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Editorial

Welcome dear readers, contributors, and friends to the third edition of the St Albert the Great Major Seminary (SAGS) Journal, Abeokuta, otherwise known as AGORA Journal. Sags AGORA Journal is an annual publication of both philosophical and theological articles, as well as disciplines related to them. We continually appreciate your feedbacks, which enables us to keep building on the quality and standard of the Journal.

AGORA Journal, this time, presents to you the volume 3 edition of its publication. Besides the quality of the articles, we keep on pushing the Journal both by International Assessors and international contributors to the wider society while maintaining our locus. SAGS AGORA Journal is now not only peer-reviewed, fully indexed journal with high online visibility, but also seasoned with digital object identifier (DOI). Digital Object Identifier refers to numbers, letters, and symbols which is used to uniquely identify various objects, articles or documents, standardized by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), and link to it on the web.

AGORA Journal goes for the best quality research articles. This means that the articles contained in the Journal have been peer-reviewed and internationally assessed. Consequently, we mind our authors' credentials, and focus on contributing new and original research. We adopt a quite technical and official language with complex ideas and arguments, in an objective tone, and in an analytical perspective as well.

In this Edition, we have twelve (12) articles as a whole: Five (5) philosophical articles; four (4) theological articles, and one (1) article each in Business Education, Gender, and Ecology. One interesting thing about these twelve articles is that they emerged differently and divergently but spontaneously themed towards Eco-spiritual anthropology; Theological anthropology, and Philosophical anthropology. It is about re-forming the human being towards God the creator, and having the attitude of a common home with every creature.

Therefore, I can't appreciate enough the timely effort of our editorial board members, editorial consultants, our contributing scholars, the publishing press, and you our websites connectors and people of good will, for assisting us in making our publication successful. As I promise more exciting publication subsequently, I invite you to check this idea of new human person presented herein, and please feel free always to supply us with feedbacks on the way forward.

Thank you once more for participating in this intellectual banquet even as a distributor.

**Evarestus Igwe-Alufo, CM,
Editor in Chief.**

AGORA

A Journal of Philosophical & Theological Studies

Francis Olawale Adelabu

MADE LIKE GOD: A RE-READING OF GEN 1:26

By

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Abstract

At the centre of formation to the sacred priesthood is a human person. A major goal of the whole process of formation to the sacred priesthood is to facilitate a Christlike human(e) person who will lead other human persons to God as he (the *formandus*) also manifests the values and principles he hopes to encourage in the faithful. Paradoxically, apart from the crisis of faith which plagues our world today, human mores, values and character are among the foremost challenges in the formation to the sacred priesthood. The qualities of respect for persons and principles, sincerity of purpose, selflessness, commitment to a worthy goal, sense of community, tolerance and transparency, right judgement and discretion are in dire demand. Gen 1:26 gives the fundamental of the identity of the human person preparing to become a priest. What does it mean to be made in the *şelem* (image) and *demut* (likeness) of God? Are these two Hebrew morphemes the same? What are their implications for the self-understanding of the *formandus* and a better comprehension of his future flock? The morphological, lexical and patristic study of these Hebrew morphemes and their syntactical connection with their immediate and wider context constitute the crux of this scribal enterprise.

Keywords: Genesis, Imago Dei, Priestly Formation

Introduction

At the centre of formation to the sacred priesthood are neither values nor laws nor principles. At the centre

of formation to the sacred priesthood is a human person. Classically, a human person was defined as an individual substance of a rational nature. This definition by Anicius Boethius has been modified over time to include the other aspects of human reality like consciousness, knowledge, freedom, time, personal identity, to mention but a few.¹ In the theological debates on the nature of Christ in the 4th to 5th centuries, Christ was defined as being a person with two natures.

Christ, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, calls and chooses human persons to serve His people in the ministerial priesthood. A major goal of the whole process of formation to the sacred priesthood is to facilitate a Christlike person who will lead other human persons to God as he (the *formandus*) also manifests the values and principles he hopes to encourage in the faithful. The first book of the Bible, Genesis, gives the scriptural capitulation of the enigma called the human person. Gen 1:26a makes a statement which the narrator probably presumes is evident to the reader: “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness”. What does it mean to be made in the *şelem* (image) and *demut* (likeness) of God? Are these two Hebrew morphemes the same? What are their implications for the self-understanding of the *formandi* and a better comprehension of his future flock? In the current enterprise, we will first embark on a close reading and exegetical study of Gen 1:26, in order to examine the semantics of its different parts with a view of sieving its core lessons in relation to the formation of the candidate to the sacred priesthood.

Let us make...

Gen 1:26 belongs to the so-called first account of creation, which follows a six-day sequence, generally introduced by a

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command known as jussive in Biblical Hebrew grammar, “Let there be.”² The creation of the heavens and the earth, and the various creatures teeming in them had been through a verbal declaration. The sixth day already denotes a marked turn from the usual preceding command, Let there be. At the creation of man, there is a plural invitation – let us make (a cohortative). This plural has been the source of many decades of scholarly puzzle. In fact, many medieval Jewish scholars attempted to change it thus: “let men be made...” and were tackled by Abram ibn Ezra.³ If God is one, and the priestly writer had set out to emphasize the monotheistic nature of Israel’s God and his responsibility for the creation of the entire universe, then why the use of plural on the sixth day? Let us look briefly at the array of positions on the reasons proffered.

Summarily, there are six positions on the cause for plural.⁴ The first is grammatical in nature, proffered by Paul Joüon. He holds that the ‘we’ of majesty (whereby an individual presents self in the plural because of royal or regal powers) does not exist in Biblical Hebrew (§114e, n.2). Rather, only the plural of majesty can be found in the Hebrew Bible. He describes Gen 1:26 as a plural of deliberation with oneself. In other words, God is deliberating within Himself – let us make man. In a similar submission, the influential 20th century literary biblical scholar Umberto Cassuto views the use of plural in Gen 1:26 as self-encouragement.⁵ He compares it with 2 Sam 24:14, when David says, Let us fall into the hand of the Lord...but into the hand of men let me not fall.

A second view takes its inspiration from Isa 6:8, “I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?” Since God was here most likely speaking to the heavenly court, so also could it be that God was addressing other divine beings with him in Gen 1:26. This view is common among Jewish commentators, but it has been systematically

criticized by August Dillmann, among others, that it would imply the angels had a role in the creation of man.⁶ His second critique would hardly have a universal recognition in today's Pentateuchal studies because he argued from the traditional view of the documentary hypothesis, stating that the priestly account (P) had no evidence of angels in its account. The current state of Pentateuchal studies has very much revised such stereotyped conclusion accruing from traditional documentary hypothesis.⁷

A third view is that of the renowned Hermann Gunkel, who holds that the plural might have been as a result of the polytheistic account which the priestly author did not somehow get to expunge before the final draft. This view is based on the presumption that the creation account author copied copiously from the extant neighbouring cosmogonies (that is, other ANE documents like Arthasus and Enuma Elish). However, not minding some cross-pollination noted among them, it is clear that "Gen 1 is distinctly anti-mythological in its thrust and explicitly rejects ANE views of creation."⁸

A fourth view suggests that an individual was speaking, and simply used the plural in the sense of a plural of majesty. This argument derives its force from the plural nature of the divine name, Elohim.⁹ But Joüon has again observed that the plural of majesty in Biblical Hebrew never goes with verbs or pronouns. They can only be found with nouns.¹⁰

A fifth view is that of D.J.A. Clines (who is later supported by G. Hasel).¹¹ He bases his position on Prov 8:22 ("The Lord created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of long ago") and a translation of *ruah Elohim* in Gen 1:2 as the Spirit of God. Thus, they propose that the *naaseh* means God was addressing "his Spirit who was present and active at the beginning of creation". This argument gives way, however, when the *ruah Elohim* is, as is more generally agreed today,

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translated as the wind of God.

A sixth view, which is closer to our tendentious position in this paper, is that of the Church fathers like Justin Martyr who saw the plural as a reference to Christ and an adumbration of the Trinity. Though it might be true that the author of Genesis was not schooled in Trinitarian Christian dogma, accentuated by the fact that conscious effort was being made to distinguish the Israelite Adonai from the polytheistic neighbouring theism. Nonetheless, the use of plural may be seen as a hint or clue of the plurality in the Godhead, a concept which would later have a *sensus plenior* in the New Testament (cf. Gal 4:4), where Christ is seen as being active in creation with the Father.¹²

A Conceptual Examination of Image (*şelem*) and Likeness (*d^emut*)

Strictly speaking, the root for the word, *şlm*, is not attested in Biblical Hebrew. In cognate languages like Arabic, Jewish Aramaic, Palmyrene and Syriac, it means, “to add images”, or “to cut off”, “to hew”. The LXX translates *şelem* as *eikōn*; which means image. The root *şlm* occurs 17 times in the Hebrew Bible with the book of Genesis having the highest number of occurrence – a total of 4 (Gen 1:26, 27; 5:3; 9:6). The occurrences of the word in Genesis have been referred to as the “theologically most significant.”¹³ This is because other occurrences of the word refer to the basic meaning of the word as figure, image or pictorial representation.¹⁴ *Şelem* can also be found in the Qumran document, CD 7:15, 17 where it has a meaning similar to that of Amos 5:26, “idol”. Thus, it is clear that outside Genesis, Gen 1:26 (together with its other Genesis occurrences) is the only passage where *şelem* “designates the representation of something which was not a taboo or illicit.”¹⁵

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Demut is a noun which can be translated as likeness, form, appearance. It comes from the verbal root, *damah*, which occurs 25 times in the Hebrew Bible. Its highest occurrence can be found in the book of Ezekiel where it appears 15 times. The LXX variously renders the translation as *homoïoma*, *homoïosis* and *eikōn* – all having the nuance of likeness, resemblance and image. *Demut* can also be found in the Qumran text 4QS1 40.

The dual appearance of *demut* and *şelem* in Gen 1:26 and Gen 5:3 shows that both words are quite close. They have also been found side by side in a ninth-century Aramaic inscription from Tell Fakhariyeh, illustrating the statue of King Hadduyisi.¹⁶ The closeness of the two terms can also be seen in the interchangeability of the prepositions they command (it is good to note that the preposition beth before *şelem* has been frequently described as beth essentiae – “according to, after the pattern of”).¹⁷ While in Gen 1:26, *şelem* takes the preposition, be, “in”, *demut* takes the same preposition in Gen 5:3. Again, while *demut* takes the preposition, *ke* in Gen 1:26, *şelem* takes the same preposition in Gen 5:3.

Leaving the discourse on prepositions, it is apt to inquire the meaning of image and likeness in the context of Gen 1:26. What does it mean to be made in the image and likeness of God? This question has been the topic of much scholarly debate and pondering over the centuries.

Five Trends of Interpretation

Following the history of interpretation, five main possibilities are key to the concept. The first trend of interpretation, with proponents like P. Humbert and H. Gunkel, takes its cue from the literal definition of *şelem* as a physical figure. The position is further buttressed by the use of *şelem* in Gen 5:3 where Adam is described to have fathered

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Seth “after his image”, which surely refers to the physical resemblance between father and son. With this semantic, man is viewed to be made with a physical resemblance to God. However, the apparent emphasis in the Old Testament on the “incorporeality and invisibility of God makes this view problematic.”¹⁸ Deut 4:15-16 warns: “Since you saw no form when the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the fire, take care and watch yourselves closely, so that you do not act corruptly by making an idol for yourselves, in the form of any figure”. Furthermore, “identifying the image of God with man’s bodily form or upright posture is unproven.”¹⁹ Though again, Num 12:8 and Psa 17:15 metaphorically describe God as having a form which can be seen. J. Skinner notes that writers of the Hebrew Bible constantly attribute bodily parts to God, and might be quite difficult to prove if they ever attained the height of describing God as formless spirit.²⁰ Thus, the position remains open-ended.

A second line of argument is that being made in God’s image makes man God’s representative on earth. This view has been embraced by scholars like G. von Rad, J. Hempel, and H. Wildberger. H. Gross champions this view by arguing that to be made in the image of God implies that man is created to rule over the animal world. M. Görg modifies the model by holding that being created in the image of God, man now assumes the function of God’s spirit over the chaos of the world, and not simply the animal world.²¹

A third line of interpretation separates *selem* from *demut* and propounds a semantic distinction between them. This position is expressed by the second century Christian scholar, Origen of Alexandria, who notes that in Gen 1:27, the narrator only says that God made man in his own image. Likeness is omitted. For Origen, this silence about likeness shows that “man received the honor of God’s image in his first creation,

whereas the perfection of God's likeness was reserved for him at the consummation. The purpose of this was that man should acquire it for himself by his own earnest efforts to imitate God."²² Origen saw Gen 1:26 as a first creation and the event of Christ's incarnation as a second. Thus, adherence to Christ would make man become similar to God, in the likeness of Christ.

Merging the Christological interpretation of the image of God with the Trinitarian dimension, is the North African Doctor of the Church, Augustine of Hippo, who in his treatise, *On The Trinity*, aptly sees the image as a trinitarian connotation. Augustine presents a more personalist, psychological and existential account of the *imago Dei*. For him, the image of God in man has a Trinitarian structure, reflecting either the tripartite structure of the human soul (spirit, self-consciousness, and love) or the threefold aspects of the psyche (memory, intelligence, and will). According to Augustine, the image of God in man orients him to God in invocation, knowledge and love.²³

For Thomas Aquinas, the *imago Dei* possesses an historical character, since it passes through three stages which are analogous to the creation, Christ's redemptive death and final salvation when one cooperates with God's grace: the *imago creationis (naturae)*, the *imago recreationis (gratiae)*, and the *similitudinis (gloriae)*.²⁴ For the angelic doctor, the *imago Dei* is the basis for participation in the divine life. The image of God is realized principally in an act of contemplation in the intellect.²⁵ This conception can be distinguished from that of Bonaventure, for whom the image is realized chiefly through the will in the religious act of man.²⁶

A fifth stream of interpretation views human beings as God's counterpart such that a dialogue is rendered possible between God and man.²⁷ The scholars that hold this view

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include W. Zimmerli, J.J. Stamm, F. Horst, W. Rudolph, O. Loretz. C. Westermann, a chief proponent of this position, succinctly expresses the theory when he writes, “what God decides to create must be something that has a relationship to him. Ultimately, this further determination in the account of creation of human beings consists in determining further the nature of the act of creation which enables an event to take place between God and humans.”²⁸

Our position will be a combination of the fourth and fifth streams of interpretation. From this union, it becomes evident that the triune God has revealed his plan to share the communion of Trinitarian life with persons created in his image.

Theological Discourse on Imago Dei

Analyzing the pre-1960 theological currents of the *imago Dei* discourse, Stanley Grenz names two basic approaches: substantial and relational views. The substantial view describes the creation of man in the image of God in categories of certain attributes and qualities which are inherent in the human person.²⁹ In this view, the human person shares some characteristics with God, and these characteristics form part of the *structure* of the human person. In other words, this similarity of feature(s) between the divine and the human does not depend on the belief of the human in God. Regardless of acknowledgement on the part of the human person, he is structurally similar to God in reason and will.³⁰

The relational view, on the other hand, perceives the *imago Dei* as reflecting a basic relationship between man and God. That is, man must be in a relationship with God for his creation in God’s image to be made more manifest. In other words, the relational view verbalizes the term, ‘*imago*’ – as a consequence of the relationship that exists

between the creature and the creator, the former “images” the latter.³¹ Many protestant theologians, like Karl Barth, are of this view, for it came to light in a strong manner from the Reformation onwards.³² Though some strains of the relational view acknowledge man’s ability to reason as a structural trait, they insist that it is man’s relationship with his creator that more efficiently reflects his ability to image him.

A third strain of the interpretation of *imago Dei*, termed the functional, was delineated by Richard Middleton. This view is based on the ANE parallels of the details of Gen 1:26-27, whereby just as powerful earthly kings erected their (royal) statues in provinces they could not physically be, so also is God in the Hebrew Bible seen as establishing man in the human realm. Thus, man is functioning in the place of God and is made in the image of God in connection with that ambassadorial function. In Middleton’s words, “on this [functional] reading [of Gen 1:26], the *imago Dei* designates the royal office or calling of human beings as God’s representatives and agents in the world, granted authorized power to share in God’s rule or administration of the earth’s resources and creature.”³³

Middleton identifies fifteenth century Italian renaissance thinkers like Marsilio Ficino, Giorgio Morandi, and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola as key proponents of the functional view. Teething strains of the functional view have been said to be found in the ante-Nicene fathers and the notes of Saadiah Gaon, a Jewish exegete, on the book of Genesis.

More Patristic Interpretation

The church fathers developed the structural view of the image of God Genesis interpretation. They were, with evidential probability, highly influenced by Greek philosophy, where the human person is defined as a rational substantial

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individual. For instance, Aristotle defines man as a ‘rational animal’.³⁵ And reason had often been paired with will as two sides of the same rationality that God has granted man.³⁶

A first notable church father who gave a substantial view about man’s creation in the image and likeness of God is the second century apologist and philosopher, Justin Martyr. Justin held that man is responsible before God due to the fact that he possesses reason and will. In his work, *First Apology*, addressed to Roman Emperor Pius Antoninus, Justin writes: “In the beginning he [God] made the human race with the power of thought and of choosing the truth and doing right, so that all men are without excuse before God; for they have been born rational and contemplative.”³⁷

Furthermore, on the basis of man’s possession of reason and will and the consequent obligation of responsibility to God, Justin links man to angels. For Justin, God created men and angels with reason so that they might know their Creator and also exercise the free will. In the same stroke, they will be liable for their conduct “if they do anything contrary to right reason.”³⁸

After Justin comes Irenaeus of Lyons. Irenaeus is seen as being majorly responsible for the neat distinction between being made in the image of God and being made in his likeness. For Irenaeus, after the fall, man loses the likeness of God and only retains God’s image. This is because man cannot be *like* God in sin and disobedience. This likeness will only be restored with the redemptive power of Christ. He holds that being made in the image of God entails possession of reason and will on the part of man, qualities which he maintains even after disobeying God.³⁹

Since reason can be altered or reduced after the fall by continuing in a life of disobedience, Irenaeus kind of exalts free will over reason. For him, since man can choose either

good or evil, then the position of the Gnostics that man is automatically created good or evil with no ability to choose is very incorrect. For the Church Father, “God made man a free [agent], possessing his own power, even as his own soul, either to obey or disobey God.”⁴⁰ Irenaeus includes the body in his capitulation of being made in the image of God. By so doing, he again refutes the Gnostic position that only the soul and spirit are necessary for salvation.⁴¹

Furthermore, Irenaeus views Christ as the culmination of man’s creation in the image and likeness of God. In fact, the image of Christ should be that perfect form for which man should long and aspire. It is the direction in which man is to grow. Irenaeus writes, “We [Man] should therefore not seek after . . . another hand of God besides that which, from the beginning even to the end, forms us and prepares us for life, and is present with His handiwork, and perfects it after the image and likeness of God.”⁴² On the whole, Irenaeus’ exposition is not peculiar to him. It actually serves as a pinhole surmise of patristic era’s anthropology.

The next church father who took up the *imago Dei* discourse is Clement of Alexandria, a Christian theologian who lived between the second and third century, AD. Clement towed the line of Irenaeus in making a neat distinction between the image and the likeness of God. He held that every man was made in the image of God; but only Christians can attain the likeness of God at the end of time. For him, Adam was imperfect at creation, for he still had to long for the likeness of God by embracing a virtuous life.⁴³ For Clement, “the pious Christian alone is rich and wise, and of noble birth, and thus call and believe him to be God’s image, and also his likeness, having become righteous and holy and wise by Jesus Christ, and so far already like God.”⁴⁴

In line with his strong Hellenistic philosophical formation,

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reason had a major role in Clement's theological writings. He held that reason made man conform to the likeness of God, and made him live right and well. In fact, he almost equated reason with God himself, and "the divine likeness with the active life controlled by reason."⁴⁵ In fact, man's salvation involves the purification of his reason in order to situate him better on his eschatological journey to be like God.

Clement of Alexandria's interpretation of *imago Dei* in the line of reason (as enlightened by Hellenistic philosophy) will pervade patristic thoughts for some centuries. Apart from Athanasius who touts Clement's path, Gregory of Nyssa also describes man as a "rational animal."⁴⁶ He holds that reason is the form in which man is made in the image of God; that God 'imparted' not 'gave', mind and reason to man, because mind and reason are proper adornment of man's own nature.⁴⁷ Furthermore, in line with James 1:17 that every good and perfect gift is from God the Father, Gregory holds that God has given man all good gifts and that man is filled with all good, just like God who is goodness itself. Gregory emphasizes, among other good gifts like wisdom, virtue, and excellence, the gift of free will. Of the fourth century church fathers, St John Damascene can be said to close the scene, with the full implementation of the Irenaeus-Clementine distinction between image and likeness, when he held to be made in God's image signifies possession of reason and free will; while creation in the *likeness* of God means 'likeness in virtue'; that is, leading a virtuous life in order to really be *like* God.⁴⁸

The International Theological Commission Conception: The Contemporary Catholic Image

The International Theological Commission is a body founded in 1969 by Pope Paul VI, as an advisory organ to

the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith.⁴⁹ The commission, which was a result of a proposal made during the first Ordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in 1967, has the primary onus of assisting the Holy See and the Congregation of the Doctrine of Faith with the examination of major doctrinal questions. It is saddled with the discussion on the discussion on and development of dogmatic and doctrinal teachings of the Church.

In 2004, the Commission came out with a seminal document on the church's understanding of the creation of man in the image and likeness of God. This document is entitled, *Communion and Stewardship*.⁵⁰ According to the document, there was a special reawakening of interest in the imagery due to the focus on the human person in major documents of the ecumenical council. With the Second Vatican Council, there arose a renewed interest in the development and application of the concept to sacred doctrine. Intense study of the scriptures, the fathers of the church and a resuscitated focus on the scholastic thinkers refreshed the relevance of the *imago Dei* concept in the years leading up to the council. At the council, the theme of the dignity of the human person, as discussed in the pastoral constitution, *Gaudium et spes*, was based on the *imago Dei* concept. Gen 1:26 and Psa 8:6 formed the background scriptural passages for the document's discussion of the fundamental dignity of the human person. According to *Communion and Stewardship*,

Because every human being is an image of God, he cannot be made subservient to any this-worldly system or finality. His sovereignty within the cosmos, his capacity for social existence, and his knowledge and love of the Creator - all are rooted in man's being made in the image of God.⁵¹

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The Christological import of the *imago Dei* concept is further developed in *Gaudium et spes*. Christ is the image of the invisible God who became man in order to save humankind after the fall. Christ became man in order to restore man to the dignity of man's creation and the original intent of his creator. His mission is to restore the perfect likeness to man once again. Man's questions about the meaning of life and death only find a response in Christ, who has been revealed by God the Father.⁵² When man conforms to Christ and benefits from the gifts of the Holy Spirit, a new version of his very self is created – a version which has been redeemed from the consequences of the original fall and is capacitated to fulfil the new commandment of love.

Even after the Second Vatican council, as noted by *Communion and Stewardship*, many theologians became interested in exploring the concept of *imago Dei* and the nexus between Anthropology and Christology. There began a renewed search to further investigate the unique value of creation of man in God's image, a creation which is further ennobled by the grace of Christ's incarnation as man. The dynamism of being created in God's image is further elaborated by the evolution of human culture, such that "the *imago Dei* can in a real sense be said to be still in the process of becoming."⁵³

The Trinitarian and Anthropological Dimensions

The terms, 'communion' and 'stewardship', summarize the doctrine on man's creation in the image of a triune God. Man was created for the sake of communion with the Trinity. In fact, "the triune God has revealed his plan to share the communion of Trinitarian life with persons created in his image."⁵⁴ Man's creation in the image of God makes it possible for him to relate with the persons of the Blessed Trinity:

“created in the image of God, human beings are by nature bodily and spiritual, men and women made for one another.”⁵⁵ Communion with the Trinity renders communion with other human persons possible and healthy. Nonetheless, the destiny of man created in the image of God, is to be conformed to Christ, who is the perfect image of the Father.⁵⁶

In her definition of man, the Church views man as a whole, not sole body nor sole spirit.⁵⁷ The influence of dualistic anthropologies which tend to separate the mind and the body in man is contrary to biblical anthropology. Man is both body and soul, and his creation in the image of God entails both aspects. Man, not only his soul nor only his body, was created in the image of God. Creation in the image of God, again is not sexist in any way. It includes both male and female – “persons created in the image of God are bodily beings whose identity as male or female orders them to a special kind of communion with one another.”⁵⁸ As such, being made in the image and likeness of God, man is created as a person capable of a knowledge and love that are both personal and interpersonal.

Creation in the image of God, as the document establishes, confers the responsibility of stewardship on man in his relationship with God, other human persons, creatures and creation itself. Though distinguished from other creatures by intellect, volition and free will, man still bears a germane responsibility towards them. In stewardship, man shares in the divine governance of creation. The injunction to dominate the earth and subdue it, is not a license to despotically exploit creation but a command to majestically serve it and care for it. The words of Pope John Paul II cannot be truer in this regard: “Man’s lordship is not absolute, but ministerial...not the mission of an absolute and unquestionable master, but of a steward of God’s kingdom.”⁵⁹

Implications For the *Formandus*

Based on the foregoing, the impeccable need for unity within the *formandus* himself, made in the image and likeness of God cannot be overemphasized. *Communion and Stewardship* clearly states that the human person, created in the image of God is a being at once corporeal and spiritual. Though made of body and soul, man remains a unity.⁶⁰ A human person, understood as an irreducible entity, is entirely willed by God. This realization of inner unity is fundamental in ascertaining that the candidate to the sacred priesthood is free and stable in character. Without inner self-coherence, indeed the candidate is doomed to be uncoordinated and consequentially disoriented in his relationship with others.

The formation of candidates to the priesthood is based on a proper self-understanding of the candidate himself. The key post-synodal apostolic exhortation on the formation of candidates to the priesthood, *Pastores dabo vobis*, states it clearly that human formation remains the basis of all priestly formation.⁶¹ Now, the human person called to be a priest is called “to be a living *image* of Jesus Christ, Head and Shepherd of the Church.”⁶² The concept of image, *imago Iesu Christi*, is fundamental to the mission of the candidate. Though made in the image and likeness of God, the candidate is called to further perfection and assimilation to the image of Jesus Christ, who is the perfect image of God the Father.

A proper understanding of the core dignity of the human person will aid the *formandus* to have an understanding of his identity as king and servant. The dignity of the *formandus* is derived from his intrinsic relationship with the persons of the Blessed Trinity. This communion with the Trinity eventually translates into choices that reflect self-respect and project the dignity which ensues from that relationship. Self-respect is so important for the *formandus*, by the nature of his baptismal

calling and the noble sacerdotal vocation for which he aspires. This comprehension of self-dignity and respect, overflows into his relationship with other persons. It is also important to remember that the *formandus* was *chosen from among men*.

Consequently, the *formandus* is required to be “balanced, strong and free, capable of bearing the weight of pastoral responsibilities.”⁶³ Being balanced implies also recognizing the image of God in the persons whom he comes across and relates with. In fact, the conciliar decree on the training of priests, *Optatam totius*, goes ahead to state that the *formandus* should be trained to have self-control, develop strength of character and possess such qualities as sincerity, love of justice, fidelity to promises, courtesy in deed and modesty in speech.⁶⁴ On the necessity of human formation for evangelisation, *Ratio fundamentalis* of the Congregation for the Clergy, says clearly: “Human formation is a necessary element for evangelisation, since the proclamation of the Gospel takes place through the person and is mediated by his humanity.”⁶⁵ Self-understanding cannot be overemphasized in the formation of the candidate for the sacred priesthood, because his stewardship will be fundamentally thwarted if there is no clear concept of self-dignity in the mind of the *formandus*.

Furthermore, affective maturity is an important component in the formation of the candidate, created in the image and likeness of God. Affective maturity entails that ability to recognize and respect the image of God in other persons, especially the opposite sex, in the mission of restoring all things in Christ and bringing men and women closer to God. The *formandus*, in this sense, should have a harmonious personality, whereby the physical, psychic and spiritual aspects of his person are harmoniously integrated in the expression of his identity as a candidate to the sacred priesthood. Here, the candidate has “a clear and strong training in freedom”, where

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he truly masters himself in true Christian living and is free from all shackles of anti-social behaviour and unwholesome addictions.⁶⁶ In this line, the candidate, the royal servant made in the image of God and being formed to be like Christ, develops a healthy vision of the opposite sex and is able to consider the older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity (see 1 Tim 5:2).

Indeed, *Communion and Stewardship*, “it is in the essence of the imago Dei in man that personal beings are relational and social beings.”⁶⁷ The relation of the *formandus* with other persons should thus be founded on the relations within the Triune Godhead, who far from being a solitary being, is a communion of three Persons. Constituted by the one divine nature, the identity of the Father is his paternity, his relation to the Son and the Spirit; the identity of the Son is his relation to the Father and Spirit; the identity of the Spirit is his relation to the Father and the Son. In effect, *no person is as such alone in the universe, but is always constituted with others and is summoned to form a community with them.*⁶⁸

Conclusion

The new evangelization which the Church clamours and so much emphasizes today, has as its centre, the human person. Christianity is about Jesus, true man and God, who became a full human person, in order to redeem humanity from its original fall. The audience of the new evangelization, again is the human person, called to be configured to the person of Christ and His Church. Thus, the human person created in the image and likeness of God, has the onus to be more like Christ in his response to the original intention of God at the moment of creation. The dignity of man cannot be overemphasized in our time and age when industrialization and technology are making people to look more like chips and figures that can

be replaced at will and used. The identity and mission of the candidate to the priesthood has been clearly defined in the terms of the communion expected of him with the Holy Trinity and his stewardship among the people of God, which respects the image of God in himself and in the people he serves.

The candidate to the priesthood has to be a social being who recognizes the existence of others, respects their persons and space and interacts freely and sanely with them with the full implications of an *imago Dei* relating with other *imagines Dei*. *Pastores dabo vobis* rightly notes that that “Future priests should therefore cultivate a series of human qualities, not only out of proper and due growth and realization of self, but also with a view to the ministry. These qualities are needed for them to be balanced people, strong and free, capable of bearing the weight of pastoral responsibilities. They need to be educated to love the truth, to be loyal, to respect every person, to have a sense of justice, to be true to their word, to be genuinely compassionate, to be men of integrity and, especially, to be balanced in judgment and behaviour.”⁶⁹ These values are built on the fundament that the human person is created in the image and likeness of God and as such, has the vocation to exude the dignity which rightly reflects his source and origin.

Endnotes

¹For a more elaborate philosophical discourse on the nature of the human person, see, among others, Battista Mondin, *Philosophical Anthropology*, (Rome: Urbaniana University Press, 1985), 243-259.

²The first account of creation is described as so-called because there are contending positions that proffer another interpretation for the *toledot* that appears in Gen 2:4a, whereby Gen 2:3 is seen as the right conclusion to the account of creation. See Victor P.

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Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1–17*, NICOT, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1990), 151.

³Thus they tried to change the Qal *qatal* cohortative to Niphal participle. See *Genesis Rabbah*, 8.

⁴David J.A. Clines, “The Image of God in Man”, *TynBul* 19 (1968) 62-69; Gerhard Hasel, “The Meaning of ‘Let Us’ in Gn 1:26”, *AUSS* 13 (1975) 58-66.

⁵Cf. Umberto Cassuto, *From Adam to Noah*, Jerusalem 21989, 55.

⁶Cf. August Dillmann, *Die Genesis*, in John Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, New York, NY 1910, 31.

⁷For critique of the traditional division of documentary hypothesis, see

⁸Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, WBC 1, Waco, TX 1987, 28.

⁹See Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 133.

¹⁰Joüon §136 d-e.

¹¹Cf. D.J.A. Clines, “The Image of God”, 68-69.

¹²*Sensus plenior* has been defined as “that additional, deeper meaning, intended by God but not clearly intended by the human author, which is seen to exist in the words of a biblical text (or group of texts, or even a whole book) when they are studied in the light of further revelation or development in the understanding of revelation”. See. Raymond E. Brown, *The Sensus Plenior of Sacred Scripture*, (Published diss.), 92.

¹³TDOT, XII, 391.

