything else in African worldview seems to get its bearing and significance from the position, meaning and end of man” (p. 109). The idea of God, divinities, ancestors, rituals, sacrifices etc., are only useful to the extent that they serve the needs of man.

THE AFRICAN COSMOS



A diagram showing the Centrality of the Human person in the African Universe

The African universe has physical and the spiritual dimensions (Edeh 1983, Abanuka, 1994, Ijiomah 2005, Unah 2009). At the spirit realm, God represents the Chief Being, and sits at the apex of power. In the physical world, human beings dominates, occupying the central position in the scheme of God's creation. Onunwa (1994) believes that the African cosmos is like an isosceles triangle, God (the Supreme Being) is at the apex. The ancestors are at the base of the triangle, while at the centre are human beings. The primacy of the human being in the African universe is due to the central place the human person occupies within the universe. The triangular imagery suggests that human beings form a "microcosm" on which converge the innumerable forces and influences from the beings that inhabit the other arms of the universe.

4. Man as a Theocratic Being

The analysis of the Yoruba idea of a human person as *eniyan*, reveals the African concept of man as a being having its origin and finality in the Supreme Being. This implies that man in the African universe is best understood in his relationship with God his creator, to whom, from the Igbo perspective, he is ontologically linked with through his *chi*, the spark or emanation of God in each person. His or her life is understood as a gift from God. Thus, the Igbo bear the names:

- a. *Chi-nyere ndu*: God gave life
- b. *Nke-chi-yere*: the one God has given
- c. *Chi-n'eye ndu*: God gives life
- d. *Chi-di-ogo*: God is generous
- e. *Chi-nwe- ndu*: God owns life
- f. *Chi-ji-ndu*: God owns life

Man's existence is not the product of chance. According to Kanu (2015a), in African worldview the human person has a purpose and mission to fulfill; he comes into the world as a force amidst forces and interacting with forces. Good status, good health and prosperity are signs of the wellbeing of a person's life-force, and man struggles to preserve it through an appropriate relationship with the spiritual forces around him. The goal of every human person is to achieve his *akara chi*, the destiny imprinted on his palm by his *chi*.

Although the human person comes from God, his birth is not a separation from God. He still relates with the divine in a community of ways: Through **libation**: which are prayers usually said in the morning time or during ceremonies, meetings and gatherings using *oji* (kola nut) and *mmanya-oku* (hot drink), the food and drink of the gods. Ijiomah (2005) avers that in prayer, "the Igbo man tries to normalize the relationship among the three worlds ... libation is made to God through the agency of the ancestors and other deities" (p. 87). **Through divination**: which involves a process of inquiry. People who wish to know why certain things happen, how to solve certain problems and so on, go to diviners.

5. The Human Person as a Being with the Other

Kanu (2015b) avers that the human person is not just an individual person, but one born into a community whose survival and purpose is linked with that of others. Thus the human person is first a member of a clan, a kindred or a community. Thus, the African believes that "when a man descends from heaven, he descends into a community". The community rejoices and welcomes his arrival. As the child grows, he becomes aware of his dependence on his kin group and community. According to Mulago (1989):

The community is the necessary and sufficient condition for the life of the individual person. The individual person is immersed into the natural world and nevertheless emerges from it as an individual and a person within his conscience and freedom given him by the mediation of the community in which he senses a certain presence of the divine. (p. 115).

Mbiti (1969) has classically proverbialized the community determining role of the individual life, "I am because we are and since we are, therefore I am" (p. 108). The community, according to Pantaleon, gives the individual his existence. That existence is not only meaningful, but also possible only in a community (Kanu, 2012b). To be is to belong and to belong is to be.

6. The Three Dimensions of the Human Person

According to Oduwole (2010), Yoruba scholars agree that the human person is made up of three basic elements: *Ara* (body), *Emi* (breath) and *Ori* (soul). This is also true of the constituents of man in Igbo ontology: *Obi* heart or breath, *Chi* destiny, *Eke* or *Agu* ancestral guardian. Idowu (1962) describes the body as the concrete, tangible thing of flesh and bones which can be known through the senses. As regards the *Emi*, he describes it as spirit, and this is invisible. It is that which gives life to the whole body and thus could be described through its causal

functions: Its presence in the body of a person determines if the person still lives or is dead. According to Oduwole (2010), the body is the creation of *Orisha nla* (Arch-divinity). He was assigned by *Olodumare* (the Supreme Being) to mould the body of human beings. It is only the Supreme Being that puts the spirit into the body so as to give it life. Yoruba philosophy on the human person does not end with the body and spirit, there is a third element called the soul. The soul affirms that the human person already has individuality in the spiritual world before birth. From this understanding, life does not begin with birth, it begins as soon as one acquires the soul which defines a person's individuality. The soul of the human person begins to live even before there is a body for its abode.

7. Conclusion

African anthropology initially controlled the production of anthropological knowledge and the result was functionalist studies - it was aimed at enhancing colonialism. It was not surprising that these studies were explicitly often myopic. After the colonial period, the new nations of Africa dismissed anthropology both as a cultivation of primitivism and as an apologetic for colonialism. This notwithstanding, circumstances have arisen for the social sciences, including anthropology, across Africa to regroup and to face the challenges that confront us as a continent and as part of the human family. It will be salutary for Africans to bring their own particular perspectives to all the social sciences, including anthropology

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Towards an African Philosophy of Development**Kanu, I. A., Ph.D****Veritas University of Nigeria, Abuja**Ikeemario@yahoo.com**Abstract**

The question: “what is development?” has attracted a couple of perspectives. The science and technology model has created the impression and conviction that science and technology is the key that unlocks the door of development; thus, more scientifically and technologically advanced societies are understood as more developed than the others. Economism has associated development with economic growth. It argues that the economy of a nation is the substructure upon which other structures rest. As such, once there is a positive change in the Gross National Product of a nation, it is said to be developed, and when it is contrary, the country is said to be underdeveloped. There is also the secularist and historicist model of development which is associated with the dawn of modernism. Its proponents strongly believe that development is predicated on autonomy rather than hegemony. In the face of these different perspectives of development, this work investigates the possibility of having a concept of development that is based on the African cosmology and thus, attends to the African spirit. In the collection and analysis of data, it adopts the phenomenological method of inquiry. It submits that there is an African philosophy of development that is wholistic and complementary in character.

Keywords: African, Philosophy, Development, Science, Economism.

1. Introduction

The question of the meaning of development has become a burgeoning interrogation in Africa, and responses to the question have attracted a retinue of perspectives from different backgrounds. A cursory glance at the different perspectives on this issue reveals that they are rather reductionist perspectives rather than wholistic in nature. These perspectives are regarded as reductionist in the sense that they hold a perspectival perspective of reality as evident in the philosophies of the empiricists and rationalists who hold onto a piece of reality as though it were the essence of reality. One of the models of a reductionist concept of development is the science and technology model. This, according to Bhagavan (1990), is based on the created impression and conviction that sees science and technology as the key that unlocks the door of development; thus, more scientifically and technologically advanced societies are understood as more developed than the others. It is on this basis that some countries in the world are regarded as developed, others as developing and some others as underdeveloped. This notwithstanding, Oraegbunam (2009) avers that the human person is more than science and technology, and, thus, to lock up development within the compartment of science and technology is only to limit development. Heidegger (1977) in this regard avers that science and technology is only a means to an end and not an end in itself.

Economism has also associated development with economic growth. This perspective is evident in Karl Marx who argued that the economy of a nation is the substructure upon which other structures rest. As such, once there is a positive change in the Gross National Product of a nation, it is said to be developed, and when it is contrary, the country is said to be underdeveloped. The association of economic growth with development has led to what Kim (1981) refers to as a cult of money and the dehumanization of the human person. It was this inordinate and reckless drive for development that led to the slave trade and colonialism. In the name of boosting economic growth humanity was degraded and divided. Development cannot be associated with a system that dehumanizes and divides human beings. Development must begin with people and not destroy people; thus, it must go beyond economic growth.

There is also the secularist and historicist model of development which is associated with the dawn of modernism, animated by the Cartesian anthropological philosophy, which overthrew the theocentricism of the medieval world, giving birth to practical philosophies that undermined religious and supernatural authorities. This perspective is the basis for enlightenment, agnosticism and atheism. Its proponents strongly believe that development is predicated on autonomy rather than hegemony. This perspective features prominently in the philosophies of Hume, Nietzsche, Darwin, etc. the end result of this position is the reduction of man to a chain

of evolutionary processes that are devoid of meaning. The human person becomes a kind of machine, a clock, commoditized and depersonalized in the image of a big vending machine; this diminishes his value as a human person. It, therefore, becomes very difficult to associate development with such a perspective.

In the face of these perspectives on development, the question that looms at the horizon of this work is, from the African perspective, what is development? What contribution can African anthropology and metaphysics make to the pool of literature on development? Since development is used in relation to the human person, the question that needs to be attended to first, is ‘who is man in African ontology?’ An understanding of the human person would help shape an African integral and humanistic concept of development.

2. Man as a Substructure for an African Philosophy of Development

Different perspectives about the human person have merged over the years, and these perspectives have equally affected the concept of development. Kierkegaard speaks of the ‘anguished man’, Karl Marx of the ‘economic man’, Sigmund Freud of the ‘erotic man’, Nietzsche of the ‘man as the will to power’, Heidegger of the ‘existent man’, Cassirer of the ‘symbolic man’, Bloch of the ‘utopic man’, Marcel of the ‘problematic man’, Gehlen of the ‘cultural man’, Mounier and Scheler of man as the ‘incarnate spirit’, Ricoeur of the ‘fallible man’. In the midst of these Western perspectives of the human person, how does the African see the human person? And how does this shape the African concept of development?

The African world is heavily anthropocentric. Man is at the centre of the universe, more central than God. Thus, Mbiti (1969) avers that “Man is at the very centre of existence and African people see everything else in its relation to this central position of man... it is as if God exists for the sake of man” (p. 92). Corroborating with Mbiti, Metuh (1991), avers that “Everything else in African worldview seems to get its bearing and significance from the position, meaning and end of man” (p. 109). The idea of God, divinities, ancestors, rituals, sacrifices etc., are only useful to the extent that they serve the needs of man.

The African universe has physical and the spiritual dimensions (Edeh 1983, Abanuka, 1994, Ijiomah 2005, Unah 2009). At the spirit realm, God represents the Chief Being, and sits at the apex of power. In the physical world, human beings dominates, occupying the central position in the scheme of God’s creation. Onunwa (1994) believes that the African cosmos is like an isosceles triangle, God (the Supreme Being) is at the apex. The ancestors are at the base of the triangle, while at the centre are human beings. The primacy of the human being in the African universe is due to the central place the human person occupies within the universe. The triangular imagery suggests that human beings form a “microcosm” on which converge the innumerable forces and influences from the beings that inhabit the other arms of the universe. With this understanding of the human person, man is not defined according to his colour, nation, religion, creed, political leanings, material contribution or any matter. The human person has a dignity that must be preserved from every form of exploitation. He is a being with the other, and, thus, should have a wholistic approach to development. Although a human being, he is made up of various forms and aspects.

3. Development and the African Culture

The encounter between Western and African cultures was one that looked down on the African culture as underdeveloped, and thus the need to be discarded. In this encounter, many Africans forsook their culture in pursuit of the Western culture often associated with development. The African culture was described in derogatory terms as pagan, fetish, idolatry, etc. This raises a question as regards the relationship between culture and development. In relating development with the African culture, Wirendu (1998) avers that:

Nevertheless, it is a fact that Africa lags behind the west in the cultivation of rational inquiry. One illuminating (because fundamental) was of ‘approaching the concept of ‘development’ is to measure it by the degree to which rational methods have penetrated thought habits. In this sense, of course, one cannot compare the development of peoples in absolute terms. The western world is ‘developed,’ but only an aspect, and that is not the core, of development. The conquest of the religious, moral and political spheres by the spirit of rational inquiry remains, . . . a thing of the future even in the west. From this point of view the west may be said to be still underdeveloped. The quest for development, then, should be viewed as a continuing world-historical process in which all peoples, western and non-western alike, are engaged. (p. 195).

If African development efforts would be considered successful, it is not in the discarding of her culture but in the preservation and safeguarding of her heritage. This does not in any way imply that preservation excludes openness to external influences. If they add value to the African cultural heritage, Africa should be open to them. To be open to other cultures without a prior establishment of self-identity would usher in the loss of identity and authenticity. With the African history, inundated by varying proportions of assimilation, true development must begin with mental decolonization for the restoration of the African humanness.

4. A Complementary Notion of Development

The human person and the nature of reality in African ontology is generally complementary. Kanu (2015a&b) and (2016a&b) in the complementary philosophy of *Igwebuike*, understands reality as being composed of beings that are in relation to the other. Asouzu (2007b), the Father of African complementary philosophy, in his philosophy of *Ibuanyidanda*, presents the African reality as “an all-embracing whole, in which all units form together a dynamic play of forces, which are in harmony with each other, by completing and supporting the other” (p. 14). Asouzu (2004) further speaks of reality as “necessary complements of each other” (46). While describing the human society, Asouzu (2007a) advanced that, “Human beings and societies exist only in relations” (p. 74). Taking from the above ontology, the African concept of development is all-embracing. This is contrary to the impression one gets from the different perspectives on development which makes it seem like a relative concept. The African does not in the name of development exploit the other. He does not in the name of development destroy his environment. He does not in the name of development make a caricature of the supernatural beings that constitute a fundamental part of the universe. He sees himself as part of a whole, a whole which all these constitute complementary elements for the well being of all.

It is from this African perspective that Wirendu (1998) insists that the human perspective on development must be wider than the myopic perspectives on development. He writes:

Man should link the modernization of the conditions of his life with the modernization of all aspects of his thinking. It is just the failure to do this that is responsible for the more unlovable features of life in the West. Moreover, the same failure bedevils attempts at development in Africa. Rulers and leaders of opinion in Africa have tended to think of development in terms of the visible aspects of modernization – in terms of large buildings and complex machines, to the relative neglect of the more intellectual foundations of modernity. It is true that African nations spend every year huge sums of money on institutional education. But it has not been appreciated that education ought to lead to the cultivation of a rational outlook on the world on the part of the educated and, through them, in the traditional fold at large. Thus it is that even while calling for modernization, influential Africans can still be seen to encourage superstitious practices such the pouring of libation to spirits in the belief that in this kind of way they can achieve development without losing their Africanness. The second advantage of seeing development in this way suggested above is that the futility of any such approach becomes evident. To develop in any serious sense, we in Africa must break with our old uncritical habits of thought; that is we must advance past the stage of traditional thinking. (pp. 195-196).

In the past, discussions and commentaries on development easily tended to be developed by economists, scientists, etc., who saw it primarily from the perspective of economic and scientific growth. While economic growth or scientific advancement is a positive sign, for the African, it does not constitute the full picture of development. Thus, as Nwajiuba (1999) observes, it is possible that there could be an economic growth, scientific advancement but not development. Development observes Onwuliri (2008) goes beyond the narrow lines of economic and material advancement. It is all encompassing.

5. Conclusion

With the African understanding of the human person, the African concept of development is one in which man is at the centre of development itself. His interest and wellbeing, in line with the interests and wellbeing of others must be captured in every true development. As Ndiaye (1987), man is the driving force of development and at the same time, the beneficiary of development. Man is the *terminus ad quo* from which every development project moves and around which every development project must be polarized. Being a being Scheler (1970) describes as a ‘so vast, so varied, so multiform, that every definition demonstrates itself as too limited’, an understanding of development in relation to man must, therefore, include all the above dimensions: economic, social, religious, etc. as Oraegbunam (2009) writes of man:

“He is a *homo scientificus*, a *homo technologicus*, a *homo economicus*, a *homo sapiens*, a *homo religiousus*, a *homo rationalis*, a *homo moralist*, *homo politicus*, *homo faber*, *homo transcendentalis*, *homo spiritualis*, *homo eschatologicus* all together” (p. 71). The concept of development must therefore not be related to only one or two of the above. Development should thus be wholistic and complementary. In relations to the African culture, no culture is superior to the other. And if no culture is superior to the other, then none should be considered a symbol of development and the other, underdevelopment. Africans need not look down on their own cultural heritage in the pursuit of western ways of life. The understanding of development in the sense of solely modernization is restrictive and myopic. Development against the backdrop of modernization, according to Wiredu (1998), should be seen as “one in which Africans in common with other peoples seek to attain a specifically human destiny”(p. 190).

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Towards an African Philosophy of Religion**Kanu, I. A., Ph.D****Veritas University of Nigeria, Abuja**Ikeemario@yahoo.com**Abstract**

There are a couple of literatures on African Traditional Religion, which could have philosophical slants, however, cannot be referred to as philosophical texts, partly because the authors never set out to write a philosophical work. This notwithstanding, these texts have contained in them elements of African philosophy of religion. While their works can be referred to as containing some elements of African Philosophy of Religion, they cannot be regarded as African philosophy of religion texts. This piece attempts at developing an African philosophy of religion, as an independent discipline of African philosophy, which is different from African Traditional Religion. It employs the historical and thematic methods of inquiry in the collection and analysis of data. It strongly argues that there is an African philosophy of religion, which can compete with the Western philosophy of religion.

Keywords: African, Philosophy, Religion, God, Evil, Human Suffering.

1. Introduction

Religious themes have always emerged in the thoughts of Western and African philosophers. In the Ancient Era of Western philosophy, religious reflections abound in the writings of Pythagoras, who was greatly influenced by the Orphic religion, Plato, Aristotle and Epicurus. In the Medieval Season, it dominated the philosophical reflections of the philosophers of the Medieval world, as it is evident in the philosophies of Augustine, Pseudo-Dionysius, Boethius, St Anselm, etc. Religious themes are also apparent in the treatises of many early modern philosophers, such as Locke, Berkeley, Hume, etc. This notwithstanding, in these treatises, there was only a mingling of religious themes with the broader concerns of philosophy, that is, in relation to the concerns of politics, logic, anthropology, epistemology, metaphysics, science, law etc.

A detailed study of the history of philosophy reveals that the dedication of philosophical texts wholly or exclusively to the study of religion is rather a recent thing. Thus, the term ‘philosophy of religion’ was first employed by Henry Moore in the 17th century with a specific focus on the philosophical study of religion. Since then, it has continued to develop as an area of study, and today, it is recognized as a branch of philosophy. An increased number of students are studying it in universities and seminaries, and scholarship is developing the discipline in new and previously unconsidered directions.

With the recent development in African studies, gradually opening up new vistas like African philosophy, African bioethics, African religion, African ethics, African logic, African science, African history, etc., this piece attempts to investigate the possibility of developing studies in African Philosophy of Religion. This could be considered a pioneer attempt in the direction of making a detailed and systematic study of an African Philosophy of Religion. However, before studying African philosophy of religion, it would be worthwhile to distinguish between African philosophy and African traditional religion, with the hope that it would pave the way for a clearer conception of African Philosophy of Religion.

2. African Philosophy

A cursory glance at the historical development of the discourses on the nature of African philosophy reveals four perspectives. Gbadegesin (1991) outlines these four perspectives as follows:

a. The first group understands African Philosophy as the philosophical thought of Africans as could be sifted from their various world views, myths, proverbs, etc. In this sense, it is the philosophy indigenous to Africans, and untainted by foreign ideas. It is based on this understanding that Tempels (1959) wrote that “I confidently hope to be able to convince my readers that real philosophy can be found among indigenous peoples and that it should be sought among them” (p. 17).

- b. The second group understands African philosophy as, the philosophical reflection on, and analysis of, African conceptual systems and social realities as undertaken by contemporary professional philosophers. This reduces African Philosophy to reflections by professionally trained philosophers who operate with the collaboration of traditional thinkers.
- c. The third group understands African Philosophy as the combination of these two approaches, without suppressing or looking down on any. This would involve sifting philosophical thought of Africans as could be gotten from their various world views, myths, proverbs, etc, and reflecting on them by professionally trained African philosophers.
- d. The fourth group argues that African Philosophy is not any of the above; however, its proponents represented by Hountondji (1976) regard African Philosophy as any collection of texts produced by Africans and specifically described by their authors as Philosophy.

