
CHRISTIAN RELIGIOUS STUDIES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION, VALUE, KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Transformation is a call for higher education. This call implies that, the standard of education is falling and this necessitates the quest for real transformation. There are certain Surmountable problems affecting the standard of education in Nigeria. These problems include: ineffective use of educational curriculum, poor educational management and finance, poor educational personnel, undedicated professionals towards teaching, poor teaching resources on the basis of the above assertions. Paper examines the objectives of Christian Religious Studies, problems of values, knowledge and skills which could lead to low standard of higher education and measures for effective change to bring quality to education in general. This paper also explains the concept of education and its objective, the term transformation. And how CRS can be a model of reality in transforming higher education in Nigeria. Relevant conclusion and recommendation are presented.

The concern of nations globally is to make life better and liveable for the well-beings of its citizen in all ramifications. The best channel to achieve this is to provide and promote educational standard of living. However, different steps have been employed to address the issues of quality education in Nigeria. But it seems to be no corresponding impact. As Karl Max rightly notice that “people are just interpreting the society but the real issue is to change the society for good”. The assertion of Max is relevant especially in education program because how to achieve the basic aims of education is not treated only what education will give is major concern in Nigeria society. The issue on ground should be on how to improve and transform the low quality in higher education because through real and quality education Nigeria’s ambitions of building a veritable society can be easily achieved. However, there seems to be an emerging trend threatening education in general. These include poor education finance, inadequate participation of the stakeholders in education programme, environmental

terrorism, in conducive Environment, the use of outdated teaching material and aids and poor educational personnel. The result of the problems mentioned is poor performances of the students in both higher institutions and in secondary school. National policy on education (FGN 2006) affirmed that no education system can rise above the quality of the teacher while Ogunsaja (2004) concluded that the standard of education in Nigeria has fallen beyond societal expectation.

Therefore, transformation is needed in higher education in order to promote equalitarian society. The major areas in education, which need transformation are School Administration, academic environment, educational personnel, relevant educational materials, appropriate educational allowances and educational accountability. If these can be taken care of, there will be a positive change in the education system in general in Nigeria. Thus, this study examines how Christian religious studies can be practically useful in bringing change to higher education in Nigeria.

Conceptualization

To embark any meaningful discussion, academic responsibility demands that certain operational terms used in the context of the paper should be briefly explained for the in-depth understanding of the topic under examination. These operational terms includes education, transformation, value, knowledge and skill

Higher Education

The contextual word 'education' is all embracing that virtually covers every aspect of life. Education according to Ngu (2005) asserts that its the basic human right that provide the meaning for development of a nation.

History is witnessed that, without education no society or nation has been able to accelerate in terms of development process. Ogunshola (2006) attests that education improve economic welfare, reduces income inequalities, ensures demographic benefits, and guarantees economic security and democratization. Therefore, the word 'education' refers to the general outlook of the society. On the other hand, higher education is an essential component of equality aimed to build knowledge, attitude, and values that will enable both young and old people positively developed morally, mentally and academically. Higher education is about empowering people with positive and genuine skill, attitude and knowledge.

Again, higher education aims at nation building and to promote high standard of educational system. Its also based on a philosophy that saves human kind from educational interruption and ignorance at all level. As a body, it can make a good representation for a possible generalization of any kind of need. It also plays a fundamental role in pursuing national goals.

Reider (2003) highlighted numerous indicators for quality education; these include outcome, relevance, learners and instructors, contents and processes.

Transformation

According to Maurice, transformation is to reconstruct, revamp, restore, reassemble, and regenerate. Similarly, Microsoft Encarta define transformation as a process, or an instance of changing in the way in which something is organized.

The concept of transformation by Bernard (1950) attests that transformation reconstruction emanated from man's strive to transform, re arrange or reorganize.

Ramons in Oloruntoba (2009) pointed that transformation is a philosophy that centres on the idea of constant change.

Therefore, educational transformation is a process of re shaping rearranging values, knowledge, skills, in individual for effective and positive mind.

Christian Religious Studies

National commission for College of Education (2004) defined Christian Religious Education as an academic discipline specifically designed for the moral and religious development of the country. Similarly, Adeseiro (2007) asserted that Religious Education is a final body of truth that has been divinely revealed and imperative for the survival of any society. From the above definition, it can be deduced that Christian Religious Education inculcates in the learner sound religious Values such as honesty, love, kindness, tolerance, forgiveness, and corporate existence, which can only be properly used to facilitate change.

Objectives of Religious Education

The national objective of Christian Religious Education in Nigeria as stated by the National Commission for College of Education (2004), is stated below

1. To demonstrate practical proficiency for teaching Christian Religious studies in school level.
2. To demonstrate and express satisfactory intellectual capacity.
3. To benefit further studies in CRS.
4. To demonstrate sound knowledge and appreciate of the moral value needed to live as a Christian in the various stages of growth and development.
5. To exposure the place and significance of religion in human life and make a meaningful contribution to humanity.
6. To radiate attitude and values which are typical of nature and responsible member of the Christian community such as love, respect, honesty, and service. The actualization of the lofty Objectives of CRS can achieve in the practical sense through the teaching and learning.