¹⁴The only significantly difficult passages to translate are Pss 39:7(6) and 73:20 whereby *selem* has the nuance of “silhouette, fleeting shadow”. While the text of Psa 73:20 is uncertain, Psa 39:7(6) can be translated as “dreamlike image”, cf. TDOT, XII, 391.

¹⁵Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 135.

¹⁶Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 29.

¹⁷Cf. Hans Wildberger, TLOT, III, 1082. For a contrary view, see Claus Westermann, *A Continental Commentary: Genesis 1–11*, (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1994), 145-146.

¹⁸Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 30.

¹⁹Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 30.

²⁰Skinner, *Genesis*, 32.

²¹Manfred Görg, “Alles hast du gelegt unter deine Füße”, in E. Haag – F.-L. Hossfeld, ed., *Freude an der Weisung des Herrn*, FS H. Groß, SBB 13, (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1987²), 146; “Das Menschenbild in der Priesterschrift”, BiKi 42 (1987) 25-26.

²²Origen, *On First Principles*, 3.6.1 in A. Louth – M. Conti, *Genesis 1–11*, ACCS.OT 1, Downer’s Grove, IL 2001, 29.

²³Augustine, *Confessions* I, 1,1.

²⁴Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I q.93 a.4.

²⁵Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I q.93 aa.4 and 7.

²⁶Bonaventure, *Sententiae* II d.16 a.2 q.3.

²⁷Cf. TDOT, XII, 392.

²⁸Westermann, *Genesis 1-11*, 157-158.

²⁹For the attribution of the term, ‘structuralist’ originally to Emil Bruner, see Stanley J. Grenz, *The Social God and the Relational Self: A Trinitarian Theology of the Imago Dei*, (Louisville, KY – London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 142.

³⁰On this summary, see Grenz, *The Social God*, 143.

³¹See Douglas John Hall, *Imaging God: Dominion as Stewardship*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986), 98 in Grenz, 162.

³²For the view that Barth’s stance is again influenced by Martin Buber’s relational ontology, see Richard J. Middleton, *The Liberating Image: The Imago Dei in Genesis 1*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2005), 23-24.

³³Middleton, *The Liberating Image*, 27.

³⁴See Middleton, *The Liberating Image*, 29.

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³⁵See Aristotle, *De Anima* 3.3.427.a19–427b9.

³⁶See Grenz, *The Social God*, 144.

³⁷Justin Martyr, *Apology*, 1.28; 1.10.

³⁸Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 141.

³⁹Nonetheless, Irenaeus holds that a sinful man is an irrational being, for opposition to the will of God is tantamount to leading an irrational life. See Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 4.4.3

⁴⁰See Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 4.37.1 and 4 in Grenz, *The Social God*, 146.

⁴¹See Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 5.6.1; Grenz, *The Social God*, 146.

⁴²Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 5.16.1; Grenz, *The Social God*, 147.

⁴³See Clement of Alexandria, *The Stromata*, 6.12; Grenz, *The Social God*, 149.

⁴⁴Clement of Alexandria, *The Protrepticus*, 12.

⁴⁵Grenz, *The Social God*, 150.

⁴⁶Gregory of Nyssa, *Of the Making of Man* 8.5, 8.8; Grenz, *The Social God*, 151.

⁴⁷Gregory of Nyssa, *Of the Making of Man* 9.1; Grenz, *The Social God*, 151.

⁴⁸See John of Damascus, *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, 2.12; Grenz, *The Social God*, 152.

⁴⁹For the establishment of the Commission and the statement of its composition and functions, see John Paul II's *motu proprio*, *Tredecim Anni*.

⁵⁰International Theological Commission, *Communion and Stewardship: Human Persons Created in the Image of God* is made up of three chapters and 95 articles. It is the twenty-second document of the Commission.

⁵¹*Communion and Stewardship*, no. 22.

⁵²See *Gaudium et spes*, no. 41.

⁵³*Communion and Stewardship*, no. 24.

⁵⁴*Communion and Stewardship*, no. 25.

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⁵⁵*Communion and Stewardship*, no. 25.

⁵⁶See *Communion and Stewardship*, no. 25.

⁵⁷See *Communion and Stewardship*, nos. 26-27.

⁵⁸*Communion and Stewardship*, no. 40.

⁵⁹Pope John Paul II's January 17, 2001 discourse quoted in *Communion and Stewardship*, no. 73.

⁶⁰*Communion and Stewardship*, nos. 26, 41&42. See also *Gaudium et spes*, no. 14, §1; *Catechism of the Catholic Church* no. 362.

⁶¹*Pastores dabo vobis*, no. 43.

⁶²*Pastores dabo vobis*, no. 43.

⁶³*Pastores dabo vobis*, no. 43.

⁶⁴*Optatam totius*, no. 11.

⁶⁵*Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, no. 97.

⁶⁶See *Pastores dabo vobis*, no. 44; *Ratio fundamentalis* no. 99.

⁶⁷*Communion and Stewardship*, no. 41.

⁶⁸*Communion and Stewardship*, no. 41.

⁶⁹*Pastores dabo vobis*, no. 43. See also *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*, nos. 93-99.

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**AN INQUIRY INTO THE PHILOSOPHICAL SOURCE
OF ATHEISM IN THE MODERN WORLD**

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Abstract

This article “An Inquiry into the Philosophical Source of Atheism in the Modern World” is evoked by the perception that modern philosophy began by relegating metaphysics as its point of departure. Metaphysics, the science of being as being, is banished and replaced with the philosophy of consciousness (cogito) instead. But the challenges of the relegation and replacement have generated a series of problem including an orientation towards the ungodded society. Consequently, Descartes’ cogito, the basis for all modern philosophies, henceforth could not bridge the gap between noumenon and phenomenon, between thought and reality; for the idea of God does not necessarily involve the existence of God. Therefore, it is the belief of this article that an inquiry of such kind, through a critical and conceptual analysis of modern philosophies of consciousness may open up to a philosophical source of ungodded society today. The analysis of this inquiry uncovers and argues that the relegation of metaphysics implies the relegation of the science of being whose act it is to be (esse). The relegation of the science of being whose act it is to be implied the rejection of God, hence atheism.

Keywords: Atheism, Consciousness, Existentialism, God, Metaphysics and Modern philosophy.

Introduction

To say whether Metaphysics is either destroyed, rejected or relegated from the very beginning of modern philosophy implied the same thing. That God is kicked out of the contemporary society is not unfounded; the consequence is huge, and it is an orientation towards the ungodded society. The destruction of metaphysics in the modern era has implied atheism. Contemporary atheism is a determination of man to live without God as a matter of principle. The philosophies of modernity have striven to eliminate metaphysics as the science of being whose act it is to be. The success of modern philosophy in suppressing the existential thing has generated a series of grievous problem. Hence the problem is not difficult to grasp.

If a metaphysics of being whose act it is to be is excluded or relegated, *esse* or existence will surreptitiously return as a metaphysics of non-being. To live in the rejection of absolute being is to fuse life without God within the metaphysics of non-being. Thus, such a rejection of God in modern philosophy can be explored and is dependent on three main sources: The philosophical, the anthropological, and the cognitional sources of atheism

¹However, the focus of this paper is only on the philosophical source of ungodded people.

Methodologically, this study employs the use of critical and conceptual analysis of the rejection of metaphysics in the modern philosophy to uncover the philosophical source of atheism. The approach includes: First, to examine the nature of metaphysics as a course of study. Secondly, to x-ray the origin of its rejection in the modern philosophy. Lastly, to highlight the atheistic implication of the rejection of metaphysics and its consequent effects today.

The Nature of Metaphysics

An examination of the nature of metaphysics reveals that Metaphysics is the branch of philosophy that studies existence; that deals with the first principles of things, including abstract concepts such as being, knowing, substance, cause, identity, time and space. Etymologically, the word metaphysics is derived from a collective title of the fourteen books of Aristotle that we currently thought as comprising his *Metaphysics*. It all originated from Aristotle's disciple, Andronicus of Rhodes, in 70 B.C., who in editing of his master's works, used the term '*Ta meta-ta-physika*' to designate the works of Aristotle that came after the '*Physica*' (physics) might have been studied. The physical ones are the books that contained what we now call Aristotle's Physics.² For Thomas Aquinas following Aristotle, "metaphysics is at once first philosophy, so far as it considers the highest causes, and natural theology inasmuch as it considers God; Metaphysics in its entirety is ordered to the knowledge of God; because being is first of all, God, apart from whom no being whatever exists."³

Regarding the subject matter of metaphysics, we know that both the ancient and medieval philosophers defined metaphysics by its subject-matter. A science that studies 'being as such' or 'the first causes of thing' or 'things that do not change'. But metaphysics is becoming difficult to be defined that way today. This is probably on account of some two reasons. First, by some philosophers who rejected the existence of those things that had once been seen as constituting the subject of metaphysics. Secondly, and perhaps on account of many philosophical problems lopped into as metaphysical problems that in actual fact are not related to the first causes or unchanging things - such as the problem of free will or that of the mental and the physical.

No matter how difficult it has turned out for modern man to say what Metaphysics is, for Aquinas who developed his philosophical and theological work within the classical

metaphysics of Aristotle, and culminated the Medieval Scholasticism as well, metaphysics, the “first philosophy, and a philosophical science of the divine (*Scientia Divina*) are one and the same. Following Aristotle, he is convinced that there is a science that studies being as being. Like other theoretical sciences, metaphysics must have a given subject.”⁴ According to Aquinas “this subject matter is ‘being’ in general (*ens commune*) or being as being.”⁵ Initially Aquinas thought God or the Divine as the subject matter of metaphysics. But for Avicenna (980 -1037) and Averroes (1126 - 1198) who refused to identify the subject matter of metaphysics with God or the divine, Aquinas toed their line because no science can demonstrate the existence of its own subject. Aquinas agrees with Avicenna that God’s existence can be demonstrated in metaphysics, and not in merely physics as Averroes held.⁶

Going with Avicenna and Averroes on this point enabled Aquinas to eliminate God as the subject of metaphysics. But at the same time, he holds that metaphysics belongs to one and the same science that studies its subject and pursues knowledge of the principles and causes of that subject. If being as being or being in general is the subject of this science, then the metaphysician should reason from knowledge of this subject to knowledge of the cause or principle of all that falls under it, that is, under being as being. Aquinas thought this principle is God. For not only that God is not the subject of metaphysics, He is not included under its subject; being as being, as Avicenna probably held it. But God can be studied in metaphysics only indirectly, as the cause or principle of what falls under being as being. In this way, Aquinas was able to defend the unity of metaphysics and the science of the divine in a way that made him unique among thirteenth-century thinkers.⁷ “*Ens commune* is the proper effect of the highest cause, God. This precludes including God under *ens commune*, for He would then cause Himself.”⁸

Modern Creation

Abandoning the subject of metaphysics as treated in the classical metaphysical works of Aristotle, and culminated in Thomas Aquinas, has forced some modern authors to create an artificial demarcation in what they called problems for ‘old metaphysics’ and for ‘new metaphysics.’ Peter van Inwagen and Meghan Sullivan have lop-sided into metaphysics many philosophical problems that actually are not related to the “first causes or unchanging things” in the new creation of some problems for “new metaphysics.” Such problems as free will, the mental and the physical are not related to the first causes of things or the unchanging things.⁹ They are but rather the modern creation of metaphysics.

The Origin of the Destruction of Metaphysics in the Modern World

According to Stumpf, “although philosophy rarely alters its direction and mood with radical suddenness, there are times when its new concerns and emphases clearly separate it from its immediate past. Such was the case with seventeenth-century Continental rationalism, whose founder was Rene Descartes and whose new program initiated modern philosophy.”¹⁰ The trend of atheism which has attained its climax in the contemporary society, no doubt originated from the ‘*cogito ergo sum*’ of Descartes.

Epistemological Idealism - Rene Descartes (1596 - 1650)

Rene Descartes, a French philosopher, is widely considered the father of modern philosophy because he turned the focus of philosophical investigation from the world of objects to the thinking subject. This implies that he provided the seed for a new philosophy that broke away from the old in an important way. The “old” philosophy is Aristotle’s as it was appropriated and interpreted throughout later medieval scholastic period of

Aquinas. *Cogito ergo sum* is the bedrock of epistemological idealism. This is because for Descartes, the only thing that can be known is whatever that goes on in the mind. For nothing of an external world can be directly accessed or known about. Thus, the only true knowledge we can have is that of our existence, a position summed up in this his famous statement, *cogito ergo sum*, I think, therefore I am.¹¹ Descartes became dissatisfied with Scholasticism because of the much disputation involved. As a matter of fact, the medieval synthesis was by this time shaken by a whole lot of conflicts of opinions. Descartes was however quick to notice that the positivists' sciences were in comparison making giant strides in the path of progress. This was precisely because they were based on mathematics.¹² But Descartes was largely impressed by the methods of mathematics; which is because Mathematics deals with the purely conceptual without any reference to concrete entities from which the concepts were abstracted. In dealing with these concepts which are '*entia rationis*' mathematics arrives at conclusions that are logically certain, universal and demonstrable, and whose certainty is further guaranteed by the very fact that nothing is said about the extramental foundation of the concepts dealt with. Descartes came to the conclusion that philosophy can become a truly scientific discipline only when it is based on mathematics. But in order for philosophy to be mathematical, it must be occupied only with concepts just like mathematics. In an attempt to establish such a philosophy that deals only with concepts, Descartes had already created a chasm between thought and reality.¹³

This chasm between thought and reality furnished the ground for Descartes' next step of systematic doubt of all things, especially of the extramental realities. Descartes' doubt is not just an ordinary skepticism but a step towards the discovery of a knowledge which is intuitive and certain beyond all doubts. This methodic doubt is but an undertaking based

on the new rules enunciated by Descartes for the procedure of his new philosophy.¹⁴ Following these rules, Descartes was able to discover in the midst of his doubt that the truth '*cogito ergo sum*' is certain beyond doubt. "... this truth, 'I am thinking, therefore I exist' was so solid and secure that the most extravagant suppositions of the skeptics could not overthrow it..."¹⁵ Assured of the certainty of the *cogito*, Descartes went forward to establish it as the first principle of his philosophy.

The next step for Descartes was to say what *cogito* stands for, and he made it clear that *cogito* is consciousness. This consciousness includes all the various modes of thinking like comprehending, willing, imagining and perceiving of which we are immediately aware of. Thinking in Cartesian philosophy is not a thinking about being but rather a thinking about thought. Of course, consciousness for Descartes is always self-consciousness, and this self-consciousness is the ground of man's existence. "... if I had merely ceased to be conscious ... I had no reason to believe that I should still have existed."¹⁶ Descartes, therefore, locates the essence of man in thinking. Having established the consciousness of the self, and the certainty of the existence of the self, Descartes made an attempt to recover all the extramental realities he banned under the methodic doubt starting with God. In dealing with the question of God, Descartes was operating from within the confines of consciousness and its ideas. He discovered and concluded that the idea of God is an innate idea in man, an idea which does not derive from any extramental thing nor could it proceed from the factitious agency of man. So, Descartes clarifies:

The only possibility left was to hold that the idea had been put in me by a nature really more perfect than myself, and in fact possessing all perfects of which I could have any idea, that is to say to explain myself in one word, by God.¹⁷

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According to Descartes, this innate idea of God is at variance with other mental ideas because it necessarily carries with it the fact of existence; and the idea of God would be impossible without God's existence. But because the idea of God is possible, Descartes concludes that God must therefore necessarily exist. Having established the existence of God, Descartes made God the ground for the existence of other extramental things. God is the cause of the mechanical world. This mechanical causality of God is a matter of necessity. God necessarily causes things to exist. Hence God for Descartes is essentially a cause and to cause things is essentially his function. But if God functions necessarily as a cause, then he operates only as a nature and cannot be distinguished from nature. Thus, in Cartesian philosophy, the reality of God became absorbed into cause.

Reacting to Descartes' stand on natural theology, it must be affirmed that his doctrines rendered the question of God difficult. His attempt to prove the existence of God ended in a woeful failure, precisely because he started from within consciousness, cut off from reality. All Descartes was able to arrive at is the idea of God within the immanence of consciousness and not the really existing God. But concepts do not in any way demonstrate the existence of any extramental reality. According to D. P. Dryer:

By concepts alone we cannot know whether anything exists. Even if we think of some objects as real, our employment of the concept real does not then give us knowledge of the reality of that of which we are thinking.¹⁸

Perhaps because Descartes offers his argument deriving from the *cogito*, modern philosophy in due course would logically and successfully overthrow the Cartesian proofs.

Also being left with no other probative argument from their father Descartes, the logical consequence of the *cogito* having emerged more conspicuously, post-Cartesian philosophers would necessarily opt for atheism, implicitly or explicitly.

Descartes' notion of God as being cause is equally untenable. It is true that Thomas Aquinas gave the proof of God as the efficient cause of everything in his second way, it does not follow that God's essence is causality because this implies that God's causal act in creation is by necessity and not by freedom. Such relegation of God to the level of cause and the consequent withdrawal of God's freedom is but another more subtle way of denying God. God creates as a free being; a being that creates necessarily without being free to do so or not to do so is not and can never be God.

Critical Idealist - Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)

Immanuel Kant, a German philosopher, was anxious to rehabilitate metaphysics which was at the verge of decay, after the Empiricists-Rationalists debacle on the issue of knowledge and the certainty of knowledge. Kant came to the conclusion that what ought to be done in order to furnish metaphysics with certainty is to affect a 'Copernican Revolution' by supposing "... that object must conform to our knowledge."¹⁹

It is within this framework that Kant limited knowledge to sensibility and understanding. Kant wrote: "There are two stems of human knowledge namely sensibility and understanding which perhaps spring from common ... root through the former, objects are given to us, through the latter, they are thought."²⁰ The faculty of sensibility comprises the *apriori* structures of space and time to which objects must conform if they are to be known at all. The sensible intuition is received in the sensibility via the "*a priori*" forms. What is given is then thought by the understanding via the categories. But the categories according to Kant are applicable only to the objects of possible experience.

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Thus, they do not apply to any other object whatsoever except those given in sensibility.

Kant then maintained that no synthetic *apriori* judgment can be made about anything that falls outside the cognitional horizon of space - time coordinates of the *apriori* forms of sensibility, and which cannot be conceptualized by the categories. Such a thing he declared to be unknown and unknowable. Kant later identified the unknown and unknowable with the noumenon, the thing-in-itself. While the thing as it appears, the phenomenon is known and knowable, the thing-in-itself is permanently beyond the grasp of human knowledge.²¹

With this disposition, Kant dealt a final blow to all types of metaphysics, especially the metaphysics of God. This he did by showing that the objects of perennial metaphysics are not given within the spatial-temporal horizon of the *apriori* forms. Thus, all efforts to speculate on them through the pure reason result in transcendental illusions of different kinds. On account of this, metaphysics has become an illusion in Kant, who was anxious to rehabilitate it. As if that was not enough, Kant further maintained that no theistic argument, no matter how erudite and sophisticated can establish the existence of God.

Consciousness which originated in Descartes' *cogito* is already gathering momentum in Kant. That conscious self which doubted everything in Descartes does not seek to bridge the gap between thought and reality as Descartes did, but has become the prime and sole factor in the establishment of the truth of things. Only those things that satisfy the obligation of conforming to the subjective *apriori* condition are declared to be existing and intelligible by the subject. Locked within the aprioriness of its' *apriori* structures, the self has radically lost all means of bridging to God. As a result, Kant easily concluded to an agnostic position, on the ground that all theistic arguments are impossible.

Kant was not yet over with his harm. He maintained that

God's existence is only assumable on the ground of morality. God's existence then has no rational justification but on moral grounds. It is understandable that the *Critique of Practical Reason* of 1788 follows on from Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* of 1781, which was a critique of the pretensions of pure theoretical reason to attain metaphysical truths beyond the ken of applied theoretical reason. The implication of this awkward position of Kant is that if morality is removed, then God's existence will be totally undetermined or even incredible. The danger hidden in this stand of Kant on theism was shown by George A. James who wrote:

It was transposition of religious ideas from the realm of metaphysics to the realm of practical reason, the idea of belief in God as the support for moral action, that attracted the most violent assault upon theistic ideas in the following generation.²²

Absolute Idealism - J G Fichte (1762-1814) & G W F Hegel (1770-1831)

Johann Gottlieb Fichte is one of the founding figures of German idealism in the period between Kant and Hegel, and according to Stumpf:

Now the idealists put forward the opposite thesis, namely, that what is, is knowable. At the same time, the first idealist, Fichte, had no intention of reverting to the kind of metaphysics Kant had rejected. Fichte believed that Kant had achieved genuine progress in philosophy, and he intended to carry forward what he had begun.²³

From the above statement, it is no longer difficult to see that the conscious ego of Descartes and Kant was transformed in Fichte into an absolute ego, which in order to be responsible to itself for its action, need not to be dependent upon anything outside itself for its existence. The moral responsibility of this Absolute ego springs from its self-affirmation, its positing itself. This positing of itself is absolute. The absolute ego is the ideal self of man to which man ought to conform by performing his moral duties. But though it is the ideal, the absolute ego is “more truly real than any merely finite self, it is more truly a self...”²⁴ The position of Fichte throttled belief in the ontological reality of God and opened the way to a more explicit atheism. Fichte denied that God was an entity or a substance. He attempted a deontologization of the divine reality. It is in this context that his atheism became clearer when he said that there is no doubt ... that the notion of God as a separate substance is impossible and contradictory...²⁵

By deontologization of the divine reality and reducing it to insubstantiality, Fichte effectively denied the existence of God. The God of Judeo-Christian revelation is a substance, separate from the world. To deny this fact as Fichte did is nothing but atheism, pure and simple.

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, the culmination of German idealism, availed himself of the Cartesian emphasis on consciousness and attempted to construct a tremendously massive corpus of metaphysics based on a revised transcendental logic. Hegel dismissed the unknowability of the thing-in-itself. With this done, the categories of Kant were transformed from being the subjective conditions of knowledge into being an autonomous category of reality. Hegel equated thought with reality and thus made the mind the source of everything. As he asserts: “reality is rational and rational is real.”²⁶ Thought itself, is located in the activity of the human consciousness. The human consciousness by the process of logic and dialectics

attains to the absolute idea. On contact with the human spirit, the Absolute idea becomes spiritualized. Thus, the Absolute becomes spirit when it is attained by the human spirit. Hegel explained the nature of spirit thus:

The spiritual alone is the actual; it is the essence or being-in-itself; that which relates itself and is determinate, that which is other and for itself; and that which is this determinateness and being outside itself remains in itself-, or other words, it is in and for itself.²⁷

Hegel maintained that man's attainment to the absolute is the same thing as the absolute coming to comprehend itself through the human spirit. The absolute spirit is for Hegel the totality and the ultimacy of all reality. As such, the absolute spirit comprehends everything including itself. The absolute spirit for Hegel is the idea of God knowing himself in himself through the agency of the finite human spirit (or consciousness). God for Hegel is, therefore, a self-thinking thought.

Hegel further maintained that because God knows himself through the world, his causal act of creating is by an internal necessity of his being. It is only by creating a non-God that God comes to be and knows himself. Hegel asserts "without the world God is not God."²⁸ Hegel was not yet over. He further sought to dissolve all distinction between infinite and finite. By so doing Hegel eliminated in effect, the correlative issue of the transcendence of the infinite. Hegel sought to show that God and man are one in the Absolute Spirit. The transcendence of God is operative within the finitude of the finite. The contingencies characteristics of the finite are also necessary for the full actualization of the diving of the divine. Thus, Masterson wrote, "... Hegel describes the order of finite being as a necessary aspect of the process whereby the infinite accomplished its full true reality as infinite."²⁹

Though Hegel wrote piles of volumes on God, yet his position is betraying to theism. The Absolute Spirit of Hegel is potential, it is a dynamic process on the way to becoming. But God is a perfect and pure actuality and has not the slightest element of potency in Him. God in Christian theology and philosophy is He who is. The Hegelian absolute spirit is not and can never be God.

Secondly, Hegel dashed the freedom of God's causal act of creation to pieces when he said that God's creative activity is by an inner necessity of his being, so that he can come to be and know himself. But God is pure actuality and is not becoming. The pure act of being in God is constitutionally identical with his knowledge. The creative activity of God is by absolute freedom.

Hegel's confusion of the infinite with the finite is unwarranted. For how can an infinite characteristic be operative in the finite, or how can the exigencies of the finite constitute the actuation of the already infinite? The illogicality of Hegel is apparent here. Obviously, Hegel's position is pantheistic, and any form of pantheism is already anti-theistic.

The Reshaping of the Philosophic Mind - Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900)

Metaphysics had its obituary announcement in Nietzsche. In the later modern period, in an attempt to reshape the philosophic mind, Nietzsche had in his philosophy produced what he called the 'superman' or 'over man' and the philosophy of the will to power. The essence of life for Nietzsche is the will to power. This will to power which is a drive-in human dominates the environment. It is more than the will to survive as it is an inner drive to express a vigorous affirmation of all man's powers, a will to overpower.³⁰ This will to power of Nietzsche reveals then a defiance of man to God; since God is man's other self, his alter ego. It is needless then as it were,

for man to use that which is his, that is, his values and good qualities in postulating another being altogether from himself. Thus, it happens in man's recognition of the Christian God. The human effort therefore must be geared towards a revolutionary mood whereby his greatness can be assured and regained by pitting his recreation of himself against the dissolution of that "God who is a conjecture."³¹

Nietzsche saw the need to create another man altogether, the potentially higher man, the superman, by exposing the burden of Christian morality. This man would be the ideal man. This is a very crucial moment for man which he cannot afford to throw off. Zarathustra spoke to his people, "... Behold, I teach you the superman. The superman is the meaning of the earth." The superman must be against those who propose superterrestrial hopes, since such hopes are all sheer nonsense and binding to moral values that make him captive, and unfree being³² The superman is supposed to be a free spirit. Done with the superman, Nietzsche moved on to the question of God, morality and religion. In the *Joyful Wisdom*, Nietzsche proclaimed that 'God is dead.' "Where is God gone? ... I mean to tell you! We have killed him you and I! We are all his murderers! ... God is dead! God remains dead! And we have killed him."³³ If God is dead, has he been living, Nietzsche queried? Since Platonion and Christianity conspired to turn the mind towards a beyond then God has been the great and empty image in which fear of life and hostility to reality found self-expression, concealment and justification. For Nietzsche, then, God is the greatest objection against human existence. A life subject to God is of necessity a rejection of man's ingenuity and potentialities. It is taken to be a hatred of humans, a fear of beauty, a rejection of nature and happiness.³⁴ If man continues to recognize moral traits which are idealized as virtues, it becomes then; "the marks of a slave morality which express the will to power of the inferior."³⁵ For Nietzsche, God was already dead, there was no need for the

Christians to continue destroying the era of the superman.

On the origin of religion, Nietzsche writes:

The origin of religion lies in extreme feelings of power which, because they are strong, take men by surprise: and like a sickman who, feeling one of his limbs uncommonly heavy, comes to the conclusion that another man is lying on top of him.³⁶

The consequence of Nietzsche's philosophy is not difficult to perceive. By proclaiming the death of God, Nietzsche opened the way for a total disbelief in the absolute. God was now a non-existent entity, and something not to contemplate about. It becomes very obvious then that the aim of his philosophy was to make God, man's alter ego - his other self and to make the superman a deity. The result is nothing but the enthronement of atheism and the demise of theism.

The Phenomenology of Edmund Husserl (1859-1938)

When Husserl began his philosophy on the platform that "phenomenology must honor Descartes as its genuine patriarch,"³⁷ then the theist must be ready to expect for the worse, and embrace the impact. Husserl's phenomenology is but another factor that quickened the rapid advancement of modern philosophy towards militant atheism. Husserl, just like his patriarch-Descartes, intended to launch philosophy on the platform of unshakeable certainty. Husserl repudiated various forms of modern scientific rationalism as naive because of certain questionable assumptions made by the exponents. The way in which prejudices and unproven assumptions can be arrived- is by effecting what Husserl calls the phenomenological epoche. Husserl gave the significance of the *epoche* thus:

It is the methodology through which I come to understand myself as that ego and life of consciousness in which and through which the entire objective world exists for me, and is for me precisely as it is.³⁸

In enacting the phenomenological *epoche*, the mind brackets, that is, detaches itself from all its former knowledge, belief, prejudices and assumptions with regard to the phenomenal world. In bracketing all former knowledge, Husserl arrived at the certainty of the existence of the transcendental ego, and its consciousness. The transcendental ego of Husserl ... “is the ego which while suspends all beliefs about the reality of the world on the ground that are not indubitable, discovers itself as the only apodictically certain being.”³⁹

However, consciousness for Husserl is always to be conscious of something. Whatever is given in consciousness is that which the human mind intends. The given of consciousness is therefore intentional. “The essence of consciousness, in which I live as my own self, is so called intentionality.”⁴⁰ In the issue of knowing, Husserl maintained that the knowing consciousness and the intelligible phenomena are the same. Husserl’s unique point is that: “Phenomena, or whatever is, are ultimately contained in the very subjective act whereby what is, is present to consciousness.”⁴¹ In knowing therefore, the objectness of the object is fashioned for it in so far as it is given in the consciousness. The construction of this objectness of the object is precisely what the function of the intentionality of consciousness is.

Husserl was searching his consciousness for any fact that can be established without any contingent premise. Of course, he discovered the conscious ego. But the significance of the phenomenological method of Husserl in modern philosophy is

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that for him, only that is true, which is given in the immediate data of consciousness. Also, that whatever is grasped in consciousness is the real. "... everything which is and has reality for me, that is, for man, exists only in my consciousness ..."⁴² The implication is that phenomenology has no comfortable place for the ultimate ontological reality, that is God, who is not given in the immediate data of consciousness. Phenomenology did the job of clearing the ground in which contemporary existentialist philosophers would sow their various seeds of atheism and anti-theism.

Existentialism - J. P. Sartre (1905-1980) and Merleau-Ponty (1908 - 1961)

S. E. Stumpf records that existentialism emerged in its contemporary form in Paris following World War II. In its beginning, people did not take it serious since its thoughts were expounded in cafes. Contrary to the expectation, it immediately gained momentum and influence and is still having its sway.⁴³

Existentialism is a philosophical line of thought whose main emphasis is on existence and concrete reality, rather than on essences, ideals and abstractions. It is opposed to any doctrine that view man as the manifestation of an absolute or of an infinite substance. The existentialist doctrine maintains that 'I alone exist'. It places a new emphasis on man's inner life and experience and thus on his immediate, subjective awareness. There is no knowledge, according to the existentialists, apart from a knowing subject. Man's life then, with its moods, anxieties, and decisions, becomes the center of attention. Existentialists' emphasis on personal existence and subjectivity has resulted to a new emphasis on man's freedom and personal responsibility. This emphasis on freedom and personal responsibility leads to the enthronement of the ego opposing man's proper relationship with the absolute.

Freedom is the right to do what pleases one, it is also the

right to choose freely. The consequence of this then, is that God becomes a being that can be chosen or sidetracked. In other words, freedom is working out the demands of one's inner nature and expressing one's genuine or authentic self. This expression of one's genuine and or authentic self however, can lead to the denial of God.⁴⁴ From the above description, the meaning and aim of existentialism is not far-fetched. Existentialism by idolizing the self and personal freedom, has presented itself as a kind of radical atheism. "Atheism had become an important cause of the problems that gave rise to existentialism... a growing sense of life's worthlessness and meaninglessness."⁴⁵

For instance: **Jean Paul Sartre**, a French existentialist philosopher, whose "idea of God is that there can be no God. Hence man's striving after God is doomed to utter failure. For God is the same thing as the metaphysical absence and impossibility of all being."⁴⁶ It is evident that Sartre's philosophy is atheistic, which can be drawn insistence on freedom of man and from the position that the idea of God is contradictory. "Man commits suicide when he creates God."⁴⁷ Likewise **Maurice Merleau-Ponty**, a French phenomenologist, being an authentic man would mean living fully in relation not to God, but to the world and others. For man has no business at all with the absolute hence the idea of God should be erased from man's consciousness.

