

CHALLENGES TO SUSTAINABLE HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIAN SOCIETY: CHRISTIAN MORAL EDUCATION RESPONSES.

Dr. Nkechi C. Njoku

Department of Arts and Social Science Education
Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki - Nigeria

ABSTRACT: *The study adopted public opinion survey design to investigate challenges to human capital development in Nigerian Society: Christian Moral education response. A sample of three hundred (300) were drawn from the entire population of (508) CRS teachers in South-east geopolitical Zone of Nigeria using accidental sampling technique. A 26 items self developed, questionnaire were used to illicit information from respondents. Two research questions guided the study. The data were analyzed using mean. It was found that: poor understanding of fundamental doctrine of human progression, lack of proper moral formation, man's non conformity to the law of nature/creation, illiteracy due to poor education, poor management of nature resources, health challenges, high population growth due to poor birth control and sexual abuses and so on constitute challenges to human capital development. The study also revealed that adequate teaching of Christian moral education will inculcate good moral behaviour in the young people, as well as creating in them good understanding of fundamental doctrine of human progression which are the basis of human development. Based on the above finding recommendations were made on improving human capital development in Nigeria.*

KEYWORDS: Challenges, Sustainable, Human Capital, Development and Christian Moral Education

INTRODUCTION

Human capital development is a process of enhancing skills, productivity, knowledge and values of people through helping them achieve better living in their environment (Acquinas, 1984). In the beginning, according to biblical creation story, God created man and his environment; and endowed man's environment with adequate resources which could sustain man's existence (Genesis, 26-28). In the recent era it seems that the resources are no longer adequate to sustain man especially with the rapid growth on the earth occasioned by the rate of expansion and increase of human society. This brought about the need for man to upgrade his knowledge, skills and improve his moral attitude so that the limited resources would be sufficient for man's future use and sustenance.

The need for sustainable human capital development is to fashion out a way man could upgrade his living in his society for man's better condition. Human capital development in this study got to do with improving the quality of human life both in health, education, moral and access to good standard of living. In otherwise human capital development demands man's change of mind set and attitude towards life situations so that he can improve his skills, products, knowledge and values in other to enhance his present and future life and environment. For human capital development to be achieved, life support amenities (such as

access to good road, medical services, well equipped schools etc) needs to be provided to keep man in healthy state and educate man for future management and sustenance.

However, this study tends to look into how adequate teaching of Christian moral education could help to improve human existence for future development. Religion according to Dundes (1968) permeates into every fabric of human society hence the claim that every man is religious, though man's religion varies. In this way religion plays major role in human society. The religion of interest in this study is Christian religion. Christian religion is a complex phenomenon which has immensely influenced not only the moral, social and ethical life of man, but also man's economy in varying degrees. Religion especially Christian religion seeks radical transformation of human nature and yet advocates peace and unity (Macgregor 1960).

From Christian perception, God is viewed as an agent of creation and sustenance of creation. Christian education present answers to the worrisome problems and needs of man; as well as offer man the supernatural sanctions; values, hope, norms, that governs his moral behaviour which in turn guides man's knowledge, struggles, commitments and approaches to issues of life. The teaching of Christian moral values helps in building up a responsible society. Christian moral education according to Njoku (2011) teaches man to be aware of himself, his dignity, rights and self realization in his society. This suggests that the civic function of Christian religion is on the recognition of man's basic relationship with his environment. No wonder Agha (2004) in his work on ethics of responsible self observed that Christian religion is confidence in the value of man's work for future development and sustenance. Agha emphasized that the growth of every individual is impinged in a society where no cooperation exist as a mainstay of socialization process. In other words the religious concept of humanity is deeply saturated by the spirit of tolerance for one another as a strong factor for unity and peace which enhances human development.

Sustainable human capital development advocates capability to live a good and healthy life, to be educated so as to appreciate and understand the works of creation, to live a decent life ensuring that other creations are cared for as well as protected. This means that in a society where people's well being are generally taken care of such society can boast of growth on human capital development. In addition to the above is adequate provision of public domain such as good ecological system, security and judicious balance of political powers. Religion being an instrument for responsible society advocates tolerance, love and empathy which help in maintaining peace and order that ensures society's welfare. By so doing, Christian religion guides human behaviour as well as offer man an intrinsic obligation to not only live in unity, but show concern and care to others as part of their religious duties for sustainable human development (Amplified bible version gen 1 :28^b).

Owing to the fact that religion is fundamentally rooted in taking care of man's specific needs, it presupposes that religion is indispensable in human capital development; hence religious precepts go a long way in enhancing all round development of man. It is expected that through the teaching of Christian morals as embedded in Christian religious studies in schools and beyond, the society will raise a generation of people who can respect the views and feelings of others and human dignity.