Value, Knowledge, Skill

Education is derived from the Latin word “Erudio” meaning to bring up a child physically and mentally or to rear. There is a general definition that concise education as all round development of an individual physically, socially, morally, mentally, temperamentally, psychologically, and spiritually. Any education that leaves out any aspect of human development would be the worst. Therefore, education is not just what has often been reduced to transmission of scientific knowledge but assimilation of skills and values.

According to Fafunwa (1976), education is the process that prepares individuals for the future. Education is expected to reflect in the life of the recipient a kind of behaviour that conforms with the norms and values of the society. Functional education is therefore that type of education that is necessary for inculcating values and skill for future challenges and for national development

Value

According to Saleh, Ademola, and Dumulup, (2011) “values” are societal rules, which emerged from time for good and benefit of individual and the society as a whole. People through parental instructions or elderly advice develop values. For example, a disciplined person knows that it is wrong to be lazy but an undisciplined person sees nothing wrong with being lazy. A person with values learns to acquire moral decency. Values are variables such as; justice, honesty, contentment, diligence, selflessness, and obedience.

In the context of this, there are benefits attached to it either in the society or to individual. Example of its benefits are; fairness, equal treatment, unity trust cooperation and hard work. At the same time the danger of lack of values are; indiscipline, bribery and corruption, laziness, nepotism and bribery All these negate functional education for national development.

Knowledge

Hornby (2000) defined knowledge as the information, skill and understanding that one has gained through learning experience. Therefore, to acquire knowledge, education is the tool to be used. Education is the step-by-step training and instruction given to young people especially in schools, homes and other institutions for the attainment of skills, abilities, development of character and mind necessary for national development. Leah (2005) ascertained that knowledge can also be acquired by listening to news and good advice from parent and other adults. It can be gotten through reading.

Skill

This is the ability to do something well. Education serves the dual role of equipping individuals with knowledge and skills to effectively participate in national development. There are many types of skill that can be acquired. These life coping

skills, intellectual skills, artistic skills, communicative skills, manipulative skills Technical skills, interpersonal skills or human relation skills and managerial skills. From the above mentioned, it could be deduced that educational programmes are acquired to give the skills that can be used to deal with challenges that will be encountered in national development.

Problems Affecting Higher Education, Skill, Value, Knowledge, And National Development

There are certain surmountable problems affecting education. These include;

1. The operation of school curriculum is not in harmony with the needs and aspiration of the people
2. Neglect of the technical and vocational skills.
3. Much attention is not given to moral education in the school and society.
4. There is no sufficient political will from the government
5. The aspect of informal education is not given much attention.

The problem of functional education skill, value, knowledge and national development can be tackled if these issues are properly addressed.

On the other hand, there are lots of benefits enhanced by education. These are;

1. Eradication of illiteracy, ignorance and poverty
2. Education serves as an instrument per excellence for effective national development.
3. Education has been used as the greatest powerhouse for the generation of wealth. (Palmer, 2001).
4. Education has engenders quick development such as; economic, political, sociological and human resources.
5. Lastly, Eyibe (2000) noted that education is not only the acquisition of knowledge but the use of the knowledge for the benefit of the individual and mankind in general.

Christian Religious Knowledge For Higher Transformation Education, Value, Knowledge, Skill and National Development

Man is complex being full of possibilities and potentials and the more we develop these potentials the more accomplished and truly educated we are. Education entails the training of bodily and mental faculties.

CRS is a stabilizing factor in our individual personality. By encouraging people to be good, Religion enables society in general to be good. In support of the above statement, Ilorin (1992) summarizes that religion is complete and imperative for societal survival. In addition to this, National Commission for Colleges of Education (NNCE) objectives of CRS is to demonstrate sound knowledge and appreciation of moral values

needed to live as a Christian life in the various stages of development for functional education, values, knowledge, skill and national development. Nigerians should be aware that God's relationship with man and authentic Christian value and qualities are for functional education and national development.

Again, for sustainability of functional and national growth generally Nigerian needs to depend on encouraging the teaching of CRS. For example, Christian religion produces honest, truthful and courageous personnel who will develop and care for national properties. It also impacts or inculcates the fear of God in the recipients at all time at all level of development. Corruption and Misappropriation of funds and frauds and others social diseases that can only be addressed through the teaching of Christian religious studies.

The reality of higher education, skill, value, knowledge in Nigeria can only be positive if wastage in education are prevented. Wastage in education means inefficient use of educational resources, eg. Unemployment, lack of teachers and poor educational facilities. The nature of wastage in education is attributed to quantities instead of qualities and one of the objectives of CRS is to produce quality personnel to develop the nation. Therefore, the major determinant of growth is religion.

Conclusion

Conclusively, in order to receive and transformation high education values skill, and knowledge in all educational sectors, educational planners and other stake holders would need to take a good look at the role of Christian religious studies (CRS) in producing morally desired manpower for transformation in educational development. It also provides quality through the fear of God for the nation and it makes education relevant in all ramifications of life. Finally, it promotes principles of self-reliance for national development.

Recommendation

- Government must stand up to fight educational corruption in all school levels
- Nigerians must inject behaviour modification in various level of education.
- There should be support for the teaching of CRS in educational curriculum
- There should be given equal right with all the school subjects.

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