Conclusion

Relegation of Metaphysics implies Atheism

Examining some modern philosophers has revealed that modern philosophy had its starting point with the rejection of metaphysics. Rejecting the science of being as being implies rejection of God. Without prejudice to cognitional source of atheism, rejection of metaphysics began in the 16th century, when Francis Bacon rejected scholastic metaphysics in favor of empiricism. In the 18th century, a hardliner- empiricist,

David Hume argued that all genuine knowledge involves either mathematics or matter of fact, and that metaphysics, which goes beyond physics and mathematics, is worthless. "... commit it then to the flames all metaphysical work, for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion."⁴⁸ Responding to Hume, Charlton would ask, why was metaphysics rejected by the modern philosophers? For the hidden agenda driving anti-metaphysics, is precisely the destruction of all values, that is, nihilism.⁴⁹ The key elements of a rational metaphysics cannot be matched with Hume's radical measuring gouge in order for it to remain the foundation of philosophy. In the science of being as being, reality is absolute. It has a specific nature independent of our thoughts or feelings. The world around us is real. It has a specific nature and must be consistent to that nature. A proper metaphysical world-view must aim to understand reality properly.⁵⁰

The orientation of the modern philosophies of consciousness to atheism has been highlighted. The success of modern philosophy can be gouged from the fact that a high percentage of educated people accepted atheism as the intellectual stance proper to the sophisticated. Atheism had become an important cause of the problems that gave rise to existentialism. The existentialists struggle against meaninglessness, some of them took a frank atheistic position and drew out all the consequences of such a position in formulating their approach to life."⁵¹

By virtue of its orientation to atheism, modern philosophy was bound to consider religion in a superficial way. By virtue of its anthropocentric anthropology, it was bound to consider religion in terms of a-this worldly immanence. In a-this worldly immanence, anthropology the theme of religion became man himself and his various needs. With the vertical worship of God excluded as other world illusion, the core of this world religion becomes the moral life, healing and social justice.

Morality, healing and social justice constitute significant abiding human issues. But when these themes are made to be the heart of a-this world immanence, they effectively ungod the participants. Religion which anthropocentric anthropology had shaped to the contours of culture and ethnic group cannot hold man into transcendence. Religion understood in the light of modernity is a factor in the ungodding of people. However, this is not the first-time religion has been a factor in the ungodding of people. Natural pre-Christian religion has been constantly unable to sustain the metaphysical insights in natural theology. It has failed to hold man out into the transcendence of God. The darkness of excessive light seems to have defeated it. It has turned into the subjection of the worldly powers. Natural religion has continuously expanded itself on protection from enemies in the healing of sickness, in the explaining of death. In the midst of these woes to man, transcendence is side-tracked and natural religion becomes a process of ungodding.

That pre-Christian natural religion and the religion of modernity should be agents of ungodding is not strange. What is strange, however, is the speed and enthusiasm with which many exponents of the Christian faith have sought to make Christianity take its place among the religions of a-this worldly immanence. From this, theological consequences follow. In the practical order, Christianity is then shaped to the anthropocentric demands of the-this world religion. The pastoral of social justice, of healing and the good moral life are not opening to Christ. They are being performed as exigencies of this world religion. In a grave moment many Christian exponents have allied themselves with the forces active in the ungodding.

The conclusion is simple. A philosophical implication of relegating metaphysics in the modern philosophy is ungodded people. Such atheism combined with philosophical naturalism is sure recipe for existential disaster. The formular is simple: no God, which includes the associated concepts of Divine

accountability, equals no ultimate hope, no ultimate value and no ultimate purpose, and this is clearly evident with the contemporary existentialist philosophers.

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**AN INTERROGATION OF THE NOTION OF MAN IN
EXISTENTIALISM AND
AFRICAN TRADITIONAL THOUGHT**

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Abstract

Many scholars have considered the nature of man from diverse perspectives. Many also identified some distinctive human features. The philosophical purpose of these considerations is to give us a better understanding of man in order to project humanity for better existence. Existentialism is the aspect of philosophy that concerns itself distinctively with the nature of human existence. Its concepts of freedom, choice, responsibility, individuality, and existence precedes essence are crucial to the understanding of human nature. Like other branches of philosophy, African philosophy is not bereft of ideas about human nature. Its conception of the nature of man is influenced by African worldview. Man in many African societies is perceived as instinctively spiritual, communal, responsible and in a way deterministic. These features on a face value interpretation contradict essential nature of man in existentialism. Sequel to the above, this paper seeks to interrogate the two branches of philosophy in an analytical manner. The interrogation of the two perspectives is with the aim of projecting humanity in Africa for a better existence. It is hoped that this comparative approach to Western and African existentialism will enhance an improved understanding of man and consequently help in improving human condition in Africa.

1.1 Introduction.

Human nature can be described as what it means to be human or the natural characteristics and dispositions of humanity.

It is about the feeling, thinking and actions of human beings. Discussion about human nature is germane to the understanding of man especially in relation to his ability to live a meaningful life. Since this is the ultimate purpose of philosophy (to practically impact lives), philosophers have been interested in a deeper discovery of the nature of man. To Aristotle for example, the nature of man distinguishes him from inanimate things and animals. This nature is important in the discovery of man's activities and functions.¹ Aristotle as a result of the analysis of human soul concluded that man is both rational and social.²

Existentialists however considered human nature from a unique and radical perspective. Existentialism is a philosophical project that seeks to achieve better human condition first for the individual and then to the general masses. To achieve this, attempt is made by classical existentialists to understand the fundamental nature of man. Man, in existentialism, is essentially understood from the perspective of his existence. This is because existentialism takes human existence as the point of departure for philosophy. Human existence, for the existentialists, encompasses the totality of the individual such that what the individual does, feels, his basic inclinations, and associations are part and parcel of his existence. They argue that philosophy should consider factors and forces that assail the human being as its primary responsibility.

Africans in their philosophy and worldview perceive human nature in certain ways. Beyond the rational and social nature of man, Africans consider the affective, the intuitive, the irrational and the emotional part of man. It is possible in African thought to relate to phenomena through all these modes of thought.³ Man, however, is considered in Africa as being in the centre of the universe. Every aspect of African worldview must ultimately be related to man and his existence. It, therefore, becomes imperative for Africans to consider the nature of man who is at the centre of the universe.⁴

The ultimate purpose of existentialism and African

understanding of human nature is to seek the best possible world for humanity. While their approach may be different in some instances, there is no doubt that the two schools essentially desire a better human condition for man. This paper, therefore, seeks to interrogate the two philosophical disciplines. First, it establishes possible areas of similarities and differences. Second, it does an experiential critique of the two philosophies, seeks the best combination that projects a qualitative human existence in Africa and lastly, it recommends possible ways to attain better human condition in Africa.

1.2 Nature of Man in Existentialism.

The focus of philosophy has always been to impact humanity. Its basic responsibility is to reflect on life and human existence. However, the 19th century witnessed the development of a brand of philosophy that focused on the problem of human existence. This is the field of existentialism. Scholars that belong to this kind of philosophy include but not limited to; Soren Kierkegaard, Martin Heidegger, Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre and many others. Though they are not entirely united in their approach to the problem of human existence, they agree on some basic themes of the discipline. These themes constitute their understanding of human nature and will be the focus of this section of the paper. 'Existence precedes essence' is a central proposition of existentialism and it describes a major fundamental characteristic of man. It means that there is no essence of human being which would somehow precede him and determine his essence. This is contrary to the thoughts of essentialists like Plato and Aristotle who hold the view that everything has an essence which exists before birth. To them, part of what it is to be a good human is to adhere to one's essence. In this regard, one's essence gives one a purpose.⁵

Existentialism in opposition to the above asserts that existence that man first exists, and then defines himself. He cannot be said to be anything before and outside his existence. The process is that man first exists then encounters himself, surges

up in the world and defines himself afterwards.⁶ The implication is that man is not a predetermined being. He is not determined by anything outside his existence, not even any form of nature. No nature is affixed to man. His nature is continually developing according to the goals he set for himself. He is what he makes himself. He cannot be seen from a fatalistic point of view. No one is born with innate personality but everyone becomes who he is by the goals he pursues and the value he adopts.

Another implication is that man is not a complete but a continuous project. He can be something today and another tomorrow. Every individual has a future depending on what he/she desires for himself/herself. This theme in existentialism was first propounded by Jean Paul Sartre and adopted by many other existentialists.

Another point in existentialism discussion about human nature is that humanity is foremost about the individual and not the community. Man, in the context of existentialism, refers to an individual who is self-transcending, a conscious being who always projects into the future. He is unique; he has his own irreversible history and he is not replaceable in the society. He also has an interiority that is impenetrable but can only be accessed by him.⁷

The individual, according to Sartre, is never exhausted by any of his phenomenal aspects. There is no particular perspective that reveals the entire character or nature of man. This is why "Being-for-itself" is different from "being-in-itself." Being-in-itself does not have the consciousness that transcends itself.⁸ "A stone is a stone; it is what it is and in being just what it is no more no less."⁹ It is fixed complete and without consciousness. On the contrary, "Being-for-itself" is the being of the individual which has potentiality and is transcendent. It can become what it is not; it is perpetually beyond itself. It is therefore, incomplete, fluid, indeterminate, and it corresponds to the being of human consciousness. It is this process that essentially determines the nature of the individual not birth, the environment or any pre-

existence negotiation or condition. It is an individual centered orientation, and it is anti-social in outlook.

The implication is that the individual must continue to be free to project into the future. He/she has the capacity to take a new course at any point in time. It also implies that man's character could be unpredictable depending on his choice of project. Lastly, the individual must be an actor not a spectator in the language of Soren Kierkegaard. To him, existence must refer to a quality in the individual, namely, his/her conscious participation in actions. Only a person who is engaged in conscious activities of will and choice can be truly said to exist.

Existentialism also maintains that the existence of the individual necessarily implies the existence of others, for the individual cannot exist without others. This means that man is not only a being in the world but also a being with others. Existentialists, therefore, stress the social nature of man as a being with others while maintaining man's individuality, singularity and uniqueness.¹⁰ This implies that the individual should not allow himself/herself to be lost in the crowd.

As a result, existentialism asserts freedom as a necessary feature of the human being. This freedom is unfettered and unrestrained. Freedom is the structure of man's being and a basic condition of human existence. An attempt to prove that man is free is like an attempt to prove that man exists. Freedom is an integral part of existence. The individual does not acquire freedom because it is identical with human existence.¹¹ Sartre opines that freedom is fundamental to man and not a derivate of anything. Man came to the world to be free. Freedom is, therefore, natural to man and it cannot be in excess.¹² If there is anything that man is born with, it is the capability to be free. The freedom of man is unrestricted and there is no universal moral law that determines how he should act. However, Sartre is not just interested in man being free for the sake of freedom. The individual must be free of self-fastened shackles in order to attain his/her unlimited potentials.¹³ Freedom is, therefore, meaningless

if it cannot assist man to become the best that he can be.

However, freedom for man is tied to choice. It is the freedom to choose. This means that freedom and choice are inseparable. Choice is the concrete actualization of freedom. Human existence is said to be authentic when the individual freely chooses who and what he or she becomes. Freedom, nevertheless, compels the individual to assume responsibility for his/her life and actions.¹⁴

Another imperative point of discussion in Existentialist view of human nature is the role of God in human existence. Existentialists are divided in this regard. While Kierkegaard holds a strong view that man is instinctively religious, Nietzsche, Heidegger and Sartre opines that God does not have any responsibility in human nature. To Kierkegaard, human existence is wasteful without God. To him, Christian faith is not a matter of regurgitating church dogma; it is a matter of individual subjective passion. Faith is the most important task to be achieved by a human being because it is only on the basis of faith that an individual has a chance to become a true self.¹⁵ He also opines that religion is not characterized by objective truths (factual information about the world) but rather subjective truths (passion and commitment). Religion is made meaningful by passionate commitment to what the individual believes and what he or she wants out of life, regardless of whether it can be rationally and mathematically described or not. Reason to him undermines faith and can never justify it. To believe in God is a matter of choice and not intellectual exercise.¹⁶ Essential or true self is only made possible by religious commitment.

Sartre's atheism, on the other hand, is the foundation of his theory of man. His existentialism rests on the notion that the non-existence of God does not have any negative effect on human values. Without God, man can attain progress, success, honesty, dignity, and qualitative existence.¹⁷ Men do not need God to exhibit good nature. His atheism also suggests that the non-existence of God makes everything permissible. Since God does not exist, man becomes the only being that is unrestrictedly

free and whose existence comes before his essence. Nietzsche's atheism is demonstrated in his two concepts of Master and Slave Morality. He pronounced God dead in Master Morality and declared man to be God. Man took over the place of God and rejected the values of slave morality. The death of God is the freedom of man. Man is free to act in the place of God. The individual now becomes a super man who is unrestrictedly free.¹⁸ This position is a rejection of the idea of man as instinctively religious.

Essentially, existentialism is a theory of action. Man is born to be active and not passive. He must be active by taking control of his own destiny. Other important nature of man to existentialists are facticity and death. Facticity refers to the limiting factors of human existence. It has to do with the awareness of man's finitude, his inability to know beyond what he can know. This is, the limiting factor of human existence. Death reveals the authentic possibilities of human existence. The concern of existentialists about death is not about the way it comes, but about the finitude of existence. The truth that existence will end.¹⁹

1.3 African Notion on the Nature of Man

Africans, like other tribes of the world, have the quest to unravel the nature of man. The beginning point of their discussion about human nature is the origin of man. Most tribes in Africa hold the view that man has a pre-existence that pre-dates his actual existence and also affects his essence and nature. The origin of man also has to do with the creation of man. God is seen as the creator and sustainer of man and the universe.²⁰ Man's nature cannot be discussed outside God because human nature is derived from God. Africans believe that the Supreme Being acts through a host of lesser gods in the creation of man. The gods are like intermediaries between God and man and they are venerated.²¹ Each of these deities exemplifies an authority associated with a natural or cultural phenomenon.

In African worldview, nothing (human nature inclusive) happens and is discussed without the spiritual dimension. It is

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believed that every aspect of life is controlled by a particular spirit. Whatever happens in life is only a shadow of what has been settled in the spirit realm.²² Mbiti opines that all African people believe in God. It is an assumption that needs no query.²³ Opoku submits that God in the African religion is the creator of gods, men and the universe.²⁴ In-essence, human nature in Africa cannot be detached from God. Man is naturally drawn to God and religion serves as a standard for morality and all other values needed for better human condition.

The above implies two things. The first, is that African existentialism is theistic as opposed to Sartre and Nietzsche's atheistic proposition. God in African worldview is involved in human affairs and He cannot be detached from any discussion about man including his nature. The second is that the Africans' belief about God challenges Western existentialism dictum of 'existence precedes essence'. Things that happen in the spirit realm to most Africans have impact on man's real existence. African conception of human existence pre-dates his actual existence. Therefore, any discussion about man must necessarily take this spiritual dimension into consideration.

We can, therefore, say that the pre-existence dimension is crucial to Africans' conception of human nature. The Africans' view of man as it relates to human existence predates his concrete personal existence. The concept of Ori and human destiny among the Yoruba of Nigeria, which is similar in thought to the *Akan* of Ghana's concept of personhood, suggests that the whatness of an individual did not start at the point of his/her existence, rather it is a phenomenon that can be traced to his/her pre-existence.²⁵

According to Yoruba traditions, *Oloдумаре* (the Supreme Being) creates the physical body but commissioned *Ajala* (a potter) to be in charge of molding Ori (head) which signifies essence. After Oloдумаре has finished the creation of human body, an individual will go to *Ajala* pick his/her *Ori*. This Ori picked by an individual determines what the person becomes in life.²⁶ This reflects that the human essence has been given an individual prior to his/her existence. This suggests that there are

aspects of human nature that are affixed from the pre-existence state. This is also contrary to the belief in existentialism that nothing is natural to the individual.

Many scholars have on the strength of the above Yoruba ontological argument concluded that human destiny in Africa is not alterable, that is, a deterministic interpretation of the concept of human destiny. Some have also called for a re-interpretation of Sartre's dictum to be "Essence precedes Existence instead of "Existence Precedes Essence." The above interpretations have also led some to conclude that the individual in Africa is not free since he/she is limited to the essence chosen from his or her pre-existence.

The above conclusion and interpretation is however a misunderstanding of the interlocking relationships of various components that builds up the human personality in African culture. There is therefore the need to present the right interpretation of African concept of destiny in relation with other African values that adequately interpret human nature. This paper argues that the concept of human pre-existence and destiny in Africa does not necessitate a re-interpretation of Sartre's dictum neither is it an impediment to human freedom. Destiny in African ontology is soft deterministic and not hard deterministic.

Another feature of man evident in African worldview is that man is a social being. Hence, human nature is not only rooted in God and pre-existence state but also in the reality of others in the society in particular and the world at large. Human nature must necessarily be discussed in relation to others. This is similar to Plato and Aristotle's study who holds that man is a social being. This however contradicts the individualistic perception of man in existentialism.

African culture emphasizes individual responsibility and contributions to the society. This is because African perception of human nature is highly social. It places great emphasis on social responsibility. The individual's responsibility to the society is higher in the African context. This responsibility includes the effort to ensure others act according to acceptable

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standards and values. This is also why the culture of the people of Africa emphasizes moral training. Freedom, in this context, is not unfettered and unrestrained.

The concept of Ubuntu from the South and East Africa best encapsulates the idea of African “we” philosophy. The concept shows how the being of an African person is not only imbedded in the community, but also in the universe as a whole. It is the belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity. With *Ubuntu*, a member of a family or a village who is in great existential difficulty will not be left alone. It speaks particularly about the fact that no individual can exist as a human being in isolation.²⁷ It speaks about our interconnectedness.

1.4 Interrogation for Better Human Existence in Africa

The task of this section of the paper is to interrogate existentialism and African perception of human nature in a way that helps us have a better understanding of the two perspectives but most importantly helps us discover the best way to project a better human existence in Africa. The difference between the two schools of thought seems obvious but there are similarities that our interrogation will help to unveil. So, how are the two approaches similar?

A clear similarity despite the obvious differences is that both existentialism and African perception of man intended to achieve the same goal. First, it is for a better understanding of man. The two branches of philosophy sought to understand man in relation with other things in the universe. Second, the two schools of thought sought such understanding not just for the sake of knowledge but to discover how best to project man for better existence.

We also need to point out that their differences in terms of religious nature of man are not total. Like African worldview of man, existentialist like Kierkegaard holds the view that man is instinctively religious. Lastly, though existentialism may be anti-social, it recognizes the presence of others. Existentialists avers that the individual is not alone in the world and he or she

must take decisions with the consciousness of others. Though the individual must be free to choose and decide, such decision must be taken with the consciousness of taking it on behalf of others. This is responsibility according to Sartre.

The next task of this paper is to interrogate the two approaches using their central themes about human nature. Three theme combinations will be interrogated and they are; atheism versus theism theme, 'existence precedes essence' versus pre-existence notion, and individualism versus communalism.

Atheism versus Theism

Their conception of man in relationship to God and spirituality is not that straight forward. While African conception asserts that spirituality cannot be detached from human nature, existentialists are divided in this regard. A single conclusion about the role of god cannot be reached in discussing existentialism in general. However, majority of classical existentialists are atheistic in their approach to human nature. We can however draw values that are relevant for better human existence from the two approaches.

Africans see man as instinctively religious. Man cannot be detached from his God. Mbiti avers in this regard that "it is tough for a person to be detached from his/her religion for to do so is to be served from his root, foundation, his context of security, his kingship and the entire group of those who make him aware of his own existence."²⁸ God is understood in Africa as the root of human existence. Hence, he is inherently religious. Atheistic existentialists like Sartre and Nietzsche challenged this African thought about human nature. To them, God is not an important factor in human existence. Nietzsche in fact pronounced God dead and argued for a *superman* that embodies *Master mortality*. Sartre on his own part argues that progress, prosperity, honesty and better human existence are best achievable without God.

The greatest concern for African continent is that there are individuals and nations of the world that are atheistic but are having better human existence than African individuals and society. Despite African religiosity, evils such as corruption,

terrorism, ritual killings, and leader's insensitivity still pervade the whole continent. Despite African religiosity, discussion about hope for humanity is most times on the negative. Africa still struggles with issues of high rate of poverty, environmental degradation, terrible infrastructural facilities and social amenities just to mention but a few. It should be noted that all these problems are human inflicted. It is then imperative to ask the following questions; why are many Africans still backward despite our religiosity? Why are countries that are not religious making better human progress? What is the benefit of the African claim that man is inherently religious? What values does the claim of God have for human existence? Can we conclude that God is not needed for Africa to make tangible existential progress?

To conclude that God is not needed in Africa on the strength of the above will be a fallacy of hasty conclusion. It is the belief of this writer that the God-factor could be beneficial to humanity in Africa if properly implemented. It is important for Africans to translate their religious values to existential advantage. Religious values such as honesty, sincerity, selflessness, sacrificial living, and love for others that are presently in short supply among religious practitioners in Africa should be revived. Therefore, the real issue remains the practicality of religions and how God-factor can be made practical for better human existence.

The need for religions to have practical and positive effects on people's lives cannot be underestimated. The situation today is the springing up of many religious centres with less godliness. In many parts of Africa, the situation is that the more religious centres we have, the more the level of evil and immorality in the system. Many adherents of religions in the contemporary Africa are the ones involved in large scale corruption, abuse of leadership positions and similar practices that dehumanize humanity.

This was not the case in the Africa of yesteryears. Religion in Africa used to be the basis for judging individual morality. The fear of God, the deities and ancestors was used to make people honest, sincere and avoid every form of evil. Corruption and leaders' insensitivity was for example unpopular in the Africa of

those days. Many have attributed the negative change in Africa morality to modernization propelled by westernization. Whatever the cause may be, the truth is that African religions have helped in curtailing evil in the past.

For religion to have positive impact on humanity, Kolawole avers that there should be a balance between the spiritual and the physical dimensions of life. There is the need for the people to relate better with their environment and the physical world. African religion should promote responsible stewardship of God's resources emphasizing creature's care rather than reckless usage of the earth's resources.²⁹ He also stresses out the need to translate the dominant religiosity to true spirituality characterized by godliness.

Religion in Africa, among other things should promote sound moral standard since God in African understanding is responsible for moral order. The failure of religions in Africa to promote moral standard is therefore an aberration and it has a direct relationship with negative human existence. The issue of unbridled corruption in most parts of Africa is largely a moral issue and its existential implications are enormous. Corruption breeds poverty, poor infrastructural facilities and economic stagnation which in turn lead to political instability, conflict and ethic crisis. It is certain that no meaningful development can take place where corruption is institutionalized.

Hence, this paper affirms that the God-factor is not the reason for the backwardness of many African nations but the failure of the people to translate religious values to existential advantage. Putting religious values into action can in fact help Africans attain qualitative human existence.

‘Existence Precedes Essence’ Versus Pre- existence Notion.

Another area of this study that requires interrogation is the *dictum* ‘existence precedes essence’ in relation to Africans’ belief in the pre-existence of humanity. Does the pre-existence notion connote a hard deterministic interpretation of the concept of destiny? Do Africans’ beliefs in the pre-existence of man require

a re-interpretation of this dictum to mean ‘essence precedes essence’? Does the pre-existence notion limit individual freedom to transcend self? These are crucial questions we will seek to provide answers to.

A hard deterministic interpretation of African notion of destiny and pre-existence of Man is based on a misunderstanding or misconception of the thorny issues surrounding the African conception of a person. Pre-existence notion must be interpreted with other relevant concepts in African culture in order to have the best interpretation. These include concepts like character, sacrifice and challenging work. Our interrogation must, therefore, examine some of these thorny issues and concepts.

It is a common belief in many African cultures that powerful spiritual human forces can alter destiny chosen in the pre-existence of any individual. These are people who have capacity to tap into the celestial reality for spiritual power. They are referred to as *Omo araye* (powerful human beings) in Yoruba culture. These include witches, secret cults with a bias towards evil practices or machinations. These powerful spiritual beings can render ineffective whatever future the individual has picked in his or her pre-existence state.³⁰ In other words, some African cultures holds the view that pre-existence interactions are not cast in iron

Evidences also abound in African culture where a person’s destiny is altered for another person through sacrifices. A popular concept in Yoruba culture of Nigeria is *Akosejaye* where the future or destiny of someone is revealed through divination. Actions are taken in some instances to swap an individual’s destiny for another with the aim of changing that person’s bad destiny to a good one.

Additionally, many African cultures believe that a person’s character is capable of changing whatever future picked in the pre-existence state. A person whose character is bad has already spoilt his or her happy destiny. A good destiny unsupported by good character is considered in many African cultures as

worthless. Therefore, an individual with bad character should not expect an automatic fulfilment of good destiny. Many African cultures agree with Aristotle's submission that virtues are qualities that are necessary for the development of man as a social being.³¹ Being cannot be independently explained in many African societies without character. Character in Africa transcends existentialist understanding of the human person in that it describes a more cultured and nurtured individual and also guarantees better societal preservation.

From all the above, it is obvious that whatever happens in the pre-existence of an individual from the culture of the people of Africa is not enough in the realization of his or her destiny. Human efforts as existentialists claim are also very crucial in African understanding of human success. A literal and face value interpretation of African ontology may suggest in some senses that an individual's pre-existence has an overriding determination of whatever a man will be in life. However, a deep consideration of other concepts and values in the African interpretation of human essence suggests otherwise. Individuals have the responsibility to take positive action in the realization of their destinies. Like existentialism, African ontology is also a theory of action.

Therefore, African ontology is soft deterministic and there is no need for a reinterpretation of existentialist dictum of "existence precedes essence" to "essence precedes existence". Essence in Africa is determined by both situations of pre-existence and actual existence. The individual may have chosen a portion in his or her pre-existence, the actualization of this portion when one gets to the world is self-deterministic. This is more so since the individual is oblivious of whatever transaction he/she has entered in his/her pre-existence state. He or she is left with no other choice than to freely determine his or her destiny with positive action while on earth.

We can also conclude on the strength of the above argument that African pre-existence notion does not limit the freedom of the individual to transcend self. The individual is free to achieve

potential through hard work, good character, and good spiritual and interpersonal relationships. For if destiny is determined, where is the place of freedom and choice? What is the justification for giving punishment for wrong doing? What is the need for human struggle and handwork?

It is therefore, imperative for Africans to work towards a comprehensive understanding of the African culture. The epistemological danger of a bad understanding of a people's culture is a weak philosophy which in turn retards development. Africans must consciously promote their cultures especially those that are critical to human development.

Individualism versus Communalism

The seeming contradiction between the concept of the individual in Western existentialism and the society in African ontology also requires interrogation. It is important to point out that existentialism though heavily emphasizes individual in its argument, it at the same time recognizes the presence of others. Sartre in fact avers that no man chooses for himself alone without a consideration of the implication of his choice on others.³² What is important for us is how to strike a balance between the individual centred approach of Western existentialism and the society centred approach of the African culture. Temisanre Ebijuwa provides a template that can be used to achieve the desirable balance. The core of his argument is that excessive individualism and an over-stretched communalism are problematic to the progress of any society.³³ He avers that the individual is not an atomic and self-sufficient being that does not need the society to realize his or her goals. The individual can, therefore, not be described in isolation from the life goals and values orientations that determine him.³⁴ It is in fact the community that makes available what is necessary for the realization of individual potentials and for living a worthy life.

It is, therefore, futile to conceive the self as a pre-social being since the individual acquires his or her identity from inter

subjectivity of cultural socialization and also draws the picture of himself or herself from the cultural store of inter-subjectivity. This is because the inter-subjectivity shared values serve as the mechanism for the control of human behaviour and give the individual a set of definition of himself or herself and of others. Hence, the identity of the individual cannot be detached from the cultural store of inter-subjectively shared value orientation.³⁵

It is, however, counterproductive for the community argument of the African culture to be pushed to the extent of it being an obstacle to the ability of the individual to be innovative, initiate a new course of action, and be autonomous. By autonomy, we mean the freedom of the individual to pursue personal aspirations and choose his or her own goals for the purpose of achieving self-realization. The responsibility of the community is to create the enabling environment for the individual self-realization.

The way forward, according to Ebijuwa is to see the relationship between the individual and the community as complementary and not competitive. There should be no conflict between the individual and the society. It is possible for the individual to be connected with the society, contribute his or her quota to the common good and still maintain his or her identity. The ideal human community is the one that respects individual freedom for personal aspiration and at the same time encourages the individual to see the common good as the fundamental goal of everyone. This model is beneficial for better human existence in Africa.

This study therefore calls the attention of African governments to initiate policies that will assist individuals develop their personal potentials. This is the key to African development as it directly related to the evolution of economic, scientific, and technological innovations in the continent. Many developmental initiatives of the developed world are product of the ability of certain individuals to stand out of the crowd and transcend themselves. For Africa to develop and improve the quality of human existence, there must be deliberate intention

by individuals to positively activate their freedom and contribute to the development of humanity. African countries must also be willing to free their people from any form of restraint that limits their capacity to achieve projects that can improve the quality of human existence in the continent.

Conclusion

We have so far identified issues in human nature from existentialism and African culture. The two philosophical schools of thought with different views of human nature can however be said to be complementary if properly interpreted. A good balance of the two approaches will definitely be productive for good human existence in Africa. What this paper has presented can be said to be a social critique of African existentialism. It is an attempt to identify relevant issues from Western existentialism that can benefit human existence in Africa. African culture and philosophy are good and productive but may not be sufficient to give man the best of existence.

While the God-factor is important in African conception of human nature, existentialists are not united in this regard. The God-factor in Africa has however, not impacted sufficiently on human existence within the continent. Though it is an important aspect of the African culture with values that can help to improve human development, its operation has been altered overtime by the practitioners to the extent that it has become almost ignorable for qualitative human existence.

For religions in the continent to have existential impacts on the people, this paper recommends that religion in Africa should promote high moral standard and other existential values. There is the urgent need for religious practitioners in Africa to be practical and translate the words, spirit and intention of their religions to practicality. It is by doing this that Africa can overcome certain evils that are detrimental to qualitative human existence. In the same vein, Africa should seek to strike a balance between the spiritual and physical dimensions of life.

The 'existence precedes essence' *dictum* of existentialism has been considered by some scholars to have contradicted African ontology. Consequently, they argued for a re-interpretation of its *dictum* to mean 'essence precedes existence'. But this is only a literal and face value interpretation of African ontology. African ontology is not fatalistic as argued in some quarters. There is no sharp difference between the practical outcome of existentialists' concept of being and that of Africans. The religious and the pre-existence dimensions in African ontology do not negate the power and the will of the individual to transcend self. Actually, the pre-existence stand of the African people ultimately slips into individualism.

This paper, on the basis of the above argument, recommends that African philosophy should encourage and commit itself to the right interpretation of African culture, values and norms. Our philosophical investigation must be deep, intelligent, foundational, factual, and integral. Also, government and philosophy should educate people on the values of individual transcendence embedded in African culture. This can be included in school curriculum starting from the elementary school. It is also critical for African culture to abandon any of its aspects that limits individual freedom for self-transcendence, like gender discrimination.

The individualistic nature of man in existentialism is a direct contradiction of the communal and social nature of man in African context. While this paper stands by the virtues that the African social nature of man presents, it at the same time calls for a good balance between it and the individualistic notion in existentialism by appropriating and inculcating some of the values of existentialism good for human development into African social system. The African system must consciously promote the desire of the individual to make positive impact in the society. Anything that suppresses the individual potential is not productive for human existence. This is one of the ways Africans can have qualitative human existence.

Endnote

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**ETHICAL TENSION BETWEEN MORAL AND
ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN CATHOLICS SCHOOL:
A PRINCIPAL'S PERSPECTIVE**

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Abstract

Despite the progress of modern society in various fields of life, especially in education, people are yet to find true meaning, true happiness and real orientation towards ethical values. Most unfortunately, and on a daily basis, many young school leavers in Nigeria are far from real fulfillment and true happiness. They are either more confused themselves or confuse the entire system. Despite their well-paid jobs in public service, they still lack something tangibly meaningful. Alternatively, as the schools that produced them keep growing, glowing and blossoming in population/financial boom, the nation still suffers. Input determines output, and as a common elementary computer technology dictum goes, 'garbage in, garbage out.' This is our problem, and the root cause is not far-fetched. There is a discrepancy in the educational system due to lack of ethical ingredients in school management. It affects human behaviour, thoughts, actions. The in-thing is that because ethics is not given its proper place in schools, misplaced values take the center stage. Efforts to give ethics its proper place in educational institutions results in ethical tensions and dilemmas. This paper discusses the ethical predicaments that challenge most value-driven school managers in Nigerian Catholic/Mission school system which claims to be making a difference. Selecting the ethical issue of examination malpractice, we compared academic and moral excellence vis-à-vis ethics, its tensions, and the implications of its lack in Nigerian educational system. The rationale and root challenge are the corruption and injustice around the practice, and ethics alone paves the way forward.