While these views reveal the different groupings of perspectives on African philosophy over the years, none adequately, as an independent perspective, captures the meaning of African philosophy. From the first perspective, African philosophy, although includes, but not entirely domiciled in the myths, proverbs, folklores etc., of the African people. African philosophy has an extension capacity that encompasses contemporary events and issues. Holding on to that definition would make African philosophy to be a study of the past, but we know that African philosophy is contemporaneous. The second must be treated with reservation; this is because African philosophy goes beyond the thought of professional philosophers; there are also 'unprofessional' African philosophers. As regards the third, the comments for the first two definitions still apply. The fourth definition needs to be remodeled. Kanu (2015) argues that what makes a piece philosophical is not the author. What if a mad man was to be the author of an idea, and he calls his thought philosophy, does it make it philosophy? There should be principles that make a thought philosophical. Generally, African philosophy is a rational and critical enterprise that employs distinctive methods that are African in character in the interpretation of the African's experience of reality. The critical and rational nature of African philosophy distinguishes it from other areas of African study like African Traditional Religion and African Cultural Studies.

3. African Traditional Religion

African Traditional Religion, as a concept, can be employed in two complementary senses. Loosely speaking, it encompasses all African beliefs and practices that are considered religious but neither Christian nor Islamic. The expression is also used almost as a technical term for a particular reading of such beliefs and practices, one that purports to show that they constitute a systematic whole- a religion comparable to other world religions. The concept was introduced by G. Parrinder in 1954, but later developed by Bolaji Idowu and John Mbiti. However, Ekwunife (1990) defines African Traditional Religion as:

Those institutionalized beliefs and practices of indigenous religion of Africa which are the result of traditional Africans' response to their believed revealing Superhuman Ultimate and which are rooted from time immemorial in the past African religious culture, beliefs and practices that were transmitted to the present votaries by successive African forebears. (p. 29).

He further writes that African Traditional Religion is a religion that is transmitted:

Through oral traditions (myths, and folktales, songs and dances, liturgies, rituals, proverbs, pithy sayings, names and oaths), sacred specialists and persons, sacred space, objects and symbols, a religion which is slowly but constantly updated by each generation in the light of new experiences through the dialectical process of continuities and discontinuities. (p. 29).

Corroborating with Ekwunife, Awolalu (1979) writes:

When we speak of African traditional religion we mean the indigenous religion of the Africans. It is the religion that has been handed down from generation to generation by the forebears of the present generation of Africans. It is not a fossil religion (a thing of the past) but a religion that Africans today have made theirs by living it and practising it. This is a religion that has no written literature yet it is "written" everywhere for those who care to see and read. (p. 26).

Awolalu further adds that:

It is largely written in the people's myths and folktales, in their songs and dances, in their liturgies and shrines and in their proverbs and pithy sayings. It is a religion whose historical founder is neither known nor worshipped. It is a religion that has no zeal for membership drive, yet it offers persistent fascination for Africans, young or old. (p. 26).

African Traditional Religion is, therefore, a religion that has been with Africans for many generations, and with which they have lived their lives and solved their existential problems from time immemorial. Thus, Kanu (2015b) avers that it is a religion that is *co-terminus* with the African people and their society. The purpose of discussing African Traditional Religion as a theme in this study is to show the distinguishing line between African Traditional Religion and African philosophy and African philosophy of religion. These are three distinct concepts.

4. "African" as the Context for an African Philosophy of Religion

The presence of the concept "Africa" in the concept "African philosophy of religion" already speaks of or provides the *locus* or *locale* for doing the philosophy of religion called African. By Africa, Ki-zerbo (1981) refers to the land of sunshine, of black race and mostly refers to the sub-Saharan regions of the Negroes, encompassing the territory about the city of Cartage and the Sub-Saharan Africa. It is the second largest of the Earth's seven continents, covering 30,244,000 sq km (11,677,000 sq mi), including its adjacent islands with 54 countries. Robert (2003) observes that it encompasses 23 percent of the world's total land area. In 2000 some 13 percent of the world's population, an estimated 797 million people, lived in Africa, making it the world's second most populous continent, after Asia. Knappert and Pearson (1976), state that its peoples are divided into more than 1,000 ethnic groups, with different languages, social customs, religions and way of life. Izu (1997), articulated the geo-numerical identity of Africa thus:

It covers an area of 11, 617, 000 square miles. It is three times the size of Europe (10, 400, 000 square kilometres and 4,000, 000 square miles) and contains about four hundred million inhabitants. Africa is divided into twenty five major ethnic groups speaking about seven hundred languages. It contains within it every known type of topography and climatic condition, except the Arctic cold. There are in the North the Sahara, and in the South the Kalahari Desert, with permanent snow in the Kilimanjaro. Also found in Africa are jungle areas, temperate zones, swamps and Savannah. Finally, some of the highest falls and longest rivers in the world- the Nile, Niger, Zaire (now Congo), and Zambesi rivers- are also found in Africa. (p. 16).

African philosophy of religion, therefore, focuses basically on the religious experience of the African, and if there must be a reflection on religious experiences outside of the African, then it must be in relation to the African religious experience. Whatever reflection that falls outside of this parameter may not qualify to be considered an African philosophy of religion. Thus, African philosophy of religion must include a philosophical analysis of the African religious experience.

5. The Development of African Philosophy of Religion

There are a couple of literature on African Traditional Religion, which could have philosophical slants, however, cannot be referred to as philosophical texts, partly because the authors never set out to write a philosophical work. This notwithstanding, these texts have contained in them elements of African philosophy of religion. Such texts include: *Sacrifice in Igbo religion*, Arinze, F.; *West African traditional religion*, by Awolalu, J. O. & Dopamu, P. O.; *Igbo ritual symbols*, by Ejizu, C. I. O.; *Olodumare: God in Yoruba belief*, by Idowu, B.; *Fundamentals of religious studies*, by Madu, J. E.; *Comparative studies of African Traditional Religion*, by Metuh, E. I.; *West African religion*, by Parinder, G. D.; *West African traditional religion*, by Quarcoopome, T. N., etc. The writers of these works did not set out to write a philosophical work *ab initio*. Thus, while their works can be referred to as containing some elements of African Philosophy of Religion, they cannot be regarded as African philosophy of religion texts. This is not to say that these works are irrelevant in the study of African philosophy of religion; they can be a starting point for African philosophers of religion as they provide the raw material or data for philosophical reflection.

The African universe being a deeply religious one, it has become increasingly difficult for many African philosophers to reflect on the African experience without delving into African religious themes like God, proofs

of God's existence, life after death, divinities, ancestors etc. This notwithstanding, in the treatises of African philosophers, there was only a mingling of religious themes with the broader concerns of African philosophy, that is, in relation to the concerns of politics, epistemology, metaphysics, science, law etc. They did not originally set out to reflect on African philosophy of religion. Such works include: *Bantu philosophy*, by Tempels, P.; *An essay on African philosophical thought: The Akan conceptual scheme*, by Gyekye, K.; *Hermeneutics of God in Igbo ontology*, by Mbaegbu, C. C. A.; *Muntu: An outline of the new African culture*, Jahn, J.; *Essays in African philosophy, thought and theology*, by Njoku, F. O. C; *African philosophy: An ontologico-existential hermeneutics on classical and contemporary issues*, by Kanu, I. A. Although their works have chapters dedicated to philosophical reflections on African philosophy of religion, they are not philosophical texts dedicated wholly or exclusively to the study of African philosophy of religion. The first attempt at dedicating a philosophical text to the study of African philosophy of religion can be traced to J. S. Mbiti's *African Traditional Religions and Philosophy*. On this point, African philosophers of the thorough going universalist school would distance themselves with this idea. However, the most recent attempt at dedicating a whole text to a philosophical study of African traditional religious thought is seen in Kanu, A. I.'s *A Hermeneutic Approach to the Study of African Traditional religion, Theology and Philosophy*. On the ability of such a text to represent a study of African philosophy of religion would also be controversial. These notwithstanding, no matter how imperfect these developments represent a dedicated study in African philosophy of religion, they all constitute a part of the history of the development of what may be one day regarded as the history of African Philosophy of Religion. The idea of an African philosophy of religion is here employed to inspire further writings in this direction. It is also hoped that it would be a basis for further studies in African philosophy of religion.

6. Defining African Philosophy of Religion

African philosophy of religion is not to be understood as an enterprise that is out to defend African traditional religious convictions or experiences. It is not an organ of religious teaching, and as such, it is an enterprise open to all forms of religious traditions in Africa. It studies the concepts and belief systems of the African religions as well as the prior phenomena of religious experience and the activities of worship on which these belief systems rest and out of which they have arisen. African philosophy of religion would, therefore, analyze African conceptions of God, proof for the existence of God, religious symbols, salvation, worship, creation, divinities, ancestors, reincarnation, African religious language, myth, life after death, the problem of evil, morality and religion from a philosophical perspective, and with the philosophical method of analysis. Unlike other forms of study in the area of religion, African philosophy of religion is a neutral activity.

From the above, it can be said that African philosophy of religion is concerned with the justification of African religious beliefs with rational argumentation and the analysis of the central themes in African religious traditions. Thus, it focuses on determining the nature and status of African religious beliefs; its proximate aims, its motivations, their meaning and the truth that they command. And the primary aim why African philosophy of religion engages in this search is simply to determine the character and worth of African religions and religious experiences.

7. Selected Themes in African Philosophy of Religion

In the discussion of African philosophy of religion, there are various themes that build up this area of study. This includes God, evil and human suffering, divinities, immortality, etc. This section would focus on these themes:

a. God in African Ontology

God in the African universe, according to Quarcoopome (1987), from his names and attributes, is a reality and not an abstract concept. Idowu (1973) avers that he is a personal being with whom one can enter into communion and communication. He is approachable in all occasions of life. In societies where there is hierarchy of power, from the king to the chiefs and common people, the idea of God is also presented within the frame of a hierarchy. This is evident in the Yoruba, Benin and Akan concepts of God. However, where such hierarchies are not well developed, the idea of God is presented in plain terms, as among the Nupe and Tiv. Among some cultures, he is conceived as masculine, as among the Yoruba, Mende and Akan; in some others as feminine, as among the Ewe; in some others, he is conceived as both male and female, as among the Gas. The Yoruba call him *Olodumare* or *Edumare* (The King of heaven); The Igbo call him *Chukwu* or *Osebuluwa* (Great God or sustainer of the universe); The Edo call him *Osanobua* or *Osanobwa* (Creator and sustainer of the universe);

The Nupe call him *Soko* (The supreme deity that resides in heaven); The Ijo call him *Temearau* (The creatress of all things –feminine term-); The Tiv call him *Aondo* (The power above that creates and rules all things); The Ibibio refer to him as *Obasi Ibom* (The God who lives above the earth); The Akan call him *Odomankoma* and *Nyame* (full of mercy and the God of fullness respectively); The Mende of Sierra Leone call him *Ngewo* (The eternal one who rules from above); The Kono of Sierra Leone call him *Meketa* (The Immortal or eternal); From these names of God from different African cultural backgrounds, his attributes already begin to emerge.

b. The Existence of God

The desperation to prove the existence of God is a Western phenomenon than African issue. This is because the African believes that God exists and does not need anyone to prove to him. God is part of his daily life. Edeh (1985), while speaking of the Igbo's relationship with God, writes:

... the Igbo is born in a religious atmosphere that makes the presence of God a living fact, he has not the least doubt that God exists. Consequently, the Igbo normally does not bother about a proof of God's existence. God is so near to man, so involved in man's existence, that one does not question Chukwu's existence. (p. 118).

Corroborating Edeh, Mbaegbu (2012) writes:

It would be grossly baseless to suggest to an Igbo traditionalist that all his thoughts of the Supreme Being which are his own creations encapsulated in these names and attributes of Chukwu or God are false and misguided; worse still, if such natural creations are misappropriated to be the exclusive reserve property of the Christian missionaries. The earliest Igbo people possess the concept of the Supreme Being as a real existent being in their traditional ontology (p. 246).

While discussing the concreteness of God among the Yoruba people, Jahn (1961) writes that:

God may be banished from Greek thought without any harm done to the logical architecture of it, but this cannot be done in the case of the Yoruba. In medieval thought, science could be dismissed at pleasure, but this is impossible in the case of Yoruba thought, since faith and reason are mutually dependent. In modern times, God even has no place in scientific thinking. This was impossible for the Yorubas since from the Olodumare an architectonic of knowledge was built in which the finger of God is manifest in the most rudimentary elements of nature. Philosophy, theology, politics, social theory, land law, medicine, psychology, birth and burial, all find themselves logically concatenated in a system so tight that to subtract one item from the whole is to paralyze the structure of the whole. (p. 97).

These perspectives register the understanding that the African does not depend on proofs like the westerner in order to believe in the existence of God. The first attempt at providing Igbo-African proofs of the existence of God was done by Edeh (1985). This he was able to build from the responses he got from the questionnaire he gave Mr Ede Ani Onovo, a native of Nkanu and a man well known for his wisdom and knowledge. He refers to his proofs as five ways of coming to know about *Chukwu*, which include: the existence of things in nature, Igbo nomenclature, the Igbo concept of *Chi* and the Igbo idea of life and death. Mbaegbu (2012), building on Edeh's, went further to develop the proofs of the existence of God in Igbo ontology. However, contrary to Edeh, he was motivated to develop these proofs to prove to missionaries that there was the idea of the Supreme Being in Igbo traditional ontology, and that the idea of Supreme Being was not influenced by missionary activities among the Igbo. While Edeh refers to his proofs as possible ways of arriving at the existence of God, in Mbaegbu the concept for describing the proofs attains systematization, he referred to them as: traditional rational proofs for the existence of God.

c. The Problem of Evil and Human Suffering

From the Igbo perspective, suffering is expressed in the Igbo word *ahuhu*, which means an unfavourable situation which ought not to be. The word can be applied in a strict sense and in a broad sense. In a strict sense, *ahuhu* connotes a gravely difficult, painful and dishonourable situation which a person undergoes as punishment for offences committed against the deities, humanity or the created order. This definition agrees with the Igbo unified view of reality, which sees the world as having an ontological link. Thus, Madu (2004) maintains that "There is an ontological link of the different spheres of the cosmic order, to the extent that what affects one sphere invariably will affect the other" (p. 21). From the Igbo perspective, suffering is retributive and proportionate to the abomination committed. The Igbo would therefore say *Isi kote ebu ogbaa ya* (the head that pushes the wasp hive receives the sting) and *mpuru onye kuru, ka oga'ghoru* (whatever a man sows that he would reap). According to Ezeanya (1994) "Suffering of every kind – epidemic, sickness of all sorts, accidents, fire outbreak, natural disasters like flood, and earthquakes were all attributed to the influence of the powers above man, both good and evil showing their displeasure at human offence" (p. 19). Suffering is believed to be

perpetrated by bad spirits *ndi ajo nmuo* and sometimes the ancestors could also inflict suffering. There were also human collaborators known as *ndi ajo nmadu*. They collaborate with bad spirits, witches and sorcerers to inflict suffering on fellow human beings.

In a loose sense, the Igbo understand suffering as any kind of painful or difficult experience resulting from situations or painstaking efforts to achieve difficult objectives. It is in this regard that suffering is understood in terms of *opipia*, that is, penance, usually done to achieve spiritual growth, or *olu ike or olu siri ike*, that is, hard work, as in the case of a man who works at a cement industry, daily carrying about 500 bags of cement from one point to another, it is considered *ahuhu*, but for the purpose of raising money to take care of his family. In this case it also refers to *igba mbo* (making serious effort). This kind of suffering brings hope and does not lead to despair or destruction. The Igbo would say: *mmiri mmadu kwosara onwe ya adighi atu ya oyi* (the water a person pours upon himself does not bring him or her cold). Hard work is at the centre of the Igbo spirit. The Igbo would say: *onye obula choro ihe mara mma ga adi nkwadobe ikuchara ya okpofufu n'ihina o dighi ije oma na-ada ne'lu* (one who desires great things must be ready to work hard), in another proverb, the Igbo would say: *o bu naani ukwu gbara apiti na eri ihe guru ya* (It is only the leg that is soiled with mud that enjoys whatever it likes). This kind of suffering is not a curse but attracts blessings from God. Greatness is achieved through hard work. There are generally, three approaches to the problem of evil and human suffering. The first is the Igbo cosmological optimistic view which traces evil and human suffering to human beings. There is the human destiny view which interprets evil and human suffering as part of the destiny of a person. There is also the eclectic view which combines the two perspectives above.

d. Morality and Religion

In Africa, there is widespread belief in a Supreme God, with a profound sense of the sacred and mystery. Thus, it is difficult to separate the life of the African from his personal inclinations to the divine. It is in this regard that he does everything with the consciousness of God. Mbiti (1969) puts this succinctly:

Wherever the African is, there is his religion. He carries it to the fields where he is sowing seeds or harvesting new crop, he takes it with him to a beer parlour or to attend a funeral ceremony; and if he is educated, he takes religion with him to the examination room at school or in the university; if he is a politician, he takes it to the house of parliament. (p. 2)

Relating the dominance of religious perspectives in African life, Opoku (1974) avers that "It may be said without fear of exaggeration that life in the Akan world is religion and religion is life". (p. 286). Opoku (1978) connecting the interpenetration of religion to morality wrote that "Generally, morality originates from religious considerations, and so pervasive is religion in African culture that ethics and religion cannot be separated from each other" (p. 152). Sarpong (1972) stated that "Ethics here emerges with religion and religious practices" (p. 41). Busia (1967) also wrote that "Religion defined moral duties for the members of the group or the tribe" (p. 16). Agreeing with these perspectives, Danguah (1944) avers that "Everything has value only in relation to the idea of the great ancestor" (p. 3).

Gyekye (1987) rejected the link established by these scholars between religion and morality as mistaken. He observed that these scholars speak of morality only in terms of moral rules or norms, while forgetting that morality involves the conduct of people or the pattern of behaviour. It is therefore not clear if these perspectives are of the view that morality is bound up with religion or if it is that religious beliefs influence human actions, or if both is meant. The reason of Gyekye distancing religion from morality was based on his research among the Akan people of Ghana in which he discovered that the concepts of good and evil are used not because the divine has sanctioned them, but because it helps humanity. He thus, prefers to talk of a humanistic or non-supernaturalistic origin of morality rather than a religious origin of morality which emphasizes the wellbeing or welfare of the community. Wiredu (1983), Summer (1983) and Oluwole (1990), while arguing for the Akan, Ethiopian and Yoruba ethics respectively, had written in the same terms when they argued that African morality is founded on rational reflection, that is, as to what is conducive to human welfare. Omoregbe (2005) and Wiredu (1983 and 1995) have also argued along the same line.

It is true that morality is not religion, but to argue that morality has no relationship with religion sounds plausible but not real. It was not so much about that God has given the moral law, but that these laws when broken offends him and the ancestors who upheld them. God is part of the ontological order, and to do anything that harms the human person is to distort the ontological order and thus would attract divine wrath. In African

traditional societies there was the fear of the ancestors and divinities. The idea of the relation of morality to the divine gave morality a strong value in African traditional societies and further affected behaviour, that is, the response of men and women to that law. African ethics therefore, has both a religious and humanistic basis. It is religious and humanistic at the same time because in African ontology, the human person occupies the central place.

8. Conclusion

The African religious themes that could be subjected to a philosophical reflection goes beyond the ideas of God, the existence of God, evil and human suffering, morality and religion. There are several other themes that could be discussed in the study of African philosophy of religion. These themes include ancestors, divinities, reincarnation, witchcraft, etc. What makes the difference between African philosophy of religion and other African religious and cultural studies is the method employed by African philosophy of religion, the methodology of rational argumentation and analysis of African religious themes and experiences. While this study serves as a pioneer attempt in the systematic study of African Philosophy of Religion, it targets at inspiring a more intense and systematic analysis in the area of African Philosophy of Religion. Thus, the term 'African philosophy of religion' is adopted with a specific focus on the philosophical study of religion. It is hoped that it would develop as an area of study, and one day be recognized as a branch of African philosophy. It is also hoped that an increased number of students would study it in universities and seminaries, especially as scholarship is developing in new and previously unconsidered directions.