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria is a country that is plagued with misplaced value (Njoku, 2008). Majority number of her citizens gives high premium to materialism and pays little or no concern about how the wealth is gotten. That is why an average number of adults go in search of wealth by crook and fowl means at the expense of good moral living that brings about all round human development. The morality of an individual guides his choice of value in that if one's morality is corrupt, he is likely to make wrong choice through misplacement of values influenced by self desire (Njoku, 2005).

The growth and freedom of an individual is dependent upon the moral life of the individual. The ethical, spiritual, physical and moral development of people is the fundamental goal of education hence education for all is a major index in human capital development. In this case the connecting valve here is man's morality that directs his feelings, thoughts and actions; and as such man's moral life is a major factor in human capital development. Thus, the study delves into investigating the role Christian moral education could play in ameliorating the challenges to human capital development in Nigeria. The problem therefore is: what are the challenges to human capital development and how could Christian moral education respond to the problem?

Research Questions

The underlisted questions guided the study:

1. What are the challenges to sustainable human capital development in Nigeria?
2. In what ways could adequate teaching of Christian moral education a response to challenges to sustainable human capital development?

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted public opinion survey research design which aimed at investigating into challenges to human capital development in Nigeria: Christian moral education responses. This method is appropriate for the study because the study deals with issue of interest to the general public. South East geo-political Zone of Nigeria is the area of the study. It is a cross section of the country and comprised five states predominated by Ibos. The population of the study consists of all CRS teachers in government owned secondary schools in the five states. Statistically, the area has only 408 CRS based teachers out of the 810 government owned secondary schools. Out of four hundred and eight (408) CRS based teachers only three hundred (300) teachers are selected for the study using accidental sampling technique. The choice of accidental sampling techniques is to enable researcher select only CRS teachers who are within accessible location. Fixed response questionnaire was used to collect data. The instrument was face validated by two experts in measurement and evaluation to ensure clarity of sentence, appropriateness and relevance of the purpose. Mean was used to analyze data and criterion mean of 2.5 was used for interpretation of mean. Criterion mean of 2.5 was generated by adding the total assigned values of the responses and dividing by the total number of responses ($4 + 3 + 2 + 1 = \frac{10}{4} = 2.5$). Thus any mean score up to 2.5 and above

was interpreted as acceptable by respondents while 2.49 and below is adjudged rejected by the respondents.

Data Presentation

Table 1: Mean Response Scores on Challenges to Human Capital Development. No = 300

S/N	Statement	\bar{x}	Remark
1.	Poor understanding of fundamental doctrine of human progress	3.8	Accepted
2.	Intellectual inabilities of man occasional by poor moral formation	3.0	Accepted
3.	Man's non conformity to the law of nature creation	2.8	Accepted
4.	Desertification encroachment due to man's mis-management of nature	2.5	Accepted
5.	Illiteracy due to poor education	3.02	Accepted
6.	Poverty of the mind due to poor orientation and greed.	2.8	Accepted
7.	Poor management of nature resources	3.00	Accepted
8.	Imbalance in gender equality as a result of cultural barriers	2.5	Accepted
9.	Climatic change occasioned by violation of nature creation.	2.7	Accepted
10.	High population growth due to poor birth control and sexual abuses.	3.5	Accepted
11.	Health challenges due to illness.	3.8	Accepted
12.	Manifestation of bureaucratic corruption due to poor moral development/upbringing	3.8	Accepted
13.	Globalization occasioned by the use of internet web.	3.00	Accepted
Grand Mean		3.09	Accepted

The above table scores a grand mean of 3.09 which is above the criterion mean of 2.5. This shows that respondents agreed that the above listed items are challenges that confront human capital development in Nigerian society. However, a grand mean of 3.09 shows significant level of acceptance of the items as challenges to human capital development in Nigeria.

Table 2: Mean response scores on Ways adequate teaching of Christian Moral Education a Response to Challenges Associated with Human Capital Development Nigeria society. No = 300

S/N	Statement	\bar{x}	Remark
14.	Inculcating good moral training in the growing child before using Christian precepts	3.8	Accepted
15.	Indoctrinating good understanding of the fundamental doctrine of human progression as contained in CRS	3.0	Accepted
16.	Developing in the young people intellectual ability required to interpret and conform to the law of creation	2.6	Accepted
17.	Cultivate in the growing adult the love for God's creation and need to care for them as stipulated in the bible (Genesis 1:29)	2.8	Accepted
18.	Educating young people through proper orientation on the need to live for one another as a means of shuning rancor and wickedness	3.0	Accepted
19.	Discouraging in the young the zeal to sought luxury at the expense of peace, harmony and love.	3.0	Accepted
20.	Teaching young people the importance of limiting their needs by adjusting their conceptions and desires to realities of the world.	2.8	Accepted