Keywords: Moral Excellence, Academic Excellence, Ethical Tension, Value-Driven School Management, Examination Malpractice.

Introduction

Modern society has brought much noticeable progress to the fields of arts, medicine, agriculture, sciences, longevity, technology and lifestyles. Yet, people are not happier and many seem not to find orientation towards ethical values or some rational meaning in anything. (Rev. Prof. Obiora Ike, Executive Director, Globetics.net, Switzerland)

As school system constantly face challenges of “decline of moral values, intolerance, increasing trends of hostility and violence, [high rate of corruption], vandalism and other negative phenomena,”¹ the urgency for ethics in education becomes imperative. This describes a current global educational dilemma, traceable to tensions of misplaced values. Ethical problems constantly reduce education standards. It is often difficult to decode the underlying ethic behind the values that schools pursue nowadays. Some managers and teachers normalize various forms of mal-practices in pursuit of students’ excellent performance in examinations. Some students pay and engage in several moral misconducts to obtain high academic grades. Incidentally, they become lazy with their studies, disregard hard work, play away their time, indulge in truancy, and all other unbecoming school behaviour. Catholic schools record huge progress, making a difference through their insistence on high moral standard in the pursuance of academic excellence. However, this often breeds tensions between academics and morals, and places some school managers at the crossroads. This essay discusses some administrative challenges facing Nigerian Mission school managers, their possible causes, effects, and the ethical options for addressing them.

Moral Excellence

Morality is central to Christian ethics. Conscience is the teacher. Hence, moral excellence is the capacity and quality to do what is right and avoid what is wrong. It is synonymous with virtue,

goodness, and admirableness. For Christians, moral excellence is not an option but a divine command. The entire Bible focuses on virtuous living (2Tim. 3:16-17). The Ten Commandments in Exodus 20, Deuteronomy 5 and the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapters 5-7 are few instances among several other Christian moral codes. Therefore, Catholic education believes in pursuing academic excellence in moral ways.

Academic Excellence

Academic excellence is one of the keys to a meaningful future. California State University defines it as “the demonstrated ability to perform, achieve, and/or excel in scholastic activities... identified with achieving high grades and superior performance.” It is the “maximum development of...intellectual capacities and skills in service to humanity”² Through academic excellence, one makes significant and valuable contributions to the society. Here, we see that academic excellence is, by itself, a value to be cherished.

In Nigeria, most people seem to limit academic excellence to excellent scores during examinations to earn a required certificate. Hence, most schools focus on students passing examinations rather than teaching, studying and learning with a sense of responsibility. This hinders students from making meaningful contributions to the society because they lacked proper and in-depth teaching-learning process. Evidently, this is a misplacement of value: we teach and learn just to pass; and the fact that “our students do well” during exams is a step to getting huge population, which in turn seems to be the only parameter to measure ‘good schools’ nowadays. The contradiction is that one who performed academically well is unable to make useful contributions to the society. Reason? The process neglected ethical considerations.

Ethics in Brief

The noun, ethics, is a set of moral principles that governs a person’s behaviour or the conducting of an activity. This branch

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of knowledge, also called moral philosophy, is a discipline concerned with what is morally good and bad and morally right and wrong. The term is also applied to any system or theory of moral values or principles.³ Peter Singer defines ethics as “the philosophical study of the concepts of moral right and wrong and moral good and bad, to any philosophical theory of what is morally right and wrong or morally good and bad, and to any system or code of moral rules, principles, or values...associated with particular religions, cultures, professions, or virtually any other group that is at least partly characterized by its moral outlook.”⁴

Ethics deals with existential questions⁵ at all levels of life, and focuses on fundamental issues of practical decision making. The nature of ultimate value and the standards by which human actions can be judged right or wrong are among its major concerns.

The origin of ethics is traceable to some mythical accounts of the introduction of the moral codes by humans. As a systematic study of what is morally right and wrong, ethics originally came into existence as human beings began to reflect and formulate the best ways to live. “This reflective stage emerged long after human societies had developed some kind of morality, usually in the form of customary standards of right and wrong. Virtually every human society has some form of myth to explain the origin of [its] morality.”⁶ Africans, for instance, have strong moral codes encoded in stories, folklores, proverbs and wise sayings, music and songs, mimes and dances, etc.

In the field of religion, ethical systems can generally be broken down into three categories namely: deontological, teleological and virtue-based ethics. Deontological ethics is “characterized primarily by...adherence to independent moral rules or duties.”⁷ Teleological moral systems “focus on the consequences which any action might have.”⁸ Virtue ethics develops good character traits by placing “much less emphasis on which rules people

should follow and instead focus(es) on helping people develop good character traits, such as kindness and generosity. These character traits will, in turn, allow a person to make the correct decisions later on in life. Virtue theorists also emphasize the need for people to learn how to break with bad habits of character, like greed or anger. These are called vices and stand in the way of becoming a good person.”⁹

Ethical Tensions

Kaye et al define ethical tension as “decision-making situations that necessitate choosing between two or more moral imperatives...”¹⁰ It is a dilemma, an inner conversation with the self-concerning two or more available propositions, and a choice between two or more courses of action, when obstacles on each side hinder the decision as to which course to pursue.¹¹ Education involves molding young minds towards the making of moral choices. The tension here is between academics and morals, whereby certificate is more important than skill. We unravel the depths of this tension by discussing ethics in education.

Ethics in Education and its dilemma

Ethics is a universal concern of all peoples around the world. So, it is still very relevant today as never before. Virtue ethics always talks about ethics of something. Hence, we have ethics of all fields of life: medicine, law, education, religion, politics, economy, etc. Education is a “vehicle of social transformation and socio-politico-cultural-economic dynamics.”¹² There is a general saying that “politics without principles, business without morality, [and] education without character are equally dangerous...”¹³ Ethics plays indispensable roles in education for the good of the society. Quality education is important for the powerful knowledge and the all-round dynamics necessary for navigating the 21st century. Such education is useless and meaningless if it is void of ethical dynamics.

Some of the main aims of ethics are “to stimulate ethical reflection, awareness, responsibility, and compassion; to provide insight into important ethical principles and values; to equip an individual with key cognitive and non-cognitive (moral) intellectual capacities.”¹⁴To achieve this, ethics in schools (higher education) cover areas like “content and pedagogical competency, fair assessment, [and] respect to stakeholders, professional conduct, student development, reasonable pay, perks and leaves, avoidance of dual relationships, counselling to students and parents and involvement in community development.”¹⁵ Every school manager pays serious attention to the above, while at the same time, taking cognizance of further ethical issues and institutional puzzles such as sexual harassment of all kinds, examination malpractice, and exploitation of employees, bullying, and suicide of students, among others.

As a practical science of the morality of human conduct, ethics is concerned with human behavioural norms. Education ethics, therefore, comprises the realm of behaviour that schools display (managers, parents, staff, and students) to differentiate between right and wrong. This ideal involves defining work ethics to realize educational objectives. The rationale is that “education is for life and not merely for living...not mere accumulation of information but values in actions [that]...go a long way in creating future managers with openness to new idea, and readiness to learn from others. Our schools must ponder over the lofty ideals of practicing ethics in its day to day affairs.”¹⁶ For a good result, they have to surmount certain ethical issues. Reflecting on the ethical educational issues, Biswal observed that:

...schools are seen today suspiciously by parents, teachers, educators, administrators, union members & business persons, people inside and outside the school walls. Also schools face severe value crisis which has direct bearing on quality of the schooling as well as quality of outputs. Several unethical practices that mar the purpose of schools are : contract employment

strategy, drill & practice approach in school academic affair management, deliberate crocodile cry towards realization of educational objectives, use of one size fits for all formula in learning process, no action for minimum level of learning , low rate of employee's retention, no policy for teacher appointment, promotion and retention, no heed to learning of individual child, raising eyebrows to special government policies... to name a few. Hence it is very much essential that institutions of learning should be designed and run as learning organizations by practicing ethics in all walk of schooling.¹⁷

Similarly, the Nigerian educational system encounters various ethical issues that challenge the nation and as well affect the school administrators (principals and head teachers), and the learners. Obviously, ethics should permeate every facet of human life and organizations, including educational institutions of learning. Unfortunately, school administrators and managers struggle with problems of ethical predicaments and anguish that stare them in the face when taking critical decisions in the day-to-day school administration. Such problems sometimes lead to frustration, anger, and perplexity, which in turn affect their overall performance.¹⁸ The reason is clear; the practice and implementation of ethical values in all facets of Nigerian life, especially in education, is kept at arms-length. They appear only on paper policies without practical realization. We clarify this argument in a quick glance at the Nigerian educational system and the challenges posed by lack of policy implementation.

Nigeria and Educational Challenges

Nigeria's policy and philosophy of Education believes that education is a tool for development, founded on five major goals: building "a free, and democratic society; a just egalitarian society; a united, strong and self-reliant nation; a great and dynamic economy; and a land full of bright opportunities for all citizens."¹⁹ To this end, the policy opted for

...a quality of instructions...oriented towards inculcating the following values: respect for the worth and dignity of the individual; faith in man's ability to make rational decisions; moral and spiritual principle in inter-personal and human relations; shared responsibility for the common good of society; promotion of the physical, emotional and psychological development of all children; acquisition of competencies necessary for self-reliance.²⁰

Undoubtedly, the contents of the above policy are ideal and ethic-based while the implementation of it is often unfortunately unrealistic. This is the problem. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) observes numerous problems of "corruption, abuse of power, insecurity, poverty, discrimination,"²¹ economic instability which affect Nigeria generally and the education sector in particular. Reasons are traceable to lack of the proposed 'quality of instructions.' Consequently, some Nigerian youth did not receive values-driven education, and some, who eventually became political leaders, could not deliver effectively because they cannot give what they do not have. Hence, the Nigerian education system fails.

Nigerian education is problematic because of what we may call 'neglect from top to bottom' and vice versa. From the top is leadership and governance, while the bottom is the family, and subsequently, the school. Every blame on poor economic system reverts back to bad leadership, which abandons schools without quality human and infrastructural resources. From the bottom are parents and teachers, some of whom, themselves lack or misplace values in child upbringing. Therefore, in a disoriented economy, everyone takes the easy way out, void of ethical responsibility. Additionally, political crises and religious conflicts in Nigeria grossly destabilizes education. Terrorist attacks deny many children access to quality education, lives are lost and properties (e.g. school buildings) destroyed. Leaders and wealthy Nigerians educate their children in the Western countries, thus abandoning Nigerian schools.

As mission schools emerged, and individuals and organizations established private schools, the situation becomes more disappointing and difficult for the average Nigerian child. The objectives of these mission and private schools are to fill the lacunae and make a difference through the teaching of ethics and morals. But because they lacked government support, they became expensive as they must recruit qualified teachers, pay them justly, and provide adequate facilities for the desired quality education. Some made little progress amidst critical economic, religious and political challenges. Although a few mission schools opt for quality education, their efforts seem like a drop in an ocean. According to Richard Omolade, “only a few can really be said to be providing a creditable alternative to government’s delivery of education,”²² and this few suffer untold predicaments for that. This dilemma confronts and challenges typical managers of some Catholic schools in Nigeria in a tension of balancing academics and morals while struggling to make a difference by attaining some levels of enviable excellence among other schools.

Catholic Schools: Making a Difference

Catholic schools have distinctive identity and ethos. They inculcate ethics and morals in the child through moral and religious studies. One could describe Catholic education as ‘education in Christ, and for life,’ responding to emerging contextual challenges. For instance, according to the Congregation for Catholic Education, Vatican City, Rome, “the context in which the mission of education is carried out is characterized by challenges emerging from varying forms of an ideology.”²³ A recent ideology is the ‘gender theory’, which “denies the difference and reciprocity in nature of a man and a woman and envisages a society without sexual differences, thereby eliminating the anthropological basis of the family.”²⁴ To address this gender and human sexuality theory, the Roman Catholic Church, in her recent education document, *Male And Female He Created Them: Towards A Path Of Dialogue On The Question Of Gender Theory In Education*,

developed “a methodology based on three guiding principles... to meet the needs of both individuals and communities. The principles are: to listen, to reason and to propose.”²⁵ This model addresses educational crises the ethical way, and gives Catholic education a unique feature.

Concurrent with the Universal Church, Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) developed a Catholic Policy on Education in Nigeria, which intends “to guide the church and help parents fulfil the obligation of providing Christian education for their children. While drawing principally from Catholic Educational principles, it works in consonance with Nigeria’s National Policy on Education.”²⁶ Thus, Catholic education in Nigeria seeks to fulfil, complement and supplement the national objectives. Under the auspices of CBCN, Catholic education is rooted in the universal aims and objectives for a Christocentric and value-oriented education. The third National Catholic Education Summit held in 2018, resonates the Vatican’s response to the ‘gender theory’ and sexuality issues. Since the first and second summits in 2006 and 2014 respectively, the Nigerian Catholic education has maintained its primary focus on “provision of qualitative and holistic education for the average Nigerian child irrespective of religious or ethnic differences.”²⁷ According to the summit report, this goal “combines intellectual, physical, moral, spiritual and cultural formation that is premised on Christian religious principles and the social teachings of the Church.”²⁸

Local Churches (Dioceses) break down and apply the policy to contextual needs and challenges without neglecting the universal and national focus. Finally, each Catholic school, considering the immediate needs of the domicile community, develops specific education objectives according to government and Church policies at all levels. This system creates a balance between theory and practice, and between morals and academics. For instance, the Society of Jesus articulates the identity and ethos which Catholic schools must reflect “if they are to have

a characteristic identity and mission.” Although they share many features with other schools...“Catholic schools also draw distinctive features from their Christian heritage and the way in which they combine their educational and religious missions.” The Jesuits present key characteristics of Catholic schools this way:

Jesus Christ is at the center of the Catholic School... [He] is presented to pupils and to staff. The values and attitudes of Christ are modelled by the adults of the school community. Pupils are encouraged to make the values and attitudes of Jesus Christ their own. The school recognizes the Spirit of the Risen Christ, present, alive and active in the school community. From this vision of the Catholic School centered on the person of Jesus Christ, come values and actions which are articulated in the four main areas of school life: Studies, Pastoral Care, Religious Life and Personal Formation.²⁹

On this background, *Odetoyinbo* and *Asogo* noted that Catholic educators “share in the mission of the Church - to teach and educate, and build the virtue of the children through moral education which, not only builds the person, but also helps to make the society a better place.”³⁰ This means that a typical catholic educator must be a value-driven leader, courageous enough to face the tension between the ideal and the actual, between the policies written on scripts and their actualization.

The Value-Driven School Leader and Dilemma of the Administrative Crossroad

Crossroads suggest tension situations that lead to confusion, loss of capacity for navigation, need to ask questions, and to seek guidance, for redirection and for discernment. Government neglect of schools leads to economic and financial crunch, compelling most Nigerians to keep ethics and morals at *arms-length* in pursuit of survival. Some school proprietors, parents,

teachers, and students develop various survival strategies contrary to Christian norms and conscience. There are unhealthy competitions among schools to get the highest population and the best academic grades. Again there are agitations from parents who want their wards to get excellent results. Hence, excellence in the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) becomes the yardstick for school popularity and students' university admissions. The system affects parents some of whom are teachers. One way out is to tolerate malpractice of all sorts, rationalized as 'examination logistics.'

When a school manager says 'no' to this, agitating and contradictory voices arise, even from church leaders who argue for the impossibility of students to pass examinations without any 'help,' and that 'almost every school' and/or 'school head' does it. But the fact that everybody does something doesn't make it right. Surprisingly, some parents who could not pay the normal termly/annual school fees are ready to pay whatever it takes 'for the logistics.' This is cheer corruption, indiscipline, bad example, and lack of fairness to our children, and above all, a sin. It is an administrative dilemma, which places the ethically value-driven leader at the crossroads. Here also comes the 'moment of moments' to define who you are. What actually defined the leader? Does the manager allow circumstances, problems, what people say, what they think, what they do, etc. determine who he/she is or does? More often, it is what we do that defines us. This is where ethics comes to play because in as much as we decide and act according to what we value, ethics makes our decisions and actions more generally acceptable and worthy in terms of morals.

Shapira-Lishchinsky detailed five other ethical tensions related to that of morals and academics in teacher education, which also challenge a typical value-driven school manager. According to Shapira, these are ethical tensions between "Caring climate vs. formal climate, distributive justice vs. school standards, confidentiality vs. school rules, loyalty to a colleague vs. school norms, and family agenda vs. educational standards."³¹

A close look at these pairs of values calls the leader to a critical evaluation of the reason behind decisions and actions taken in the running of the school. Oftentimes, the later parts of the pairs are upheld to the detriment of the former.

For instance, one could drive family agenda to such an extent that educational standards are swept underground. A parent itching for examination malpractice, in the name of ‘helping the students pass their external exams, does that because he/she had already set out career (Medicine, Engineering, Law etc.) for the child. Whether their average academic performance matches or not is not their concern. Hence, general educational standards are sacrificed on the altar of family agenda; loyalty to colleagues are upheld to the detriment of school norms; distributive justice suffers as individual school standards enjoy greater preference, etc.

A typical researcher shared an experience in Globethics.net³² Annual Report where she defined her three years of serving as principal of a girls’ secondary school as ‘years of an ethical fight.’ It was an experience of struggling to strike a balance amidst similar tensions mentioned above, to let the ‘ethical’ prevail in school matters, and at the same time maintain the status quo of the school. They were years of critical thinking as to ‘why you do what you do’, and she was so determined to follow the ethical way even if the Church and school authorities may suggest the alternative in the name of searching for the material gain of the school alone. According to the researcher,

The climax was my three-year experience as principal of a Girls’ Secondary School, famous and popularly known for her zero-tolerance in examination malpractice. Consequently, I faced several challenges including lack of population, financial setbacks and many others. In pursuit of moral and academic excellence, I wished the students to make different through discipline and responsible hard work. But I was totally misunderstood, misinterpreted, misquoted, suspected, misrepresented

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and vehemently opposed from all angles by students, parents, staff/workers, and fellow colleagues. There were furious anger, attacks, secret meetings, confrontations, hatred, and bias. I was called names and became object of discussion, accused of mounting unnecessary tension and pressure on the staff, parents and students, all because I said an ethical 'NO' to corruption.

Navigating these managerial crossroads requires strong ethical decisions that defines who we are and which standards we stand for. As we can see in the example of the above school principal, any value-driven leader always takes the ethical way at all times without fear or favor, and considering precisely the ethical effects of examination misconducts.

Ethical Implications of Examination Malpractice

Examination malpractice, which takes various forms (leakage of questions, impersonation, smuggling of foreign materials, copying, collusion, markers' malpractice),³⁴ is generally caused by "misplaced priority for certificate acquisition against knowledge and skill acquisition due to the certificate syndrome in the society, lack of preparation by teachers and inadequate preparation by students." This is because of the Nigerian idea that "certificate is most important than the skill to deliver."³⁵ Some schools approve it for economic gain: to attain the enviable height of population and financial boom among peer schools.

It has several ethical implications and grave consequences on individuals, institutions of learning, communities and the country at large. These include lack of self- confidence, dismissal/termination/loss of position in public service, and lots of embarrassment and suffering to individuals, families and the entire nation. Examination malpractice discourages students from hard work, leads to poor job performances, low productivity, bribery, corruption, and certificate clamor. The above disadvantages seriously and negatively affect the entire society.

Any society that approves it - through compliance, questionable silence, or by pretending not to know it exists or happens, all in the name of helping them to pass - is not only unfair to, but have failed the kids entrusted to their care. We miss the point, destroy their future, and deprive them the proud opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the society.

Consequently, we produce a generation of '*half-bakes*' or "square pegs in round holes [who] lack the required knowledge and experience to carry out their assignment and professional duties effectively" because they "have low morale and academic value...and eventually "end up with unfulfilled dreams in their chosen career."³⁶ Having received negative orientations, they end up being future fraudulent and corrupt leaders in their various offices because they've actually built on false and faulty foundations.

Furthermore, this generation will forever be asking the very questions that the poet and literary giant T. S. Eliot asked a century ago: "Where is the life we have lost in living? Where is the wisdom we have lost in Introduction knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?"³⁷ The answer to these questions lies in the domain of ethics.

Additionally, we produce a generation already at the dead ends of life. Obiora Ike, sees these dead ends "in the world of business and politics, in commerce and industry, governance and education, religion and culture, in technology and social behaviours, thus the confusion, the disorientation and the lack of happiness noticeable everywhere. We are aware that the center is not holding any more. Such a situation is a reflection of something gravely wrong in society - a crisis of values and moral uprightness perpetuated by untruths."³⁸ The center fails because ethics is absent, everything falls apart. The only way out of the dilemma is to brave the ethical way.

Facing the Challenge: Ethical Way

To address these situations, responsible managers apply practical steps to achieve balanced success. The basic steps include first, to educate the staff, parents and students on morals. Secondly, to develop concrete job definitions and description of staff work ethics, code of conduct for managers, parents, teachers and students. Thirdly, regular and ongoing staff seminars on teaching ethics. Fourthly, firmness and fairness, accompanied by constant supervision, constructive criticisms and confrontations, and application of some sanction for recalcitrant behaviours.

These steps require fortitude and readiness to face the challenges that arise when one decides to ‘go against the grain.’ Ethics swims against the current, hence the tension. This is similar to the injunctions of the biblical Sirach, who advises us to “prepare yourself for an ordeal when you come to serve the Lord” (Sirach 2: 1-9). It needs patience, discipline and hope for a far-reaching result of transforming lives in higher education. In fact, it takes a lot of other virtues to remain ethical in the pursuit of values. The result is something close to the researcher’s testimony in Globethics.net Annual Report,

...however, I won [the ethical fight], and the students that stayed [back] scored 100% in their final examinations without cheating. Ethics cannot be sacrificed on the altar of any human or material gain...life is about values, discovered, spoken of, lived and died for. Values make life meaningful, and ethical values [make life more meaningful and] set us on the path to freedom of simply good, right, just...living. However, the ambivalence of human freedom makes values-driven lives difficult, throwing humans into confusion and tension. In this dilemma, ethics guides, mentors, and introduces us to principles of behavioural conduct, itself becoming a tool for navigating the storms of life. Discernment plays a vital role at such crossroads, thus confirming that our

values inform our decisions. This is why ethics matters.
This is my story; this defines me.³⁹

This is the purpose of ethics: as a value-driven leader, to train future value-driven leaders. To get to this point of success is not easy. The manager needs to possess a balanced personality, with enough emotional intelligence to know the difference between “the good and the traditional.”⁴⁰ Above all the leader must “think outside the box.” For Mike Sturm, this means “creative thinking, different from the conventional, and applying new perspectives.”⁴¹ It means knowing that school management is not a one-man game. The manager cannot do it alone, but must carry others along. Sturm has three strategies for thinking outside the box: eliminating the goal-directedness of one’s thinking, encounter rather than come up with ideas, and thinking wide. The result is a good networking, combined with positive attitude and appreciation of persons.

Hence, we can infer why ethics matters. Education without ethics is like growth without a soul. The ethical way is the only way. According to Obiora Ike, ethics provides a “link between education, development and culture, especially in the African context.”⁴² Development would elude socio-economic, religious, political structures if education systems neglect ethics, the principles of which “leads to transformation...ethics determines what is ought, what is right, what adds value to the common good and what leads to sustainable development.”⁴³

Catholic schools follow the Vatican method of listening, reasoning and proposing morals. This is the starting point on the way of ethics. It requires the values of listening to the environment and the situation, the reasoning capacity to decipher the difference, and the courage to stand firm while proposing the true, the just and the right line of action. It involves the simple way of moral instructions for edifying lifestyles, for commitment, for focus in life, and for responsibility in teaching and learning. In all, it is the value of listening to the voice in the inner world.

Bibhuti Narayan presents us with more concrete steps on how to manage ethics in schools. These include a) Emphasis on Vision & Mission of school; b) setting the ‘dos’ (and don’ts) for educational managers, c) Use of affirmative language, d) Documentation / dissemination, e) Institution of Internal Quality Assessment Cell & ethics committee in school, f) Protection of Children from Sexual Offence (POCSO) Act 2012, g) Following “ W-A-T-C-H” Model. This simply means watching your Words-Actions-Thoughts-Character-Heart/habit; h) Performance Appraisal / Promotion and Reward; and i) Conflicts Management,⁴⁴ all because ethics matters.

Why Ethics Matters

Ethics matters because of its utmost importance in life. Think life think ethics. With ethics we can be our best, and without it we are at our worst, heading towards the dead-end road. Ethics is fundamental and foundational to human life. Lucy Howe Lopez recalls how Obiora Ike demonstrates the ‘who, why and where’ of ethics. According to Lucy, Obiora often says that “Ethics is where life is,” demonstrating it by bringing [the] fingertips and thumbs of each hand together that ethics touches life, it does not exist in a vacuum, unrelated to and distinct from our day-to-day lives and concerns.”⁴⁵

This means that to the Globethics.net family, ethics lies at the very fabric of life. The Executive Director of Globethics.net, Obiora Ike, summarizes why the organization sees ethics as the hinge on which every facet of life particularly education, must hold. Ike had stated that

Ethics is the queen of sciences that addresses the Good Life. It promotes living well and rightly. Ethics is about doing the right thing, making the right choices, protecting the common good, promoting good behaviour and avoiding harm. Ethics helps to promote collaboration and community coexistence and is a subject taught within the family, in schools and higher education institutions.

Through ethics, young people and adults reconnect with a moral and ethical compass for life by practicing virtue. It is indeed clear that without ethics and values-based education, a better world is not possible. Our common challenge therefore is to integrate ethics in education so that people think ethically, govern ethically and act ethically. Education has a value to add by integrating ethical thinking in the young as they shape the future. This is why ethics matters, and it matters for all peoples globally and urgently.⁴⁶

Furthermore, ethics challenges us to reflect on the realities of life. Ethics matters because (1) “it is part of how many groups define themselves and thus part of the identity of their individual members, (2) other-regarding values in most ethical systems both reflect and foster close human relationships and mutual respect and trust, and (3) it could be “rational” for a self-interested person to be moral, because his or her self-interest is arguably best served in the long run by reciprocating the moral behaviour of others.”⁴⁷

Finally, ethics balances extremes, filling the valleys and leveling the mountains in human conduct. It supplies needed values where they lack, levels the unethical and replaces them with the ethical. Ethics balances moral and academic tensions. Therefore, it is either the ethical way or not at all.

Conclusion

This work has reflected on the ethical tensions and struggles between moral and academic excellence in Nigerian schools. Hence, we have showcased the fact that ethics in education matters because it provides the link between all human activities in order to make them worthwhile and meaningful. Everything about development in all ramifications boils down to education, which is total failure if it does not inculcate ethical and moral values in the human person. This essay encourages school leaders and all teaching professionals to stand firm on their decision to take

the ethical way in school management and administration. We agree with Globethics.net that ethics in general, and particularly in education means empowerment, transformation, holistic approach, integrity, competence and sustainability. Central to these is human dignity. Respect for the human person and his inherent worth compels his proper education along the ethical path.

Endnotes

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⁵Peter Singer, *Ethics*, some of the existential questions that ethics continues to ask include: “ How should we live? Shall we aim at happiness or at knowledge, virtue, or the creation of beautiful objects? If we choose happiness, will it be our own or the happiness of all? And what of the more particular questions that face us: is it right to be dishonest in a good cause? Can we justify living in opulence while elsewhere in the world people are starving? Is

going to war justified in cases where it is likely that innocent people will be killed? Is it wrong to clone a human being or to destroy human embryos in medical research? What are our obligations, if any, to the generations of humans who will come after us and to the nonhuman animals with whom we share the planet?"

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⁷Austin Cline, "Three types of Ethical Systems," in *Learning Religions*, 2018, Available at: <https://www.learnreligions.com/atheism-types-of-ethical-systems-4058406>. Accessed on 29 March, 2022. Cline explained further that, "In order to make the correct moral choices, you simply have to understand what your moral duties are and what correct rules exist which regulate those duties. When you follow your duty, you are behaving morally. When you fail to follow your duty, you are behaving immorally. A deontological moral system may be seen in many religions, where you follow the rules and duties that are said to have been established by God or the church."

⁸Ibid. Again, for Cline, "In order to make correct moral choices, you have to have some understanding of what will result from your choices. When you make choices which result in the correct consequences, then you are acting morally; when you make choices which result in the incorrect consequences, then you are acting immorally. The problem comes in determining correct consequences when an action can produce a variety of outcomes. Also, there may be a tendency to adopt an attitude of the ends justifying the means."

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Mike Iroh

**AN ENQUIRY INTO THE PHILOSOPHY OF LIGHT-
ENERGY: NIGERIA AS A CASE STUDY**

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Abstract

Preview measurements of the inflow by turbine-mounted lidar systems can be used to optimize wind turbine performance by increasing power production and alleviating structural loads¹ Light Detection and Ranging devices (LIDAR) allow preview information about the approaching wind to be used to improve wind turbine control thereby optimizing operational performance of the wind turbine and hence effect increase in energy yield. We employed in this research a theoretical based method to obtain simulation results from lidar scan patterns which indicate a lot of prospects of lidar laser scanners operating in the region of pico and femto seconds regime. This makes the wind energy option in Africa as a whole and Nigeria in particular a welcomed development in renewable energy discussions and the country's energy mix. Again, a generalized philosophy of energy will consider the following aspects: the inquiry into the natural phenomenon of energy; the critique of the functioning of energy in society; and the philosophy of technology within the contexts of energy transitions.

Keywords: wind energy, Lidar-assisted control, wind turbine optimization, remote sensing, preview wind measurements, lidar scan patterns.

Introduction:

There has been a steady rise in energy production worldwide since 2004, with substantial actively installed capacity in Africa.

In fact, it was noted that wind energy is the “fastest growing installed alternative-energy production”, with at least 20% of United States energy expected to be supplied by offshore and onshore wind farms by 2030² The problem that light detecting and ranging devices hope to address in the design-models and in systems that has begun to implement its feedforward system is that in such systems, information concerning the behavior of an approaching wind is provided ahead of time by a fast-scanning laser. This remote sensor device enables an automatic shift in the direction of the turbine blades to effect minimum impact and maximum energy generation respectively.

The erratic behaviour of the approaching wind in front of the turbine and the feedback method of collecting data for optimization by the traditional models has its attendant problems. The primary challenge that the feedback system presents is that the damage done to the turbine by the wind would have been completed before the signal information is received, processed and acted upon by the system units (a sort of crying when the head is already off!). This looks like a damage control mechanism that will not help technological advancements in wind energy generation and design improvements. Thus, as Eric Smiley, Holger Fürst, Florian Haizmann and David Schlipf, in the article “Optimizing Lidars for Wind Turbine Control Applications—Results from the IEA Wind Task 32 Workshop” *Remote Sens.* **2018**, *10*, 863 noted clearly, this approach has proved to be ineffective in addressing the problem of control and design in the wind energy development³

From the foregoing discussions therefore, this thesis set out to contribute to the discussions on lidar systems as a remote sensor and feedforward mechanism in wind turbines designs. Our main approach was to simulate the factors that will provide a prospect for increasing the present nanosecond lidar scanners to those of pico and femto seconds regime. We further established, the correlation between wind turbines and lidar systems hence providing invaluable insights into overcoming the barriers

preventing the widespread use of Lidars for wind turbine control strategies, and maximizing the effectiveness of Lidars for control applications.

From a theoretical perspective, the optimization of lidar scan patterns by minimizing the error between the measurements and the rotor effective wind speed of interest is discussed. Frequency domain methods for directly calculating measurement error using a stochastic wind field model are reviewed and applied to the optimization of several continuous wave and pulsed Doppler lidar scan patterns based on commercially-available systems. An overview of the design process for a lidar-assisted pitch controller for rotor speed regulation highlights design choices that can impact the usefulness of lidar measurements beyond scan pattern optimization. Finally, using measurements from an optimized scan pattern, it is shown that the rotor speed regulation achieved after optimizing the lidar-assisted control scenario via time domain simulations matches the performance predicted by the theoretical frequency domain model.