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Identity and Language use among Liberian Refugees in Oru Camp, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Osita Gerald, Nwagbo (Ph.D)
Department of Linguistics, African and Asian Studies,
University of Lagos, Nigeria
E-mail:osynwagbo@yahoo.co.uk

Abstract

Refugees are often confronted with socio cultural challenges which often constrain them to reconstruct their identities. Previous studies on refugees in Oru camp investigated their socio-political and cultural concerns, with inadequate attention to their sociolinguistic challenges. Consequently, this research investigated the manifestations of ethnic identity through language use among Liberian refugees in Oru camp, Ogun State. This is with a view to ascertaining to what extent they maintained their indigenous languages and identified with the host community language. The study adopted the Ethno linguistic Identity Theory. On the strength of a mixed methodology, questionnaires and interviews were used to elicit information from 120 respondents comprising teenagers, young adults and full adults from three ethnic groups (Krahn, Bassa, Kpelle). The result shows that in the home, a majority of the young and full adults used English/pidgin in spousal interactions and English only in parent-child interaction, mainly due to exogamous marriages. This implies that parents were not transmitting their indigenous languages to the next generation. In the neighborhood, a majority of the young and full adults used English/pidgin in intra-ethnic interaction for reasons of accommodation. However, only the teenage group used Yoruba during interaction with the host community. Evidently, the young and full adults were not maintaining their indigenous languages neither did they identify with Yoruba. On the contrary, the teenagers had identified with Yoruba but had little or no facility in their indigenous languages. It is recommended that refugees should fully maintain their indigenous languages and also identify with the language of the host community for purposes of inclusion and the benefits of diversity.

Key words: Refugees, Linguistic Identity, Ethno Linguistics, Language use, Language Maintenance.

Introduction

The concern of this study is to investigate the place of language in the construction of ethnic identities among Liberian refugees in Oru refugee camp, Ogun State. Article 1A of the United Nations' 1951 refugee convention also known as the Geneva convention defines a refugee as:

A person who has well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, (and) is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country, or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it (UNHCR, 2010).

By this definition, it is evident that refugees are not like immigrants. Unwillingness to return to one's heritage country due to fear of persecution, for one reason or the other, is at the root of the refugee distinction. Kunz's (1981) idea of 'push' and 'pull' stresses that whereas the average immigrant is pulled or attracted to a new land by opportunities, the refugee is pushed out of his heritage country as a result of violence, discrimination, economic hardship, political conflict etc (also Berry 1997). Tribe (2002) states that unlike immigrants who choose to relocate to another country and have sufficient time to plan their movement, refugees are compelled to flee out of fear and without any plan of where they are going, and therefore any destination will do. They are usually victims of war and human rights abuses and have probably lost their possessions and loved ones through traumatic experiences.

The subjects of this study aptly fit into this definition as their flight across international borders is occasions by fear of persecution in their country of origin. It is acknowledged that refugees are confronted with numerous challenges, ranging from food, healthcare, shelter, resettlement etc. However, this study is specifically on the language and identity question in the experience of refugees. Although language is not explicitly mentioned in the definition above, its exclusion does not exempt language from the framework as race, (or ethnic group), religion, nationality all have a lot in common with language (Fishman, 1989).

The reason for opting to study the language proposition among other inconveniences encountered by refugees is because language is central in the lives of individuals as a veritable means of identification and solidarity within and across cultures (Kim, 2001; Berry, 2008). This is especially so, as the Liberian refugees in this study have emerged from a hostile situation where survival partly depended on the language or identity one expressed (Ed-zar-zar, 2002). Of course, this is not a submission that inter-ethnic hostilities are provoked by linguistic disparities; instead it is other socio-political paroxysm which dislocates the equilibrium of society (Fishman, 1969; Romaine, 2003). However, irrespective of the remoteness of language factors from the socio-political antecedents which precipitate some of these unpalatable conditions, one of the consequences is that the citizens of the affected countries, like the ones in this study, are often conscious of the primacy of ethno linguistic identity in their daily lives; that is their own language and culture in contrast to the language and culture of others.

However, due to the fact that refugees live among a different ethno linguistic group, they often find themselves in a cultural dilemma. According to Albrecht (2001) life as a refugee is problematic as it adversely affects one's sense of identity. Apart from material challenges, language barriers also frequently pose a difficulty as refugees struggle with issues of identity and belonging in a completely different ethno linguistic environment (UNHCR, 2008). They are usually presented with a bouquet of linguistic alternatives which persuade them to re-negotiate their identities. The question is, should they retain their heritage linguistic identity or should they adjust and identify with their host's culture. Whichever option they adopt has benefits and challenges; if they choose to maintain their indigenous languages they benefit from perpetuating their language and culture through transmission to subsequent generations, and a maintenance of ethnic identity, but they might lose face with the host community. On the contrary, if they opt to integrate by adopting the language of their hosts, they may enjoy some instrumental benefits depending on the utilitarian values of the host's language, but risk losing their ethnic culture. All this however, depend on the degree and pattern of acculturation..

Previous studies based on the refugees in Oru camp have not adequately investigated the disparate means of identity manifestation among the refugees. Many focused primarily on their socio-political challenges and paid little or no attention to issues of language. The present study seeks to find out how Liberian refugees in Oru camp (who opted for integration) have coped with linguistic identity projection and acculturation, with respect to their own ethnic image and the image of the host community.

Objectives

The study aims to

1. examine the dynamics of identity projection in different domains as a reflection of the distinction between insiders and outsiders;
2. highlight the various strategies adopted by the refugees to maintain their ethno linguistic identity; and
3. estimate the extent to which the refugees had identified with the language of the host community.

Review of Empirical Studies

Some empirical studies have been carried out on the sociolinguistic situation of refugees around the world. Kronner (2003) investigates the processes of identity construction among Somali refugees in Egypt. He finds that the Egyptians saw the Somalis as Africans which the refugees reject, preferring an Arabian identity due to the Arabic language. The fact that the refugees were perceived differently by their host community obstructs social integration with the Egyptians.

Korac (2009) examines various means by which refugees from the former Yugoslavia have constructed their lives in the cities of Amsterdam and Rome. He finds that, in the Netherlands the state sponsored integration by providing housing, language training, social welfare and easy access to citizenship and in return the refugees were expected to learn Dutch and adapt to the socio-cultural norms of the Dutch society. In Italy, however, no such provisions were made. Meludu and Emerole (2009) investigate the problems faced by refugees in Oru camp and find that the refugees encountered difficulties integrating into the host community due to language barrier, lack of information about jobs and lack of basic educational qualifications.

Kametani (2010) examines the Burmese refugee's integration process in Finland and finds that the Burmese refugees were interested in maintaining their ethnic identity by preserving their language and culture in Finnish society, as well as deliberately transmitting their language to their own children. The integration process was aided by the acquisition of Finnish; so the refugees adapted to the culture of Finland without relinquishing their own ethnic identity. Valenta (2010) examines the integration means among the Iraqi, Bosnian and Croatian refugees in Norway and finds that bridging and bonding with the host community was facilitated by the acquisition of greater proficiency in the host's language and culture among other things. However, they consciously maintained their own ethnic identity by way of upholding their language. Anurag (2011) investigates the identity construction of over 10,000 Burmese refugees in India and finds that it was different for the refugees to send their children to free government schools and hospitals because they did not speak Hindi, the official local language. As a result, the refugees were disgusted with the host community and made no attempt to identify with them, but maintained their (refugees) own indigenous language. Babalola et al (2012) examine the experiences of refugees in Oru camp and find that the refugees lacked basic information resources. They compared their situation with the Cambodian refugees in Myanmar and Thailand where the Shanti Volunteer Association (SVA) preserved and promoted the Karen language of the refugees which was endangered. The volunteers translated picture books to the refugees' Karen language and published folk tales and stories in Karen language. In this way, they solved the problem of acquiring books that teach the culture and language of the refugees.

Language and identity

Identity represents an individual's perception of himself irrespective of the way he is perceived by other people; this perception ranges from the personal to social and ethnic. Although there are many means of projecting identity, like food, dress, patterns of worship, several writers have posited that language is the most powerful means of showing who we are or where we come from. Fishman (1989) states that

It is precisely because language is so often taken as a biological inheritance that its association with ethnic paternity is both frequent and powerful. It is acquired with the mother's milk...it is saturated with the tears and joys of the ancestors. It is loved with all one's being. How could it be otherwise, particularly if the ultimate power used (the) language in creating the ancestors and, indeed, in creating the world itself (pp 26).

By this postulation, Fishman underscores the symbiotic relationship between language and ethnic identity. Demirezen (2006:2) corroborates this assertion by stating that the relationship between language and ethnic identity is 'bi-directional' and Spolsky (1999) too, who cites the example of the children of Israel who maintained their ethnic identity during the slave period in Egypt by not abandoning their language. Giles et al (1977 cited in Appel and Muysken 1987:11) note that

Language is not only an instrument for the communication of messages. With its language a group distinguishes itself. The cultural norms and values of a group are transmitted by its language. Group feelings are emphasized by using the group's own language, and members of the out-group are excluded from the internal transactions.

The depth of this identity projection through language is vividly elaborated by Johnson (2009:177) who states that

For the majority of Hispanics, the Spanish language runs deeply into cultural and personal identities. Anzaldua's (1987) eloquent phrasing of this principle captures the language-identity fusion: "Ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity. I am my language...to relinquish Spanish either literally or symbolically...is to relinquish a significant and powerful dimension of personal and social identity.

Appel and Musken (1987) state that language serves as a means of segregating (in a cultural sense) one group from others, so that members of one group see themselves as 'insiders' while others are 'outsiders'. This distinction, according to Gibson (2004) is evident among minority or immigrant groups within a dominant culture where bilingual language use is often analyzed as having two parts; the 'we' verses 'they' code. In this distinction, the 'we' code represents in-group speech which connotes intimacy and solidarity and is largely confined to the home, while the 'they' code is associated with status and used with the dominant group. This condition is based on the fact that individuals may feel that they belong to a particular group because they share the same system of symbols and meanings and thus share, an US feeling (Korth, 2005).

It therefore, implies that the choice of one language instead of another is related to identifying with either the out-group or in-group; in other words, language choice is tied to the projection of image or identity. Romaine (2003:517) states that

Although language choice is not arbitrary, not all speech communities are organized in the same way. Through the selection of one language over another or one variety of the same language over another speakers display what may be called "acts of identity", choosing the groups with whom they wish to identify.

In his typology of bilinguals, Ojaoye (1998:117) explains that when a bicultural coordinate changes to another language, he sees himself as changing his personality or becoming 'a different person'. Haugen (1982 cited in Korth 2005) states that language choice is 'often a significant indication of the group with which one wishes to identify'.

Language, identity and Acculturation

Gibson (2004:19) defines acculturation as "the process of cultural change and adaptation that occurs when individuals from different cultures come into contact with each other". Simply put, acculturation involves identifying with a different culture, in one way or another, and for one reason or another, hence, it has been argued that acculturation and ethnic identity have a reciprocal relationship. Consequently culture contact leaves its mark on each culture as the cultures involved mutually influence each other, though in varying degrees. In most cases, the dominant cultures which belong to the majority group exert more influence on the subordinate cultures, which belong to the minority group. This accounts for Korth's (2005) assertion that it is often the minority language groups who are constrained by socio-cultural factors to identify with the dominant language group, whereas the dominant groups feel very adequate and hence do not feel the need to identify with the minority language group.

Berry (2001) posits that there are two central issues involved in acculturation: the degree to which individuals have contact outside their group and the degree to which individuals want to give up or maintain their cultural attributes. On the basis of the above postulation, Berry outlines four acculturation strategies:

1. Integration or biculturation strategy: An integrated person reflects a desire to retain important features associated with his or her cultural group, while simultaneously being willing to adopt aspects of the dominant culture.
2. Assimilation strategy: An assimilated person rejects his or her ethnic values or identities for the purpose of adopting the culture of the host community or dominant group.
3. Separation strategy: a separation strategy is followed when a person rejects the dominant group's culture, with the objective of preserving only his or her own heritage culture.
4. Marginalization strategy: a marginalization strategy is pursued when a person rejects both the dominant culture and his or her own heritage culture.

These four strategies delineate a holistic premise to appraise the acculturation patterns of immigrants and refugees, who represent a minority in a dominant culture.

Theoretical framework

The theory adopted in this study is the Ethno linguistic Identity Theory (ELIT) propounded by Giles and Johnson (1981). ELIT is conditioned on the notion of the 'other' as opposed to the 'self'. Giles and Johnson hold that as people grow up, they also learn to group themselves and other people into social categories which usually use language as a marker of ethnic distinction. Therefore, people who identify with a particular group are more likely to use the language of that group. Masaki et al (2010) posit that ELIT is one of the theories which provide explanations for the conceptual link between an individual's language use and cultural adaptation, and identity. This indicates that, as far as ELIT is concerned, language represents a primary feature of an individual's social group identity and to an extent world view. Contingent upon this position, a person's view of his or her heritage culture against other cultures is found to correlate with language preference, knowledge and actual use (Phinney et al, 2001).

Two of the salient features of ELIT are the idea of ethno linguistic vitality and the concept of convergence and divergence. The idea of ethno linguistic vitality is what makes a group to behave as a distinct entity in intergroup relations. The vitality of a language means that it is used and transmitted from generation to generation. Evans (1996) points out that parents who believe in the strong vitality of their indigenous culture tend to transmit the language to their children. This is indicative of the fact that a structural tie exists between ethnic identity and language. Landwear (1991) presents a list of indications of ethno linguistic vitality of a speech community, and some of them are stated below:-

1. Relative position on the urban-rural continuum. In this respect, ethno linguistic groups that are remote from urban communities or congregations of other speakers would thrive more than groups located within urban centers.
2. Domains of language use: In this aspect, loss of domain (e.g. home, cultural events, social events) in which the language is used undermine ethno linguistic vitality.
3. Population and group dynamics: In this respect, a higher number of speakers contribute to ethno linguistic vitality while an insignificant number hinders vitality.

The notion of convergence and divergence originated in Accommodation Theory by Giles (1974); convergence is a method whereby individuals adapt to the communication patterns of each other during interaction, especially when minority groups adapt to the dominant groups' speech for the purpose of social approval (Hudson, 2000). On the contrary, divergence is a communicative device used to emphasize the language of the minority group for the purpose of indexing difference. It follows therefore, that whereas convergence enhances solidarity with the out-group, divergence accentuates difference with the out-group. This relationship recognizes intermediate states of acculturation where both dominant and minority identities are recognized and retained (Oakes, 2000).

Methodology

The methodology adopted in this study is the mixed method, incorporating the quantitative and qualitative approaches, both of which are employed in the fields of social science and anthropology (Korth, 2005). A basic feature of the quantitative approach is that it is deductive in nature; this is a suggestion that hypotheses or research questions are developed based on already known theory which are then proved or disproved in the course of empirical investigation. On the contrary, the qualitative research is generally inductive which is to say

that the theory is derived from research results. The use of the mixed method is beneficial because it helps in constructing comprehensive accounts and providing answers to a wider range of research questions and meaning (Tashakkori and Teddlie 2009; Holmes, 2008).

The sample and population

The sample for this study is the Oru refugee camp in Ogun State Nigeria. The population of the sample is about 2000 going by the opinion of the leaders of the Liberian group in the camp. Out of the number 120 (12%) were chosen for the study. The reason for using 120 was due to limited time and resources.

Sampling method and research instrument

The respondents used in this study were selected based on the purposive sampling technique. This method was employed due to the limited number of the population. Two research instruments were employed to collect information in compliance with the two methodologies stated above. These techniques are questionnaires and interviews.

Variables

The variables studied in this investigation are age and linguistic identity. Age is the independent variable while linguistic identity is the dependent variable. Age represents a vital variable in a sociolinguistic research of this nature due to disparities in perception among age groups. As a result of social conditions and experiences different age groups have different perceptions about phenomenon. Therefore, age differences can index a distinction in value judgment and behavior.

Analysis and discussion

The findings from the field work are presented below

Demographic information

A total of 120 respondents from the Liberian refugees were used in this study. This number is representative of the population of the Liberian group in Oru refugee camp. The demographic information of the respondents is presented below

Table 1 Analysis of Socio-Demographic Variables of Respondents

Country	Variable	Characteristics	Frequency	%	Mean	Total
Liberia	Gender	Male	57	47.5		
		Female	63	52.5		120
	Age	(13-19) Years	45	37.5		
		(20-39) Years	45	37.5		
		(40-60) Years	30	25.0	29.0 years	120
	Marital Status	Single	55	45.8		
		Married	65	54.2		120
	Ethnic group	Krahn	40	33.3		
		Bassa	40	33.3		
		Kpelle	40	33.3		120

Various ethnic groups constitute the population of the Liberian refugees in Oru camp. They are as follows:- Krahn, Bassa, Kpelle, Loma, Krumen, Kissi, Sarpo, Belle, Gola, Vai, Gio, Mandingo, Groso, Gbandi. However, three ethnic groups were used in this study (Krahn, Bassa, Kpelle) because of their numerical strength and for simplicity of analysis. The respondents were grouped into three age brackets: 13 – 19 (teenagers), 20 – 39 (young adults) and 40 – 60 (full adults). The sampled population were grouped into sex (male and female) and marital status.

Language information

The languages identified among respondents from the selected Liberian ethnic groups are Krahn, Bassa, Kpelle, English, Pidgin, Yoruba, Arabic. The information is presented below:

Table 2 Language Information

Country	Characteristics	Language	Frequency	%	Cumulative %	
Liberia	1 st Language	Krahn	40	33.3	33.3	
		Bassa	40	33.3	66.7	
		Kpele	40	33.3	100.0	
	2 nd language	English	120	100.0	100.0	
		Other Languages	Pidgin	120	100.0	100.0
			Yoruba	45	37.5	37.5
			Arabic	2	1.7	1.7

The table shows that all the respondents claimed an indigenous language as their first language and English as the second language. Other languages claimed by respondents are pidgin, Yoruba and Arabic.

Identity and Domains

In this section, respondents' actual use of language in different domains is examined for the purpose of revealing their identity patterns and how they saw themselves and wanted to be seen by others. Two domains were selected in this study, the home domain representing the in-group and the neighborhood domain representing the out-group.

The home domain

The home domain represents the inner setting where respondents reported the languages they used in different role relationships. Information was elicited from parents represented by the young adults and full adults, and children represented by teenagers. The investigation was targeted at the language(s) used between husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters. This information sourced through the questionnaire is presented in the table below:

Table 3 - The Construction of Linguistic Identity in the Home

Country	Age group	Language(s)	Role Relations					
			Husband – Wife		Parent-Child		Brother-Sister	
			Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%
Teenagers (13-19)	English	English	-	-	-	-	37	82.2
		English /pidgin	-	-	-	-	3	6.7
		English/Yoruba	-	-	-	-	5	11.1
		English/Ethnic	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total	-	-	-	-	45	100.0	
Young adults (20-39)	English	English	10	22.2	30	66.7	-	-
		English /pidgin	25	55.6	5	11.1	-	-
		English/Yoruba	-	-	-	-	-	-
		English/Ethnic	-	-	-	-	-	-
		Missing	10	22.2	10	22.2	-	-
	Total	45	100.0	45	100.0	-	-	
Full adults (40-60)	English	English	3	10.0	24	80	-	-
		English /pidgin	25	83.3	4	13.3	-	-
		English/Yoruba	-	-	-	-	-	-
		English/Ethnic	2	6.7	2	6.7	-	-
	Total	30	100.0	30	100	-	-	

Chi-Square test summary: value $\chi^2 = 10,409,2 < 0.005$

Husband-wife Interaction

The result shows that English and Pidgin are dominant in this role relation. Among the young adults a significant majority (55.6%) used English/pidgin while 22.2% used only English. None of the young adults used Yoruba or their indigenous languages in spousal interaction. Among the full adults, a significant majority (83.3%) used English/pidgin while 10.0% and 6.7% used only English and their indigenous languages respectively. None of the full adults used Yoruba in spousal interaction.

Parent-child interaction

The result shows that English and pidgin are dominant in this role relation also. Among the young adults, a significant majority (66.7%) used only English while 11.1% used English/Pidgin. No respondent used Yoruba or their indigenous languages. Among the full adults, a significant majority (80%) used only English with their children while 13.3% used English/pidgin. However, an insignificant minority 6.7% used their indigenous languages in parent-child interaction.

Brother-sister interaction

The result shows that in this role relation, English is also dominant. Among the teenage group, a significant majority (82.2%) used only English while a minority (6.7%) used English/Pidgin. However, an insignificant minority (11.1%) used Yoruba in sibling interaction. The use of Yoruba in this intimate domain represents a marked result. The chi-square test summary ($\chi^2 = 10,409,2 < 0.005$) indicates that age had a significant effect on ethnic identity projection.