21.	Encouraging the young adult to accommodate and cultivate the habit of tolerance for one another which encourages good governance.	2.7	Accepted
22.	Educating the young people on striking proper balance between private and public good.	2.8	Accepted
23.	Teaching them values that enhance general human development such as equity, peace, respect, empathy, tolerance, trust and cooperation.	3.2	Accepted
24.	Exposing the young adults their earthly duties and obligations to his environment thereby supporting civil life and political activities.	2.5	Accepted
25.	Encouraging spirit of oneness, broad communal living and generosity.	3.8	Accepted
26.	Encouraging faith in God as a way of providing support and consolation to the young people to ease the strains of difficult periods of human growth and development occasioned by poor government.	3.5	Accepted
Grand Mean		3.0	Accepted

Table 2 above on Christian moral education response to human capital development challenges as listed in items 14–26 falls within the real limit of agreed. This implies that respondents agreed that adequate teaching of Christian moral education could help in ameliorating the challenges that confront human capital development in Nigeria. Thus, grand mean of 3.0 shows high level of acceptance that adequate teaching of Christian moral education could help solve the problems associated with sustainable human capital development in Nigeria.

Findings of the Study

The following findings were made:

- (1) The study revealed lack of understanding of fundamental doctrine of human progression, poor moral formation, non conformity to the law of nature and creation, illiteracy due to poor education, poor management of nature resources poverty of mind due to poor orientation and greed, high population growth, health problems due to illness and corruption are the challenges to sustainable human capital development in Nigerian society.
- (2) And that adequate teaching of Christian moral education is a response to the challenges associated with human capital development in Nigerian society.

DISCUSSION

Results of the study in table 1 showed that respondents agreed with the items as challenges to sustainable human capital development in Nigeria. This was evident in the result obtained in the table with a grand mean of 3.09. The above finding is in line with the view of Aquinas (1984) who asserts that globalization, climate change, desertification, ill-health, poverty and population are problems that confront human development. The finding however, is quite understandable in that man's intellectual abilities seems to hinder him from progression as stipulated in genesis 1:26-28, and as such man sought luxury at the fair play, love, care, kindness and peace. Imperatively, as man pursue luxury at its peak, so does poverty level of man grows at the pace.

Data provided also highlighted corruption due to poor upbringing, man's non conformity to law of creation, poor orientation and greed as major challenges to sustainable human capital development. Similar observations were made by Agha (2004) that there is need for man to understand the basis of his existence and sustenance on the planet earth as step to future development. Agha further stated that from creation man was given all opportunity to harvest, care for his environment and even to increase in his society (Genesis 1:26-28). This suggested that provisions were made for man's sustainable development; therefore man's failure to follow the law of creation could be attributed as a factor in man's under development in Nigerian society.

Illiteracy due to poor education, high population growth due to poor birth control and sexual abuses were also among the challenges to sustainable capital development in Nigeria. It is quite clear that the above listed items could be corrected if man beef up his moral behaviour and adopt decent life style.

The finding of table 2 revealed various ways in which adequate teaching of Christian moral education could solve the problems that confronts sustainable human capital development so that there would be progress in the society. Respondents however, agreed that proper understanding of fundamental doctrine of human progression as drawn from the biblical creation story, developing in the young people intellectual ability required to interpret the law of creation, given them proper orientation on the need to live for one another as means of shunning rancor and wickedness; and imparting sound moral training as drawn from christian percepts are christian moral education responses to challenges that confront sustainable human capital development in Nigeria.

Grand mean of 3.0 is high and an evident that adequate teaching of Christian moral education would help in ameliorating challenges to sustainable human capital development. The finding is fascinating in that Christian moral education offers man the ability to understand the world around him, interpret the law of creation and progress. This understanding helps man to find fulfillment in achieving conformity to the law of nature as a means to happiness and perfection as members of a society which in turn create room for attainment of socio-economics and political equilibrium and indeed decent comfortable life. No wonder Smith (1987) averred that religion moral education inculcate in the learner virtues that helps him to live in harmony with one another and likely build up in him the spirit of respect for common good of the society.

Among the findings are discouragement of the zeal to sought luxury at all cost rather than to strike balance between personal and public good which encourages equity, justice, respect, tolerance, cooperation, love and in turn good governance. This finding complement the observation of Grimmitt (1998) that character education builds in the young adult the spirit of tolerance, love and care for his environment. Respondent also agreed that through adequate teaching of christian moral education young people could be indoctrinated on the importance of limiting their needs by adjusting their concepts and desires to realistic of the world hence that would help shun corruption, and therefore prepare way for sustainable human capital development in Nigerian society.