The significance of this research follows the main purpose of the International Energy Agency (IEA) wind task workshop-32 that was held in Boston, MA, USA in July 2016. This agrees completely with the analysis of Eric Smiley et al cited above who argued that: The workshop, ‘optimizing Lidar designs for wind energy applications’ was held to identify Lidar system properties that are desirable for wind turbine control applications and help foster the widespread application of Lidar-assisted control (LAC).

PULSED LASERS IN LIDAR APPLICATIONS:

By way of a simplified definition of terms, elementary physics defines wind as the flow of atmospheric gases on a very large scale. Wind flow are generally caused by uneven heating of the atmosphere by the sun, the irregularities of the earth’s surface, and the rotation of the earth. However, wind flow patterns are modified by the earth’s terrain features, bodies of water, and

surrounding vegetation.

A wind turbine is used to harness the kinetic energy of the vast amounts of wind, and transform it into electricity. This can be expressed in a physical equation as seen by the equation [1] below. First, we need to recall that wind is an air mass moving from an area of high pressure to an area of low pressure. This movement of air implies a kinetic form of energy which for a given air of mass m , moving at a velocity v , can be expressed as:

$$(1). \quad E_k = \frac{1}{2} mv^2$$

Considering a certain cross-sectional area, A , through which the air passes at velocity v , the volume V , flowing in a certain time unit t , the so-called volume flow, is given by:

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{dv}{dt} &= v \frac{dA}{dt} & (2) \text{ And the mass flow with air density } \rho \text{ is} \\ m' &= \rho v A & (3) \end{aligned}$$

This mass flow can now be substituted into the formula for kinetic energy of the moving air to give the amount of energy passing through the cross-sectional area A , per unit time. This energy is physically identical to the power P expressed as:

$$P = \frac{1}{2} \rho v^3 A \quad (4)$$

Therefore, the amount of energy in the wind is controlled by the density, surface area and velocity of the moving air. The equation [4] above shows that identifying an area of high wind velocity is the most crucial part of picking out an area to situate a wind turbine in a wind farm.

In reality however, the equation for kinetic energy of wind does not represent the amount of energy that a wind turbine is able to harness. Wind turbines like other physical machines are not 100% efficient; and are unable to convert all of the kinetic energy into wind. If a wind turbine was 100% efficient, then wind speeds would drop to 0 km/h after passing through the turbine.

The German scientist, Albert Betz, published a work in 1926 that showed that it is only possible to extract 16/27 or 59% of the energy from an approaching wind by the wind turbine. This is called Betz's law⁴ Therefore, the theoretical energy model for a wind turbine is given by the expression:

$$P = \frac{16}{27} - \frac{1}{2} \rho v^3 A \quad (5)$$

The lidar operation is based on the scientific theory of fluid mechanics and some elements of aerodynamics. Modern wind turbines catch the wind by turning them into or away from air flows. Wind moves the propeller mounted on a rotor and the movement turns a high-speed shaft coupled to an electric or induction generator.

The majority of wind turbines consist of three blades mounted to a tower made from tubular steel. There are less common varieties with two blades, or with concrete or steel lattice towers. At 100ft or more above the ground, the tower allows the turbine to take advantage of faster speeds found at higher altitudes.

Wind Modelling:

Wind can be mathematically described by a set of three-dimensional wind speed vectors at each point in time and space. For aero-elastic simulations, the wind speed vectors are usually only generated at the rotor plane to calculate the aerodynamic forces and moments. Thus, understanding the nature of a wind field over the full space in front of the turbine is necessary to simulate lidar systems, (see figure 1).

The inertial coordinate systems were used in this thesis to describe the wind models for the lidar simulations and a reduced model for wind field reconstruction.

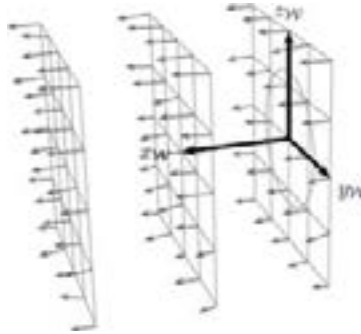


Figure 1: Snapshot of the time variant vector field as a general description of wind.

Wind and Inertial Coordinate System

The wind coordinate system is denoted in this work by the subscript W . It is used to describe the wind flow and is aligned

with the mean wind direction regarding the inertial coordinate system, which is denoted here by the subscript I . The direction is defined by the horizontal inflow angle α_h (azimuth or rotation around the z_I -axis) and the vertical inflow angle α_v (elevation or rotation around the rotated y_I -axis), (see figure 2). Although all six DOFs could be used in principle, a rotation of around the x_I is not considered in this work but might be useful for very complex terrain.

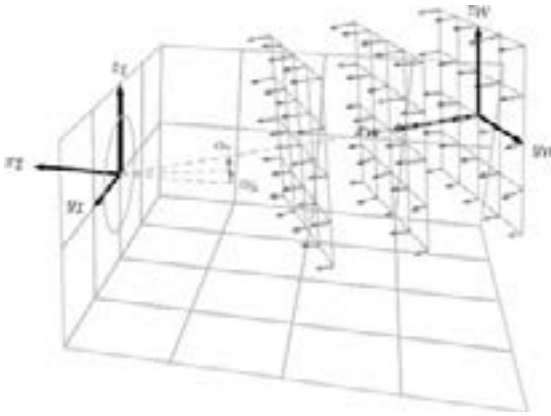


Figure 2: Orientation of the wind coordinate system (subscript W) in the inertial coordinate system (subscript I). Rotation order is defined as azimuth \rightarrow elevation ($\alpha_h \rightarrow \alpha_v$).

LIDAR and Lidar Modelling systems

Generally, Lidar (LIght Detection and Ranging) is a remote sensing technology similar to radar (Radio Detection and Ranging) or sonar (SOUND Navigation And Ranging). In the case of lidar, a light pulse is emitted into the atmosphere. Light from the beam is scattered in all directions from molecules and particulates in the atmosphere. A portion of the light is scattered back towards the lidar system. This light is collected by a telescope and focused upon a photo-detector that measures the amount of backscattered light as a function of distance. The lidar system uses light in the form of a pulsed laser for powerful 100

data collection that provides 3-D information for an area of interest. Among many things, it is useful for such tasks as surface mapping, vegetation mapping, transportation, corridor mapping, transmission route mapping, and 3-D building mapping.

According to Arthur Cracknell, over the last decades, lidar has largely contributed to our knowledge of our atmosphere. The interactions of the emitted light with the molecules and aerosols allow the observation of atmospheric parameters such as temperature, pressure, wind, humidity, and concentration of gases (ozone, methane, nitrous oxide, etc.)⁵. Lidar originated in the early 1960's, shortly after the invention of the laser. Its first applications came in meteorology where it was used to measure clouds⁶. Since then, lidar has been used not only in meteorology, but also in a wide range of other applications, such as laser range finders, altimeters, and satellite trackers.⁷The essential concept of lidar was originated by E. H Synge in 1930, who envisaged the use of powerful search lights to probe the atmosphere. Indeed, lidar has since been used extensively for atmospheric research and meteorology. Lidar instruments fitted to aircraft and satellites carry out surveying and mapping – a recent example being the U.S. Geological Survey Experimental Advance Airborne Research Lidar. NASA has identified lidar as a key technology for enabling autonomous precision safe landing of future robotic and crewed lunar-landing vehicles.

Lidar Operating Principle

The operating principle of lidar is based on the assumption that wind speed has the same value as the small particles in the air, called aerosols. Pollen, droplets, smoke, and particles of dust form these particles. Lidar technology relies on detecting backscattered light from moving aerosols in the atmosphere, when illuminated by laser radiation with coherent detection (best for measuring Doppler shifts, or changes

in phase of the reflected light). Coherent systems generally use optical heterodyne detection⁸. This is more sensitive than

direct detection and allows them to operate at much lower power, but requires more complex trans-receivers. By measuring the Doppler frequency shift of the backscattered light, the wind speed can be determined remotely. The basic concept can be illustrated as in figure 3.

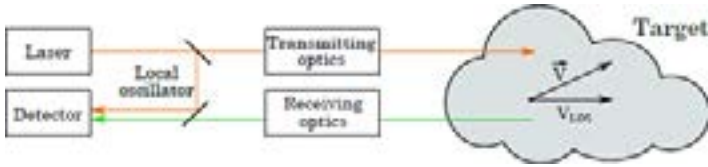


Figure 3: Generic Doppler lidar concept where \mathbf{V} is the mean velocity of the target, and V_{los} is projected radial wind speed.

Lidar Equation

In the simplest form, the detected lidar signal can be written as

$$P(r) = KG(r)\beta(r)T(r) \quad (6)$$

where P is the power received from a distance r , K summarizes the performance of the lidar system and is called the lidar system constant, $G(r)$ describes the range- dependent measurement geometry. The term $\beta(r)$ is the back scattered coefficient at distance r . It stands for the ability of the atmosphere to scatter light back into the direction from which it comes. $T(r)$ is the transmission term and describes how much light gets lost on the way from the lidar to the distance r and back.

RESULTS FROM SIMULATIONS

Lidar Measurement Coherence

The quality of a wind speed measurement as influenced by evolution can be judged by the coherence between the estimate of the u component of the line-of-sight lidar system measurement

and the true u component that reaches the rotor plane. Referring to figure 4, the up-wind point at which the lidar is focused is called point j , while the point where the evolved wind meets the rotor plane is called point i . Points i and j have the same transverse coordinates in the yz plane but are separated longitudinally by the preview distance D .

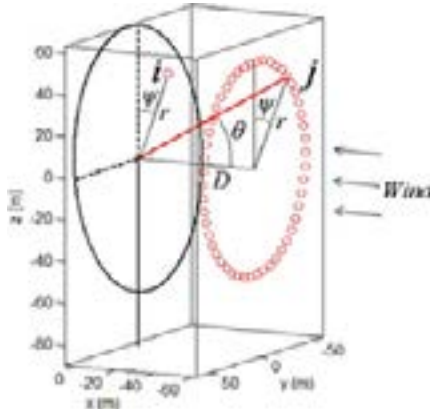


Figure 4: Coordinate system and measurement variables used. The lidar is assumed to be mounted in the wind hub at $(x_h, y_h, z_h) = (0, 0, 0)$.

Components of Measurement Coherence

There are several factors that may cause a decrease in measurement coherence. In addition to wind evolution, error sources that are characteristics of lidar measurements in non-evolving wind fields, such as range weighting and directional bias, will cause a loss of coherence. Figures 5 and 6 compare the components of coherence for three different measurement geometries by showing the measurement coherence that was calculated using the appropriate physical equations with various combination of the error sources included. Figure 5 uses the spectral properties of the TurbSim wind field with exponential wind evolution, while figure 6 uses characteristics of the large eddy simulation (LES) wind field. The decay parameter used with the exponential model is $\alpha = 0.45$. Coherence plots for both wind fields are provided to compare and contrast the simple wind evolution model and the model that is derived from the

LES results. In both figures, each scenario involves a lidar that is located at the hub, measuring wind at a radial distance of $r = 47.25\text{m}$ at an azimuth angle of $\psi = 90^\circ$, but with different preview distances ($D = 24, 58, \text{ and } 130\text{m}$). The curves in figure 5 and 6 do not include the effects of uv or uw correlation in order to highlight the other sources of coherence loss. Although the exact measurement curves differ for the two wind field models, the following trends apply to both scenarios.

When $D = 24\text{m}$, the measurement angle is large, longitudinal coherence (dashed) is relatively high, and the effects of range weighting are insignificant due to the short focal distance. Here, directional bias dominates the overall coherence, with wind evolution causing some degradation at higher frequencies.

When $D = 130\text{m}$, the measurement angle is low, longitudinal coherence is low, due to wind evolution, and range weighting is significant due to the long focal distance. Wind evolution, is the dominant component of measurement coherence, with range weighting adding a further loss of coherence.

For the $D = 58\text{m}$ scenario, all three sources of coherence loss are significant. Directional bias and wind evolution, both have very strong impacts, with range weighting causing an additional loss of coherence.

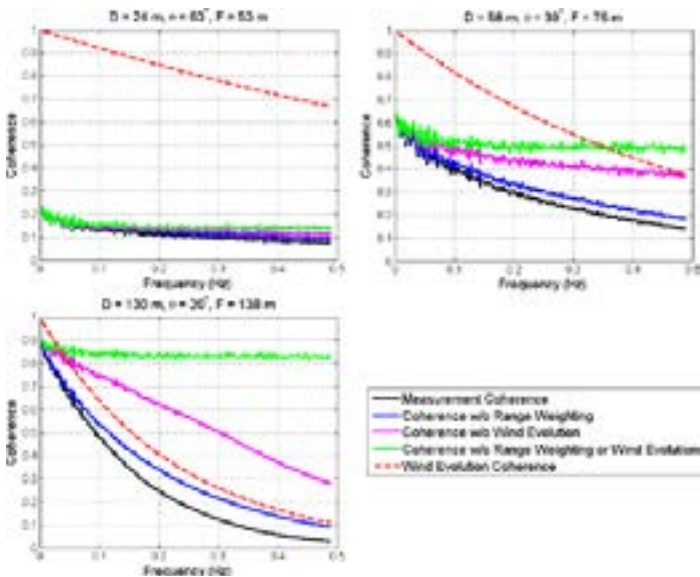


Figure 5: A comparison of the components of measurement of coherence for a scanning LIDAR scenario, with scan radius $r = 47.25\text{m}$ using the Great Plains-Low Level Jet wind field and exponential coherence with $a = 0.45$

Figures 5 and 6 above reveal that the (green) coherence curves from directional bias alone are relatively constant over all frequencies and increase as the measurement angle decreases. Although not shown in figure 5 or 6, when the effects of uv and uw coherence (present in the Great Plains-Low Level Jet wind field) are included, measurement coherence, due to directional bias, changes because of the non-zero correlation between the u and v as well as u and w components. By comparing the green and magenta curves, it can be seen that range weighting adds a significant coherence loss when wind evolution is not included, especially for larger preview distances. However, by comparing the blue and black curves, it is clear that with wind evolution included, range weighting never dominates the overall coherence loss.

Lidar Measurements of Evolving Wind Fields

Two metrics are used to reveal the measurement quality for different scan geometries. The first metric is the “coherence bandwidth,” defined here as the bandwidth where the measurement coherence remains above 0.5. A higher coherence bandwidth yields a better measurement, because more of the measured turbulence spectrum can be used in a wind preview-based controller. The second metric is the integral of measurement coherence, or the area under the coherence curve. The integration is only performed for a bandwidth of about 0.5 hertz (Hz), based on the Nyquist frequency of the LES wind field. A larger area under the coherence curve will yield a better measurement. Results based on the two metrics are similar, but both are provided here for comparison:

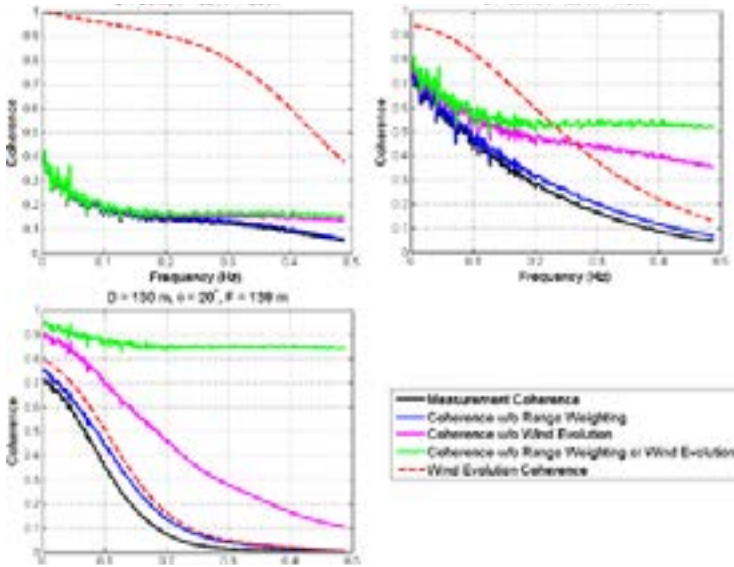


Figure 6: A comparison of the components of measurement of coherence for a scanning LIDAR scenario, with $r = 47.25\text{m}$ using the stable Large Eddy Simulation (LES) wind field and evolution model

The following results compare measurement quality for different scan geometries and reveal the optimal preview distances in terms of maximising the coherence bandwidth or coherence integration. For the exponential wind evolution model, the decay parameter α is varied to show the impact that wind evolution intensity has on optimal preview distance. For the LES-based model, the results reveal what typical preview distances might be in a stable wind field with physics-based wind evolution, but a wind field that is less productive from a wind energy perspective.

Separate results are provided for four different lidar azimuth angles ($\psi = 0^\circ, 90^\circ, 180^\circ, -90^\circ$) because the wind spectra and transverse coherences vary with height and direction. In addition, for the TurbSim generated wind field, the uv and uw correlations will have different impacts on measurement coherence (depending

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on azimuth angle).

The chosen scan geometries are based on the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) 5-megawatt (MW) turbine model. Scan radii of 15.75m, 31.5m, 47.25m, and 63m are investigated, which corresponds to 25%, 50%, 75%, and 100% blade span. For the Great Plains-Low Level Jet scenario, the lidar is located at a height of 90m, but for the LES wind field, the lidar is located at a height of 100m, which is the center of that wind field.

CONCLUSIONS FROM RESULTS OF SIMULATIONS

From the foregoing discussions, lidar simulation results show that for a circular scan pattern, a scan radius close to 70% rotor radius provides the strongest measurement correlation. Small scan radii, such as $r = 0.1R$ produce lower correlations because the measured winds are representative of a smaller portion of the rotor plane. For preview distances roughly equivalent to the rotor radius, the coherence drops as the preview distance increases due to wind evolution. However, preview distance must roughly double before coherence drops by more than 0.1. When knowledge of the wind speed and direction at heights other than hub height is used to determine the scan geometry, measurement coherence can be increased, but at most by 0.1 for $r = 0.7R$ and $24\text{m} < D < 130\text{m}$.

The modified scan pattern (temporal attenuation) improves measurement quality more for longer preview distances. The general scan pattern optimization results show that: (i) as the number of beams increases, the measurement accuracy increases as well and (ii) additional measurement ranges afforded by pulsed lidars improve measurement.

Coherence bandwidth is maximized using shorter preview distances which prevent the coherence at higher frequencies from decaying too much from wind evolution. Measuring the wind farther away than the optimal preview distances causes

wind evolution to become more severe, increasing measurement error as well. The extra preview time provided by longer preview distances are useful when attempting to detect extreme wind events and take necessary action to protect the turbine. However, using coherence bandwidth as a metric, it was revealed that, for a given scan radius, the optimal preview distance is not very sensitive to the amount of wind evolution. Optimal preview distances based on the coherence bandwidth for lidar measurements in the unstable Great plains wind field, are roughly 60m for a scan radius of $r = 31.5\text{m}$, 80m for $r = 47.25\text{m}$, and 120m for $r = 63\text{m}$ for decay parameters less than one. These approximate optimal preview distances are formed by averaging over all four azimuth angles.

Measuring the wind at multiple range gates with pulsed lidar offers the advantage of being able to track wind speeds as they travel towards the turbine as well as allowing measurements at different preview distances to be combined to improve the simultaneous estimation of wind shear and direction. Thus, from controls perspective, a preview measurement at 47.25m or 75% rotor radius for the 5 MW model is the most useful due to maximum power capture near this blade span. The results reveal that the bandwidth of coherent measurements at $r = 47.25\text{m}$ is roughly 0.11Hz based on $\gamma^2 = 0.5$ bandwidth definition.

When comparing results based on coherence bandwidth for different decay parameters, it can be seen that unless the intensity of evolution is very strong, the optimal preview distances are almost the same with wind evolution or without ($a = 0$). Using the integral of coherence as a metric, the optimal preview distances vary considerably as the decay parameter changes.

WIND ENERGY MIX IN NIGERIA

According to the Reglobal analysis, four key modern renewable energy technologies with highest deployment potentials for Africa are modern biomass for cooking; hydropower; wind; and solar power¹⁰. The power sector presents significant opportunity

to be transformed through the increased deployment of renewable energy technologies.

The nature journal of science news.org reports suggest that renewable energy sources such as wind and solar power will make up less than 10% of Africa's total electrical power generation by 2030, (Nature Energy Journal 25/01/ 2021).

This is a very abysmal rate compared to many first world and developing countries. This means that Africa and Nigeria in particular with her teeming population of over 200 million inhabitants needs to wake up from her slumber and begin to deploy wind energy as much as it is currently harping on solar energy as an option for renewable energy. The current scourge of epileptic electricity supplies in Nigeria makes any theoretical model discussions that have capacity to improve the current energy mix a necessity whose time is now.

It is important to note too that wind turbine developments are long term and capital intensive; hence, the Nigerian government through the appropriate ministry must show commitment to the development of wind energy technology in a medium- and long-term mode. The only existing wind farm in the country as at January 2021 is at Lambar Rimi, Katsina state. Continuing on the Lambar Rimi wind farm project, the Reglobal analysis had the caption, "Nigeria to complete 10 MW wind project in Katsina". (March 12, 2021) |



Figure 7: A typical wind farm with wind turbines (courtesy Reglobal analysis as in nature journal of science)

The government of Nigeria, continued the analysis, plans to commission a wind power project with a capacity of 10 MW which is located in the Lambar Rimi area of Katsina State. Katsina wind farm was set to be commissioned in March 2021. The project includes 37 GEVMP wind turbine generators with capacities of 275kW, step-up transformers for each turbine 315KVA/33KV/400V, SCADA system, installation of 2 7.5MVA transformer and accessories. The project began in 2005 under the governor of the state at the time, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua. It was then taken over by the Federal Government in 2007. It initially had a completion period of 24 months; however, the project has been met with several delays. The project commissioning was scheduled for 2012 but it never happened. This project received millions of naira in annual budgetary allocations from the government with no expenditure details.

The above picture leaves one with no doubt that at the moment, Nigeria's implementation of the wind energy is nothing to write home about. This narrative makes it even more expedient for scientists and engineers in the field of wind energy generation to wake up to the challenge before them, viz, moving from theoretical conceptions and frameworks to the field and provide clear road map for the current energy crisis in Nigeria. The government on her part must show commitment to the blue print by partnering with several international and local organizations in turning around the matter under discussion which is providing of electricity to the people.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF LIGHT-ENERGY

The philosophical conceptions of light energy in general and wind energy in particular raises once again the question of the ancient Ionian philosophers, that is, *ex qua materia constituti mundi* which means, of what material is the universe made of? The cosmologies and cosmogonies that arose from these ultimate questions became as it were less profound than the question itself. Thus, light energy with solar energy as a natural example,

metamorphoses into different forms such as wind, solar radiation, etc. Wind energy is a veritable and very safe and promising part of the discussions on renewable energy and safe environment. But again, as we stated in the discussion of the energy mix in Nigeria, the 10MW Lambar Rimi wind farm is still operating at about 25% of its capacity since the entire project is conceived to generate 36MW for a nation of over 200million inhabitants!

Thus, a philosophy of energy will raise a lot of fundamental questions: what constitutes authentic existence in Nigeria with the political will and its attendant religio-ethnic drama as experienced currently in the nation? What constitutes the ultimate solution to the current energy crisis in Nigeria that has further worsened the already deteriorated economic inflation? How can authentic existence be achieved amidst the current unethical standards of politics and civil operations in Nigeria? the rising spate of insecurity, the quest for regional self-determination, the morality of banditry and kidnapping that has now become the order of the day, the whole issue of the value of human life with due regard for human dignity and freedom of choices, and several other existential questions that relate energy and the functionality of the society.

Statistics show that over 60% of the Nigerian populace are living in conditions below the authentic existence conceived by many of the 20th century existentialist philosophers. Poverty as experienced in Nigeria is fast blurring the idea of authentic existence, the frugal comfort that light (electricity) and energy provide as well as what self-actualization implies. The declining economic fortune that these debacles spell also questions the whole issue of the equitable distribution of the world resources, the current migration issues of the young talented Nigerians fleeing to Europe and America for a better life and the future of the Nigerian Nation in a medium term and long-term mode.

Robert-Jan Geerts (2014) et al in their article *Towards a Philosophy of Energy* as contained in *Scientiae Studia Journal* had a detailed analysis of the criteria that a good philosophy of energy

should meet. According to them, “transition to a sustainable energy regime is one of the key global societal challenges for the coming decades. Many technological innovations are in the pipeline, but an uncritical appraisal of anything and everything called green innovation lacks methods for testing both the necessity and the sufficiency of these developments”¹¹.

Continuing this analysis, they argued that the task of the philosophy of energy is to explore and clarify the space in which the so-called energy transition is taking place. This will sketch the fundamentals of such a philosophy and suggests how it might be built upon the work of twentieth century critics of the functioning of energy in society, including Mumford, Bataille, and Heidegger; through the example of flux and potentiality - two apparently opposing conceptions of energy - they proposed that a philosophy of energy allows for a broader perspective on specific problems in energy transition, and illuminates implicit and problematic assumptions behind these problems.¹²

Talking about philosophies of energy, we note that there are at least three lines of thought to be found dealing to a greater or lesser extent with aspects of energy:

- (1) the inquiry into the natural phenomenon of energy;
- (2) the critique of the functioning of energy in society;
- (3) the philosophy of technology.

All three lines of thought contribute the essential ingredients to a fully-fledged philosophy of energy: the first two can be seen as attempts to develop philosophies of energy in their own right, whereas the third guides us towards a more fruitful level of analysis for issues relating to the current energy transition. Some brief elucidation of these philosophies of energy may suffice here:

1. Inquiry into the natural phenomenon of energy

Inquiry into the natural phenomenon of energy stretches back

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to Heraclitus (c.535 c.475 AD) and Aristotle (384-322 AD). Whereas the former allegedly argued that everything changes, the latter noticed that this was not exactly true: although change happens, a lot of things also stay the same. The energy historian R. Bruce Lindsay suggests that, from Aristotle onwards, an unbroken line of inquiry into the concept of energy can be drawn all the way to Albert Einstein, with as common denominator based on the assumption that “the root of the concept is the notion of invariance or constancy in the midst of change” (Lindsay, 1971, p. 383). The domain of these inquiries steadily expanded from mechanical questions on the functioning of levers and pulleys through to thermodynamic phenomena such as combustion, electromagnetism, and the discovery of mass-energy equivalence in the early twentieth century.

We do not need to reiterate this history in any detail here; what is important here involves realizing the exceptional breadth of phenomena that are fruitfully connected with the concept of energy. Over time, these insights have led to increasingly complex technologies for converting one kind of energy into another. windmills convert the linear movement of air into a rotating movement, steam engines convert chemical energy into a rotating movement via heat and pressure, solar panels convert the energy in sunlight into electricity, and, in our homes, our appliances convert electricity back into movement, light, heat, and sound. Arguably, all our activities are understandable simply in terms of converting one kind of energy into another.

There is a specific understanding of energy underpinning all these developments: a quantitative, abstract concept of “the ability to do work” that mutually interconnects a broad range of physical phenomena. This is the first philosophy of energy that we encounter, and most present-day natural scientists subscribe to some similar form of understanding energy. Although the unification of physical phenomena via the concept of energy has been exceptionally successful, conflicting conceptions of energy

do exist. These conceptions are also the result of inquiry into the natural phenomenon of energy, but, rather than relating to the scientific, quantitative paradigm, they appeal to qualitative approaches.

The scientific understanding of energy has enabled society to plug into ever increasing amounts of energy in various forms, but it fails to say much about the *effects* of these developments on society.

As changes in energy practices became increasingly visible and influential in industrial societies, in the late nineteenth century, an interest in energy emerged in the area that can broadly be described as social critique. In the twentieth century, this was picked up by a few great thinkers, and here we do find some ideas on how society relates to energy, and how this relationship developed throughout history. Thinkers like Lewis Mumford, Georges Bataille, and Martin Heidegger fall into this category.

2. Critique of energy in society

In his ground breaking book *Technics and civilization*, Lewis Mumford (2010 [1934]) places energy usage squarely in the middle of his analysis of society. From his perspective, there are four steps in the functioning of energy in society: conversion, production, consumption, and creation.

Some philosophical questions on the issue of energy at the service of the society and human existence in general comes to mind: Is there a maximum creation-to-conversion ratio? Are there different levels of energy consumption at which we attain the same quality of life, by organizing society differently?

However, before plunging into such questions, we take a step back and move onto the work of Georges Bataille, who contests the instrumental conception of energy proposed by Mumford. In *The accursed share*, Bataille (1991 [1949]) suggests that our energy practices are not instrumental to satisfying our needs, but rather it is the other way around; satisfying our needs is a way

of dealing with the excessive emission of energy by the sun. Our growing energy production and consumption simply represent an extension of this natural tendency of life to look for ever increasing accumulation and niches to fill, and to burn off the excess when accumulation is not possible.

Meanwhile, spokespersons for green technology appeal neither to paths of ruthless fossil fuel exploitation nor to sober frugality. Instead, they tend to sketch Bataillean visions of abundance: “the Earth receives more energy from the Sun each hour than humans use in a year”, implying that we simply need to better harness this energy and thereby avoid any such thing as an energy crisis. Another question to be raised could be: Why exactly would our lives become better should we command an even greater amount of energy?

Both Mumford and Bataille develop critiques against the energy practices of their day agreeing on how energy is not guided towards its proper purpose while disagreeing sharply on just what would constitute that proper usage.

One other twentieth-century thinker needs addressing in this context. Bataille appeals to our existence as individuals with access to a certain amount of energy. This represents a rather specific perspective on just what forms the human existence, with a similar perspective playing a key role in the writing of Martin Heidegger, for whom human existence changed radically with the advent of modern technology. Heidegger argues that, in modern times, the only way of understanding the world and ourselves is as a “standing-reserve” that is ready to be put to use. Stored energy proves the purest form of this standing-reserve.

Heidegger reaches this insight in his essay “*The question concerning technology*” (1977 [1954]), in which he searches for the essence of technology. This essence can be found, he holds, in the way that, that which is comes into being. In ancient Greece, the process of coming into being was called *poiesis*, a bringing-forth. This concept served both for that which emerged of its own accord (like a flower) and whatever had a specific

creator (a poem, or a tool). Bringing-forth thus represented a particular form of “unconcealing” that which was previously concealed, one in which Aristotle’s four causes have play. The general process of shifting from concealed to unconcealed was called revealing, from *aletheia*, *veritas* in Latin, and now usually translated as truth.

What is modern technology? It too is a revealing. Only when we allow our attention to rest on this fundamental characteristic does that which is new in modern technology show itself to us. The tendency of modern technology to store and extract energy on demand features here as a crucial moment in history. It is the central characteristic of a new way of revealing.

The very way the world presents itself to us has been changed by this new way of revealing, which Heidegger proceeds to call *enframing* [*Ge-stell*]. But how does humanity relate to this enframing? Because modern technology remains a human invention, one might assume we control it or can at least remain outside of its scope, but this does not prove the case. Although we might have put it in place, we have no control over the way of revealing.

The inquiry into the natural phenomenon of energy and the critique of energy in society both point to the universal applicability of the concept.

A philosophy of energy might help tackle issues in energy transition via conceptual analysis, critical reflection on argumentation, and raising the level of abstraction, while also broadening the playing field by drawing from a range of sources. It also problematizes the concept of energy neutrality as the ultimate target for energy transition by emphasizing the importance of temporality in our energy systems.

The fact that energy is understood as something storable proves essential here. Energy is here patiently waiting; this represents what we propose calling *potentiality*, *something static* that can be put to use at the flick of a switch

Heidegger notes how this is a new phenomenon; it is the merit of modern technology to have access to energy in the form of potentiality: “but does this not hold true for the old windmill as well? No. Its sails do indeed turn in the wind; they are left entirely to the wind’s blowing. But the windmill does not unlock energy from the air currents in order to store it”¹³.

Energy as conveyed in the example of the traditional windmill, will be more amenable to the philosophical concept of flux. The crucial difference between flux and potentiality therefore revolves around whether or not humanity *controls* it.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion then, a generalized philosophy of energy will be able to deal with developments in what is known broadly as the energy transition. A philosophy of energy would be able to explore and clarify the space in which the so-called energy transition is taking place. The philosophy of energy would help in tackling issues inherent in energy transition through conceptual analysis, critical reflection on argumentation, and raising the level of abstraction, whilst simultaneously broadening the playing field by drawing on a range of sources.