The implication of this result is that the refugees did not linguistically identify with their ethnic groups at home in the camp but preferred English/pidgin. The attempt to find out the reasons for this marked experience through oral interviews yielded the following results.

My wife speak Loma but I am Krahn, though I speak small Bande ... So because of different language we use English only to talk, and we also use English to talk to our children... Sometimes, sometime, like our elder daughter my wife speak her dialect to her sometimes. She really understand what she said sometime. They discuss, yes my wife do that but I don't find myself doing that. But when my younger brother came from Liberia and my mother in-law they speak dialect to the children and I liked it. (Kennedy – Krahn).

Me and my husband, we use English and pidgin; my husband is Kpelle but I am Mandingo, that is why we use English, otherwise we can't understand ourselves. Also we discuss with our children in English... I try to speak dialect to them sometime, they understand small but they don't speak it. They say it is hard but I try, and I catch them with folktales ... We tell folktales in English but when we tell the story there are some names of things like animals or people we cannot say in English, especially the song. So we say these ones in our dialect, and the children know them and they can even tell the stories and sing the song in our dialect (Ledlum – Kpelle).

The reason is we are not from the same tribe, that is why we speak English. My husband is Bassa while I am Kissi, and we also speak to our children in English... He really wants our children to speak dialect, but he doesn't try, but I try, like if I want to send them (children) anywhere, I use dialect and they hear small small and they speak small small... the way I speak it they cannot speak it like that because all of them, they were all born here, in the camp, so I try small ... (Mummy Favour – Bassa).

I am Bassa, but my woman is Krahn, so we speak English or pidgin all the time but we talk to our children in English ... That is what I am saying; if I were to marry a second time, I would not make a mistake to marry from a different tribe ... because I love to speak my native tongue in the house, and especially for my children to speak it. But you see they try to speak Krahn small because they are always with their mother. They can't speak my dialect because I am not always with them due to the work I do for sawmill (Sachoe – Bassa)

Since I started to born my children, you know in Liberia we speak English everywhere. My husband speaks different language; me I speak different language, their father speaks only English to them but for me I don't speak only

English to them, sometime I use my dialect ... Kpelle; like if I want to send them to go bring water, or cloth for me, or cook food, I do it in my language. If they ask me anything in English I answer them in my dialect. (Ortiz Kuta - Kpelle).

Although we come from the same place, but we speak English. Me and my husband we are from Kpelle, but we speak English and also pidgin and we speak English with our children. English is just part of us. (Sensie-Kpelle)

In my house everybody spea English ... Yes my wife is Krahn, I am also Krahn but we use English all the time to talk and also to talk with our children because we are used to English. Many many people in Liberia speak English. (Mummy J- Krahn)

These interview extracts reveal two reasons why respondents did not linguistically identify with their ethnic groups in the home domain. The first reason is the fact of exogamous marriages in the camp. The first five interviewees (*Kennedy, Ledlum, Mummy Favour, Sachoe, Ortiz Kuta*) reported using English/pidgin with their spouses and children due to their mixed ethnic background. Marriages between men and women from different ethnic groups tend to result in the use of a neutral language in interactions. Myers-Scotton (1993: 39).

Most urban Africans speak their mother tongues with family members except where their marriage is inter-ethnic or they are highly educated: a situation which is hinged on the fact that the multi-ethnic nature of cities plus a sensitivity to ethnic rivalries only find resolution in neutral linguistic choices.

The second reason accounting for non identification with the indigenous languages at home in the camp is obviously the status or prestige of English. The last two interviewees (*Sensie, Mummy J*) reported that, although they (husband and wife) come from the same ethnic group (endogamous marriage) they used English and pidgin in both spousal and parent-child interactions. Even though they cited custom or habit as the reason, it is apparent that the remote factor is the position or status of English in Liberia. Breitborde (1988) asserts that the status of the elitist Americo-liberians is tied to their proficiency in English; as a result many indigenous Liberians desired to rise like them by using English for the sake of education, employment and social mobility. In sub Saharan Africa, it is assumed by many that European languages are the best for education (Adegbija, 1994) and for that reason, parents usually start early to speak English to their children. Myles-Scotton (1993:121) affirms that

Further, some speak this language (English et al) at least part of the time at home, for the instrumental reason that it gives their children some practice in the medium which is crucial to their educational advancement.

The implication of this result is that a significant majority of the parents in the study were not transmitting their indigenous languages to the next generation and consequently the children did not linguistically identify with their ethnic groups. Romaine (2003:528) notes that "the inability of minorities to maintain the home as an intact domain for the use of their language has often been decisive for language shift". A shift from one language to another may not fully reflect a shift from one culture to another, but it shows that the culture has lost its prime means of expression. The more the children used English the less they identified with their ethnic groups through language.

Language maintenance

A fall-out from this investigation are the strategies adopted by the refugees to maintain their ethnic identity. Although English was mainly used across role relations, there were reports indicating the minimal use of indigenous languages by the mothers. The male interviewees (*Kennedy, Sachoe*) and the female interviewees (*Ledlum, Mummy Favour, Ortiz Kuta*) admitted that the mothers made deliberate attempts to transmit their indigenous languages to their children while the fathers did not. It seems that the role played by parents in this respect is ideologically based; it is believed that women worked mainly at home and so are closer to the children

while the fathers are always away working, as expressed by Sachoe. Perhaps while the women were more interested in their children's ethnic identity, the fathers were more interested in their global identity which can guarantee their success in the future. The choice of English therefore suggests that the need for upward social mobility far outweighs ethno linguistic considerations.

The second strategy is the occasional entrance of guests from the home land to the camp. The interviewee (*Kennedy*) reported that it was when his younger brother and mother in-law visited from Liberia that attempts were made to speak their indigenous language to the children. Such contacts with the homeland have implications for ethno linguistic vitality. Holmes (2008:64) testifies that "a regular stream of new migrants or even visitors will keep the need for using the indigenous language alive".

The third strategy is the use of cultural or extra linguistic resources to boost ethno linguistic vitality. One of the respondents (*Ledum*) reported that the refugees told their children folk tales in the camp. As the interviewee testified, although the folktales were narrated in English and pidgin, there are certain aspects of the stories which must be expressed in the indigenous language, like the names of characters (human and animal), names of places (physical and spiritual) and especially the songs and choruses which accompany the folktales. The important fact here is that folktales offered the children an opportunity to use their indigenous languages, to a little degree, thereby exposing them to their culture. In conclusion, it is evident that identity projection in this intimate domain is not predicated on context but on the needs of the participants.

The neighborhood Domain

In the neighborhood domain, the respondents reported the languages they used in different role relations in the camp. The role relations are ethnic neighbors (intra-ethnic), national neighbors (inter-ethnic) and international neighbors (host community). The information sourced outside the camp with the aid of the questionnaire is presented in the table below:

Table 5 - The Construction of Linguistic Identity in the Neighbourhood

Country	Age group	Language(s)	Role Relations					
			Ethnic Neighbours		Nat. Neighbours		Int. Neighbours	
Teenagers	(13 – 19)		Fre	%	Fre	%	Fre	%
		English	38	84.4	40	88.9	-	-
		Pidgin	7	15.6	5	11.1	-	-
		Pidgin/Ethnic	-	-	-	-	-	-
		English/Yoruba	-	-	-	-	45	100.0
		Total	45	100.0	45	100.0	45	100.0
Young adults	(20 – 39)							
		English	7	15.6	6	13.3	35	77.8
		Pidgin	38	84.4	39	86.7	10	22.2
		Pidgin/Ethnic	-	-	-	-	-	-
		Total	45	100.0	45	100.0	45	100.0
Full adults	(40-60)							
		English	3	10.0	3	10.0	25	83.3
		Pidgin	19	63.3	27	90.0	5	16.7
		Pidgin/Ethnic	8	26.7	-	-	-	-
		Total	30	100.0	30	100.0	30	100.0

Chi-Square test summary: Value $\chi^2 = 18,314,4 < 0.001$

Intra-ethnic interaction

The result shows a marked use of English and pidgin in this role relation. Among the teenage group, a significant majority (84.4%) used English while a minority (15.6%) used pidgin. Among the young adults, a significant majority (84.4%) used pidgin while a minority (15.6%) used English. Among the full adults a significant majority (63.3%) used pidgin while a minority (10.0%) used English. However, a significant

minority (26.7%) of the full adults used pidgin and their indigenous languages among respondents from the same ethnic group.

Inter-ethnic interaction

The result indicates that language use among respondents from different ethnic backgrounds, who did not speak the same language is unmarked. Expectedly, among the teenage group, a significant majority (88.9%) used English while a minority (11.1%) used pidgin. Among the young adults, a significant majority (86.7%) used pidgin while a minority (13.3%) used English. Among the full adults, a significant majority (90.0%) used pidgin while a minority (10.0%) used English.

Refugee-Host interaction

The aspect of interaction between the refugees and the host community presents results which are both marked and unmarked. Expectedly, 100% of the teenage group used English and Yoruba in interaction with the host community. Unexpectedly, a majority (77.8%) among the young adult used English while a minority (22.2%) used pidgin; a majority (83.3%) among the full adults used English while a minority (16.7%) used pidgin in interacting with the host community. The chi-square test summary ($X^2 18,314 4 < 0.001$) indicates that age had a significant effect on ethnic identity projection.

There are three marked results in this investigation which needs explanation. First, it is expected that, at least, the young and full adult groups should use their indigenous languages during interaction with their own ethnic kin but only a minority did so. Consequently, the respondents were asked why they used mainly English in intra-ethnic interaction. The inquiry through oral interviews yielded the following results.

When we Krahn are together, we speak English sometimes because we do not want to cheat the other person ... the other person will start feeling bad because he think we are cheating him, we are speaking against him. So most of the time we speak English (Papei – Krahn).

We speak Bassa if we want to say something secret, like gossip, we use Bassa when we want to gossip so that other people will not hear what we are saying. But generally we speak pidgin and English because of other people so that they will not think we are talking bad about them (Malee-Bassa).

In this camp, we mix up too much; people from many tribes, so we speak English with our native person because it is general language or our pidgin. If I speak Kpelle with my native person other people there will not like it. They will think we are gossiping them (Ortiz Kuta – Kpelle)

The interview extracts reveal that the respondents used English in intra-ethnic interaction for reasons of inclusivity or convergence; that is a consideration for the feelings of other non-ethnic 'others'. The three interviewees *Papei*, *Malee*, *Ortiz Kuta* admitted using English in this role relation because they did not want to exclude people from other ethnic groups who might be present. As a result they converged horizontally, in order to accommodate other listeners for the sake of politeness.

The second marked result is that only the teenage group interacted with the host community in Yoruba. While it is expected that the refugees should adopt Yoruba it is surprisingly that only the teenage group did so. Consequently questions were posed to the respondents and the oral interview yielded the following results.

My children, some speak Yoruba because they were born here, school here and mix up with Yoruba children, so they speak Yoruba. Like my big daughter, she speak Yoruba very well, and they learn it in school too. (Kennedy – Krahn)

They teach them Yoruba in school and so dey learn it and speak it with other Yoruba children. (Mummy Favour – Bassa).

They (my children) can speak Yoruba very well because of the school they are going, their friends they meet in school, they speak Yoruba and they learn it as a subject. (Cooper – Kpelle).

The interview extracts reveal that the teenage group acquired proficiency in Yoruba from two sources: school and neighborhood. The children's acquisition of Yoruba mainly through the school system proved that they had integrated into Yoruba culture, while their parents did not. Thus, through the children Yoruba had entered the homes of the refugees in the camp. This result is in alliance with previous studies (Rees, 1960; Hoff 1968) which suggest that the children are those who use the host's language and often serve as interpreters to their parents.

However, the practice of learning Yoruba as a school subject is in keeping with the National policy in Education in Nigeria. One of the provisions of that policy is that at the Junior and Senior Secondary School levels the child must study one of the three major indigenous languages in Nigeria. The consequence of this practice is that, as good as the policy sounds it precludes the languages of minority groups like the refugees and condemns them to study another indigenous language other than their own. Evidently, this is a violation of the international statutes which support an official recognition and promotion of minority languages. Some of these statutes are the following:

Article 4.3 of the United Nations convention on the Rights of the child (1989)

States should take appropriate measures so that, wherever possible, persons belonging to minorities have adequate opportunities to learn their mother tongue or to have instruction in their mother tongue. (cited in Maja 2000)

A sub provision of this article states that

Every state should guarantee basic linguistic human rights to all children in the education system, in day-care, schools and institutions of higher education, regardless of whether these children belong to linguistic majorities or minorities, and regardless of whether the minority children represent indigenous minorities, traditional minorities, immigrated minorities or refugee minorities. (cited in Maja 2008)

UNESCO Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights

One of the basic considerations of this declaration is that a language group is 'any group of persons sharing the same language which is established in the territorial space of another language community but which does not possess historical antecedents equivalent to those of that community. Examples of such groups are immigrants, refugees, deported persons and members of diaspora. (in Maja, 2008)

Article 28 UNESCO Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights

All language communities are entitled to an education which will enable their members to acquire a thorough knowledge of their cultural heritage (history, geography, literature and other manifestations of their own culture) as well as the most extensive possible knowledge of any other culture they may wish to know. (in Maja, 2008)

On the strength of these provisions, it is apparent that the children of the refugees in Oru camp have a right to education in their mother tongue but these rights are denied. This denial is what Skutnabb-kangas (1994) terms linguistics genocide or subtractive language education in the sense that it subtracts from a child's linguistic repertoire instead of adding to it. Nicholas (2011) refers to it as submersion education because it submerges indigenous children into an alien language and culture and expects them to sink and swim. The obvious consequence is that the children are denied an opportunity to identify with their ethnic groups linguistically.

The importance of initial education in one's mother tongue cannot be over emphasized, especially with respect to the construction of ethnic identity. Edwards (1984) and Adegbija (1994) emphasize that such a facility promotes self esteem in the individual pupil; facilitates the learning of an additional language later; promotes

cohesion and solidarity within minority communities; helps to maintain traditional relationships and attitudes between the generations and sexes and contributes to social control.

The third marked result is the fact that the young adult and full adult groups did not report using Yoruba in interacting with the host community, but mainly English. An inquiry was carried out through oral interviews to unravel the reason(s) for the marked behavior and the results are as follows:

...they no like us, that is why I no speak their language. They insult us because we are not their people (Mummy favour)

...I would have loved to learn Yoruba but you see, the treatment is bad, very bad. They do us as if we are animals. When they know you are refugee, they don't talk to you. (Kennedy).

... It is good to learn Yoruba because we are staying in their land and the integration matter, but the way they take us is not good. Sometimes they look at you from head to toe as if you are nothing (Popei).

The interviewees above (*Mummy Favour, Kenndy, Papei*) stated that they did not identify with Yoruba due to the hosts negative attitude towards them. This finding corroborates the position of Fasold (1984), Holmes (2008) and Edwards (1982) that attitudes towards a language are often a reflection of attitudes towards the speakers of the language. In other words, if you don't like a people, you don't like their language. In this case, the refugees reacted to the negative attitude of their hosts by not acquiring Yoruba, despite the benefits of doing so. This result also replicates Anurag's (2011) finding in India where refugees who felt marginalized did not integrate, especially with regards to the acquisition of the host's language. The implication of this finding is that the relationship between hosts and guests was strained.

Conclusion

This study set out to investigate ethno linguistic identity among Liberian refugees in Oru camp and aimed at ascertaining the patterns of language use at various domains, language maintenance and adaptation to the language of the host community. First, it is evident that the projection of identities in various domains had little to do with context but with the needs of the participants. Possibly due to their peculiar circumstances, the refugees were more interested in their existentialist challenges than the linguistic demands of particular domains. Therefore, it could be posited that identity projection in the home and neighborhood domains did not really reflect the distinction between insiders and outsiders. Second, the respondents used their indigenous languages minimally thereby undermining ethno linguistic vitality. There was little attempt by parents to transmit the indigenous languages to their children and as a result the children could not project an ethno linguistic identity. However, the maximal use of pidgin across domains was a means of projecting Liberian identity. Third, with the exception of the teenagers, the respondents did not adapt to the language of the host community for reasons of prejudice. It was a case of conflict of perception. The way they saw themselves was not the way they were seen by their host community and this led to a distinction between 'we' and 'they' in the camp.

On the whole, age had a significant effect on linguistic identity in the camp and this resulted in different acculturation patterns. The teenagers displayed a bicultural acculturation and would likely have a good relationship with the host community as well as being a bridge across ethnic and national divides. For not identifying with Yoruba and their indigenous languages, the young adults displayed Marginalization and would likely have a problem relating with their in-group and the host community. The full adults displayed a Separation acculturation and would likely be ethnocentric with a tendency towards a problematic inter-group relationship.

Based on the foregoing, it is recommended that parents in Oru camp should take explicit steps towards actual use of their indigenous languages, especially in intimate domains, in order to boost ethno linguistic vitality. As far as the relationship between the refugees and the host community is concerned, this study recommends a town hall meeting patterned after Smith (2006) and Lyon (1988) where both parties would meet for socio-cultural exchanges, thus endorsing and fostering inclusion and diversity.

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Comment on a. J. Ayer's Destructive Criticism of Metaphysics

Peace I. Osaghae
Department of Philosophy,
Veritas University, Abuja
Email: dsirepeace@yahoo.com
+2347033228665

Abstract

Metaphysics, an aspect of philosophy that attempts to investigate the ultimate nature of being and reality as a whole, has suffered tremendous setbacks from the criticisms levelled against it by philosophies of the empiricist persuasion. The contention has always been on the value of the thematic focus of metaphysics¹; whether the type of knowledge metaphysics promises to provide for human kind is anything worth sweating over or a worthless intellectual quibbling which does not require any serious attention. In the history of western philosophy, there has been a long trend of the rise of this type of scepticism which not merely questions the validity of metaphysics but also the possibility of human knowledge. However, this paper is an attempt to look at an atypical criticism of metaphysics advanced by A.J. Ayer. It shall critique the grounds offered by Ayer for the rejection of metaphysics because the verification principle, upon which such criticism is based, is fraught with certain problems as well. Thus, it concludes that regardless of the attack of scepticism, metaphysics has certain merits which make it occupy an important place in the heart of philosophy.

Keywords: A.J. Ayer, Metaphysics, Scepticism, Verification Principle, Logical Positivism, Empirical Science

Introduction

As a logical positivist, Ayer narrowed the sphere of philosophical inquiry only to the realm of logic, mathematics, and the empirical sciences, and denied the validity of all other spheres of knowledge, including metaphysics, religion, and traditional ethics. In this sense, Ayer shared the scepticism of Hume and followed a Humean division of knowledge (Humean view: knowledge is divided into logic, mathematics, and empirical knowledge while the rest is meaningless). Accordingly, for Ayer, both the "existence of God" and "non-existence of God" are meaningless claims since they are neither empirically verifiable nor statements of logic. In our exposition, we come to describe Ayer's critique as destructive because it is an attempt to eliminate metaphysics not only from philosophy but from any field of human enquiry. This approach is different from that taken by other antagonists of metaphysics like Kant and Heidegger which had a somewhat reformationist orientation. While Ayer attempted to show that metaphysics is an utterly useless field of human inquiry, Kant's own intention was to show that metaphysics can be meaningful if only its claims can be moderated to take into consideration the limits of human understanding. There is a sense in which we can speak of scepticism as constructive even though as Griffin and Harton (1981: 187) observes, scepticism is the doctrine that knowledge claims are false. Sceptics differ on which claims they believe to be false and why. Thus a gamut of sceptical positions is opened up including, among the more popular varieties, scepticism about the external world, other mind, ethics, the future, the past, etc. across these divisions of sceptical subject matter matter runs a series of division of sceptical motivation: thus we have scepticism occasioned by deceptive demons, dreams, perceptual illusions and scientific fallibilism. The notion of scientific fallibilism runs through the philosophical stance of Ayer; it is on this issue of empirical cum scientific method of verification that he passionately disregarded metaphysics. His *Language, Truth and Logic* define the verification principle of logical positivism. It discusses the uses and applications of the verification principle as an instrument of linguistic analysis. According to Ayer, the principle of verifiability is a criterion of meaning that requires every meaningful statement to be capable of being verified. Statements whose truth or falsehood cannot be verified are meaningless. Statements that have no literal meaning may have an emotional meaning, but they do not express propositions that can be analytically or empirically verified. It is on this empirical basis that he premised his views on the elimination of metaphysics.