Notwithstanding the mineral resources the nation is endowed with, bureaucratic corruption has affected sustainability of human capital growth, as a matter of fact undermined normal functioning of the nation's system in all ramification. Similarly, human capital development is all about improving the quality of life of all citizens, and for this to be achieved, a change

of mind set and attitude towards life situation is required. Thus, change of attitude` and mind set could only be achieved through proper moral foundation, hence adequate teaching of christian moral is a response to challenges of sustainable human capital development in Nigeria.

Educational Implication

The findings of the study has implication for the government and school administrators to emphasize and promote effective teaching of Christian moral education in all levels of our educational system because of its relevance in moulding human moral behaviour. The study exposed chains of challenges confronting human capital development in Nigeria, and the challenges are as a result of poor moral attitude of her citizens. And this suffices that the teaching of Christian moral education is not adequate in the schools hence the need for improvement and support.

The finding further intoned that Christian moral education has the answer to the worrying state of human capital development in Nigeria. It however, implies that if Christian moral education is adequately thought and teachers encouraged to do excellent work that the people's moral life could be modified as well as improved so that Nigerian citizens could appreciate and care for one another. In this way the limited resources of the nation will be sufficient for all as immoral acts of all types will be eliminate or reduced to the barest minimum to pave way for sustainable development.

Summary of the Study

This paper explored key trends on human capital development and showcased new ideas and fresh thinking on the solution to human capital development in this millennium with global moral and environmental problems. This study looks at the challenges to human capital development as being caused by man's inability to understand the fundamental doctrine of human progression due to poor moral formation and as such suggested adequate teaching of Christian moral education as a response to the challenges. This means that human development is tied to conformity to law of creation. Thus, for sustainable human capital development to be achieved, human environment have to be salvage from immorality hence the need for adequate teaching of Christian moral education in schools at all level.

CONCLUSION

No other concept or phenomenon could mould and control man's life as religion does. The challenges to human capital development have been studies and conclusion drawn that, the challenges are as a result of poor moral development of man. However, the study identified various challenges to sustainable human capital development in Nigerian society which ranges from poor moral formation to lack of understanding of fundamental doctrine of human progression to mention but a few. Christian moral education has been sought as a response to the challenges confronting human capital development because it binds the society by creating social unity and promoting social cohesion through disciplining the masses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following were recommended:

- That the government at the three levels of leadership should take a proactive stand on eliminating challenges that impede rapid growth of human capital development in Nigeria.
- As this study has identified Christian moral education as a response to human capital development, the government at the three tiers should as a matter of urgency revive the teaching of moral education in Nigeria schools.
- Nigerian citizens should adopt proper moral practices such as kindness, empathy, tolerance, love, peace and so on as this approach will enhance good communal living.
- That judicious use of material resources should be encouraged so that the limited resources will be sufficient for all.
- Adequate teaching of Christian moral education should be emphasized by ensuring that only well qualified moral educators handle the teaching of the subject at all levels of our schools.
- Christian/moral education should be introduced and made compulsory like the general studies in the university as a means of giving wider moral education to our youths and future leaders.
- The young people should limit the extent of their needs by adjusting their conceptions and desires to the realities of world which is search for the common good.
- That parent, churches and even the general public should join moral educators on character education training of the young people by emphasizing on the right values and proper moral conducts.

REFERENCES

- Agha, U. A. (2004). *Ethics of Responsible self*. Enugu: Magnet Business Enterprise.
- Aquinas, T. (1984). *Somma theologize*. Paris: Edition Edu. Cert. Vol. 1&2.
- Dundes, A. (1968). *Every man his way*. New Jersey: Prentice – Hall Inc.
- Grimmitte, H. (1983). *World Humanism: a consideration of the contribution of religion education to personal development and its implications for curriculum decision making*. Sydney: Australian Association for Religious Education.
- [http://millenniumindicators.un.org/unsd/mi/ares55\(2\)](http://millenniumindicators.un.org/unsd/mi/ares55(2))
- Kaul, I. (2002). *Challenges of human capital development in Arctic*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Macgregor, G. (1960). *Introduction to Religions Philosophy*. London: Basingtom the Macmillan Press.
- Njoku D.I. (2005) Ethics and moral divergences in our contemporary society: A case study of Nigeria. *In Journal of research and theory in education*. 1(1) 52.
- Njoku, N. (2008). The role of culture in personality formation. *Journal of Philosophy and Religion* 2. (1) 83 -87.

- Norman, B. (1969). *Moral Education*. London: Rutledge and Kegan pant.
- Smith, H (1987). *The carrier value of religious education/ theology: What can I do with religious education qualification*. London: Christian Education Movement.
- Smith, H (1989). *Professional council for religious education: What is religious education*. Derby UK: Christian Education Movement.
- Udezo, B. (2007). Christian Religion and human development: a rural perspective. *In Ugwueye edited Journal of Religion and Human Relations. 1(1)* 128-144.
- UNDP (2002). *Human development report*. New-York: Oxford University Press.