‘Energy transition’ is not simply a technological and economic problem but also an epistemological, cultural, anthropological and even metaphysical one. What will be the consequences of our necessary departure from ‘petro-modernity’, that is, from the mode of living that came with fossil fuels to modern times that shape our current age of the Anthropocene? The framework of the philosophy of light-energy in general and wind energy in particular will be able to raise ultimate questions on authentic existence and frugal comfort that electricity and energy need raises in the Nigerian context.

Endnotes

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**RALPH BARTON PERRY'S 'THEORY OF VALUE'
AS A TOOL FOR DISCERNING
HUMAN MOTIVATION IN PRIESTLY FORMATION**

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Abstract

In the best of times, the task of forming young men for the Catholic priesthood is a complex one. Yet, we are in such times that only the presumptuous would dare argue that things are not downright perplexing. Those directly entrusted with this task in seminaries and other houses of formation are at times not even sure what else they could do. They engage candidates for formation whose goodwill and appropriate disposition cannot be ascertained. Nevertheless, they forge ahead with courage sustained by hope, that the Lord who calls and whose task they have accepted to fulfil, will show the way through the maze and complexities that formation has become in our time and age. Thus, it is an imperative that the effort to seek for better and improved ways of appropriately engaging in the task of forming young men for the Catholic Priesthood should be a never ending one. I propose here, a perspective which though pertains to axiology, nevertheless bears relevance to the said task. It is an approach which could, hopefully, be developed as a module, in aid of the formation process. Adopting an analytic methodology, it takes 'the theory of value as interest' as proposed by Ralph Barton Perry, to highlight certain elements of it, while indicating what could be included in an effort at evolving a model for the fulfilment of the task of forming priests for the Catholic Priesthood.

Key Words: Axiology, Formation, Interest, Value.

1.0 Introduction

In the best of times, the task of forming a human person is not an easy one. Yet we are in such times that only the presumptuous would be bold to say things are not complex, if not perplexing. Society has become secularized and materialistic, social and cultural norms which were hitherto relied upon to mould the minds of the young have all but broken down. Those entrusted with the task of forming candidates for the priesthood work with candidates whose goodwill and appropriate disposition towards the process are not always altruistic. Nevertheless, they forge ahead, with courage sustained by hope, that the Lord who called them and whose task they have accepted to fulfil, will show the way through the complexities that formation in our time and age has become.

This paper has chosen to contribute to the discourse from the perspective which though pertains to axiology, nevertheless, bears relevance to the task at hand. It is an attempt at proposing an idea that could, hopefully, be developed as a module in the formation process. It highlights certain elements of Ralph Barton Perry's theory of value that are relevant in this regard while indicating what could be included in the development of a module for the fulfilment of the task of forming young men for the Catholic priesthood. It should be noted that this is not from the perspective that the programme of formation is inadequate. Rather, it seeks to highlight a tool that can enhance the process with a view to attaining better results.

This paper begins by drawing an outline of some of the difficulties faced in formation today that make the call for an enhancement of the process necessary. It then presents a brief analysis of what axiology represents, which will provide the background for the examination of the theory of value proposed by Ralph Barton Perry. It will proceed with an analysis of certain salient elements of Perry's theory and conclude by indicating the aspects of the theory that might be useful in relation to the formation process in Catholic Seminaries. \

2.1. Formation for the Catholic Priesthood

Formation could be categorized as the process of moulding the character of those who believe they have been called by God to be his special ministers as priests so that in their knowledge and disposition, they may be fitting for the special role to which they feel called. It is, therefore, a process that involves a building up of and focusing of the intellect and will of candidates for the priesthood, so that in their outlook and disposition, they will be genuine representatives of Christ and fitting tools in the hand of God for the salvation of the people of their time. The New Ratio calls it a “journey of discipleship” that gives “shape and structure to the identity of the seminarian and the priest and make him capable of that gift of self to the Church.”¹

An easy analogy to this is the process of training recruits into an elite military unit. It does require the breaking down of their individual perspectives and rebuilding same according to the demands and peculiar orientation of a fighting unit. This is what the Lord himself, sought to do when he called his disciples to walk with him and in the process, learn from him and come to know him. Thus, Pope Francis likened formation to working on “‘uncut diamonds,’ to be formed patiently and carefully, respecting the conscience of the individual, so that they shine among the People of God.”² It is therefore the experience of a disciple, who approaches Christ and allows himself to be conformed ever more to Him.³

This process, in our time, is carried out in a formal manner in specialised institutions called seminaries. A seminary is therefore a special institution in which those who feel called to serve God and society in a special way as priests are trained/formed. This process has four major aspects, namely: Human, Academic, Spiritual, Missionary and Pastoral aspects. In our clime, this process spans a minimum of eight years.

On the one hand, given the demands of the role that priests play in the life and faith of the People of God, the importance of a process that delivers well-prepared priests cannot be overstated. On the other hand, the complexities of life and society today are

such that the process of formation, more than ever before, calls for a level of thoroughness that cannot be over-emphasised. Society is more complex, and the prior life and exposure of candidates make the task of formation even more difficult.

2.2. Problems of Formation in Our Time

Allusions have been made above to problems in formation in our time. Expressions like confusion and complexities have been used. The point is that society has become quite complex, and candidates come forward with a mixed bag of influences and motives, such that some products of the process now give cause for concern. How often have we had cases of priests who were excellent seminarians becoming sources of embarrassment soon after they were ordained? Could they have had certain character traits and attributes that were not known or affected by the process of formation? There are increasing signs of a tendency towards taking liberty with established order and norms and several other anomalies. As a result, the approach and orientation to ministry by some appear skewed. What, with the unremitting appeal of the phenomenon of ‘healing ministry’? Many priests have been known to even defy their bishops in pursuit of such activities while it remained glaring that interest in them is motivated, not so much by apostolic zeal, but by the spoils that accrue therefrom. One could also mention instances wherein a priest exhibits such level of ignorance in matters material to the core of his ministry that one wonders if he learnt anything while in the seminary. Could it be that he was not taught, or it was the case that he just was not interested enough to pay attention?

On their part, members of formation team in the various seminaries strive very hard to follow and exhaust the prescribed curricula. They, therefore, rightly feel embarrassed when confronted with situations like those indicated above. A plausible opinion in their favour is that the same programmes successfully produce very excellent priests whose priestly ministry are a source of pride and hope. So, what went wrong in the case of those who do not meet the mark?

It has been the tradition of the Church to continually evaluate and re-appraise the programme and processes of formation to ensure that it continually meets needs of every age and time. Such efforts have produced landmark documents like *Optatam Totius* and *Presbyterorum Ordinis* of the Second Vatican Council to the *New Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis* (The Gift of Priestly Vocation) by the Sacred Congregation for Clergy in 2017.

While the general programme of formation is regularly subjected to reviews and updating, it is also important that mechanisms are regularly updated to strive to ascertain the disposition of the candidates for formation. With the growing complexity of society, occasioned by the collapse of the norms and values that hitherto held her together, as well as the negative influences to which candidates are now exposed before coming into the seminary for formation, it is imperative that particularly efforts are directed at ensuring that candidates for formation have the correct perception of and appropriate motivation for the priesthood.

3.1. Axiology: A Brief Configuration

Axiology is a branch of philosophy that concerns itself with unravelling the dynamics involved in the very ubiquitous activity of man known as valuation. Almost at all times, we engage in a process of subjecting the content of our cognition to valuation. The result of this process is that we show preference for certain things; choose some in place of others; and we are disposed to certain situations and things while others repel us. Axiology seeks to understand the reasons why we show these preferences. It strives to isolate the genus, value. Not to just enumerate and catalogue instances of value, but attempt to answer the question, ‘what is value *per se*?’ This is the kind of question that Plato proposed when he asked, ‘what is justice?’ while insisting that he was not interested in instances of justice, but in the genus justice itself.

Since its origins as a specialised branch of philosophy at the turn of the 20th century, distinguished philosophers have

thrown themselves into the task of isolating the genus value, and several responses have been proposed. One particular response that is relevant to the theme I have chosen is that of Ralph Barton Perry . He had noted the complication in the nature of value. He observed that value “seems to be at one and the same time relative to the individual and also binding on him.”⁵ He illustrated this with our experience of beauty which is, on the one hand, an emotional attitude towards an object, and on the other hand, the attributing to the object, a worthiness to evoke a like attitude.⁶ So Perry sought to find the genus of value so that when it is established, it will form a foundation for both the subjective and objective features that manifest themselves, even within a singular experience of value.

This quest took Perry beyond the ordinary phenomenon of valuation to an analysis of the dynamics of the human mind that is the subject in every situation of valuation. Thus, he proposed a definition of value derived from an analysis of the processes of the human mind.

3.2. Perry’s Value as Interest

Perry noted the characteristic of the human mind to be for some things and against other things; to view some things with favour and others with disfavour. He calls this the “bias of the subject toward or away from an object.”⁷ He believes that this duality is a function of the motor-affective characteristic of the living mind. This is what manifests itself in various forms, such as liking and disliking, desire and aversion, will and refusal, or seeking and avoiding. This motor-affective attitude of human life, Perry calls *interest*.

For Perry then, this is the original source and the constant feature of value. In his words:

That which is an object of interest is *eo ipso* invested with value. Any object, whatever it be, acquires value when any interest, whatever it be, is taken in it; just as anything, whatsoever becomes a target when anyone whosoever aims at it.⁹

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In other words, value is any object of any interest. He proposed the following equation to present his view in the simplest of terms: “X is valuable = interest is taken in X.” For him, this is value in the elementary, primordial and generic sense.¹⁰

Perry therefore, builds his conception of value around interest. According to him:

It follows that any variation of interest or of its object will determine a variety of value; that any derivative of interest or its object will determine value in a derived sense; and that any condition of interest or its object will determine a conditional value. *In short, interest being constitutive of value in the basic sense, theory of value will take this as its point of departure and centre of reference; and will classify and systematize values in terms of the different forms which interest and their objects may be found to assume.*¹¹

Thus, value is a specific relation into which things possessing any ontological status whatsoever, whether real or imaginary, may enter with interested subjects.

What emerges from this is the central role that interest plays. Interest as configured by Perry means much more than mere curiosity or when referring to things we like. In fact, it covers all the attitudes of man that mark him out as a being that acts on behalf of what concerns him. Understanding Perry’s notion of interest is therefore very central, not only for making sense out of his theory, but also for the purpose I have chosen to apply it.

3.3.1. Interest: A Psychological Connotation

Ralph Barton Perry did not content himself to the regular everyday configuration of interest. To establish its parameters in respects of its role in defining values, he went beyond its everyday application to seek out that particular and peculiar feature that distinguishes the human person in the process of choice-making. That is, he sought to identify the special factor(s) at play that

distinguish an instinctive response to stimuli from what might be termed a ‘considered choice.’ He examined attributes like internal organisation, individuality, tendency and adaptation and found that though they may serve in distinguishing life in broad terms, they nevertheless are inadequate in providing an explanation for the very specialised pattern that choosing and deciding assumes in the human person. He however settled for what he calls *Prospiscience which stands for the capacity of the human person to act in the light of expectation*.¹²

Perry noted that the need for self-preservation and food gathering is hardly sufficient to explain the vast array of a person’s special desires and aspirations. According to him,

It is characteristic of him (the human person) to be primarily concerned with the freight which he carries; and to set sail for distant parts, rather than merely keep afloat. It is this creative and adventurous aspect of life for which the narrower biological categories fail to provide, and which indicate the presence of a capacity to direct action by hope, fear and expectation.¹³

It is here that the characterisation that lifts man into a plane different from that of mere organisms is found. The human person emerges then from the strictly biological sphere into the psychological sphere while still retaining his biological antecedents with its encircling environment.¹⁴

What this means is a spotlighting of that area of human behaviour that is termed purposive. In ordinary language, terms like *aimed, directed, intended, in order to, for the sake of, with a view to*, and several others are used to specify this category of human actions. The contrasts are termed *accidental, instinctive and random occurrences*.

Thus, Perry holds that “the key to a man’s bias is not to be found in the results of his action, but in what he expects of it.”¹⁵ The human person acts for a purpose and his actions are termed purposive because they are performed for their expected

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effect(s). None of such actions or even responses, is selected at random. Rather, each is chosen for its perceived relation to what is desired.¹⁶

What we find here is that prospiscience, which stands for the capacity of man to act in the light of expectation, captures that human tendency to act for a purpose. Thus, for Perry, an interest emerges, when we encounter an object, a situation, an ideal or whatever, and we establish a nexus between what we expect and what that object, situation or ideal promises.¹⁷

To understand this, let us go on to examine the two principal components of this configuration of interest. They are the *governing propensity* and what Perry calls *the subordinate or auxiliary response*. These two form the axis on which he pegged his configuration of interest.

3.3.2. Two Operative Principles in Interest

The governing propensity, as employed by Perry in his definition of interest, coincides with what Edward Tolman calls *determining adjustment* in his article, "Instinct and Purpose."¹⁸ In both instances, it connotes the tendency on the basis of which a prevailing circumstance constitutes a stimulus for which a response is required. One may wish to identify the tendency to avoid pain by whatever means possible, as the governing propensity in the case of a dog that scampers behind the obstacle when the whip is taken down. While, in the case of Socrates, it would be the overriding sense of obligation to obey the law regardless the cost, rather than escaping from prison to save his life.

The governing propensity, therefore, is that general set which is, at any given time, in control of the organism. It is what initiates effort. According to Perry, "whatever excites endeavour, inaugurates the very state in which that endeavour is to terminate."¹⁹

The auxiliary responses on the other hand, are the acts by which the governing propensity is executed. They have the nature

of being tentative since they are selected based on their relevance to the end in view. There is no guarantee at the time they are executed that they will bring the desired end. All that the agent knows is that he has chosen them by the results they promise. These results are sought for in view of the governing propensity. Herein, lies the link that gives character to an interested act.

From the foregoing, one finds that an act of interest is synonymous with an action that is purposive. Therefore, Perry holds that our actions are never entirely innocuous, except they fall into the category of accidental, spontaneous or instinctive actions. According to him, “most human actions, instead of being born *de novo* at the moment of performance, merely pass over from an implicit or partial state to an explicit or complete state.”²⁰ They unfold in a serial order, leading on to the goal that is desired or that is in view.

Yervent Krikorian accedes to this when he notes that in ordinary conception, purposive action “is determined in terms of foresight, provision, or conscious desires.” According to him, “the idea of what one wants comes first, and action brings this idea into concrete existence.”²¹

In general terms, therefore, one can conclude with Perry that *purposiveness* can be ascribed to an “act of which it can be said that its occurrence is due to its promise or forecast.”²² On the contrary, when an act is called *random* it is implied that it is of the nature of pure reflex. The purposive therefore, is that which is meant or intended to be. The agent of the act construes the situation in terms of something ulterior and views it in the light of some aspect or relation that transcends the given and present fact.

4.1. Perry’s Value Theory and Priestly Formation

Perry has defined value as the object of any interest. Whatever it is, the moment interest is taken in it, becomes a value. This means that anything whatsoever acquires value for an agent whenever he takes interest of whatever kind in it. The analysis

of interest revealed remarkably fascinating elements: Values are not limited to objects that we own or aspire to own; they are not limited to concepts and ideals; they cover all facets of human life. Value is the operative principle in our process of decision-making. Not only regarding those things we hold in high esteem, desire, attracted to, and so on, but also those things that are negative, that we reject, that repel us, that we hate and so on. It is the kind of interest that an object, situation, ideal or whatever, elicits from us that determines the kind of value it acquires for us.

Given the foregoing, the priesthood can be considered a value. In which case, there is a governing propensity for which the priesthood is only an auxiliary response. Put differently, there is a higher end for which the priesthood is a means. In this scenario, choices have been made, and those choices were made based on their perceived relevance to the desired goal.

If we accept the foregoing as a credible assumption, then, the question can be asked: what kind of interest gave birth to the value that is expressed in the choice of a priestly vocation? In other words, what is the general set or governing propensity to which the priesthood is an auxiliary response? A clear answer to this question would require a brief analysis of the factors involved in the process. They are:

a.) The Act of Cognition: This occurs when we individuate an object. What is crucial here is that the candidate individuates it, then an interest is taken in it. One cannot develop interest in what he is not aware of. I opine that it is how the society perceives the priesthood that provide young people the need for them to embrace it. It is the perception that it receives that determines the kind of interest it generates. If positive, it will be respected and considered worthy of embracing; and if negative, it will be derided and not considered worthy of giving one's life to. So, like in all value situations, perception or cognition is the first crucial step. Thus, for proper formation, it is important the process takes into account the candidate's perception and conception of the priesthood.

b.) Determination by the Governing Propensity: The nature of interest generated is determined by the governing propensity. This, we remember, is that general *set*, which at any given time, is in control of the organism. It is what initiates effort. The governing propensity provides the basis on which a prevailing circumstance constitutes a stimulus for which a response is required. This is what goes into constituting the kind of interest that the object cognised (in this case, the priesthood) elicits. This is very crucial. It is this propensity that will show whatever has been cognised as an opportunity to be utilised or a danger to run away from. This translates or interprets what is cognised in the light of expectation. Thus, the interest generated will acquire a special character depending on the perceived utility of the object in relation to a goal. So, the interest might be positive, it might be negative, primary (as an end in itself) or secondary (as a means to an ulterior end), it might be spiritual or mundane. It may attract, it may repel. Whatever the kind of interest that is generated is the kind of value that the object acquires.

c.) Subordinate Response: This refers to the means chosen with a view to actualise the promise the object represents or to nullify the threat that it poses. In this instance, there is a choice on what to do. Whatever means is chosen is tentative in nature. It may deliver the desired goal or may fail to deliver. It is nevertheless the chosen means. On this, if the governing propensity (general *set*) is love of God and humanity, the priesthood could be perceived as a means of serving God and humanity. The value that it will hold and what it will represent will however be very different if one aspires after greatness and personal ego rather than the service of God and humanity.

These factors come into play in the determination of a value. They should, therefore, be taken into consideration in the process of discernment of the vocation of a candidate in formation for the priesthood. The nature of a candidate's response to his call to the priesthood would be determined by how he perceives the priesthood at the time he recognizes the call. That perception

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goes a long way in determining what kind of answer the response to the call will be. *It is what he cognised the priesthood to be that constituted it into a fitting means for realising the unfulfilled phase of his governing propensity.*

4.2. Possible Ends with the Priesthood as the Means

Some ‘cynics’ in the West would react to the news of the great numbers in our seminaries with questions about the socio-economic condition of our country. The thinking is, ‘if such great numbers are flocking into the seminaries, it is because the priesthood is wrongly perceived as an easy route out of the harsh prevailing economic conditions.’ Such thinking would suggest that if the economic conditions here were to improve considerably, the numbers flocking into the seminaries would drop. One may be tempted to reject such claims, but it would be wise we examine the reality on grounds to find out if any aspect of this could be true.

In the first instance, it must be affirmed that the call to the priesthood is of divine origin. Let us also affirm that the call can come through any means, even most mundane ones. If these two assertions are not in doubt, it remains to be added that it is very important that calls to the priesthood, via mundane means, need to be purified during the years of formation. In other words, if a child gets attracted to the priesthood because the Reverend Father owns the only car in the village, it is important that while in formation he grows to understand and accept the fact that there is more to being a priest than owning and riding a car.

Furthermore, there is no denying the fact that the priesthood gives one an automatic ticket into the higher strata of society. The people revere the priest so much and many of them are willing to deprive themselves in order to provide for him. Nothing can be more touching than to see a poor woman bringing a hen to offer to the priest when her own family cannot slaughter one for a meal. From the moment of ordination all through his life, he is revered, supported, protected and provided for by the people. We are aware that in many places, people from a priest’s home

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and all well-wishers gather as soon as he is ordained, levy themselves, in order to give him a car (ostensibly for his work). Meanwhile, a majority of those making the contribution cannot dream of owning one themselves. At that same time, the peers of such newly ordained have not even secured jobs, that is, if they have completed their university education. From the moment of ordination till the time of death therefore, he is accorded such honour and privileges that cannot be guaranteed by any other profession or calling. Yemi Akinlato supports this view when he affirmed that:

An individual who is guaranteed a life-long employment and other benefits accruing therefrom in the priestly job centre will seize the opportunity even without conviction as to the vocation or job itself. Some aspirants to the priesthood do not want to lose the opportunity such as this given on a platter of gold.²³

The same view is captured in the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria when it noted:

While one must avoid falling into the error of attributing vocations to poverty in the land, the fact cannot be ignored that for some, it would also mean that the alternative to queuing at the embassy is queuing at the seminary gate as prospective candidates for the priesthood. Some are attracted to the priesthood because they see in it a means of upward social and economic mobility. Yet, there are many who are attracted to the priesthood by the recognition of the nobility of service.²⁴

If these are true, it is only necessary to be reminded that by divine providence, such mundane considerations could serve the will and purposes of God to attract someone to the priesthood. The evidence of the problems that have been severally highlighted

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supports the opinion that many come into the calling with the wrong mind-set and remain with it for a considerable length of time.

The implication of Perry's theory in relation to the forgoing is that if the nature of the value one has in respect of any object, real or otherwise, can be identified, then the nature of the interest that engendered it becomes apparent. Inversely, if you can identify one's interest, then you can pinpoint the kind of value and object he works for. When we apply this to the disturbing trends we find in the priestly ministry, we may wonder if the cognition that provided the object of interest (in the case of priesthood for the problematic priests) did not promise something that is not exactly altruistic in relation to the vocation? For example, the single mindedness with which some priests go after material goods make it inevitable to question what may have attracted them to the priesthood in the first place. If, from the onset, one clamours and lobbies for "plum" assignments, what are his values and his goal for which he considers the priesthood a means? What is such a person's perception of the priesthood?

These questions can go on and on, but it suffices to keep in mind that a thing is what it is to us, by virtue of the nature of interest it elicits in us. There is a mind-set (which Perry calls the Governing Propensity). Cognition presents us with an object which we may believe to be useful for the fulfilment of the terms of the mind-set. This engenders interest, which in turn translates the object into a value in consonance with the character of the interest that was generated.

4.3. Applying Perry's "Value as Interest" as a Tool for Priestly Formation

The programme of formation must take into cognizance that which has always been true: not all motives for wanting to embrace the priesthood are altruistic. In this case, we have already established that whatever the motive is at the beginning of one's formation for the priesthood does not really matter. What matters is that one's motives for wanting to become a priest

Agora: Journal of Philosophical & Theological Studies should eventually become altruistic and holy.

This awareness must form a basis from which to structure and direct the work of formation. It comes therefore, as a tool for discernment. In this regard, it must be re-emphasised that formation and selection are two different exercises. Awareness for discernment in this case, is not conceived as a tool for selection, but an aid to formation. Discerning that there may be skewed expectations, efforts are directed at correcting those expectations.

This is important at all levels of the formation process. The first step should be at the Diocesan Vocations Team level where an attempt must be made to clearly and carefully discern if there exists a genuine vocation. A well-trained and experienced team can strive as much as is possible, aided by the Holy Spirit, to go beyond the claims of the candidate to understand the nature and authenticity of the call to which the candidate is responding. Then, the seminary Formators and all the various levels of assessment that the candidate will pass through, till the final decision to ordain a candidate, can greatly benefit from this awareness too. Thus, knowledge of the axiological configuration of value as interest can be a great help at these various levels of discernment. If we have the tools and the appropriate environment, determining the candidate's true perception of what his calling is should be a *conditio sine qua non* for approval for ordination.

One understands too well, just as Shakespeare observed, 'there is no act to find the mind's construction on the face.' Yet, it is very important that we recognise how much havoc the failure to identify and correct misconceptions of the priesthood have caused. Efforts should not be spared then to discern, to the extent possible, wherever these misconceptions exist and to correct them.

The study of axiology needs to be integrated into the academic curriculum of philosophy for the seminarians. In this way, candidates can be helped to realise that the skill to question, which philosophy imparts, should first be applied to the self.²⁵ This will bring them to appreciate and take cognisance of the dynamics involved in the process of choosing, liking, loving

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and preferring and so forth. This is what one could refer to as 'formation in values': Being brought to an appreciation of the motor-affective processes involved in the making of choices and in the exercise of preferences. 'Knowledge', they say, 'is power'. Awareness could serve as a very powerful motivation to right whatever may be wrong. This is particularly important since there is the possibility that an interest may elude one's cognition. Which means, the candidate may not necessarily be aware of the true content or nature of his interest. The right discernment will therefore be beneficial to him. In this regard, programmes and activities need to be developed that would act as aides to this end.

One cannot but observe that there is so much furtiveness in the life of those in formation these days. So much is done for the benefit of formators' observation. Often, the real self is kept far away from observation until the supposed moment of freedom. It is obvious from the foregoing that for as long as this remains the case, the true motivations and the genuine character of a candidate will not benefit from the process of formation. Systems must, therefore, be evolved that will engender trust on the part of the candidates so that they may open themselves up to formation. It is in this regard that the often clamoured-for 'auto-formation' can find its true meaning and relevance: wherein, a candidate freely opens up himself to embrace the process that seeks to help him become conformed to Christ whose 'sample' he is preparing himself to become for the people of his time.

5.0. Conclusion

This effort was intended to highlight the important role our perception plays in determining what we make of things. This is the background to our process of decision-making, of choosing and of exercising preference. The theory of value proposed by Ralph Barton Perry shows this very clearly. The analysis leading up to the definition of value as interest reveals that a thing acquires value depending on what that thing is in relation to our general mind-set or governing propensity.

From this analysis, one can infer that the difficulties in the priesthood; difficulties that turn the formator's job into a nightmare, may derive from perceptions of the priesthood that produce a set of priorities and objectives that are at variance with what is generally expected. This paper recommends therefore that the truth be affirmed, that not all motives for embracing the priesthood are altruistic. Perry's theory shows us why we cannot afford to ignore this fact. It is therefore the thrust of this paper that affirming this could be a useful tool in the hand of the formator so that he can better discern what the motives of the candidate are, and in the process engage in a meaningful and productive formation exercise.

Endnotes

¹The Congregation for the Clergy, "the Gift of the Priestly Vocation" in *New Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*, (Vatican City: Pauline Publications of Africa, December 2016), 8.

²Pope Francis, *Address to the Plenary of the Congregation for Clergy* (Vatican City, 03 October, 2014): *L'Osservatore Romano*, 226 (04 October 2014), 8.

³Ibid.

⁴Ralph Barton Perry is an American Philosopher who lived between 1876 and 1957. He set out the core of his axiological theory in his major works: *General Theory of Value: Its meaning and Basic Principles Construed in Terms of Interest*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1926) and *Realms of Value: A Critique of Human Civilization*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954).

⁵Ralph Barton Perry, *General Theory of Value: Its meaning and Basic Principles Construed in Terms of Interest*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), p. 25. [Hereafter cited as GTV.].

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid. p.115

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⁸Ibid. See also, "The Definition of Value," *The Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Method* 11 (1914), where he calls it "a general kind of reaction," a "subjects liking or disliking." pp. 149-150.

⁹GTV, pp. 115-116.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 116.

¹¹GTV, p. 116. Emphasis is mine.

¹²See Ibid. p. 180.

¹³Ibid., pp. 181-182.

¹⁴GTV, p. 183. The point here is that Perry identifies a faculty at work that cannot be explained either by man's biological or physiological configuration. He identifies its operation with the mind

¹⁵Ibid, p.212.

¹⁶See GTV., p. 209. Perry credits William James with pioneering the conception of consciousness being primarily a selective agency. According to James, "consciousness is at all times primarily a selective agency." (*Principles of Psychology*, [London: Macmillan and Co., 1901], Vol. I, p.139). Perry subscribes to this when he affirms "our senses themselves are organs of selection. Attention, perception, thought, taste, and the moral will are all modes of choice by which a man's personality and his world are finally individuated and stabilized." GTV., p. 209.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 183.

¹⁸See Edward C. Tolman, "Instinct and Purpose," *Journal of Philosophy*, 27(1920), p. 20.

¹⁹GTV, p. 194.

²⁰Ibid., p. 98; GTV, p. 206.

²¹Yervent H. Krikorian, "The Meaning of Purpose," *Journal of Philosophy*, 27 (1930), p. 97.

²²Ralph Barton Perry, "A Behaviorist View of Purpose," *Journal of Philosophy*, 17(1921) p. 103.

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²³Yemi Akinlotan, “Materialism and Christ’s Call to Discipleship” in Charles Hamawa (ed.) *Proceedings of the National Seminaries Committee Workshop*, Ibadan, 2005, pp.169-170.

²⁴The Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria CBCN), *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*, December 2005, #5.

²⁵See *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sarcedotalis*, no.67

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**GENDER DISCOURSE AND NATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA**

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Abstract

There have been growing agitations for gender equality in Nigerian society in particular and the African continent in general. Consequently, a plethora of philosophical theories and literature on gender equality and gender inclusiveness became ubiquitous in the philosophical landscape as a society is built on the provisions of laws to foster fairness in human relations. Despite these concerted efforts toward gender equality, society still struggles to fully evolve from its firm patriarchal foundations. This slow pace in eliminating gender inequality and producing a society devoid of gender bias is seen in African states in general. African women are becoming more vocal and proactive in their dissatisfaction with the gender discrimination in society. African females and feminist philosophers have struggled for recognition and societal acceptance and implementation of some of the laws that have been made at national and international levels to ensure the revisitation of policies that reiterate the need for women to enjoy equal opportunities with their male counterparts especially concerning female participation in politics. This paper is in pursuit of gender equality within the crucible of gender equity and equal opportunities in the political, economic, socio-cultural, educational and other sectors that require the services of human resources. The goal is to foster an atmosphere of partnership and complementarity between both genders, where the female gender can complement the male gender in every area that will require the unique expertise and makeup of either gender. The paper uses critical and analytical methods.

Introduction

The advent of feminism and the feminist movements that emerged in the later parts of the 19th and 20th centuries marked a major shift in the predisposition toward gender balance in every facet of the world economy. The brewing agitations for gender equality in a society that was hitherto swept underfoot became a matter that held primacy in human civilization. Consequently, a plethora of literature on gender equality and gender inclusiveness became ubiquitous in the literary landscape and scholarship as a society built on the provisions of feminist ideologies to foster balance and fairness in human relations. Despite these concerted efforts toward gender equality and balance, society still struggles to fully evolve from its firm patriarchal foundations. While the Western world has recorded remarkable strides and progress in gender balance, the African society still leans on a fragile clasp, held by patriarchal norms, and has taken more time in inculcating gender equity. This has led to the emergence of various African feminist literature in the 21st century that attends to gender discrimination to produce a society where there is no gender exclusivity and where women would also be properly represented at the echelons of power. This essay is a discursive work that examines gender imbalance and its implication on national development in a bid to contribute to the already existing body of knowledge that reiterates that bridging the gender gap is a non-negotiable component of achieving sustainable growth and development in Nigeria.

Theorizing Gender

Gender is understood as the classification of the human species into male and female, or man-woman categories and their projected reconciliations. However, gender as a theory transcends much more than a binary identification of humans into these categories.¹ Gender is, “a social construction of the relations between male and female in terms of roles in power-sharing, decision making, division of labour and remuneration

on labour both at home and in the workplace”². Chinwokwu and Arop corroborate this view when they note that “gender is socially constructed and specific to a cultural milieu within a geographical boundary”³. Idike buttresses this view in succinct terms when they add that “gender is more of a cultural category, underpinned by socially constructed (and contested) beliefs and rules about identity and sexuality”⁴.

These cultural variations that guide human relationships are points of constraints and have implications on how individual actors may perceive their identity and well being in society as well as their responses to opportunities. In a male dominant society, the female gender falls at the receiving end of many of these socio-cultural laws and norms. The role of a woman in any society is predicated upon the provisions of culture as these cultural norms dictate what a woman should or should not do. This means that what a woman is expected to do in a particular culture is different from what a woman is expected to do in another distinct culture. This is why Samuel and Segun observes that “gender has been viewed as the socially constructed attributes, opportunities and relationships associated with being male and female and which determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context”⁵.