The Empirical Basis of the Elimination of Metaphysics

For the empiricists' there could be only one medium through which knowledge can be acquired and that is through sense experience or the data presented to the mind as evidence of the senses. Whatever can be known is that which can be said to be empirically verifiable through the method of scientific investigation. Following in this tradition – the tradition of the logical positivist which was essentially mathematically inspired, Ayer argued that when metaphysical propositions or statements are analyzed in line with this method, it would reveal its nonsensical nature. Worthy of note here is the fact that the target of most devastating activities of positivism is metaphysics. The positivism of the 1920s and Ayer's logical empiricism, for instance, made no pretence that metaphysics was the disease of which philosophy and the positive sciences must be cured (Unah, 1996: 9). One of Ayer's intention is to show that there cannot be any non-empirical world of values, or that men have immortal souls, or that there is a transcendent God is literally 'senseless'. This strand of atheism is on the grounds that any religious discourse was meaningless. He believed that religious language was unverifiable and as such literally nonsense. Consequently "There is no God" was for Ayer as meaningless and metaphysical an utterance as "God exists." Though Ayer could not give assent to the declaration "There is no God," he was an atheist in the sense that he withheld assent from affirmations of God's existence. However, in *"Language, Truth and Logic"* he distinguishes himself from both agnostics and atheists by saying that both these stances take the statement "God exists" as a meaningful hypothesis, which Ayer himself does not see as such. Ayer's empiricism was consistent and at times radical (Green, 1999: 98).

A cursory analysis of the arguments offered by Ayer will reveal that his criticism has an empirical basis. Obviously, the empiricist basis of Ayer's attitude to meaning was laid first in his reading of Hume. The thought that no idea had any empirical significance unless it was suitably related to an impression stayed with him, and was reinforced both by his reading of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* and by the time he spent in Vienna with the Logical Positivists². His first formulation of a criterion of meaning, the principle of verification, was in the first edition of *Language Truth and Logic* (1936), where he claimed that all propositions were analytic (true in virtue of their meaning) or else either strongly verifiable or weakly verifiable. Strong verification required that the truth of a proposition be conclusively ascertainable; weak verification required only that an observation statement be deducible from the proposition together with other, auxiliary, propositions, provided that the observation statement was not deducible from these auxiliaries alone.

In the view of Ayer, whatever goes beyond the physical world in explanation, does not qualify to be regarded as something meaningful. This explains why he maintains in "The Elimination of Metaphysics," that:

We may begin by criticizing the metaphysical thesis that philosophy affords us knowledge of a reality transcending the world of science and common sense...many metaphysical utterances are due to the commission of logical errors, rather than to a conscious desire on the part of their authors to go beyond the limits of experience (Ayer, 1946: 13).

Meanwhile, it is pertinent to state that his dismissal of metaphysics doesn't mean that other philosophers are prevented from metaphysical enquiry, and on the other hand by raising language to the status of a sort of knowledge above and beyond that which is experienced he could be accused of treating it as a form of metaphysics. The major problem that Ayer had with metaphysical theories is that it tends to claim more than what can be said to have a correspondence with the physical world. He laid emphasis on this point in his *Metaphysics and Common Sense* when he writes thus:

What the metaphysician would like to do is to take up a position outside any conceptual system: but that is not possible. The most that he can hope to achieve is some modification of the prevailing climate; to find a way, for example, of eliminating singular terms or perhaps even to contrive to represent himself and the things around him as logical constructions out of their appearances. But if such a venture is even to be intelligible, let alone any of the theoretical interest, it must have at least a rough correspondence to the way in which things are ordinarily conceived (Ayer, 1994: 81).

It is upon this system of thinking that Ayer defends a purely empirical interpretation of reality and physicalist response to the question of what is; it is a worldview patterned after those of his intellectual mentors. As Ayer explains in the preface, the views he advocates derive from Russell and Wittgenstein among modern philosophers and from the earlier empiricism of Berkeley and Hume have much in common with the logical positivism of the Vienna circle (O'Connor, 1967: 229).

Ayer's Formulation of the Verification Principle

On Ayer's version, the principle of verification states that a statement only has meaning if it is either analytic or empirically verifiable. An analytic statement is true (or false) just in virtue of the meanings of the words. For instance, 'a bachelor is an unmarried man' is analytically true, while 'a square has three sides' is analytically false. A statement is empirically verifiable if empirical evidence would go towards establishing that the statement is true or false. For example, if I say 'the moon is made of green cheese', we can check this by scientific investigation. If I say 'the universe has 600 trillion planets', we can't check this by scientific investigation in practice, but we can do so in principle. We know how to show whether it is true or false, so it is 'verifiable' even though we can't actually verify it (Lacewing, 2009). Ayer has this to say about empirical statements: we may accordingly define a metaphysical sentence as a sentence which purports to express a genuine proposition, but does, in fact, express neither a tautology nor an empirical hypothesis (Ayer, 1946: 24). How do we know if a metaphysical proposition expresses something sensible or determine if such statements are genuine propositions? There is only one way of knowing and according to Ayer; the criterion which we use to test the genuineness of apparent statements of fact is the criterion of verifiability. He seems to argue that the metaphysician makes assertions and claims about reality without paying attention to the understanding of how the premises of his propositions are deduced. It is also difficult to assume as the metaphysicians have thought possible that there could be valid process of reasoning that can possibly lead one to the conception of transcendent reality. However, Ayer distinguishes between two senses of the criterion of verifiability which are practical verifiability and verifiability in principle:

a. **Practical Verifiability:** This refers to the propositions that are verifiable empirically as matters of fact through observational procedures or through experience. This is in line with the positivists' thesis that all propositions which have factual content are empirical hypothesis, and that the function of empirical hypothesis is to provide a rule for the anticipation of experience.

b. **Verifiability in Principle:** A proposition is said to be verifiable in principle if there are no empirical means of verifying its truth contents, for example, a statement like "there are mountains on the farther side of the moon." According to Ayer, since no rocket has yet been invented which would enable one to go and look at the farther side of the moon, so that one is unable to decide the matter by actual observation and because one does not know what observations would decide such a proposition as theoretically conceivable, one should therefore describe such proposition as being verifiable in principle and not in practice.

Also, Ayer made it clear that there are two senses in which the term "verifiable" can be used; these are the strong and the weak sense of verifiable. A proposition is said to be verifiable in the strong sense of the term, if, and only if, its truth could be conclusively established in experience. But it is verifiable in the weak sense, if it is possible for experience to render it probable. However, metaphysical propositions fails to meet the requirements of the criterion of verifiability whether in principle or in practice this is why Ayer regarded metaphysical statements as simply nonsensical statements which could never be said to be verifiable whether in the weak or strong senses of the term.

Apart from the criterion of verifiability, Ayer also emphasized the criterion of analysis, which he feels provides a framework for the understanding of the verification principle. Metaphysical claims are said to be meaningless because its central themes and theories come from the failure to understand the workings of our language. It is this type of emphasis that led to the distinction between analytic and synthetic propositions in contemporary philosophy. Analytic statements are tautologies (they are true by definition, necessarily true, and true under all conditions). The truth of analytic statements depends only on the meaning of their constituent elements, and it does not depend on confirmation by empirical testing. Synthetic statements (including empirical propositions) assert or deny something about the real world. The validity of synthetic statements is not established merely by the definition of the words or symbols that they contain. If a synthetic statement expresses an empirical proposition, then the validity of the proposition is established by its empirical verifiability (Scott, 2001).

The high point of Ayer's formulation of the verification principle is that meaningful propositions are regarded as statements that have conditions under which they can be verified. According to the verification principle, meaningful statements have conditions under which their validity can be affirmed or denied. Statements that are not meaningful cannot be expressed as propositions. Every proposition is meaningful and must be either true or false. Every empirical proposition asserts or denies something about the real world. It is on the basis of this principle that Ayer criticized the metaphysician as the linguistic absurdist because he thinks that what makes the metaphysician to use words in the manner that it violates the rules of logical analysis was that the metaphysician is misled by a superficial grammatical feature of language. In fact, Ayer on this note of the misuse of language

classified the metaphysician a misplaced poet because both the metaphysician and the poet appear to be talking nonsense.

Simply put the logical positivist or logical empiricist as they preferred to be called, defended the old cause of empiricism, with its blanket rejection of metaphysics and its respect for science, but drew on the latest developments in logic to do so. There was no doubt that the logical positivists' rejection of metaphysics was greatly influenced by the sceptical philosophy of David Hume. Hume had suggested, earlier to the development of Ayer's views, though imprecisely that all genuine propositions fell into two classes: they either contain abstract reasoning concerning quantity or number or experimental reasoning concerning matters of fact and existence. The logical positivists, however, divided them more rigorously into formal propositions like those of mathematics and logic, which they held that, following Wittgenstein, were tautologous (if true) or contradictory (if false), and factual propositions which could be tested empirically. Statements that could not be allocated to either category were claimed to be meaningless. That is, a statement is factually meaningful if, and only if, it is empirically verifiable in theory or in practice. This is why the logical positivists, including Ayer, hold that the meaning of a statement lies in its method of verification. The basic aim of the logical positivist is to defend the thesis that all true propositions are either true by virtue of the meaning of the terms they contain or because they actually predict the occurrence of sense contents.

The Limitations of the Method of Logical Positivism

It followed that where earlier empiricists had tended to reject metaphysical claims about God, the afterlife or the absolute as being false or unduly speculative, the logical positivists rejected them as literally nonsense. Indeed, they went further. Not only did they dismiss metaphysical claims, they also argued that everything that could be said at all could be expressed in terms of elementary statements. All statements of a high order, from the most penetrating descriptions of character to the most abstract scientific hypothesis, could be translated, without loss of meaning, into statements about basic observable events. This was the import of their famous slogan, "the meaning of a proposition is its method of verification." It followed, according to the positivist that the main task for philosophy, once metaphysics is eliminated, was precisely to clarify the relationship between different sciences and between science and common sense observation; explaining what it meant, at the level of observation, to refer to say, neurons, nations or the unconscious. Philosophy was to become the logic of science. We may need to say something about logical positivism before we show the limitations of their anti-metaphysical stance. Logical positivism is the philosophical school that has attacked metaphysical speculation most sharply in the 20th century. The Positivists derived their name from the "positive" philosophy of Auguste Comte, a 19th-century Frenchman who had represented metaphysical thought as a necessary but now superseded stage in the progression of the human mind from primitive superstition to modern science. Like Comte, the Logical Positivists thought of themselves as advocates of the cause of science; unlike Comte, they took up an attitude toward metaphysics that was uniformly hostile. The external reason for this was to be found in the philosophical atmosphere in the German-speaking world in the years following World War I, an atmosphere that seemed to a group of thinkers known as the Vienna Circle to favour obscurantism and impede rational thought. But there were, of course, internal reasons as well.

According to the Positivists, meaningful statements can be divided into two kinds, those that are analytically true or false and those that express or purport to express matters of material fact. The propositions of logic and mathematics exemplify the first class, those of history and the natural and social sciences the second. To decide whether a sentence that purports to state a fact is meaningful, one must ask what would count for or against its truth; if the answer is "nothing," it cannot have meaning, or at least not in that way. Thus, they adopted the slogan that the meaning of a (non-analytic) statement is the method of its verification. It was this verification principle that the Positivists used as their main weapon in their attacks on metaphysics. Taking as their examples statements from actual metaphysical texts—statements such as "The Absolute has no history" and "God exists"—they asked first if they were supposed to be analytically or synthetically true, and then, after dismissing the first alternative, asked what could be adduced as evidence in their favour or against them. Many metaphysicians, of course, claimed that there was empirical support for their speculative conclusions; thus, as even Hume said, "the order of the universe proves an omnipotent mind." The very same writers, however, proved strangely reluctant to withdraw their claims in the face of unfavourable evidence; they behaved as if no fact of any kind could count against their contentions. It followed, said the Positivists, that the theses in which they were interested were compatible with any facts whatsoever and thus were entirely lacking in significance. An analytic proposition, such as "It either will or will not rain tomorrow," tells nothing, though there may be a

point in giving voice to it. A metaphysical proposition claims to be very different; it purports to reveal an all-important truth about the world. But it is no more informative than a bare tautology, and, if there is a point in putting it forward, it has to do with the emotions rather than the understanding.

In point of fact, the Positivists experienced great difficulty in devising a satisfactory formulation of their verification principle, to say nothing of a satisfactory account of the principle's own status. In the early days of the movement the demand for verifiability was interpreted strictly: only what could be conclusively verified could be significant. This had the effect of showing that statements about the past and propositions of unrestricted generality, to take only two instances, must be without meaning. Later a move was made toward understanding verifiability in a weak sense: a statement was meaningful if any observations bore on its truth. According to A.J. Ayer, an English disciple of the Vienna Circle, writing in 1936, it is the mark of a genuine factual proposition, not that it should be equivalent to an experiential proposition, or any finite number of experiential propositions, but simply that some experiential propositions can be deduced from it in conjunction with certain other premises without being deducible from those other premises alone.

As Ayer admitted in his second edition, however, this formulation lets in too much, including the propositions of metaphysics. From "The Absolute has no history" and "If the Absolute has no history, this is red," it follows that "This is red," which is certainly an experiential proposition. Nor were subsequent attempts, by Ayer and others, to tighten up the formulation generally accepted as successful, for in every case it was possible to produce objections of a more or less persuasive kind. This result may seem paradoxical, for at first glance the Positivist case is extremely impressive. It certainly sounds odd to say that metaphysical sentences are literally without meaning, seeing that, for example, they can be replaced by equivalent sentences in the same or another language. But if the term meaning is taken here in a broad sense and understood to cover significance generally, the contention is by no means implausible. What is now being said is that metaphysical systems have internal meaning only; the terms of which they consist may be indefinable but perhaps do not relate to anything outside the system. If that were so, metaphysics would in a way make sense but for all that would be essentially idle; it would be a game that might amuse but could hardly instruct. The Positivists confront the metaphysician with the task of showing that this criticism is not correct. Whatever difficulties are involved in formulating a principle of verifiability, the challenge can hardly be ignored.

One of the greatest shortcomings of the logical positivists is that they are guilty of reductionism. They erroneously thought that every aspect of reality can be subjected to the verification principle and interpreted in an empirical manner. But even the verifiability criterion laid down by the logical positivist is fraught with certain problems which the positivist seems not to have realized. For instance, the verification principle itself is guilty of not being capable of being verified either by observation or by any other empirical means. This shows the principle of verification as a recommendation that may or may not be accepted. Another problem of the principle is that of meaning. The meaning of the principle has to be established for it to serve as a judge to others that are not of the scientific orientation as the logical positivists. Another shortcoming of the principle is in the meaning of words. Words serve different functions depending on how they are used; it also depends on the use that the user wants to put them. What we are saying here is that a word cannot be verified by a third party except he knows the right meaning the user of the word is using it for. So to have a straight-jacketed way of verifying the empirical content of words is to pretend to be ignorant of the dynamism of human speech act. Another problem of this principle is that, it holds historical fact and past experiences as meaningless because it cannot be verified because it seeks to emphasise concurrent human propositions about belief and valuation. How do we verify historical event since they are in the past, especially when we are not there physically to justify or verify the empirical significance of such events? So the point we are making is that, if there is no way we can examine past events through the verification principle, thus it then suffice to say that our past experiences are meaningless or nonsense? Having briefly looked at the limitation of the method of positivism in arriving at general truths; we shall now specifically examine how this method qualifies as a problematic for Ayer's attack on metaphysics.

A Critical Response to Ayer's Sceptical Attack on Metaphysics

Not every aspect of reality can be explained in physical terms as Ayer thought. His criticism of metaphysics was based out of an apparent misconception of metaphysics. Although while it may be granted that certain aspects of metaphysics may be extraneous, it is not enough grounds to warrant the type of universal scepticism which Ayer puts up against metaphysics to expunge it wholesale out of the enterprise of philosophy. Since he believes that it is the philosopher's business to give a correct definition of material things in terms of sensations. But what Ayer fails to realize is that it is also the philosopher's business to know what reality is as against mere appearances.

Knowledge that is derived through sensations that are regarded as capable of being verified by Ayer are easily amenable to error of the senses, in which case, perceptual errors or illusions of the senses may be mistaken for knowledge. Reality in this context is, by the metaphysician's own admission, something that is inaccessible to sense; as Plato explained, it can be discovered only by the pure intelligence, and only if the latter can shake itself free of bodily encumbrances. The inference that the metaphysical world is secret and mysterious is natural enough. Metaphysics in this view unlocks the mysteries and lets the ordinary man into the secrets. What this implies is that contrary to the limited vision of Ayer, meaningful knowledge about the nature of reality can be derived through the use of human rational faculty or through reason. It is through reason that even the rudiments of Ayer's verification principle and criterion of analysis can be understood.

In addition to the technical difficulties surrounding the proper formulation of the meaning-criterion, Ayer later acknowledged that he had been vague as to whether the criterion was intended in a 'weak' or 'strong' sense: if weak, verifiability merely demarcated sense from nonsense, whilst the strong version meant that the method of verification provided the meaning of the sentence. It was the strong version that was used in his discussion of the meaning of sentences about the past and other minds, but in his discussion of the latter another difficulty emerged. It had not been made clear whether the 'method of verification' was intended to be neutral between people employing the sentences in question, and so provide a standard meaning for these sentences, or whether such a method could provide an idiosyncratic meaning for one individual's use of the sentence, the method of verification being peculiar to that person. In his discussion of mental experiences, Ayer had implicitly taken the second route, and so sentences attributing such experiences on him were given a 'mentalist' analysis, and those attributing experiences to others were given a behaviourist analysis (Macdonald, 2010).

The view which Ayer appears to be defending is that metaphysics fails to meet up with the criterion of meaning set by positivism. This is why he asserts that "among those who recognize that if philosophy is to be accounted a genuine branch of knowledge it must be defined in such a way as to distinguish it from metaphysics, it is fashionable to speak of the metaphysician as a kind of misplaced poet. As his statements has no literal meaning" (Ayer, 1946: 27) Metaphysical statements, since they purport to express neither logical truths nor empirical hypothesis, must accordingly, be reckoned to be without meaning. Theology is a special case of metaphysics; affirmations of divine existence are not even false, they are without sense. For the same reason, value statements in ethics or aesthetics fail to attain the status of genuine statements and exposed as expressions of emotion with imperative overtones. The a priori statements of logic and mathematics are empty of factual content and are true by virtue of the conventions that govern the use of the words that compose them. The tasks left for philosophy after this withdrawal from its traditional boundaries are those of solving by the advance of the sciences. Philosophy is an activity of analysis and is seen, in the end, to be identical with the logic of science (O'Connor: 1967: 230).

Undoubtedly, the criticism of Ayer was so fierce that he attempted to expunge metaphysics from philosophy due to his conception of it as an aimless discipline immersed in an endless speculation. In his opinion, the object of his criticism of metaphysics is to show that philosophy, as a genuine branch of knowledge, must be distinguished from metaphysics (Ayer, 1946: 23). He adopts Hume's division of genuine statements into logical and empirical, together with a principle of verification which requires that an empirical statement shall not be counted as meaningless unless some observation is relevant to its truth or falsity. His use of linguistic analysis and scientific and mathematical concepts to repudiate metaphysics is not devoid of its own limitations. Nonetheless, philosophers (positivists) have long been under the illusion that language has foundations in simple concepts. Concepts, words, it seems plausible to argue, are either simple or complex (Hannay, 1975: 269). So it is difficult to determine whether Ayer was using words and concepts in the simple or complex sense when he was talking about the criterion of verifiability. But did Ayer and the positivists succeed in their quest to reject metaphysics as a worthy field of inquiry? Udefi (2009: 9) provides us with a plausible answer to this question:

In any case, metaphysics has not been eliminated as envisioned by the logical positivists since their 'Verifiability Principle' is enamoured by torrents of conceptual problems. The positivists wanted to get rid of metaphysics with their "Verifiability Principle," but it seems that there are some conceptual and linguistic confusion surrounding the principle itself. It is not entirely clear how to verify the principle or what kind of observations would show that it is either true or false? We can conclude by saying that the revolt against metaphysics by the logical positivists is a failure and botched.

Thus, if as Ayer assumes, metaphysics should be shown the way out of philosophy because it persistently makes statements that have no factual content, then we may need to get clear on what it means. Facts have a way of intruding into philosophical as well as practical affairs, and in each case we must in some way come to terms with them. But in doing this, we must also realize that “fact” expressed in language is a many headed Hydra of which the common element is an illocutionary factor serving to express certification of the adequacy of the evidence for some directly verifiable empirical proposition. Thus, when we employ “fact” language we are talking about some portion of the world, employing various useful linguistic patterns expressing properties and inter-elocutionary force; but to attempt to distil entities from these linguistic patterns is not justifiable (Johnson, 1976: 508). The above injunction goes to show the shortcoming of Ayer’s emphasis on linguistic analysis as criterion of truth or meaningfulness of our conceptual schemes.

Conclusion

Consequent upon our critical appraisal of Ayer’s criticism of metaphysics, we shall conclude this essay, in defence of metaphysics due to the fact that the positivists’ critique of metaphysics does not repudiate the idea of metaphysics. Regardless of the sceptics’³ argument against metaphysics, it does not change the fact that metaphysics is the fundamental study of the ontology or being. This is why Aristotle referred to it as “first philosophy,” the study of being as being. A common set of claims on behalf of metaphysics is that it is an inquiry into what exists; its business is to subject common opinion on this matter to critical scrutiny and in so doing to determine what is truly real. This is evident in the ways in which actual metaphysicians have attempted to characterize their enterprise, noticing in each case the problems they have in drawing a clear line between their aims and those of the practitioners of the exact and empirical sciences which includes metaphysics as: an inquiry into what exists, or what really exists; the science of reality, as opposed to appearance; the study of the world as a whole; a theory of first principles. All of these characterizations come with its own unique challenges, although it is not enough to on the grounds of the challenges inherent in the metaphysical investigation of nature, reject the enterprise as a meaningless preoccupation.

In any case, as John Heil (2001: 91) observes, metaphysics is gradually mounting a comeback to the age long sceptical challenge by the logical positivists. That is, after decades of attempts to keep the subject at arm’s length, philosophers are discovering that progress on fundamental issues in, say, philosophy of mind, requires delving into metaphysics. Questions about the nature of minds and their content, like those concerning free action, personal identity, or the existence of God, belong to applied metaphysics. Metaphysics then is partly an attempt to spell out a system of fundamental categories of being. This enterprise is largely, but not exclusively, a priori. The metaphysical categories we unselfconsciously deploy are, after all, the product of ways of thinking about the world that have proved adaptive. They enable us to sort out and make sense of our experience. Thus, Ayer’s criticism, though, strongly advocated, does not take into consideration the importance of metaphysics to human life, this is why we consider it as a mere form of prejudiced academic fusing.

Notes

1. Etymologically the term *metaphysics* is unenlightening. It means “what comes after physics”; it was the phrase used by early students of Aristotle to refer to the contents of Aristotle’s treatise on what he himself called “first philosophy,” and was used as the title of this treatise by Andronicus of Rhodes, one of the first of Aristotle’s editors. Aristotle had distinguished two tasks for the philosopher: first, to investigate the nature and properties of what exists in the natural, or sensible, world, and second, to explore the characteristics of “Being as such” and to inquire into the character of “the substance that is free from movement,” or the most real of all things, the intelligible reality on which everything in the world of nature was thought to be causally dependent.

2. Round about 1920 a gang of philosophers including Rudolph Carnap and Kurt Gödel started meeting in Vienna. This so-called ‘Vienna Circle’ dedicated themselves to reconciling philosophy with the new sciences and so determined to take it upon themselves to evaluate truth solely in terms of the empirical verifiability or logic of language. This was the school of ‘Logical Positivism’, and it was Ayer who is chiefly remembered for popularising it in England.

3. The word “sceptic” usually refers to a theoretical figure whose philosophical importance lies exclusively in his challenge to any attempt to justify the belief in the possibility of knowledge.

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A Constructive Analysis of John Dewey's Pragmatism

Peace I. Osaghae¹

Department of Philosophy,
Veritas University, Abuja

dsirepeace@yahoo.com,

+2348026450787, 07033228665

&

Paul T. Haaga (PhD)²

Department of Philosophy,
Veritas University, Abuja

paulohaaga@gmail.com,

+2348067666445, 08020540454

Abstract

Pragmatism is popularly known to be a theory of action and John Dewey is one of its leading proponents. It is a view that rejected the dualistic epistemology and metaphysics of modern philosophy in favor of a naturalistic approach that viewed knowledge as arising from an active adaptation of the human organism to its environment. For the pragmatists (C.S. Peirce, W. James and J. Dewey) our beliefs are nothing except they inspire action; however, each of these pragmatists expressed different aspects or dimensions of pragmatism. This paper attempts an analysis of John Dewey's pragmatism, with particular reference to his theory of education looking at it from a constructive view point.

Keywords: Pragmatism, Constructivism, Truth, Instrumentalism, Experience, Education, Value

Introduction

The term 'pragmatism' is derived from the Greek word 'pragma', and it means action or practice (practical). At the end of the 19th century, this movement emerged as the most original contribution of American thought to the enterprise of philosophy. Pragmatism was first introduced into philosophy and given its initial theoretical formulation by C. S. Peirce in 1878. His counterpart, William James gave the movement a wide and popular circulation through his brilliant and lucid essays, while John Dewey methodically implemented it into the daily affairs of American institutions¹. Generally, the pragmatists rejected the idea that there is such a thing as fixed, absolute truth. Instead, they held that truth is relative to time, place and purpose; also it is ever-changing in the light of new data. This movement was made popular by these three pioneering members but our interest is on John Dewey.

John Dewey, an American pragmatist, lived between 1859 and 1952. He was born in Burlington, Vermont and educated at the University of Vermont and Johns Hopkins University, where he obtained a PhD in philosophy, in 1884. Subsequently, he taught at the University of Michigan, Minnesota, Chicago and Columbia. Long after his retirement from Columbia in 1930, he developed a broad body of work encompassing virtually all of the main areas of philosophical concern in his day, especially on social issues. He began as a Hegelian but later abandoned the Hegelian orientation and was later influenced by Charles Darwin's evolutionary theory². He looked upon humanity as a biological organism that can be understood in relation to his environment and like any biological organism, a human being struggles for survival. For him, humanity is enmeshed in a dialectic process, in the material and natural environment.

Dewey's Philosophical Doctrine

In the similitude of Heraclitus who believed that; just as the water in a river is ceaselessly changing so are all things in the state of flux and that nothing can be said to be permanent in this world, nothing is constant or static and everything is always in the process of change, Dewey's philosophy is one of change³. That is change here implies the emergence of new structures, novel forms which is as a result of the quantitative alteration of things which leads to something qualitatively new. The traditional question that he addressed in a series of his essays was that of the meaning of truth. According to him, a statement or a hypothesis is true or false in so far as

it leads us to or away from the end which we have in view. In other words, 'the hypothesis that works is the *true* one'. In his opinion this view of truth follows as a matter of course from the pragmatist concept of meaning. He disagrees with James' view of truth as that which satisfies the condition of knowledge because it suggests a private emotive satisfaction.

He is sharply opposed to the idea of philosophy as being concerned with a sphere of unchanging timeless being and truth⁴. He considered the pragmatic theory of truth as central to the pragmatic school of thought, and vigorously defended its viability. He substituted 'inquiry' for 'truth' because in his view, truth as conceived by most professional philosophies is static and final, perfect and eternal, like the multiplication table, which is precise and free from all temporal dross. Since Pythagoras, and still more since Plato, mathematics has been linked with theology, and has profoundly influenced the theory of knowledge of most professional philosophers; in religious terminology, it may be identified with God's thought and with those thoughts which as rational beings, we share with God. His interests are biological rather than mathematical, and he conceives thought as an evolutionary process⁵. His work lies in his criticism of the traditional notion of truth, which is embodied in his famous thesis on 'instrumentalism'.

Conceptual Clarification

There are certain notions that are relevant to this paper which we shall attempt to clarify in order to effectively grapple with the issues that are of interest to this paper. These concepts include instrumentalism, experience, spectator theory of knowledge and the idea of value in a world of fact. This clarification is necessary because it will help us have good understanding of the main ideas emphasized by Dewey. It is through some of the notions mentioned that he was able to radicalize philosophy and express his thoughts which he felt was going to transform both man and the society in which man lives.

a. His Idea of Instrumentalism

This is his brand of pragmatism; in an essay on the development of American pragmatism, Dewey defines instrumentalism as 'an attempt to constitute a precise logical theory of concepts, judgments and inferences in their various forms, by considering primarily how thought functions in the experimental determinations of future consequences' That is, how the forms of human activity including thought (thinking), are used by people as instruments to solve practical problems. Dewey's pragmatic or instrumental view of the mind and knowledge begins by rejecting all three approaches to knowledge: rationalism, empiricism and the Kantian account.⁶ For him, thinking is an activity aimed at solving individual and social problems, a means by which humans strive to achieve a satisfactory relationship with their environment; and not a quest for the "truth", as though the truth were a static and eternal quality in things. This approach is popularly considered to be a living way of doing philosophy. In this regard, thinking or active intelligence arises in "problem situations"; intelligence is the power possess by man to cope with his environment. Thinking and doing are closely related⁷.

Dewey's instrumentalism as an epistemological theory is in line with evolutionary naturalism whereby knowledge is determined in line with evolutionary principles. He puts it thus: "what measures [knowledge's] value, its correctness and truth, is the degree of its availability for conducting to a successful issue the activities of living beings (MW4:180)"⁸. Simply put, 'instrumentalism' holds that reflective thought is always involved in transforming a practical situation and it has a significant difference from empiricism and rationalism that separate thinking and doing.

b. His Notion of Experience

This was his grand concept which he employed for the purpose of connecting humanity as a dynamic biological entity with its precarious environment. For him, "every experience both takes up something from those (experiences) which have gone before and modifies in some ways the quality of those (experience) which come after." He equated nature with experience arguing that 'the idea of environment is a necessity to the idea of organism'.⁹ By this, he means that objects are not fixed substances but individual things (existence or events) that are filled with meanings. For him, the mind or intelligence is not a fixed substance, it functions as a mediator between humanity and organism and its environment; and knowledge is not a set of static concepts¹⁰. He rejects the idea that individuals passively receives stimulus and then become active responders. Rather, the nature of organisms is to interact continuously with their environment in a way that is cumulatively and mutually modifying¹¹. Hence, he posits that there are no fixed, immutable substances or things. He propounded the spectator theory of knowledge, the doctrine that "independent" objects exist "out there" outside the mind (realism).

c. Spectator Theory of Knowledge

He argued that earlier philosophy confused the true nature and function of knowledge, as if knowledge is molded after what is supposed to happen when we look at something in reality i.e., the idea that the objects of knowledge are passively absorbed or taken in as mental representations of a fixed outer reality; for example, the empiricist assume that thinking refers to fixed things in nature-that for each idea there is a corresponding object in reality. Also, for the rationalist, to have a clear idea is to guarantee that the object of thought exists in reality¹². For him, the mind is taken as an instrument for considering what is fixed and certain in nature. Nature is one, the mind is another and knowing is relatively the simple activity of looking as a spectator does. The question of how humanity or society discovers its ends or the foundations of its value and the problem of relating facts to value, led him to fashion a new theory to the problem of relating facts to value.

d. Value in a World of Fact

Dewey criticizes the Western conception of morality as an experience which is external to or radically distinct from everyday experiences of domestic and industrial relations. For him, moral concerns permeate much of experience.¹³ He sees value as the satisfactory solution of the problem reflected by desire. "Dewey conceived the moral life as suffused with innumerable possibilities of enjoyment and happiness, as well as of disaster. Ordinary life revolves around familiar attachments, ambitions and fears. He argues that the philosophic task is to place at the disposal of human beings the assumptions and methods that would facilitate the efforts in which they will be engaged in any case. It is a project of enabling and liberating".¹⁴ According to him, the mind discovers values like it discovered facts in experience. Every person experiences the problem of choosing between two or more possibility, the question of value arises where choices have to be made and intelligence can discover the best solution when the problem is analyzed in its specific practical context. Also, he was convinced that science could provide the standard for value judgments; in other words, judgment of value, like a scientific hypothesis, is predictive, and it is thus empirically or experimentally verifiable.

Dewey's approach was a rejection of any theory of value which holds that the standard of any value is to be found either in the "essences" of things or in some form of transcendent eternal truth¹⁵. His theory appears to rest on the assumption that experience gives a person or society the ends toward which life and behavior should move. From his perspective, metaphysics, like religious rites and cults, has been a means of "escape from the vicissitudes of existence". Instead of facing the uncertainties of a constantly changing world, metaphysicians have sought security by searching for fixed, universal and immutable truth. Given this metaphysical perspective, from which abstract speculation about eternal truth is mere escapism, it is easy to understand why he was primarily interested in practical problems and actively participated in movements of social, political and educational reform.

Dewey's Theory of Education: A Constructive Analysis

The term "education" derives its etymology from the Latin word "educatio" which means "to breed, bring up or rear". Several scholars like John Amos, Comenius, Confucius, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle and Dewey, just to mention a few, that have considered the concept of education have given it wide formulations. Even though there were wide variations in the definitions given by scholars about education, it is important for us to note that education is not an ambiguous concept because the available definitions given by thinkers share similar features. Simply put, education can be defined as the result of a process by which an individual acquires knowledge, skills, attitudes and insights with the aim of promoting individual and social wellbeing. John Dewey, the architect of what is variously termed an activity-based or learning-by-doing approach to teaching and learning, believes that many of the problems with prevailing educational practices grew out of their foundations in a faulty dualistic epistemology. On the progressive education movement, he went out of his way to emphasize that teachers must attend to the educative value of the experiences they create for youngsters. He argued for a view of teaching and learning that was social constructivist in orientation¹⁶. Unlike the traditional approaches in the theory of knowledge, which saw thought as a subjective primitive set out of which knowledge was composed, his theory of knowledge emphasized the 'necessity of testing thought by action if thought was to pass over into knowledge'. He adopts the theory of knowledge, which identifies the object of knowledge with the term of the process of inquiry, in order to get rid of what he calls 'the spectator theory of knowledge'. This represents an ideological shift in the way the acquisition of knowledge was previously considered in philosophy.

His approach understood thought genetically, as the product of the interaction between organism and environment, and knowledge as having practical instrumentality in the guidance and control of that interaction. A concept in Dewey's philosophy of education and to this day perhaps the most controversial is his concept of growth. These are explanations which place the significance of human effort in the distant future.¹⁷ His method called upon teachers to execute the enormously hard task of 'reinstating into experience' the subject-matter of the curriculum. This subject matter like all human knowledge was the product of man's efforts to solve the problems that confronted him in experience, but as a formal body of knowledge, it had been abstracted from the problematic situations where it had originally developed.

Traditionalists argued that this knowledge should simply be imposed on the child in a sequence of steps determined by the logic of this abstracted body of truth. The way a child's character is shaped, the moral and political agenda of schooling, is sometimes termed the 'hidden curriculum'. The school should rather be viewed as an extension of civil society and the student, encouraged to cooperate as a member of a community, actively pursuing interests in cooperation with others. It is by a process of self-directed learning, guided by the cultural resources provided by teachers that Dewey believed a child is best prepared for the demands of responsible membership within the democratic community.¹⁸ He argues that individuals achieve self-realization by utilizing their peculiar talents to contribute to the well-being of their community, and hence the critical task of education in a democratic society was to help children develop the character, habits and virtues, that would enable them to achieve self-realization.

Pragmatism and Constructivism are allies in many contemporary philosophical debates; the term 'construction' is indeed a recurrent and continuous motif in his writings. This contextuality of the Deweyan experience as a continuum of 'doing' and 'undergoing' implies that construction is always a transactional affair in-formed by the socio-cultural interactions in which we participate¹⁹. It is this kind of complementing and combination that breeds social progress and development within the society. For contemporary constructivists as well as for contemporary pragmatists his claim still holds true that democracy is a creative task before us that challenges our imaginative and symbolical capacities to envision and accomplish viable ways of 'the good life' that we and others wish to live.

Conclusion

The pragmatic theory of truth exempts logical truth and so, met with strong opposition among its critics perhaps most notably from the British logician and philosopher Bertrand Russell, who dissented from the theory because Dewey substituted 'inquiry' for 'truth' as the fundamental concept of logic and theory of knowledge. But then, Dewey only meant that no truth is absolutely sacrosanct, but some truths possess in practice a constant functional value.

This theory that there are no sacrosanct eternal truths, but that all statements which we believe to be true are revisable in principle or from the purely logical point of view, obviously has important implications in the fields of morals and politics.

One may be tempted to think that Dewey's idea of thinking as an instrument for solving practical problems, takes it for granted that human thought processes will always be a pointer to change or move in the positive-constructive dimension, even though it is not always the case in reality as we know that people have also used thought and great intellectual ideas for destructive purposes. For instance, Albert Einstein's theory of relativity which began purely as a scientific hypothesis was converted by the Nazi's to make nuclear weapon of mass destruction; and also in politics, people use propaganda as a deceptive agenda to make a scandal out of their opponent. But then, the making of weapons of mass destruction is not necessarily for destructive purposes but for territorial protection of sovereignty i.e. to protect a state or country against external aggression or forces. More so, the idea of propaganda is not necessarily for destructive aims, but also as publicize information to promote an idea, policy or cause by a government or an organization.

In sum, notwithstanding the possible shortcomings, he was an effective proponent of progressive education that was opposed to formal, authoritarian methods of instruction. He also favoured having students learn by performing tasks that are related to their own interests and today, educational practices throughout the United States and in many areas across the world generally follows the fundamental postulates of his educational philosophy.

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Christianity and the Great Commission: Challenges of Evangelism in Nigeria

Raphael Ukpong-Umo
Department of Sociology
Ritman University, IkotEkpene
Akwalbom State, Nigeria
E-mail: raphbeacon@yahoo.co.uk
080 6413 2846

Abstract

The Great Commission as interpreted by bible scholars refers to the command by Jesus Christ to his disciples during the first century (and by extension to all Christians up to the present time) to take the gospel message of his death, burial and resurrection, to all parts of the world in an effort to make more disciples through conversion. Secondary data were used to contrast between the operations of the disciples in executing the command in the first century and during contemporary times. The study offers a concise review of the fulfillment of the Great Commission in certain areas of work in the New Testament churches including, planting of churches, edification and benevolence. Basic issues that appeared during the actualisation of the command are previewed in the paper, and answers are proffered concerning the relationship between evangelism and social activities.

Key words: Church, Gospel, Evangelism, Christians, Commission

Introduction

Evangelism whether in the first century or twenty-first century; in Nigeria, America or any other place or region has ever been executed amidst challenges. Even during the limited commission when the Lord Jesus was still physically present on earth with the Disciples, they encountered several challenges. It seems to me that all bible examples of successful evangelism thrived under one circumstance (challenge) or the other.

Let us consider the limited commission of the bible in order to make an analysis that shall manifest the challenges therein and which shall form part of the total consideration of the overall challenges for discussion in this series. The text in Matt. 10:5-10 read as follows:

‘... (7) As you go, preach this message, the kingdom of heaven is near. (8) Heal the sick, raise the dead, Cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. (9) Do not take along any gold or silver or copper in your belts. (10) Take no bag for the journey, or extra tunic or Sandals or a staff, for the worker is worth his keep’.

As can be observed in the instructions above, the attached conditions manifest embedded challenges which the Disciples had to overcome as they execute the project. In considering these conditions, we find in verse (7) that they were first and foremost sent to preach the word. Many at the time (even as the case is now) were not inclined to listen or hear the word. The Spirit acknowledges and even the Scripture confirms that there were scoffers, or mockers (2 Peter. 3:3). As instruments of the evil one, their aim over time is to disdain and deride the workers in an attempt to discourage and get them off focus so that God's plan of deliverance (material and spiritual) for humankind may decline and suffer. It is disheartening to preach the word to an audience that is unwilling to listen and hear; it is also all the more discouraging if the audience tries to stifle the effort. In verse (8), they were to heal the sick; raise the dead; cleanse the leprosy and drive out demons from those who were possessed – all actions associated with supernatural abilities. The executors had no powers of their own and the endowments are not natural; therefore it was for them, something that challenged their ordinary abilities. They needed power extraordinary for the execution, but whether or not there were doubts in them was also a seeming challenge. Even stifling the behaviour of avarice so as to “give freely” without desiring for money or any other material reward was itself a challenge. In all of these, they were able to overcome by prayers.