National Development

National development refers to the sustainable and holistic growth and development of a nation and its citizens. The growth of a nation is predicated upon how much of an impact the nation has had on its citizens. The Federal Government of Nigeria in promoting the third National Development plan of 1980 explains the ramifications of development thus: True development must mean the development of the human person, the unfolding and realization of his creative potential, enabling him to improve his material conditions of living through the use of resources available to him. It is a process by which man’s personality is enhanced, and it is that enhanced personality, creative, organized and disciplined-which is the moving force behind the

socioeconomic transformation of any society.

According to Okoli, “Onabanjo and M’bayo opine that national development should be man-oriented and not institution oriented”⁶. They add that “for Elugbe, national development refers among other things, to the growth of the nation in terms of unity, education, economic well-being and mass participation in government”⁷. Participation and representation are, accordingly, core elements of democracy. According to R.C Okeke and Ifeagwazi, “national development refers to nationwide development in a nation-state and implies the well-being of a manifest majority of the citizens of such a state in material terms”⁸ For Idike, it connotes decreases in inequality levels as well as the guarantee of the security of lives and property.⁹

Development does not just entail equipping the populace with the financial wherewithal for their basic needs alone but an increase in the production of goods and services with a concomitant increase in income leading to an improved standard of living.¹⁰ National development can also be described as the overall development or a collective socio-economic, political as well as religious advancement of a country or nation¹¹. National development is therefore predicated upon the holistic development of the human resources in a nation expressed in an improved standard of living, and the political, socio-economic, and educational growth that underpins the sustainability of the nation.

Gender and National Development

The general friction that exists when discussing the issue of gender is the reality that women are left out in policymaking, and are discriminated against in matters of economy, opportunities and education in general. Even in the developed nations of the world, women are still craving full support and the opportunity to showcase their expertise in diverse sectors. Data from the Northern zones report very low participation of women in politics and public life. While women in Southern Nigeria gained the

right to vote in 1959, it was not until 1979 – twenty years after – that Northern Nigerian women were allowed to vote¹². Women continue to be under-represented in the National Assembly where they occupy only 6.4% of seats. Figures 1 and 2 present the percentage of seats held by women in the Nigerian Senate and House of Representatives for the 2007 and 2011 general elections.¹³

With the clamour for gender balance proliferating in contemporary society, Nigeria as a nation intensified its commitment toward a political system that is gender-inclusive with the promulgation of the principle of non-discrimination in Section 2 of the 1999 constitution. This has however not yielded its desired result as females are still not given equal opportunities with their male counterparts socially, politically, educationally and economically. As of 2020, the national average of women's political participation in the country has remained at 6.7% in elective and appointive offices, which ranks below the global average of 22.5%, the African regional figure of 23.4%, and the West African sub-regional figure of 15%.¹⁴

Connell in a very expressive manner emphasizes that in civil society, “the majority of men gain...from the overall subordination of women”¹⁵. This reality becomes even more daunting when we consider the fact that women contribute immensely to the productivity of any nation globally, and are yet treated with disdain. It is expedient, therefore, in line with the millennium development goals that women should be included in the socio-economic and political development of the nation as men alone cannot meet up with the development goals of the nation. In fact, according to Mbah, contends that “women are the heart of development in every nation”¹⁶. It is a truism that women are involved in some sectors of production and economic generation in the nation like subsistence agriculture and domestic labour in addition to bearing children and home keeping. They also contribute to the economy by involving in trading, wage employment in cottage industries and factories, etcetera. The National Bureau of Statistics (2004) indicates that

women represent 87% of those employed in the service sector, which involves predominantly informal and unregulated forms of employment.

One of the indices for measuring the growth and civility of a nation is the number of women that are part of the leadership of the nation. Every human society is a composite whole that comprises the male and female gender. Therefore, for progress to be all-encompassing, the economic, socio-cultural and political landscape must bridge the gender gap. A gender-inclusive nation has decided to rise from limiting patriarchal foundations that are discriminatory. The agitations for gender equality and equity are a result of the fact that there is no balance in the treatment of women in the workplace, and there are no provisions for equal opportunities.

The 21st century is marked by globalization and inclusiveness and continues to explode into a haven where the tension that is created by gender imbalance and the disparity that exists could have dire consequences on any nation. For centuries, women have experienced discrimination in careers and the workplace. There is a notable difference in the salary of a woman and a man in the same level of qualification, expertise and experience in a workplace and this one truncates efficiency and quality.¹⁷ This is because such a phenomenon forestalls partnership between both genders and this is detrimental to growth and development.

The erstwhile president, Goodluck Jonathan was keen on the empowerment and inclusion of women in his administration. This led him to implement the 35% Affirmative Action for women in ministerial appointments. Despite this adoption, the Buhari's administration is yet to pass it into law, so that it gains legal status as it has come to be a mere paperwork that can be easily ignored by any leader. It is not surprising therefore that the Buhari led administration has completely ignored it. It was in order to establish gender balance in the political atmosphere of Nigeria that Senator Abiodun Olujimi representing Ekiti South in the National Assembly reintroduced the bill on gender equality in Nigeria after it was rejected in October 2015 on

religious and cultural grounds. The bill was to promote equal opportunities for both male and female gender and to eliminate degrading religious and socio-political discriminatory practices against women. This bill was, however, rejected again on weird religious grounds on March 15, 2016¹⁸. This, therefore, indicates that Nigeria is still saddled with the responsibility to revisit some of these religious and socio-cultural beliefs that relegate women to the background. Women, in turn, need to speed up activities that require that they reinstate their desire to be included in every part of nation-building and governance.

Promoting gender equality is therefore one way to include women in the developmental strides of the nation. Okumo and Asfaw assert that “Promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment is an essential component of an effective economic and human (social) development strategy”¹⁹. Chukwuku and Arop define gender equality in very clear terms as “the absence of discrimination of any individual based on sex concerning the allocation of economic resources, political positions or access to social services”²⁰

The United Nations Development program further buttresses the need for gender equity when they note that gender equality accelerates sustainable development in a nation. They put it in clearer terms when they add that a “one per cent increase in gender inequality reduces a country’s development index”²¹. This demonstrates that excluding women in the developmental strategies of any society is detrimental to the growth and development of that society. The aim of the national gender policy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria becomes very instrumental at this point which pledges to:

Build a just society devoid of discrimination, harness the full potentials of all social groups regardless of sex or circumstance, promote the enjoyment of fundamental human rights and protect the health, social, economic and political well being of all citizens to achieve equitable rapid economic growth; evolve evidence-based planning

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and governance system where human, social, financial and technological resources are efficiently and effectively deployed for sustainable development.²²

Women Empowerment and Sustainable Development

The fact that women's inclusion in any sector of a nation's activity contributes immensely to geometric growth only means that empowering women in every sector of a country's economy becomes a primary goal. Developments and strides in every nation must be hinged on partnership with men and seamless complementation. Any attempt to improve society with an act of dishonour and discrimination against the female gender only accounts for a rapid decline. Most developed nations of the world have seen the need for this and implemented increased women's participation in politics. Women should be allowed to participate fully with men in the designation, implementation, orchestration and even execution of policies in government geared towards sustainable development. It is in the light of this that the Beijing Declaration Platform for Action (1995)^{23s} emphasizes women's empowerment and their full participation based on equality in all spheres of society which include participation in the decision making process and access to power as being fundamental to the achievement of equality, development and peace. Oyeneho cited and emphasizes that:

Empowerment is a process with a series of steps by which individuals gain access to critical economic and educational resources, such as information, assets, cash and skills. The individuals use these to bring about changes in their environment and to influence other persons and institutions with competing or conflicts of interest²⁴.

Women empowerment transcends just gender equality alone. Its positive benefits and advantages are enormous. It produces a ripple effect in ensuring stable families which translates to peace and security in a nation.²⁵ This is because the family being

the smallest unit of society is the core centre of training for any child and represents the foundation upon which society is built. Being the home keepers and primary custodians of families, empowering women would allow for better families with the right training that can transform society.

Empowering women would also be integral to exposing them to their fundamental human rights. This would help in eliminating destructive and subjugating cultural practices like gender-based violence, female genital mutilation, and other obnoxious and dehumanizing practices like sexual abuse suffered by women and even young girls in society. Chinwokwu and Arop note that:

The Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality (2005) provided five components for women's empowerment. These include Women's sense of self-worth; the right to have and determine choices; the right to have access to opportunities and resources; the right to have the power to control their own lives both within and outside the home and the ability to influence the direction of social change to create more just social and economic order.²⁶

The USAID policy, therefore, earmarks different strategies for the empowerment of women in society. One of them is increased opportunities for women in social and political activities. The political situation of a nation represents the growth of that nation. According to King, "The goals of development are largely defined political process"²⁷. Therefore, empowering women entails increasing the capacity of women to participate in politics and governance. They should be given unreserved rights to vote and be voted for key political offices. Women are truly empowered when they sustain the power to act freely, exercise their rights, and fulfil their potential as full and equal members of society"²⁸.

Removal of gender disparities is another way women can be properly empowered. Women should be allowed equal access

to resources and wealth control as their male counterparts. Some of the socio-cultural practices in Nigeria are detrimental to women's empowerment. A good example is the Igbo system where women are not allowed to inherit landed properties after the death of their husband, especially when a male child is absent. The act of relegating women to the background and paying them less at their workplace, even when they are equally qualified or more qualified than their male counterparts is an act that must be completely jettisoned to allow for sustainable growth and national development.

Gender-based violence is another scourge that has grossly limited women. According to the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against women²⁹, (CEDAW, 1992) Article 1, "gender-based violence inhibits women's capacity to enjoy their rights and freedom based on equality with men and it also impairs their ability to enjoy their basic fundamental human rights as enshrined in the international law and conventions" . CEDAW (1992) Article 1 went on to define gender-based violence as "any act of violence that results in or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life". Women have been victims of all forms of violence ranging from physical abuse from partners and every other act that suggests that women are of lesser value than men. When gender-based violence is eradicated, women would be better able to express themselves and be able to pursue their personal goals.³⁰

Another strategy for women empowerment that would translate to national growth and development is increased education for women. Nigeria from colonial times till date is a society that holds to the patriarchal system of providing education for only the male gender with female education coming as secondary. The Global Gender Index Analysis report presented by World Economic Forum (WEF) in 2013 named "economic participation and opportunity; educational attainment; health and survival and political empowerment" as areas where the gender gap is very

prevalent in the world³¹. The gender gap in attaining education in Nigeria and even globally is shocking and is a great cause for concern. This was the fear of Buchi Emecheta's book titled, *Second Class Citizen*. In it, Buchi mentioned the experience of a girl named Adah, the protagonist heroine of the novel, who from her early life has been passionate about Western education, But her brother- Boy- was picked from the family for that education Adah was so enthusiastic about. She was deliberately left out because of the belief that a Woman's education will definitely end up in a man's kitchen. This experience of her life led her to an unsuccessful marriage with Francis which left her life in ruins.³² -Riley notes that "in almost all the developed countries of the world, females are more likely to be illiterate and have spent few years in school than their male counterparts"³³. Women have been successfully short-changed in places of work based on their lower educational qualifications when compared with their male counterparts. A great sign of progress from gender inequality in every society is the equal opportunities for education for everyone irrespective of gender.

Nigeria's Role in Bridging the Gender Gap towards Nation Building

Despite the glaring shortcomings of the Federal Government in enforcing gender balance and passing some proposals for gender equality into law, Nigeria has at some point pledged its loyalty and commitment to fostering gender equity and bridging the gender gap. The Nigerian government has signed major gender treaties globally that foster gender balance. They include the International Civil and Political Rights Covenant - the International Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Covenant, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Children's Rights Convention, and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Convention against Torture)³⁴.

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In the year 2000 Nigeria adopted and passed into law the National Policy on Women, guided by the global instrument of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and its optional protocols. Since then, several gender-responsive policies have been adopted including among others: The Female Genital Mutilation (Prohibition) Policy of 2002 (which is currently under review to make it more proactive); the National Gender Policy (2006) (also currently under review); the Gender Policy for the Nigeria Police Force (2010) and the Gender-based Violence (Prohibition) Law (now adopted in many states in Nigeria)³⁵.

Evaluation and Conclusion

Nigeria as a nation is still very much at an infancy stage as it pertains to bridging the gender gap and allowing for equal opportunities. This millipede pace in eliminating gender inequality and producing a society devoid of gender bias is seen in African states in general. This accounts for the proliferation of different kinds of literature in the Literary landscape that speaks against gender inequality and establishes feminism as a core ideology that should infiltrate the African society and permeate into every sector of governance and society. From bold female writers like Flora Nwapa who became the first-ever female writer in Nigeria, publishing her novel *Efuru* in 1966 as a response to the highly misogynistic society of Nigeria with its accompanying ills expressed in culture and tradition, to Buchi Emecheta's *Joys of Motherhood*, African women began to voice out their dissatisfaction with the gender discrimination in society. Flora Nwapa and Buchi Emecheta are foremost pioneers of the feminist movement in Nigeria expressed in African literature and inspired the new generation of feminist writers in our contemporary society led by Chimamanda Adichie. And with the emergence of other feminist authors like Lola Shoneyin, Ayobami Adebayo, and a host of others, the Nigerian philosophical structure and the whole African philosophical and literary enterprise have played a major role in contributing to the clamour for gender equity.

The onus, however, lies on the government to start the processes of implementing some of the laws that are geared towards gender equity. The 35% Affirmative Action should be revisited and passed into law. Other policies that are only at the level of mere theoretical ruminations should be translated into pragmatic values and practices and programmes that reiterate the need for women to enjoy equal opportunities with their male counterparts should be emphasized. The signing of different global policies by regulatory bodies that emphasize gender equality is only the first step toward bridging the gender gap. Intentional actions that are truly gender-friendly should be implemented and taken seriously.

One major area that should be visited is the area of female participation in politics. While Western nations have increased women's participation in politics, there is a dire need for more women to be integrated into key political positions if we are to experience growth and development in Nigeria. Women have taken different leadership positions in Nigeria, Africa and the world in general and have proven to be very instrumental and efficient in positions of leadership. Therefore, there is no basis whatsoever for withholding leadership positions from them. Furthermore, women should be paid fairly like their male counterparts and economic stability should never be the exclusive preserve of the male gender only.

Flowing from this, instead of women canvassing for gender equality in politics, the theory of equal opportunity should be adopted.

This theory should emphasise the meritocratic system of selection and opportunity, where a person is allowed to contest an election if he or she is the best candidate. Consequently, being the best candidate requires certain qualifications. But given the fact that women are sometimes victims of marginalization, they may not emerge as the best candidates as their educational background, and financial, emotional, parental and societal support may not be sufficient enough compare to that of their male counterparts. This is where equity and a level playing

ground should be put into consideration.

Equity in the sense which is being applied in this paper is the process of being fair to women and men. Consequently, “since women and men have different experiences and backgrounds, they should not only be given equal access to resources and opportunities, but also the means of benefitting from this equality.”³⁷

As much as the goal of bridging the gender gap is integral to the sustainable growth and development of the nation, it is pertinent to discourage radical and destructive feminist movements that seek to arouse gender wars and portray feminism as a war against the male gender. The systemic foundations of patriarchy have taken deep roots in Nigerian society and African society in general. Therefore, actualizing a society free from gender biases is a gradual process that would not happen overnight. Therefore, degenerating into gender wars and inspiring hatred for the male gender is only a counterproductive endeavour that would plunge society deeper into realms of underdevelopment.

The pursuit of gender equality must be within the crucible of gender equity and equal opportunities in the political, economic, socio-cultural educational and every sector that requires the services of human resources. The goal is to foster an atmosphere of partnership and complementation between both genders, where the female gender can complement the male gender in every area that will require the unique expertise and makeup of either gender. This way, the clamour for gender equality would be seen in the light of progress and not an attempt to raise any gender above another or discredit any gender. When the gender gap is bridged and there are equal opportunities for everyone, society would grow geometrically in leaps and bounds. This is because every act of integrating women into the goals and plans of sustainable development is greeted with concomitant growth in every facet of the nation.

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**AN EVALUATION OF ROBERT PUTNAM'S
SOCIAL CAPITAL THEORY**

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Abstract

There are many societies blessed with rich resources and influential people where some members of that community still lack the basic economic resources to grow and build themselves. This is because some have in excess and some little and some do not have at all. To correct situations like this, Robert Putnam's Social Capital Theory suggests the building of trust and relationship between and among individuals in a society. The Social Capital Theory of Putnam encourages societal connectedness and the provision of resources for her citizens as means of improving economic development and growth. Aside being explored theoretically and empirically some of the assumptions of social capital theory have been challenged; its limitations as a unified concept have not been adequately tackled thus creating uneasy flow in relationship and trust. This paper therefore tries to evaluate Putnam's notion of social capital, stating that trustworthiness and connection are key to developmental growth but these qualities are not just shown to all by all. Using the evaluative method, this paper concludes that togetherness in economic building can develop the society faster and stronger rather than individually targeted which can as well provide a central means of resolving distrust and commitments among members.

KEYWORDS: Connections, Development, Economics, Social Capital, Trustworthiness.

INTRODUCTION

In recent times there has been lots of challenges as regards growth and development of the society in different areas owing to

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certain inadequacies. Social scientists and development experts often puzzle to explain why economic growth and development differ significantly across countries or regions that enjoy virtually equal access to technology, resources and market in a modern global world. Explaining large economic disparities across countries having otherwise identical production environments in terms of technology and capital (natural, physical, and financial) is a major challenge for researchers. This has affected all forms of social networks and communal enhancing. The factor that allows this access lies within the solidarity of parents, friends or members of a social network. This has resulted in an increase in a variety of social problems ranging from ineffective education to economic strain, to social conflict between individuals as well as groups. The inability to constructively handle intractable conflict is the most serious and the most neglected problems facing humanity. Solving today's tough problems depends upon finding better ways of dealing with these conflicts. Development is a complex multidimensional process involving major changes in social structures, behaviors, and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, reduction of poverty, narrowing of inequalities and improvement in the quality of life. Although Putnam's theorization is centered on the American society, his posits can be extended to the general society and the world at large for it to be a better place.

Thus, this paper examines Putnam's social capital theory as a strategy which harmonizes and strengthens togetherness amongst friends, members of a state, in unity and wealth. It questions the standard by which the commitment of trust and connectedness could be harnessed for mutual rather than selfish interest. As such, it proposes that his ideology may serve as a tool to improve the economy and societal togetherness.

THE MEANING OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

Social capital is a complex multidimensional concept encompassing repertoire of cultural and social value systems. Recently, it has become a very popular and appealing concept among social scientists. A growing number of sociologists,

anthropologists, political scientists and economists have employed the concept to explain various economic and social outcomes.

The fundamental notion of social capital is to incorporate socio-cultural factors to explain development outcomes. It has emerged as a prominent topic of discussion among academics, development specialists, and policymakers.¹ The history of social capital traces a long way back to classical economists, such as; Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill and sociologists, such as; Max Weber, who provided the cultural explanation of economic phenomena.² The concept of social capital as a topical issue, however, came into the spotlight only in late 1980s and attracted growing research interest thereafter. The scientific study of social capital is relatively new, but the growth of literature on the topic is enormous. Despite voluminous literature, there is no single, universal definition of social capital. It is often defined and measured in a pragmatic and unsystematic fashion.³

Now, at least, there seems to be some agreement on the conceptualisation and major ingredients of social capital. Social capital is an abstract idea rather than a firmly tangible phenomenon. The theory of social capital is particularly rooted on the notion of trusts, norms, and informal networks and it believes that ‘social relations are valuable resources’. Social capital is broadly defined as the multidimensional phenomenon encompassing a stock of social norms, values, beliefs, trusts, obligations, relationships, networks, friends, memberships, civic engagement, information flows, and institutions that foster cooperation and collective actions for mutual benefits and contributes to economic and social development.⁴ Through it, complementarity among members is encouraged and unity in spite of diversity is promoted and built. This goal is a hallmark of Putnam’s social capital when critically examined.

PUTNAM’S SOCIAL CAPITAL

Robert Putnam’s approach to social capital focuses on volunteering and civic action as well as democracy and community. His treatment of social capital is one reason so

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many scholars have latched onto social capital as a concept and some as a theory in itself. Communities with higher social capital have an easier time with volunteerism due to norms of reciprocity within the networks of those who are active in the community. He generally defines social capital in connection with the characteristics of organizations such as, "...trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions..."⁵ These attributes are what must be seen and considered for the effective implementation of his social capital theory. Putnam explains social capital as located in the social tie between two actors or is inherently found within a community network of relations.⁶ Thus, social capital lies within one's network and more specifically, in the relationships therein.

In a 2013 paper, Putnam uses his hometown in Ohio as a prime example of the deleterious effects the loss of social capital has on community. Specifically, he explains the experience of his classmates to bring out the need for social capital in a community and the disadvantage a community may experience due to the lack of social capital. His classmates noted that growing up they were poor and did not realize it at the time, but Putnam elaborates that what they lacked in monetary resources they made up with social ties and support.⁷ For example, a family that could not afford a car was able to hitch rides from neighbours to work and school. Thus, the lack of a car did not stop the father from making every one of his son's games. However, in that same town today, due to the absence of this mutual togetherness and trust in social capital theory, one does not find those kinds of stories and community.⁸ Consistent with the preceding, Putnam views social capital as a public good and not a privately and self-developmental theory. Social capital is formed as a by-product of some other social event, as such, he sees trust as a key indicator of social capital because of its link to the norm of reciprocity as well as the broad and localized benefits that are derived from social or generalized trust.

For Putnam, there are four important functions of social capital. First, social capital reduces the complexity of solving “collective problems.” Putnam identifies networks and social norms as the mechanisms that allow for ease in solving community issues.⁹ In other words, social norms and social interactions are the important aspects of how social capital is created, stored, and used. Second, social capital “greases the wheels” of society. Here Putnam suggests that when people are trustworthy and willing to trust others “social transactions are less costly.”¹⁰

Next, Putnam argues that social capital allows for people to achieve a common consciousness, where they realize that their lives and consequences are linked. Essentially what he is referring to is the feeling that we are all in the same proverbial “boat”. Here, Putnam draws again on social ties that are characterized by trust and which “develop or maintain character traits that are good for the rest of society”.¹¹ Thus, he asserts that “people who are “joiners” will learn to be more tolerant and empathetic because they are willing to listen to other viewpoints, while an absence of ties will mean that there is no one to stop someone from acting on “their worst impulses”.¹² Of course, he does not argue that if you have fewer social ties you will do something rotten, only that it is more likely.

Furthermore, Putnam links altruism and philanthropic endeavours to social capital. He references John Dewey’s distinction between “doing with” and “doing for”¹³ when talking about actions that are charitable and/or altruistic. Putnam argues that “social capital refers to networks of social connection – [and connects social capital to] doing with”.¹⁴ Thus, participating with others toward a common goal of helping others is social capital.

Also, Putnam further develops the concept of social capital to include bonding capital and bridging capital. One can think of the main difference between bonding and bridging social capital in terms of the type of tie or relationship that exists between two actors. The type of tie dictates the type of social capital.

1. BONDING SOCIAL CAPITAL

According to Putnam, bonding social capital refers to social resources that lie within ones' community and close network. He writes that, "Bonding social capital is good for undergirding specific reciprocity and mobilizing solidarity".¹⁵ Accordingly, bonding social capital is an exclusionary form of social capital that helps to bind people together based on their similarities.¹⁶ Bonding social capital is characterized by strong ties and close personal relationships. It references those in-groups that feed off one another's similarities and reject differences. Another way to think of bonding social capital is social resources that lie with ties to people who are "like" you. For Putnam, bonding social capital is the metaphorical equivalent to social "superglue." Thus, "thick" trust underlies bonding social capital. An example of bonding social capital would be when someone in your family dies and you need help and support. If you are a member of a church or place of worship then you expect that the minister and congregants will provide you with this social capital.

In sum, bonding social capital is based on relationships or memberships that are exclusive where some restrictions apply to membership, for example, based on race, gender, class, or kinship.¹⁷ Therefore, bonding social capital includes the ties between family members and close friends. It can also refer to memberships such as fraternities or sororities, ethnic group ties, and religious group membership. It has been said that bonding social capital can encapsulate the darker "side" of social capital, also noted by Weber as social closure, where bonding social capital can have deleterious effects on social inequality, especially where issues already exist "bonding practices can reinforce the practices of nepotism, ethnic hatred, and sectarianism, as well as sexism."¹⁸

2. BRIDGING SOCIAL CAPITAL

Bridging social capital refers to ties with resources that extend outside of one's immediate community or network, "bridging networks...are better for linkage to external assets and

for information diffusion”. Ties that can be construed as bridging social capital tend to “generate broader identities and reciprocity, whereas bonding social capital bolsters our narrower selves”.²⁰ In fact, most of what Putnam refers to as “thin” trust underlies bridging social capital.

At the empirical level, bridging social capital is involved in networking. For Putnam, “it is this form of capital that underlies people’s decision to join the Chamber of Commerce and attend conferences or other events that promote social networking opportunities that reach beyond their immediate local ties. Drawing on these examples, groups that are considered inclusive (where membership is not restrictive) are linked to bridging social capital.²¹ Whereas bonding social capital helps to create loyalty to the group and strengthen in-group membership a by-product of which can be the creation of out-group dislike or distrust, bridging social capital lies in the diversity of relationships and promotes the appreciation of differences. The preceding appears to imply an inverse relationship between the two types of social capital, where having more bonding social capital means one will have less bridging social capital. However, within his discussion on bridging versus bonding social capital, Putnam emphasizes that neither is exclusive of the other.²² Although he does not go into great detail about the process through which this happens, he rather notes that groups (his unit of analysis is at the community level) have the ability to create bonding and bridging social capital simultaneously.²³

Finally, Putnam argues that people tend to have more bonding social capital than bridging. However, bridging social capital is important to branching out and increasing the breadth of one’s social resources. He goes on to note that “bonding social capital is easier to build and maintain over bridging social capital, but that both are important, one to the well-being of one’s emotional and immediate social network, and the latter to one’s opportunities for advancement, diversity, and open-mindedness”²⁴.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF ROBERT PUTNAM'S SOCIAL CAPITAL

Social Capital and Children Welfare

Child development is powerfully shaped by social capital. Series of questioning and investigation has been carried out to demonstrate that trust, networks, and norms of reciprocity within a child's family, school, peer group, and larger community have wide-ranging effects on the child's opportunities and choices and, hence, on his behavior and development.²⁵ Although the presence of social capital has been linked to various positive outcomes, particularly in education, most research has focused on the bad things that happen to kids who live and learn in areas where there is a deficit of social capital. The implication is clear: social capital keeps bad things from happening to good kids.

The mere fact that social capital is correlated with good outcomes for kids does not mean that social capital causes these outcomes or, conversely, that a social-capital deficit is leading kids to take wrong turns in life. Besides social capital, states also differ in many other ways that might influence child well-being—parental education levels, poverty rates, family structure, racial composition, and so forth. The fact that social capital is associated with these factors makes it more complicated. Thus states with disproportionately large numbers of poorly educated adults and low-income single-parent families tend not to have as many vibrant civic communities as do states where residents have the economic luxury and practical skills to participate. Because of this complicated set of relationships among child outcomes, social capital, and demographics, we must be vigilant not to draw spurious conclusions. Instead, ones interest should be on if the observed differences across states in child well-being are linked directly to social capital itself or to some other factor or factors that influence both child well-being and social capital.

The beneficial effects of social capital persist even after accounting for a host of other factors that might affect state educational success - racial composition, affluence, economic

inequality, adult educational levels, poverty rates, educational spending, teachers' salaries, class size, family structure, and religious affiliation, as well as the size of the private school sector (which might "cream" better students from public schools). Not surprisingly, several of these factors had an independent effect on state test scores and dropout rates, but astonishingly, social capital was the single most important explanatory factor.²⁶

Unexpectedly, the level of informal social capital in the state is a stronger predictor of student achievement than is the level of formal institutionalized social capital. In other words, the level of social trust in a state and the frequency with which people connected informally with one another (in card games, visiting with friends, and the like) were even more closely correlated with educational performance than was the amount of time state residents devoted to club meetings, church attendance, and community projects. That is not to say that formal activities were unimportant. Rather, what this admittedly crude evidence is saying is that there is something about communities where people connect with one another over and above how rich or poor they are materially, how well educated the adults themselves are, what race or religion they are that positively affects the education of children. Conversely, even communities with many material and cultural advantages do a poor job of educating their kids if the adults in those communities don't connect with one another.²⁷

A second reason why students perform better in states with high social capital may be that they spend less time watching TV. The negative correlation between the average time that kids spend watching TV and the average level of adult civic engagement and social connectedness is quite powerful. (As always, we have checked to confirm that this relationship is not simply a spurious reflection of some other factor, such as poverty or race.) It seems likely that where community traditions of social involvement remain high, children are naturally drawn into more productive uses of leisure than where social connectedness and civic engagement among adults is limited. This state-by-state analysis reconfirms decades of research showing that community

involvement is crucial to schools' success. These studies have found that student learning is influenced not only by what happens in school and at home, but also by social networks, norms, and trust in the school and in the wider community.²⁸

Social capital at the neighborhood or community level clearly has an impact on child learning. But social capital within families also powerfully affects youth development.²⁹ Families that enjoy close social bonds and parents who instill the value of reciprocity in their kids are more likely to "gain a greater degree of compliance and adherence to their values".³⁰ Even holding constant interaction between loved ones among many other things can affect educational achievement, including parents' education and income, race, family size, region, and gender, children whose parents are closely involved with their kids and their kids' schools are much less likely to drop out of high school than children who lack these forms of social capital. Kids of parents who attend programs at their kids' school, help with homework, and monitor their kids' behavior outside school are likely to have higher grade-point averages, to be more engaged in the classroom, and to shun drugs and delinquent activity.³¹

The beneficial effects of social capital are not limited to deprived communities or to primary and secondary education. Indeed, precisely what many high-achieving suburban school districts have in abundance is social capital, which is educationally more important even than financial capital.