The objective of this paper is to examine the challenges of Christian evangelisation as a programme of spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ across the Nigeria State.

The methodologies adopted in this work are historical and comparative. As an historical method, the analysis and interpretation of data was based on the principles of historical method. This involves an attempt to interpret past trends for the purpose of understanding the present conditions and predicting what conditions are likely to be met in the future. The Comparative method was also used to complement the effort. The scope of the paper extends to cover an examination of the influence of Christian evangelical programmes in Nigeria.

The Church

The word Church is derived from Greek *Ekklesia* meaning a calling out of, (Vine, 1952), and referring to the people called out of the world and kept separate or distinct for God's service.

The church was proposed to be an avenue for the propagation of the word to the world (Mt 16:18,19). The reading in verse 19, was figurative, and addresses the opening of salvation doorthrough the preached message for people of the world. This process of teaching the gospel message to the world is the thrust of evangelism.

The word Christian means acting like Christ or followers of Christ. The name was given to the Disciples or adherents of the Christian faith by others who saw them 'acting like their master' - Jesus Christ (Acts 11:26). Within that same context, it is indicated that Christians earn the name as they were involved in the Commission - the Great commission, which is the commitment to make disciples of all nations.

We find in the scriptures a record of the command to go and proclaim the good tidings to the world (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:46-49; John 20:21-22). Ukpong (1996) rightly observed that the Great Commission is a command to proclaim the gospel to every creature, an appointment to evangelize the world, a divine mandate to act in Christ's capacity as true representatives in the world.

Christianity in Nigeria

The Church, which is the symbol of Christianity, has a comparatively long history in Nigeria. An early attempt was made around the 14th and 15th centuries by the Catholic Portuguese Missionaries (Madukwe, 2014; Omotayo, 2010). Unfortunately, the attempt was a failure because of some factors including the asperities of the equatorial climatic conditions, difficulties in procuring trained indigenous Priests, superstition and the ignominious trade in human cargo.

However, its presence became strongly felt from the 19th century, with the abolition of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. The activities of ex-slaves and the early European missionaries, facilitated by Trading Companies fostered the evangelistic programmes, thus its impact became more pervasive and visible in Nigeria. At this other time, Methodist mission took the lead under the leadership of Reverend Thomas Birch Freedman who got to Badagry in September, 1842 (Omotayo, 2010). He was closely followed by the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S) later known as the Anglican Mission which was led by Reverend Henry Townsend to Badagry in December 1842. The collaborative effort of the two missions in December 1842 was seen as the beginning of the history of ecumenism in Nigeria (Omotayo, 2010). From this time onward, several others made their ways into the land. At its early inception, it was the poor, the relegated and the destitute that became receptive of the Christian religion. Many of the leaders of the people later became converted because of the seeming prestige, recognition and reputation that attend those who profess the new faith (Inyang, 2004).

An analysis of the Nigerian worship profile shows that from their earliest of history, the people were not irreligious. Prior to the arrival of Christianity, the various socio-cultural communities were involved in the worship of a variety of deities as religion was the foundation of their political, economic, and socio-cultural lives (Ezeorah, 2009). This is also affirmed in that the custodians of traditions, including the priest and elders of the people were deeply involved in religious activities (Nwanunobi, 1992).

In relation to the Nigerian experience, Ezeorah (2009) observed that earliest evangelizers at the advent of Christianity appeared to be hostile to African Traditional Religion and Cultures. Perhaps, they did not see the compatibility between what is African and what is Christian. It was, to say the least, operation uproot African cultures and supplant them with all possible imported Christianity, which of course was Western in character. As averred in Uzukwu (1996) African Christians, especially during the post-colonial period questioned the separation of their culture from their faith in Jesus Christ. This was also captured in Madukwe (2014), as he observed that prior to the emergence of colonial rule and its Christian tradition, the people of Nigeria composed

of a mixture of traditionalists and Islam adherents. The composition to a certain degree had a correlation to geography, ethnic and language differences.

Generally, the religious focus of the people centred primarily on the worship of intermediaries such as deities, divinities, and ancestral spirits and the people had their different indigenous African Traditional Religions that were peculiar to them (Umor, 1999).

Biblical Basis for the Great Commission

The scriptural directive by Jesus Christ, the acclaimed founder of Christianity to all Christians to proclaim the gospel to all nations can be located in the Synoptic gospels and Acts of the Apostles (Matthew 28:19, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:47, Acts 1:8). “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you and lo, I am with you always to the close of the age.”

The Great Commission contains three commands, and the mandate to make all the nations his disciples is a central command, the heart of Jesus’ mission mandate (Hertig, 2001).

a). Preach the Good News to Every Creature.

The evangelist Luke notes that Jesus often traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God (Lk 8:1)

b). Make Disciples of All Nations.

Preaching and accepting the gospel creates a basis for making Disciples for Christ. The model for Christian discipleship can be found in the life and teaching of Jesus Christ who calls people to follow him (Lk 9:23-24; Mt 10:38-39; Mk 8:34). The disciple is one who believes and identifies with Jesus Christ, and lives in the hope of his return.

Ukpong (1996) views a disciple as one who understands Christ’s absolute possession of his/her life, accepts Christ as the Lord and master and harmonizes his/her life according to the life of Christ.

According to Inyang (2004), making disciples is a process and this includes baptism in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, as well as teaching them to do all that Jesus commanded (Mt 28:19,20; Acts 2:38,41, 42). Preaching the gospel brings people to a decision of accepting Jesus Christ as Lord, and baptism introduces them into the church. It is in the church that they are taught to do everything that Jesus Christ commanded.

c). Serve the Needy

Jesus commanded the disciples to perform miraculous actions including healing the sick, raising the dead and exorcising demons (Mt 10:8). Reporting on how Jesus Christ went about doing good, the evangelist Luke stipulates that Jesus often moved about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God (Lk 8:1). Inyang (2004) commented that the Apostles received the power from Jesus Christ to replicate these extraordinary actions but the early Disciples received the power only through the laying of hands by the Apostles of Christ (Acts. 8:18,19; 11Tim.1:6).

Contemporary situation differ in that, all request are channeled to God through prayers in the name of Jesus Christ.

Evangelism and Church Planting

The great commission was among other things designed to open the way for church spread. As more and more people heard and believed the word, and come to repentance, the number of followers expands and the need to plant more churches became necessary. The two other key objectives of the church in order to strengthen the fold were edification and benevolence. The Church at Jerusalem is a classic example in this issue. The church started at Jerusalem (Lk 24:47), and the Apostles and other Disciples later spread everywhere preaching the word and planting many congregations as well as consolidating through edification and benevolence

Approaches to Evangelism in Nigeria

- Street Evangelism
- Electronic Evangelism (Television/Radio)
- Social Media Evangelism
- Door-To-Door Evangelism
- Open Air Evangelism
- Correspondence Evangelism

Street Evangelism

Street evangelism involves teaching people and distributing religious tracts along the streets, sometimes in a convoy. The Pentecostal churches are often seen on the streets teaching the people and distributing hand-bills to people and inviting them to fellowships (Omotayo, 2010). However, no single approach is peculiar to particular church group as several approaches may be juxtaposed in order to achieve results.

Electronic Evangelism (Television/Radio)

Electronic evangelism involves mostly, the use of mediums such as radio and television to communicate the message to people. It has the coverage advantage as a wider audience (both urban and rural) can be reached at the same time. Akpayang ()

Social Media Evangelism

The use of social media in information dissemination has been found to be very efficient, fast and effective because of the ease of usage, convenience, and cost effectiveness. Hundreds of thousands of persons can be reached across a vast expanse within the shortest possible time. Social Media Evangelism involves communicating the gospel through social media platforms (facebook, linkedIn, e-mails, whatsApp, etc).

Door-To-Door Evangelism

This approach also known as house-to-house evangelism is one of the traditional methods of evangelism in Nigeria. It thrived well in traditional setting, where residential houses were constructed in open spaces, without fences, and where the population is in the most part homogenous. It is still widely accepted within the Christian community in contemporary times perhaps because it is cost effective. The door-to-door approach also relies on correspondence as prospects are often given printed materials on contact, for further studies. This approach also known as House-to-House evangelism assumes the form of home contact model, where people often in pairs walk to homes and discuss the word of God with their prospects. It is one of the oldest evangelism approaches with wide applicability in both urban and rural areas. However, access is a strong challenge especially among most fenced buildings in modern towns and cities.

During the 19th century, the correspondence, open air and door-to-door evangelism strategies dominated, but during the 20th and 21st centuries, the electronic and social media evangelism strategies dominated.

Open Air Evangelism

Open Air evangelism takes the form of an organized forum where people are gathered for the purpose of hearing the word of God. As a public forum model, the use of public address system enhances performance. Contemporary cases are often fantasised particularly for the purpose of attracting a good audience. It is another traditional platform for evangelism in Nigeria. The approach is gradually waning especially in Nigerian cities due to shift in patterns of life, modernity, etc. However its relevance still hold sway in the rural communities where sameness of life pattern provides the opportunity for most people to return and retire home from labor almost at the same time of the day, and this guaranty the possibility of having a forum where open air lectureships can be successfully staged with reasonable level of success. Contemporary challenges include public apathy due to deviation from crusade and miracle convention.

Correspondence Evangelism

Correspondence evangelism is the process of communicating the word of God through correspondence using the printed materials (small booklets or Tract).

The correspondence approach to Nigeria evangelism is basically a print medium and involves the circulation of printed materials (Tracts/pamphlets) from source to target destinations. Individuals eg Christians, groups eg congregations, and formal organizations eg World Bible School have successfully deployed this approach to reach out to a large audience. These Tracts are distributed to prospects that may or may not be known to the source group (s). The contact address on the printed materials is expected to serve as a feedback link between prospects and organizers. Some of the challenges of correspondence evangelism include;

(a) Wastage (as some prospects who may not be interested in reading the printed materials usually discard them without reading, let alone studying the contents.

(b) Lack of Proper Feedback (as it is difficult to trace all prospects, follow up process is weak, and prospects are lost in transit).

Despite the observed weaknesses of this approach, it has a wide application including platforms of door-to-door and open air lectureships.

EDUCATION AND EVANGELISM IN NIGERIA

Education has been described as the process by which an individual acquires skills, knowledge, abilities, attitudes and other forms of behavior that help to shape belief and moral values (Haralambos and Holborn, 2008). It is a tool for personality development for active and useful life in society. In view of the foregoing, education is significant in successful evangelism anytime, anywhere.

Significance of Education in Evangelism

Education involves training the mind for the acquisition of special skills, abilities, and attitudes for behavioral change that should affect society in specific ways. The apostles obtained training from the master that enabled them make positive impact on the society at the time (Acts. 4:13). John the Baptist and Jesus Christ trained their disciples thereby equipping them for the task of evangelism (cf. Mark 3:13-19; 7: 18-20). In all of these cases, the disciples were trained before being sent forth.

In Nigeria, the importance of education and training for effective evangelism cannot be over emphasized. Indeed, there is a correlation between effective bible training, evangelism mobilization, and soul winning. Most of the major Church denominations in Nigeria have theological arms where training is obtained (at full time or part time arrangement) for qualifying people as Priests, Pastors, Ministers, etc.

Challenges of Evangelism in Nigeria

Right from the initial entrant of Christianity into Nigeria, they were obvious factors that challenged the spread of the gospel. These challenges shall be discussed under two sub-units, and these are: (1) Spiritual, and (2) Material. However, one reinforces the other.

Spiritual

Worldliness remains a major hindrance to Christian evangelism at any time. Also, the behavior of some who were not inclined to listen or hear the word is a serious cause of worry. As earlier alluded, the Spirit acknowledges and the Scripture confirms that there were scoffers, or mockers (2 Peter. 3:3). As instruments of the evil one, their aim over time is to disdain and deride the workers in an attempt to discourage and get them off focus so that God's plan of deliverance (material and spiritual) for humankind may decline and suffer. It is disheartening to preach the word to an audience that is unwilling to listen and hear, and all the more discouraging if the audience tries to stifle the effort.

Material

There are several material challenges to the execution of the Great Commission in Nigeria but for the purpose of this paper, discussions on the subject shall be classified into four, namely Geographical, Economic, Socio-cultural and Political.

Geographical factor

Access to some communities posed great difficulties especially at a time where good road networks were not available. Access to the hinterland in the forest belt of the south-east, through the creeks to some riverine areas of the south-south and western coastal areas, the hilly and stony areas of the west as well as some part of the north all posed geographical challenges for evangelism.

Economic factor

The financial cost of evangelism at any time remains high, especially with regards to procurement of items as bibles, hymn books, food, transport, and gift items. The cost is even higher when attention is given to health care for prospects, education services and other trainings including skills acquisition.

In the present time, the costs of evangelism publicity through print and electronic media, as well as actual use of the mediums for teaching and preaching are enormous. Therefore, where no sponsor(s) are available, the work is stalled. Inyang (2004) lamented the dismal result of evangelism in some parts of Nigeria, and attributed it to dearth of funds, manpower and general poverty. These according to him affect the capacity of churches to effectively carry out extensive evangelism projects and mission work.

Socio-cultural factor

Social and cultural structures are strong impediments to the execution of the go and preach command of Jesus Christ since it was believed to be against the principles and practices of African Traditional Religion (ATR). The ethnic and language differences constitute cultural barriers to an even course of evangelization. All over Nigeria at the time, the promotion of indigenous religions held sway and traditional religion was a collective cultural practice. The communal aspect of the African culture was apparent in their religious worship, such that any infringement attracted community wide condemnation, reprisal and reprimand Madukwe(2010). Akpayang (2000) observed that insurgencies and other form of conflicts, social vices and criminal acts constitute challenges to evangelism in Nigeria. Drawing examples from several cases of terror at the North- eastern part of Nigeria, he remarked that the destruction of structures and facilities meant for worship in all the places put together surpasses that experienced in Jerusalem in the period of Emperor Nero.

Political factor

As averred in Umor (1999), the political structure of the Nigerian traditional society was designed to protect the indigenous cultural elements which the dominant religion (ATR) was one. Therefore, the local political leadership actually opposed the advent of Christianity and proclamation of the gospel as it was seen as an exotic and rival religion. In this regard, it has been posited that Lord Luggard, when he served as the consul of the Royal Niger Company protectorate, rejected the request to evangelise the north by Christian Missionaries (Falola, Mahadi, Uhomoibhi and Anyanwu, 1991).

Evangelism and Social Activity

Discussing the relationship between evangelism and social activity, it is pertinent to recall that during the initial contact between the white missionaries and Africans, various gift items were offered to induce prospects to the gospel (Inyang, 2004). This however was only part of the overall care for those who became interested in the gospel message. Sider (1993) acknowledges that this practice finds basis on the fact that Jesus Christ fed his followers (Matthew 14: 13-21; John 21: 12; 6:24). On this premise, some argue that all other forms of social activities can be embarked upon in the course of evangelism. On this basis, Sider (1993) proposes that social action which is that set of activities whose primary goal is to improve the physical, socio-economic and political well-being of people through relief, development, and structural change is pertinent in evangelism and mission. But Akpayang (2000) argued that material benefits especially in term of supplies of food to prospects were only incidental to the soul winning process. He pointed out that evangelism was first and foremost a spiritual activity targeted to prepare man for eternal salvation, and therefore inducement as a strategy is out of place. He specifically commented that many modern church groups actually induced people with promises of material possession before and after an encounter with the Holy Spirit in a crusade or church meeting and stressed that many of the followers lack the conviction of salvation but the expectation of material turn around.

Evangelism Era in Nigeria and Corresponding Evangelism Approaches

Evangelism in Nigeria shall be considered under three era namely, colonial, post- colonial and contemporary. During the colonial era, missionaries who purportedly were part of the imperial regimen went to the areas conquered by the colonial army and preached the gospel to the indigenous people. The dominant strategy was face to face discussion with the use of interpreters as communication of the gospel message was largely through verbal proclamation. People were gathered at public places for the purpose of evangelism (Inyang, 2004). Here, the traditional approaches including, Street Evangelism, Door-to- door and Open Air Evangelism approaches became relevant. During the immediate post-colonial era, Electronic media approach (Radio/Television) added to the list of existing evangelism approaches. However, in contemporary times, while the traditional approaches wanes, Social media has been added to the list.

The Great Commission and Proselytism

A discussion about evangelism raises the question of proselytism in the Christian family because what one Christian group or church may consider as evangelism, often another group or church may consider as proselytism (Umoh, 1997). Proselytism as a persistent and zealous endeavour toward the conversion of others to one's religion is only insignificantly present in certain churches of the Reformation heritage. It is therefore argued that the goal of evangelism is not winning practicing Christians from other denominations, but

evangelization of those persons who do not yet have a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. The argument here opens a door for further research.

Conclusion

The Great Commission is a requirement to all of Christ's disciples who are called and sent to proclaim the gospel, to preach the good news about the kingdom of God as a confirmation of their relationship with God, effectively love their neighbors, serve the needy by the power of the Holy Spirit and be a part of the lifelong process of discipleship, through the Church. Today, Jesus' disciples are sent in the same way to fulfill the Great Commission, to make Disciples of Christ, in Christ's authority and presence.

Challenges do not only exist, but persist in contemporary Nigeria evangelism processes. These challenges, both material and spiritual can be resolved with increased funding, increased spiritual awareness and willingness of Christians to be concerned about lost souls.

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Religion, Corruption and National Development

Dr. Casimir Peter Unyanga (KSM)
Department of Religious and Cultural Studies
Akwa Ibom State University
uyangacasimir@yahoo.com
08033834284, 08086014463

Abstract

It is obvious that the full content of Nietzsche's proclamation of God's death was not immediately assimilated by the Western minds. Yet the death of God announced by the mad man reflected the then existing social context of the Western society, and how the consequences of such message would spread through the centuries. Corruption today is a dominant issue and has undermined the fundamentals for a global ethics necessary for the modern Nation like Nigeria and her development. This paper examined the issue of Religion, Corruption and National Development. The work found out that consistent occurring of corrupt practices will continue to frustrate development in Nigeria. Using phenomenological method of analyzing social issues, this paper aims to give recommendations on how to fight this societal menace for our national development.

Keywords: Religion, Corruption and Development.

Introduction

The concept of religion borders on man's relationship with an expression of ideas about the divine. The system of beliefs and practices associated with religion usually draw the adherents into a community: Christians, Muslims and Traditionalists. A cursory review of the history of humanity reveals that religion exhibits a tremendous social force that cannot be safely ignored. In some societies, religion determines the social values, structure, stratification and developments. Powerful as religion is in social development, there are always horrific consequences from conflicts related to religion. Religion permeates every facet of life of the adherents and has great power to help or to hurt. The various dimensions of religion have both healthy and unhealthy aspects. The part of religion that helps people to be disciplined and productive, responsible and open-minded portrays the healthy side. When adherents of religion exhibit corrupt tendencies, unhealthy consequences emerge.

Our history is even more pitiable. We go to the refuse dump to fill our emptiness, and our painful search for meaning ends in an uneventful habit of bizarre taste, laxity, promiscuity and complacency. This is our predicament; the experience so far is very much tragic and traumatic in the presence of a blinking future. In Nigeria, the odious socio-economic and religio-political events in the country since 1966 speak volumes of a people with neither convincing common beginning nor destiny. In fact, it is a well known problem that one of the factors that have hindered Nigeria from development is the incessant occurring of religious and corrupt practices.

In this paper, I am concerned with the issue of "Religion, Corruption and National Development," by tracing the bearing of the spear cast by the contemporary age of secularism on the vision of Nigerians with the particular cases of bribery, prostitution, embezzlement, abuse of power and greed etc. I am doing this with the mind of clearing the web and mess blunting a proper focus of ideals so that individuals may come to know where they are and where they should be if Nigeria must developed. This paper will therefore find out those consistent occurring corrupt practices that will continue to frustrate development in Nigeria. Using phenomenological method of analysing social issues, this paper aims to give recommendations on how to fight this societal menace, which shows clearly that, Religion have a central role in National development which can contribute for its sustainability if the recommendations are adhered to.

Religion Corruption and Development Defined

Scholars find it difficult to frame a definition that will include every aspect of religion, past and present. From any analysis of religion, as soon as people begin to discuss whatever is to them “religion” the tendency will be to end up invariably with a moral consciousness and commitment to whatever they find themselves believing. But religion invariably extends to the external and secular expressions which involve such disciplines as Philosophy, Psychology, Anthropology, History, Geography, and Sociology which come under the aspect of phenomenology of Religion. This indeed is in recognition of what of course should be the general nature in the matter of what people regard as “Religion,” so also in the study of religious science, a measure of commitment to the truths of transcendental realities already claimed for religion (Ekarika, 2015).

According to Umoh (2010) “Religion is more than simply a belief in a transcendent deity or a means to an after life. It is, rather, an orientation to the cosmos and our role in it” (pg. 12). We understand religion in its broadest sense as a means whereby humans recognizing the limitations of phenomenal reality, undertake specific practices to effect self-transformation and community cohesion within a cosmological context. Religion thus refers to those cosmological stories, symbol, systems, ritual practices, ethical norms, historical processes, and institutional structures that transmit a view of the human as embedded in a world of meaning and responsibility, transformation and celebration. Thus, it is Religion that connects humans with a divine presence, with the human community and with the broader earth community, it links humans to the larger matrix of mystery in which life arises, unfolds and flourishes.

On the other hand, there are several definitions of corruption. One very common definition according to Mark and Ulrich, (1999) says “corruption is the abuse of public power for personal interests” (pg. 103). This definition includes most of all the active or passive bribery between a civil servant and a private person. Yet, corruption also includes activities between private persons, and when the behaviour of people with public or private tasks is corrupt when they violate their duties to obtain any kind of unjustified advantages. For Peter Ulrich (1999), the economic ethic-philosopher shows how ethically explosive the issue is: “the undermining of the common wellbeing through particular interests of individuals”.

The concept of development has been so over-used that many people believe that they know its meaning though when they are asked to define it, one is shocked to discover that they do not know it. “Development” as Walter Rodney (1972) rightly observed, “is a many sided process.” At the level of the individual, it implies increased skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material wellbeing... At the level of social groups, therefore, development implies increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relationships.

The full implication of the above characterization of development is that it is first and foremost mental before it is expressed in material equivalent. Genuine development is fundamentally of human beings in terms of ideas which imbue in them the capacity to think-qualitatively and tackle the problems that emerge out of their living conditions.

The Religious Perspective of Corruption

Corruption is almost as old as humanity, at least known since jurisdiction has existed. When looking for ethical criteria to judge corruption, biblical insight may be illuminating. Two recent comprehensive theological-ethical studies are dealing with research.

The oldest reference to corruption in the Old Testament seems to be found in the book of Exodus, only three chapters after the Ten Commandments. “Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe makes people blind to what is right, and ruins the cause of those who are innocent.” (Exodus 23:8). This prohibition of corruption dates back to the times before the kings and is not accidentally addressed to judges not to accept bribes. An unbiased jurisdiction is vital for every legal system. Also, in the environment of the Old Testament in Egypt and Mesopotamia, the phenomenon of corruption was known, but here in the book of the Exodus a law against corruption has already been drawn up! It is also important to see what the ethical justification is to prohibit corruption, it is truth and justice, in particular the legal protection of the poor as is shown in other verses.

From the time of the Kings the sons of the kings Samuel are mentioned, that they accepted bribes for their own benefit (1 Samuel 8:3). In the book of kings, it becomes clear that the corruption was also used in external affair and in military matters. Allies of the adversary were offered bribes to use military actions against him (1 Kings 15, 19:2, Kings 16:8).

The theological justification of refusing corruption becomes clear with prophets. God Yaweh is incorruptible, as he is the right and justice himself. This is why he is not trying to bribe King Kyros when he repatriates his people from exile to their land (as some individuals among the people may have proposed)?

Corruption destroys communities. Whoever uses the evil of, is called Pagan as is thus called as being excluded from the community with God (Proverbs 17:23). Devout is he who does not take bribe (Psalm 26:10).

Cases of bribery are also mentioned in the New Testament. And again, bribery is always condemned. In connection with the events around Passion and Easter, it is reported that Judas was bribed by high priest (Mark 14:10). High priests and elders had apparently paid bribes to the soldiers so that they spread the lie, the body of Christ was not resurrected but stolen. The acts of the Apostles report on how judges are bribed, the governor Felix wanted some money from Paulus, to sentence him less severely (Acts 24:26f). It is also documented that customs controlled by the Romans- was corrupt at the time of Jesus; this fact is also shown by the story of chief tax collector Zacchaeus and his illegal acquired goods and the latter gives half of his belongings to the poor (Luke 19:1-10). The corruptibility of the spirit is probably the most dangerous form of corruption. Simon offers money to the Apostles Peter and John, thus trying to buy the powers so that anyone he places his hand on would receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:8-24). To draw a moral lesson from this story, it shows that what is an inalienable power of God cannot be acquired with underhand dealings.

Corruption from the Islamic Perspective

The word "Corruption" means dishonest or illegal acts done by a person in position of authority in anticipation of money or personal gain or acts done not in line with accepted standards of behaviour. It is also seen as "all forms of bribery, abuse of office and nepotism, any favour done in expectation of material or non-material gain or even in reward of an earlier deed" Patrick Edobor Ighinonovia (2003). Thus there is moral corruption, religious corruption such as Islam and Christianity not been practiced in their pristine purity, ideological corruption such as bastardization of democracy and capitalism, political corruption, like electing people through falsification of election result, and legal corruption to mention but a few, and not just financial corruption. Many crimes are regarded as acts of corruption in Islam, the greatest crime that people can commit against themselves is shirk, or associating partners with Allah in worship in whatever form. By doing this, they equate Allah, who is the Creator, the omnipotent and the all-provider, with a weak and limited creature (Q. 31:13). Also from the Islamic perspective, committing different types of sins are acts of causing corruption on the earth. The most grievous of these sins are the destructive ones which Allah and His messenger threaten the perpetrators of with a severe punishment. Some of them are: practicing magic, committing murder, making interest-based transactions, usurping the property of orphans, mistreating one's parents, bearing false witness, adultery and fornication, drinking alcohol and taking narcotics, stealing, severing bonds of kinship etc. These sins destroy man and turn him into an obedient servant of Satan, who will then lead him to all evils and blind him from seeing the truth and receiving guidance.

"And when it is said to them, "Do not cause corruption on the earth," they say, "We are but reformers." Unquestionably, it is they who are the corrupters, but they perceive (it) not." (Q. 2: 11-12). Thus, the word 'fasad', in the Islamic scripture, which connote 'corruption' among other meanings applies to all forms of crimes, individual and social, material and moral, economic and political, legal and cultural, national and international. SayyidQutb highlights Islam's condemnation of corruption when he says, "Islam disdains to consider life in terms of a mouthful of food, carnal desires, or a handful of money. Yet at the same time it prescribes living comfortably for every individual but it prefers to provide this comfort by individual earnings through lawful means and legitimate enterprises.

Characteristics of Corruption

- (i) a means to obtain something;
- (ii) the hidden and intransparent nature of activity;
- (iii) the illegal search for personal advantage;
- (iv) the illegal acquisition of something which one does not deserve;
- (v) the economically inefficient use of funds;
- (vi) very often proximity to blackmail, abuse of public power, nepotism;
- (vii) the breach of confidence;
- (viii) the damage of moral integrity and of general ethos;
- (ix) a breach of law with a disintegration of the sense of justice;

Different Forms and Motives of Corruption

- (i) The corruption of poverty- normally “petty corruption”- has its roots in poverty (e.g. when government officials do not receive a salary at all or not enough to sustain a sufficient livelihood.
- (ii) The corruption of power- normally “grand corruption”- rooted in the greed to more power, influence and wealth or in the safeguarding of the existing power and economic position.
- (iii) The corruption of procurement and the corruption of acceleration serves the purpose to obtained goods and services that otherwise would not be available or delivered on time, or only with much greater administrative expenses.

Manifestations of Corruption in Nigeria and Effects on National Development

The Loathsome Aura

The twentieth century humanity in Nigeria is a handicapped humanity. It has survived by perpetually collapsing into a flux of misery. The Nigerians on the street today are falling apart Ehusani (1998). We Nigerians have been alienated from the root of our history, now relying on the gratuity of chance and accidents. There is no longer any sense of transcendental values, nor do we ever attempt seeking for the “paradise lost.” With our impoverished memory of history we have no full grasp of our present neither do we aspire for our proper destiny. Our nation today runs a closed system where the worst in other places is not bad enough for us. Our society and the men of power legislate and institutionalised the odds of life with coercion and brutality. No central value to hold on to. The psychology of this aura has turned from despair to tragedy.

Many scholars are of the opinion that the low-level of development in the country can be attributed to this loathsome aura in the country. This view is sustainable on the grounds that Nigerian leaders have been unable to find lasting solutions to the defective structures left behind by British colonizers. Appadorai (140-1) has identified certain qualities which leaders of government should possess and these include:

A will directed to a high purpose clearly visualised and courageously pursued; the instinct of gauging the needs of the people and the initiative to formulate means of realising them, the ability to present issues clearly to the people and to arrive at a fair judgment...

It is not only leaders that have contributed to the dismal level of development in Nigeria. The citizens are as much to be blamed. This view is based on the fact that democracy is a complex form of government which assumes a certain civic capacity on the part of the citizens. The capacity according to Appadorai (142), involves three qualities: intelligence, self-control, and conscience. These qualities have been lacking in the conduct of many Nigerians.

Bribery

This term has become a common usage in the Nigerian social fabrics. According to the Oxford Advance Learning’s Dictionary of Current English, bribery has to do with giving something to somebody in order to influence or persuade him to do something in favour of the giver. Within the Nigerian context, this is what Yorubas called “egunje,” or ochinerenu” (for the Ebiras). Government and society have implicitly endorsed this practice and we are all involved. But how? To see a manager for appointment or employment one has to “tip” the gate man and persons within the protocol. Some managers hardly grant job opportunities without having their hands oiled. Political aspirants often bribe their way through, by buying and looting the will of less informed citizens and manipulating the electoral system. Would it be shocking to you hearing that religious leaders are involved in this affair? Take for instance, a church man who goes to queue for fuel. Let us say he has an august conference to attend for which he has already calculated his hours. Without hesitation he doles out money to pay the sales attendant for a “black market deal.” With the coming of a new religious movement, a new dimension is added to the practice of bribery among clergy men. This takes the form of consultation fee which is determined by each pastor concerned. This system is very much subtle. This issue of bribery is any of its manifestations has adversely affected the development of Nigeria.

Bribery from the Islamic Perspective

In Arabic ctymology, bribery is termed as “risywah”, which means ‘wages’ or a gift given to achieve certain benefit. Al Fayumi said that risywah means a gift from someone to judges or another person, so that the judge will decide something that benefits him, or a gift to make the one received it do what the giver wants him to do.

IbnulAtsir explained that risywah is a mean or tool, used to make connection with the desired, by fake attitude. The origin of “risywah” is “rasya”, which means a pail rope, functioned to deliver the pail to the water.

The terminology, risywah means a gift that being given to certain person, to make wrong the right, and vice versa. Thus, it’s meaning is more limited in terminology compared to in etymology. A gift will be considered as risywah if the aim is to make wrong the rights and make right the wrongs.

In shariah, the ruling of bribery and bribing an official or authority to get a job is forbidden, state unanimously by the scholars. Even more, bribery is considered as a big sin.

“They are fond of listening to falsehood, of devouring anything forbidden.. (Al Maida: 42)”

According to Hasan Al Bashri and Said IbnJabair, the meaning of “shut” in that verse is bribery (risywah).

“And do not eat up your property among yourselves for vanities, nor use it as a bait for the judges, with intent that ye may eat up wrongfully and knowingly a little of other people’s property” (Al Baqara: 188).

From Abdullah ibn Amr,

“Allah’s messenger Shallallahu ‘alayhwaSallam condemned briber and the one who receive bribery.” (Recorded by Abu Daud, no. 3580, and the others; Validated by Al Albanee).

In another story, The Prophet Shallallahu ‘alayhwaSallam condemned ar-ra’isy, that is the connector of the briber and the bribed one,” (Recorded by Hakim, no. 7068).

Although the status of this saying is weak, but the meaning is true. Someone who connects the briber and the bribed one means that he also helps them to commit a sin, and this is forbidden.

Hence, asking for bribe, giving bribe, and connecting the briber and the bribed one, all of those are forbidden.

Nevertheless, according to majority of the scholars, bribing to get his/her rights or to prevent dangers and tyranny, is allowable. In such condition, the one committing sin is the bribe done, not the briber.

Abu LaitsAs Samarqand al Hanafi said, “It is permitted, if someone (bribed to) defend himself and his wealth.” There were scholars who explained this phenomenon by saying that shariah allows to make use of danger to prevent another heavier dangers.

For example, releasing the captivated. Basically, handing wealth to the infidels is forbidden, and categorised as spending money in vain. But in this case, handing over the wealth to them is allowed due to prevent the more threatening danger. Thus, it is more appropriate to use a forbidden thing which possess no danger, to prevent from more forbidden things.

But if the right to be defended is worthless, then the struggle to retain it without any arguments in shariah is considered forbidden. This is because the danger it possessed is greater than the benefits.

Majority of the scholars argued with a narration from IbnMas’ud. When he reached Ethiopia, he bribed someone with 2 dinars, so that he could continue his journey. “Verily, the sin was taken by one received bribery, not the briber.”

Atha’ and Hasan Al Bashri said that, “one is allowed to pretend (by pretending to give/bribery) to defend himself and his wealth if he worries that tyranny might be afflicted upon him.”

Types of Bribery

The scholars of Hanafi, divided type bribery into 4 categories:

First, bribery done so that someone will be appointed as a judge or officials (just as civil servant). The ruling of this category is forbidden for both sides.

Second, a judge who asks for bribery before deciding something. This type is forbidden for both sides, even though the decision is right and fair, since deciding for fair decision is the obligation of the judges.

Third, giving a certain amount of money to someone to prevent his tyranny or to gain benefits (by acquiring his rights). This type of bribery is forbidden to the bribed only.

Fourth, giving certain amount of money to someone who help the giver to get his rights. Giving and receiving such money/property is permitted, because the status of the money resembles wages.

Bribing the Judge

Bribing the judge is forbidden, according to the scholars, unanimously.

Al-Jashshan said, "There are no clashes of argumentation, over the prohibition of bribing the judge, because that is a form of suht which was forbidden by Allah in Holy Qur'an, and all muslim also agree upon that forbidden status. This is forbidden to the briber and the bribed one."

In the book titled *Kasysyaf al Quna'*, it was mentioned that, "A judge is forbidden to receive gifts. A judge who borrows goods from others, then it's status is just as gifts, since the service obtained from that goods resembles the goods itself."

Also, if a judge wanted to get his son circumcised, or other matters, then he got some presents, though masked as gifts for his son, the ruling of his practice is forbidden, because it becomes a means to bribery. If there were people who gave him an alms (since he is a poor man), the more appropriate opinion is that the status of such alms is as gifts, even though in the book titled *Al Funun*, it is written that a judge is allowed to receive alms."

Abuse of Power

Without any misgiving, Nigeria ranks high among nations where violence abound due to misuse of power. It is like a resurgence of the Machiavellian political stance "might is right." Supporting any leader in authority to sustain itself perpetually in office utilizing all means even to the detriments of the subjects.

Nigerians have witnessed enough callousness and brutality from her leaders, both political and religious. From history our experience of leadership in Nigeria are repugnant and bizarre. For pride, our leaders have mortgaged our destiny and sold our rights for greediness. Since we live in the land of opposites, ministers become lords of the people while shepherds feed on the flock. What is more, revolution and opposition are completely not entertained. If you are against them then you are in for it. Your lot cannot be less than assassination, exile and frustration. If you become a friend to their enemies, you are also very likely to pay a price. In this kind of a situation, how will Nigeria develop?

Many scholars are of the opinion that the low-level of development in the country can be attributed to the lack of "responsible" leadership. Religion can play a vital role in correcting the poor orientation of the leaders and citizens. A good religious leader is capable of high level of abstraction and this helps to create order in the midst of chaos. This is possible through the dispassionate analysis and synthesis of various ideas. As Unah (35) has stated:

Human experience is chaotic, complicated and sometimes intricate in character. Only a high level of abstraction could integrate the chaos of experience into a comprehensive and consistent world view.

Religionists are best suited to provide order to the chaos of experience and they can help to engender a new orientation by re-evaluating the issues dealing with what constitute reality, truth, and the values for Nigerians. This re-evaluation is necessary because both leaders and citizens have failed to identify with national goals.

Prostitution

In Nigerian context there is almost no distinction between what is sacred and profane. It is all promiscuity and pollution. Sexual perversion is present within the married life where there is no fidelity, between the family head and maidservant, between a house wife and a driver. Professional prostitutes engage in this business for money, their bodies become commercial articles for sale. As a fallout from radical feminism, single parenthood produces in these children questionable paternity, like mother like daughter, the children then explore their handicapped situation eventuating in sexual frustration. These children lacked proper home upbringing. So they indulge in this business taking it as something normal.

Apart from disputed areas in the street corners, Nigerian secondary schools and tertiary institutions are the greatest shareholders in this enterprise. From home, children especially girls who have less attention miserably adapt to this new situation as a way of coping with the daily needs and also to become indentifiable among their mates. In this affair women are always vulnerable. Even where the society has infiltrated this distortion in their psychology. Ladies could still be helped without manipulating them as mere instruments of gratification.

Within the family, contraceptives have made sexual indulgence far less costly and far safer outside it than ever before opinions, less hostile to illicit unions even to sexual perversion than it has been since the traditional times. As it were, our warped natures, the devils who tempts us, and all the contemporary propaganda, combined to make us feel that the desires we are resisting are so natural, so healthy and so

reasonably, that it is almost perverse and abnormal to resist them. However, against such background we must know that every sane and civilised man must have some set of principles by which he chooses to reject some of his desires and to permit others. This is realizable if we accord reasonability its proper place in our assessment of values, else Nigeria's national development shall be distorted.

Evil Effects of Corruption

One of the evil effects of corruption is that it hinders economic development. "It opens the door for inefficient allocation of resources as well as raises the cost of investment and decreases investors' confidence. Research has revealed that countries with notoriously high levels of corruption risk marginalization in a world of rapid economic integrity. Also, the diversion of public funds enriches some and impoverishes others. It kills initiatives of potential experts in the private sectors and sacrifices efficiency on the greedy hands alters of mismanaging abundant wealth. Moreover, it desecrates the rule of law and undermines the legitimacy and stability of democratic regimes. Corruption demolishes the elements of prudent management of wealth and resources. Irrational and short-sighted decisions are taken. These are motivated by greed but not need. Approvals of projects are met premised not on the basis of suitability but on the dividends for the decision-makers.

Recommendations

To fight this societal menace for our national development, the following programmes must be put in place by the ecumenical council.

- i. Drawing up an analysis, when one's own organisation faces corruption and how to deal with it.
- ii. Working out biblical theological instruments on corruption.
- iii. Signing the code of conduct against corruption which contains eight principles; respect for human dignity, aspect for moral integrity, promotion of justice, fostering of transparency, rejection of all forms of corruption, respect for the law, the right to disclose and combat corruption, the priority of the public interest over private interests.
- iv. Participation in national legal revisions to fight corruptions.
- v. Public statements of churches against corruption in one's own country.
- vi. Implementation or support of an anti-corruption campaign ("Zero-tolerance campaign" like e.g. the one of the government of Botswana).
- vii. Cooperation with the national chapters of transparency international.
- viii. Dialogue between churches and companies as to the issue.

Conclusion

Clearly religions have a central role in the formulation of worldviews that orient us to the natural world and the articulation of ethics that guide human behaviour. The size and the complexity of the problems we face require collaborative efforts both among the religions and in dialogue with other key domains of human endeavour. Religions, thus, need to be in conversation with other sectors for adequate distribution of resources for national development. Kenneth (1969) has observed that assisting humans by degrading the natural world cannot lead to a sustainable community like Nigeria. The only sustainable community is one that fits the human economy of the earth. With the help of religions, humans are now advocating for restraint in the use of natural resources on which all life depends, equitable distribution of wealth, recognition of responsibility of humans for the continuity of life into future generations. These are the virtues for sustainability, which the world's religions can contribute which in turn will assist in Nigeria's National Development.

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