Conversely, where social connectedness is lacking, schools work less well, no matter how affluent the community.³² Moreover, social capital continues to have powerful effects on education during the college years. Extracurricular activities and involvement in peer social networks are powerful predictors of college dropout rates and college success, even holding constant pre-collegiate factors, including aspirations.³³

SOCIAL CAPITAL AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

Just as areas high in social capital are good at maintaining livable spaces, they are also good at getting ahead. A growing

body of research suggests that where trust and social networks flourish, individuals, firms, neighborhoods, and even nations prosper. At the individual level, social connections affect one's life chances. People who grow up in well-to-do families with economically valuable social ties are more likely to succeed in the economic marketplace, not merely because they tend to be richer and better educated, but also because they can and will ply their connections.³⁴ Conversely, individuals who grow up in socially isolated rural and inner-city areas are held back, not merely because they tend to be financially and educationally deprived, but also because they are relatively poor in social ties that can provide a "hand up"³⁵

Understanding the detailed linkages between social capital and economic performance is a lively field of inquiry at the moment, so it would be premature to claim too much for the efficacy of social capital or to describe exactly when and how networks of social connectedness boost the aggregate productivity of an economy. Research on social capital and economic development in what we once called the "Third World" is appearing at a rapid rate, based on work in such far-flung sites as South Africa, Indonesia, Russia, India, and Burkina Faso. Similarly rich work is under way on how Americans might improve the plight of our poorest communities by enabling those communities to invest in social capital and empowering them to capitalize on the social assets they already have.³⁶

For the moment, the links between social networks and economic success at the individual level are understood. You can be reasonably confident that you will benefit if you acquire a richer social network, but it is not yet entirely clear whether that reflects merely your ability to grab a larger share of a fixed pie, or whether if we all have richer social networks, we all gain. The early returns, however, encourage the view that social capital of the right sort boosts economic efficiency, so that if our networks of reciprocity deepen, we all benefit, and if they atrophy, we all pay dearly.³⁷

Health is the one place that the importance of social connectedness is so well established in promoting human's well-being. Scientific studies of the effects of social cohesion on physical and mental health can be traced to the seminal work of the nineteenth-century sociologist Émile Durkheim, *Suicide*. Self-destruction is not merely a personal tragedy, he found, but a sociologically predictable consequence of the degree to which one is integrated into society—rarer among married people, rarer in more tightly knit religious communities, rarer in times of national unity, and more frequent when rapid social change disrupts the social fabric. Social connectedness matters to our lives in the most profound way.³⁸

Finally, and most intriguingly, social capital might actually serve as a physiological triggering mechanism, stimulating people's immune systems to fight disease and buffer stress. Some studies have documented the strong correlation between connectedness and health at the community level.³⁹ Others have zeroed in on individuals, both in natural settings and in experimental conditions. These studies are for the most part careful to account for confounding factors—the panoply of other physiological, economic, institutional, behavioral, and demographic forces that might also affect an individual's health. In many cases these studies are longitudinal: they check on people over many years to get a better understanding of what lifestyle changes might have caused people's health to improve or decline.⁴⁰

EVALUATION

Social capital is a vital resource for individuals, groups, and society. It is a lubricant that facilitates getting things done; allows people to work together and to access benefits from social relationships as well as allows modern economies to function efficiently.⁴¹ Our society, economy, institutions, and political system cannot exist without social capital. Since social capital refers to the internal social and cultural coherence of society, it has been described as a glue.⁴²

For individuals, social capital is an important source of power and influence that helps them ‘get by’ and ‘get ahead’. The popular adage: “it’s not just what you know, but who you know” relates to the powerful effects and importance of social capital. For groups and organizations social capital is vital to their efficiency and even existence because it enables people to work together and facilitates cooperation and innovation. Any organization that does not consider the importance of social capital is missing an opportunity for improvement, and risking inefficiencies and peril.⁴³ For society, social capital is also important as it allows societal institutions to exist and maintains the coherence of society. It facilitates the cooperation and collaboration of different groups and organizations; encourages people to be positively social towards one another with a wide range of benefits from reduced crime and corruption, to increased helpfulness and improved cooperation.⁴⁴

Social capital a different way of thinking about the importance of sociability that has always been important to humans. In fact, from an evolutionary point of view humans could not have survived without what we now call social capital. The ability to work together and cooperate for mutual benefit was essential to survival and continues to be vital to the functioning of our society and economy. The concept of social capital frames social and cultural processes as beneficial, important, and valuable using the language of our dominant paradigm: capitalism. There can be no mistaking the value of the ‘social’ when it is attached to the label ‘capital’ and this can be readily appreciated by scholars from economics to accounting and all of the social sciences as well as people in politics, business and all other organizations.⁴⁵

Although scholarship attests to the perceived robustness of social capital as a potentially useful academic concept, there remains, however, a number of criticisms concerning its implications as a theory, and in terms of the type of explanations it affords. These criticisms are derived from a range of perspectives and assumptions rather than from a unified critique; nevertheless, their collective force is itself in some way parallel to the multiple perspectives invoking social capital in support of a wide range

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of phenomena. To address the challenge of demonstrating the relevance of a social capital lens, it will be necessary to develop a structure robust enough to simultaneously address each of these criticisms. Although, these criticisms are numbered, but not according to any priority. The first three criticisms address the reflexive nomenclature of the concept – the social, capital and theory aspects of the concept.

Social capital is a concept based on a misleading metaphor – it isn't capital. Social capital seems to be different from other types of capital as described by economists. While this need not be a problem for the concept if it is coherently explained in relation to other forms of capital, or as a complementary part of the family of capitals, its difference to the conventional notion of capital, although has been acknowledged, it is rarely interrogated. One example of such rare interrogation is found in economist Kenneth Arrow's work. Arrow argues that the word "capital" implies three elements: extension in time; an intended sacrifice for deferred benefit; alienability. He concludes that the concept of social capital lacks each of the three elements required to be a genuine example of capital and therefore found no reason for "adding something called 'social capital' to other forms of capital".⁴⁶ Further to this, those outside economics recognize that the difference with other forms of capital weaken the explanatory power of the concept through confusion with the functions of other forms of capital. For example, Samuel Bowles argues that while the concept "social capital" might describe important relationships, the term itself and the way it is conceptualized in the literature, is so unlike other forms of capital that the term "social capital" should be abandoned. He asserts;

Capital refers to a thing possessed by individuals; even a socialisolate like Robinson Crusoe had an axe and fishing net. By contrast, the attributes said to make up social capital—such as trust, commitment to others, adhering to social norms and punishing those who violate them—describe relationships among people.⁴⁷

Similarly, Robert Solow argues that the term social capital is an attempt to build on a bad analogy. He illustrates this in a powerful way by stressing that even by asking simple questions to develop the analogy (e.g. What is social capital a stock of? What is its rate of return?), it breaks down, a simple strategy that Solow demonstrates: “is the quickest way to explain why one doubt that ‘social capital’ is the right concept to use”.⁴⁸ Solow concludes that he does not see how dressing this set of issues in the language and apparatus of capital theory helps much one way or the other.⁴⁹

Claude Fischer argues that the term “social capital” is unnecessary as other clearer and simpler terms, such as membership, trust and sociability, serve perfectly well on their own.⁵⁰ Indeed, even the supporting concepts of social capital, such as “bridging” and “bonding” fit better with a different metaphor, such as ties or association, while many of the reasons for using the term are based on conjecture, for example that trust norms are closely related to networks. A further danger is that the argument becomes susceptible to a slippery slope argument, i.e. that other features able to alter productivity are also a form of “capital”. Even before the content of the concept is examined, the use of the word “capital” is a hindrance that must be addressed and its meaning fully unpacked: The phrase itself is a problem. It is a metaphor that misleads: Where can I borrow social capital? What is the going interest rate? Can I move some of my social capital off-shore?⁵¹ Indeed, Joel Sobel argues that even though “the strengths of the analogy are not persuasive enough to justify the terminology” the use of the term “social capital” can be justified because existing literature builds on this strategy and provides: convincing evidence that the topics under the social capital umbrella are worthy of study, and application of economic principles can provide important insights. A vague keyword is not sufficient reason to condemn a promising line of research.⁵²

Social capital is a concept indicative of the colonization of sociological territory by fundamentally economic notions – it

isn't social. While scholars identify sociologists, such as Pierre Bourdieu and James Coleman as key figures in the development of social capital, there is the suggestion that it remains a fundamentally economic concept, fitting closely with the work of rational choice economists, such as Gary Becker, and, as such, it is a Trojan horse through which mainstream economists seek, to occupy terrain that had been the preserve of sociologists. Using the phrase probably allows sociologists more access to the ears and wallets of the powers-that-be than simply writing about, say, friendship and church attendance. On the other hand, the term has reciprocally allowed economists to colonize sociologists' topics.⁵³

In this way social capital is not an expansion though economic considerations, but a reduction to economic thinking. Ben Fine and Francis Green develop a similar argument, that as well as being indicative of an unhealthy colonization of the other social sciences by economics, social capital is also based on a reductionist argument. Both economists and sociologists argue that the concept is “reductionist across a number of dimensions: to the individual, to utility maximization and to universal categories.”⁵⁴ Indeed, even without this direct reduction to economic concepts that Fine and Green identify, social capital can be perceived as a reductionist concept even when its use purports to give a “social context” to relationships. This is because it erases the social in order to introduce the component used to contextualize it – simultaneously reifying the social and reducing it to characteristics of something else. Turning to Fine again: “social” as attached to capital to mark a distinct category is indicative of the failure to understand capital as social in its economic, putatively non-social form.⁵⁵

Social capital is not an explanation but rather a tautology. A key weakness, even for some of the most influential social capital explanations, is that they begin with the effects of social capital and describe the differences between positive and negative examples in terms of the way social capital has been responsible for producing these effects.⁵⁶ These explanations are thus not

explanations at all, but rather circular arguments. As Portes points out, when Putnam argues that a town is “civic” because it has civic participation and “non-civic” if it doesn’t, it explains nothing since: “equating social capital with the resources acquired through it can easily lead to tautological statements”.⁵⁷ Untangling the causes, effects, correlations and conjunctions is a difficult undertaking when dealing with networks and complex interdependencies, and bold claims should be based on theory, a mechanism, excellent case studies or other solid empirical findings, preferably triangulated with other data.

Related to the previous criticism of circularity is the problem of the direction of causality. Changes in social capital and changes in communities, even if they are related, it is difficult to show which direction causality originated. While circumstantial evidence suggests that social capital, as measured in terms of active participation in associations that knit society together is associated with perceptions of decline in the community if the two are causally related, its direction that has not been fully resolved, as Steven Durlauf notes: Do trust-building social networks lead to efficacious communities, or do successful communities generate these types of social ties? For Darlauf, “as far as he knows, no study has been able to shed much light on this question”⁵⁸.

Social capital, as outlined in the literature, can be a hindrance to economic success, with different types of negative externalities, barriers to meritocratic and efficient decision making. Social capital has a dark side. A further set of problems for the concept of social capital relate to the negative effects of social networks. Social capital, as described by leading advocates such as Robert Putnam, relates as much to the negative consequences of networks as to the positive in other to point out how the positive side of social connectedness outweighs the negative side of it.

The concept is difficult to operationalize, attempts to do so have been inconsistent and they obscure the way more specific concepts have been applied. The concept of social capital remains somewhat indistinct, but other imprecise concepts have been useful to the social sciences, often with their importance

emerging though the process in which they become operationally defined, as with many of the core concepts of critical geography. Attempts to operationalize social capital in explaining innovation illustrate that once unified, the concept explains very little even when identified as a contributory factor.

For example, Landry, Amara, and Lamari examine the relationship between innovation and six forms of social capital, five structural (business network assets, information network assets, research network assets, participation assets, and relational assets) and one form of cognitive social capital (reciprocal trust). Their conclusions, based on statistical regression, seem to suggest that marginal increases in social capital “contribute more than any other explanatory variable to increase the likelihood of innovation of firms”⁵⁹ Indeed the findings are robust and based on excellent research practices but do not explain the processes that social capital was supposed to explain until it is separated into a number of component parts.

CONCLUSION

Social structures, cultural norms and values, and institutions affect economic behavior through multiple direct and indirect channels and, hence, they are critical in understanding sustainable economic development. Successful explanation of economic development, thus, has to transcend beyond narrow measures of mere income growth to encompass social, cultural, and political variables. In the past, mainstream economic models focused primarily on standard factors of production and they largely ignored the socio-cultural dimensions. This research has so far demonstrated that the concept of social capital in the thought of Putnam as very interesting as it is, has a number of serious weaknesses. Although the nature of its weakness is not that it is based on fallacious interpretations or incorrect descriptions but rather that it produces descriptions that retain unresolved tensions. Therefore, the need for social capital connectedness strengthens community bond and unity. It helps everyone to be active and economically productive.

In conclusion, this concept is a useful heuristic and can help, in particular, in reinserting value into social science discourse, overcome disciplinary boundaries and provide a link between the micro, middle and macro levels of analysis. It can help checkmate individual excesses as well as communal misguides. Hence, as an academic discourse, it serves as a theory that can liberate a community from penury and economic backwardness.

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THE NOTION OF SYNODALITY FROM THE ANCIENT CHURCH

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Abstract

With the recent call by the Holy Father, Pope Francis for dioceses to convene synods on synodality, inviting all members of the church to journey together, it is pertinent to take a look at some of the early synods or councils in the ancient church. This will in no little way help in the understanding and appreciation of the intention of the Pope. The terms ‘synod’ and ‘council’ were used interchangeably in the early church to represent the gathering of bishops, sometimes with experts and sometimes without. These gatherings were in a way an expression of what the church truly is, that is, the gathering of a people called together by God. In this article I hope to use the synods and councils in the ancient church to buttress the fact that the church by her very nature is synodal and that these gatherings were very helpful in the resolution of issues. I hope to achieve this goal through an historical analysis and discussion of the early synods and councils of the ancient church. These gatherings that started quite naturally in the ancient church, were means of rubbing minds on issues affecting the church and proffering solutions to such issues.

Key words: Synod & Synodality, Church & Ancient Church, Councils.

Introduction

To say that the Catholic Church is synodal/conciliar is to express what the Church is by nature and this has also been proven to be by her historical antecedents with the immense

number of councils and synods (ecumenical, provincial and local/diocesan) that have been held from the very beginning. Just in October of the year 2021, the “Synod on Synodality” was convoked and declared open by His Holiness, Pope Francis. This is expected to run for two years and it is supposed to take place in all Dioceses of the Catholic Church and it is hoped to involve all, that is, clergy and laity of the church. This call for another synod in our time is a reminder to all members of the church to be true to our nature as a church, to be truly church, to be truly mother, to listen to one another. The Holy father expects all to journey together and reflect on how this journey is taken together. It is also an affirmation that the church will not rest on her oars until all her members are able to express themselves freely and feel at home in the church.

Though numerous councils and synods have taken place within the church with great results. These have led to the better enunciation and understanding of the doctrines of the church, they have also assisted the church in bringing about the reconciliation of aggrieved parties within and outside of the church. An exploration of some of these councils and synods in the early church will buttress the fact that, though the church is synodal or to apply the hypernym conciliar historically, but the facts according to some people have not been seen in practice. They claim that the hierarchy of the church speaks and all others listen. This is not the focal point of this article, rather, it aims at enumerating and analyzing some of the early synods and councils of the church in order to show that the church has truly been synodal or conciliar.

Before going on to enumerate and describe the issues discussed at the early synods and councils of the church, it is pertinent to define these key terms: the church, the synod and the council.

What is the church?

Etymologically, the term church is derived from the Latin and Greek terms *ecclesia* and *ekkalein* respectively which means ‘a convocation or an assembly’. The Greek *ek-kaleon* derived from *ek-kalo* which is a combination of the preposition *ek* (*ek*) which means “from, out of” and the verb *kalw* (*kalo*) meaning “to call, name, summon, invite” the two put together means “to call out of, summon or invite/invite out.” It is also used to designate the assemblies of the people, usually for religious purpose as expressed in Acts 19:39 where the term assembly was used to indicate the gathering of silversmiths at Ephesus. The Greek term ‘*ekklesia*’ originally “denoted the assembly of Free citizens called together by convocation¹.”

From the foregoing one can say that the church is those who are called out of, summoned or invited out. This is corroborated by Peter in his first Letter: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation, a people set apart (1Peter 2: 9)

The term *ekklhsia* (*ekklesia*) was often used in the Greek Old Testament to represent the gathering of the chosen people before God, especially the assembly on Mount Sinai (Exod. 19) where the law was given to Moses. It was here that God made the declaration of the people as his own. The use of the term church as a designation for Christian believers is an affirmation of the fact that Christians see themselves as heir to the original assembly and that it is God who is gathering people from all over the world. The Greek term *Kyriake* from which the English and German Church and *kirche* respectively are derived means “what belongs to the Lord.”² This again corroborates what was said above. Though the term ‘church’ is usually presented as “a building where Christians go to worship or an institution of Christian religion” it goes beyond these and must be understood more as a people who have been called, chosen and dedicated to God. From the very beginning we found the assembly of the people called together by Christ even before the descent of the promised Spirit: “So from the Mount of Olives, as it is called,

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they went back to Jerusalem, a short distance away, no more than a sabbath walk; when they reached the city they went to the upper room where they were staying; ... All these joined in continuous prayer, together with several women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, with his brothers (Acts 1: 12-14).

What is Synod / Council?

The terms “Synod” and “Council” have been used interchangeably in the church from the earliest of times. This is attestable through the numerous synods and councils that have taken place in the church from inception till date. The church has always recourse to these gathering of her leaders either by themselves or as it happened later in the history of the church, convoked by the political authorities towards the resolution of various issues that have confronted the church at various times in her a little over two thousand years of existence. To continue we need to have a working definition of these terms and try to also see how the church from inception had made use of this means in attaining her goal.

A council is defined as “a formal meeting to discuss what action to take in a particular situation”³ while synod is “an official meeting of church members to discuss religious matters and make important decisions.”⁴ A council is a formal assembly of bishops and other church dignitaries to deliberate and legislate on ecclesiastical matters. According to Wilhelm Joseph, councils are “legally convened assembly of ecclesiastical dignitaries and theological experts for the purpose of discussing and regulating matters of church doctrines and discipline.” It goes further to say that councils are a concentration of the ruling powers of the church for decisive action.⁵ While an ecumenical council is the coming together of the universal church, a particular council (can be plenary, general, national or provincial) on the other hand indicates the coming together of the churches around the same area. Councils are usually called by the archbishops, that is, those who are in charge of the area (the metropolitan) based

on the need to consult on communal problems regarding faith and discipline. The functions of councils are basically dogmatic (the definition of the truths of the faith), liturgical (regulating the rites of the church) and canonical (ordering of ecclesiastical discipline)⁶

The term 'synod' is derived from the Greek word *sunodos*((*sunodos*) meaning assembly, synod or session. It is defined as a meeting or council of the clergy. Fanning William defines synod as "A general term for ecclesiastical gatherings under hierarchical authority, for the discussion and decision of matters relating to faith, moral or discipline." It further indicates that synod is a synonym for council. It can be general, provincial, national or plenary.⁷ Lang said that it literally means a meeting or assembly. In general, it refers to a gathering of bishops and it is often used as an alternate for council. It is specifically used to denote that consultative body of selected clergy, religious and laity convoked by a local bishop to recommend legislation to improve the diocese. It is called the diocesan synod. This is different from the synod of bishops which is a deliberative body of representatives from the world convened by the Pope to discuss serious church matters. This goes a long way to show the hierarchical communion of the bishops as they partake in the responsibility of the universal church.⁸

Synods by the Apostles

The convocation of councils and synods started naturally in the church because of the need from the earliest moments of the church by the people in authority in the Christian communities to consult and deliberate on church matters. Councils and synods were born out of necessity. We have an example with the gathering of the apostles in Jerusalem in the upper room praying and waiting for the fulfillment of the promised Spirit. Peter raised the issue of the need for someone to take the place of Judas Iscariot, the people gathered, deliberated and decisions were made on how to go about it and the criteria that was required,

they prayed, lots were casted and Matthias was chosen and listed among the twelve apostles (Acts 1: 15-26).⁹ Peter could have taken a decision and made a choice on his own but he believed that it was better to rub minds and consult and that was what he did.

Some years later, what is usually referred to as the council of Jerusalem took place over the issue of circumcision for those were not Jews coming into the church (Acts 15). Around 50AD, the predominantly Jewish church was faced with the immediate consequence of the evangelization work of Peter, Paul and Barnabas and the spread of the gospel. With the conversion of gentiles, to what extent should these new converts conform to Jewish laws before they can be admitted to the new faith? The early church leaders, that is, the apostles and elders met at Jerusalem, they deliberated and decided that Jews were not saved because of their observance of the laws (laws of Moses), rather it is by the grace of God. At the end of their deliberation, James spoke thus: "I rule, then, that instead of making things more difficult for the pagans who turn to God, we send them a letter telling them merely to abstain from anything polluted by idols, from fornication, from meat of strangled animals and from blood (Acts 15: 19-21; Gal 2: 1-10). The decision of the council was put into a letter that was sent to all the churches of pagan origin. It is this council that many believe gave rise to the numerous councils and synods in the early church and a veritable means of resolving issues.

One can conclude here that with the notion of the church as the gathering of the people called, chosen and dedicated by God for himself; with the understanding we have of the terms 'council' and 'synods' as gathering and assembly of church leaders to discuss, deliberate and make decision on one hand and the constant praxis of the church from the earliest days to gather for the resolution of issues as seen thus far on the other hand, that the church is synodal. I will continue with the exposition of

synods and councils held in the nascent church to prove the same point further.

Councils and Synods of the early church

There are twenty-one (21) ecumenical¹⁰ council recognized by the church, though the ecumenical nature of some were doubted for some time but was eventually accepted by all, such as first Lateran Council 1123 AD and Basle/Ferrara/ Florence 1431-1439 AD. These large-scale councils were not known in the early church. It was impossible for the growing church to gather on a large scale. They only became feasible with the freedom granted the church by Emperor Constantine in 313 AD via the Edict of Milan. It must be noted that I do not intend to write on any of the 21 ecumenical councils, rather I will be focusing on the councils and synods of the early church until about the fourth century in this article.

After the council of Jerusalem 50 AD, we do not have records of any synod or council until the second century. Though before then we read in the writings of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians and Ignatius of Antioch's allusions to the gathering of presbyters in Corinth and the elders of the community in Rome and presbyters as the counsel of the bishops respectively. The very first synodal gathering recorded in the second century was in Asia Minor around 170 AD to deal with the issue of Montanus and his group, Montanists. Eusebius recorded the events of the outbreak of this heresy which he referred to as the Phrygian heresy.¹¹ Montanism was initially known as the 'New Prophecy' before it was named after its leader, Montanus, a convert to Christianity who claimed to have the gift of prophecy. Apollinarius of Hierapolis around 177 AD convoked a synod which condemned Montanus and his followers. In Lyon and Vienna about the same time local synods were held and these communicated their decision to Rome and Asia Minor regarding the same issue.

On the Date of the Feast of Passover

During the pontificate of Victor (183-193/193-203), a universal problem arose in the church regarding the date of the feast of Passover – the date of Easter. There were two parties to this, the Quarto-decimans¹² on the one hand and the Romans on the other hand. While the Quartodeciman (East) favoured the fourteenth day of Nisan, the Romans (West) emphasized Sunday as the day of Resurrection (*dies domini*) – dominical usage. These two sought a decision on the date for the celebration of Easter in the universal church. Until this point, there was disparity in the date for the celebration of Easter between the West and East. This issue is not new because it is on record that Polycarp of Smyrna during his visit to Rome around 155 AD had discussed the same issue with Pope Anicetus. Though no compromise was arrived at by the two, they parted ways amicably.¹³ Several synods were held in the West and East but no compromise was arrived at. Pope Victor tried to impose the Roman date, that is, the dominical date. He reaffirmed the decision of his predecessors, Soterius (167-174 AD) and Eleutherius (174-193 AD). He wrote letters excommunicating the Asian bishops but this was rebuffed, especially by the Asian Church led by Polycrates of Ephesus. After various local synods in the territory was affected, he was said to have sent a letter to Pope Victor; in the letter, he listed the names of apostles and apostolic fathers who had proclaimed the faith in Asia and had laid down the tradition of Quartodeciman. He wrote:

We for our part keep the day scrupulously, without addition or subtraction. ... All these kept the fourteenth day of the month as the beginning of the Paschal festival, in accordance with the Gospel, not deviating in the least but following the rule of the faith. Last of all I too, Polycrates, the least of you, act according to the tradition of my family, some members of which I have actually followed; for seven of them were bishops and I

am the eighth, and my family have always kept the day when the people put away leaven. So, I and my friends, after spending sixty-five years in the Lord's service and conversing with Christians from all part of the world, and going carefully through all Holy Scripture, were not scared of threats. Better people than I had said: We must obey God rather than men.¹⁴

Irenaeus who was believed to have had a better understanding of the issues at hand, was also said to have presided over one of such synods held in the Gallic province. Though he supported the view that only on the Lord's Day (Sunday) should the resurrection of the Lord be celebrated, he gave the Pope his piece of advice regarding his decision to cut off the whole Asian church. Irenaeus is recorded to have written thus:

The dispute is not only about the day, but also about the actual character of the fast. Some think that they ought to fast for one day, some for two, others for still more, some make their 'day' last forty hours on end. Such variation in the observance did not originate in our own day, but very much earlier, in the time of our forefathers, who – apparently disregarding strict accuracy – in their naïve simplicity kept up a practice which they fixed for the time to come. In spite of that, they all lived in peace with one another, and so do we: the divergency in the fast emphasizes the unanimity of our faith.¹⁵

Irenaeus in his letter buttressed his point using two anecdotes. The first was to refer to the predecessors of Victor, claiming that they allowed the divergence in practice. Secondly, he made reference to the visit of Polycarp of Smyrna to Pope Anicetus. The Pope did not force Polycarp to do what was done in Rome rather he left him to practice what he is believed to have received from the apostle John. The two out of respect for each

other parted ways in peace. In this way Irenaeus brokered peace in the church, he acted as a liaison for the two sides of the divide.

Synods in Africa

At Carthage in Africa numerous synods were held on varying matters. It is said that during the time of Tertullian, it was not a common practice but during the episcopacy of Cyprian (200/210 – 258 AD) things changed. The earliest were on the issue of *lapsi* or those who have lapsed in or abandoned their faith as a result of persecutions or backsliders. This happened as a result of the persecution of Emperor Decius (250 AD), it was general and compelled Christians to sacrifice to Roman gods and for the well-being of the emperor. During the persecution, Cyprian fled to a safe place from where he was in communication with the diocese. Felicissimus, his chief antagonist gathered a group of Confessors around him who confronted and condemned Cyprian's flight in the face of persecution. About the same time Pope Fabian was put to death and those who had charge of the church of Rome sent the information of his martyrdom and a letter to Carthage in which they express their surprise at the flight of Cyprian. He replied in another letter explaining the reason behind his flight (Ep. 20) accompanied with thirteen other letters written to his community, showing that he never abandoned his responsibilities. This almost caused a schism.

A synod was convoked in 251 AD presided over by Cyprian which agreed that all *lapsi* were to be admitted to penance, and can be reconciled with the church at the point of death with varying period of expiation depending on the gravity of the case. The synod also excommunicated Felicissimus and his supporters. Cyprian went on to write two pastoral letters: *De Lapsi* and *De Ecclesiae Unitate*¹⁶ on the same issue.

Towards the end of Cyprian's life another controversy ensued over the baptism of heretics. The traditional attitude of Carthage to this had been negative; heretics are not to be baptized, a view held by Tertullian in his writing *De baptismo* before him and

upheld by a great council of African and Numidian bishops under Agrippinus in 220 AD. Cyprian also presided over synods in Carthage between 255 and 256 AD and reaffirmed the African stand that heretics are not to be baptized. When Pope Stephen (254-256) heard of this he warned against taking the African stand but Cyprian would not budge, he stood his ground and defended the African decision. A bitter dispute ensued between the two (Cyprian and Pope Stephen) and as it was threatening to get dangerous, Emperor Valerian promulgated an edict against the Christians.¹⁷

During the time of Augustine of Hippo (354 – 430 AD) several other synods were held such as in 345 AD on the issue of Donatism and the rebaptism of those baptized by heretics. On 28th August, 397 AD¹⁸ a synod was held at Carthage, Denzinger referred to it as the third Council, at the synod, the canon of Hippo 393 AD was reaffirmed. The synod of 393 AD was the first ever to list and approve a Christian biblical canon of the New Testament. A synod held at Hippo in 411 AD tried to put an end to the schism caused by the Donatists. Augustine called the synod held at Carthage in 418 AD the synod of Africa, it was presided over by Aurelius of Carthage, at the synod Caelestius a follower of Pelagius and Pelagius himself were both denounced.

Synods in Europe

Ambrose of Milan (337/339-397 AD) became bishop of Milan in 373 AD and from the very beginning of his episcopacy he had shown zero tolerance to Arianism that was dominant within his jurisdiction, in fact he was made bishop after the death of an Arian bishop. During his episcopacy he participated in and presided over a number of synods and councils. In 381 AD he presided over a synod at Aquileia, at the synod Arian bishops were deposed and the creed of Nicaea was upheld as the true creed of the church following the outcome of the council of Constantinople 381 AD. He was also said to have been the brain behind the outcome of the Council of Rome 382 AD which was

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presided over by Pope Damasus. The council issued the Gelasian decrees on the Scriptures and also commissioned Jerome to work on the Latin Vulgate translation of the Bible.

Of importance is also the synod of Elvira 305/6 AD. It is usually considered as one of three synods, the other two being Arles and Ancyra 314 AD. They are said to have prepared in character the way for the ecumenical council of Nicaea in 325 AD.¹⁹ The synod of Elvira was held at the rather unknown Spanish church before the edict of Constantine. Present at the synod were nineteen bishops, twenty-six presbyters mostly from Baetica with deacons and lay faithful. Eighty-one canons were said to have emanated from the synod but it has been said that some of these were only later additions to the original ones, all of them regarding discipline, conduct and order among Christian communities. The first canon on clerical celibacy is said to be traceable to this synod²⁰. There was also a canon on the use of images. The use of images was condemned at the synod. Canon 36 states that: "It has seemed good that images should not be in churches so that what is venerated and worshiped should not be painted on the walls." This will be dealt with again at the second council of Nicaea 787 AD. Canon 38 permits baptism by lay faithful under certain conditions while Canon 53 forbids the restoration of an excommunicated person by another bishop other than the one who excommunicated such a person.

Synods in Asia

Between 264 and 269 AD series of synods were held in Antioch discussing the issue of Paul of Samosata leading to the main council in 268/269 AD that eventually condemned him. He had taught that Christ was an ordinary man inspired by the divine wisdom, his theology was unitarian rather than trinitarian. Other than this synod, over thirty councils were said to have been held at Antioch on issues regarding the Arian and Christological controversies of the time. The proceedings of the council are presented by Eusebius of Caesarea, he said that

the gathering of the bishops: “exposed and at last, explicitly and unanimously, condemned for heterodoxy the originator of the Antioch heresy.” At the synod a disputation was conducted by the Presbyter Malchion, the head of a school of rhetoric at Antioch in the presence of about seventy bishops gathered with Paul the bishop of Samosata with the intention of making Paul retract the purported heresy. Immediately after the condemnation and excommunication, the outcome of the council was addressed to Pope Dionysius, Maximus of Alexandria and all the provinces of the empire.²¹

There were also records of regular synods holding at Cappadocia in the third century under Firmilian of Cappadocian Caesarea (c. 200 – 260 AD). Some of the issues addressed at these synods will include the modalism heresy of Beryllus of Bostra, Novatian and Paul of Samosata. Much is not known about the person of Beryllus, other than what Eusebius mentioned. He was the bishop of Bostra in Arabia who had taught that Jesus did not pre-exist before the incarnation and that he did not have divinity of his own, rather it was the father that was dwelling in him. This is a form of modalism that had earlier been condemned severally. Origen was invited to dialogue with him and he was able to make him retract his heretical views and restored him to the faith.²²

There were also records of council of Fathers sitting at Neo Caesarea which is a city of Pontus in 315 AD. At this council, canons were promulgated some of which were accepted as ecumenical at the council of Chalcedon 451 AD. At this synod canons were adopted for the establishment of ecclesiastical orders. Of the fifteen canons, seven of them have to do with clerics. The first canon reiterates what was adopted at Elvira regarding clerical celibacy whilst the eleventh canon stipulated that the age for the ordination of a cleric is thirty. It states that: “Let not a presbyter be ordained before he is thirty years of age, even though he be in all respects a worthy man, but let him be made to wait. For our Lord Jesus Christ was baptized and began

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to teach in his thirtieth year.”²³ Before now, there has not been any reference to age regarding ordination.

Conclusion

Other than the synods and councils enumerated and discussed above, there were other synods and councils that were convoked and celebrated in the ancient church and in the church of modern and contemporary era. From the above discussion it is obvious that councils and synods played a vital role in the life, development and growth of the early church. This is obvious in the various decisions and canons that were reached at the synod and councils discussed above. It is obvious that synods and councils were means of stabilizing the nascent church. They were used to teach and explain the faith of the church in better terms. They were used to foster peace and unity in the church, especially in the local Churches. These and many others are what the current synod on synodality is expected to achieve in the church in general. The Pope has called on all Catholics to journey together.

Endnotes

¹Jovian P. Lang, “Church and Liturgy”, in *Dictionary of the Liturgy*, New York: Catholic Books Publishing Corp., 1989, pp. 106-108.

²John Paul II, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Missouri- USA: Liguori Publications, 1994, 751. Henceforth: CCC & no.

³A S Hornby, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 6th Edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. This definition is the fourth and formal (especially in the past). There were other definitions of the term with regards to Council governance in Great Britain.

⁴CCC, 751.

⁵Joseph Wilhelm, “Council” in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 4, New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912. Retrieved from newadvent.org, and on 29/01/2022 @ 12.45pm.

⁶*Concilio* by ch. Munier in Nuovo Dizionario Paristico e di

Antichità Cristiane, Casa editrice Marietti, Genova, 2006, p.1146-1147

⁷Fanning Williams, "Synod" in the Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 14, New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1912. Retrieved from newadvent.org, and on 29/01/2022 @12.57pm

⁸Jovian P. Lang, Synod, p.606

⁹Cf. St. John Chrysostom, Homily 3

¹⁰The word ecumenical is derived from the Greek term oikoumen (oikoumene) meaning world or universe. They are usually convoked under the presidency of the Pope or his legates, involving the bishops and all those entitled. The decisions taken at such council are usually affirmed by the Pope and they are binding on all Catholics. Wilhelm Joseph Op. cit. CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA: General Councils (newadvent.org) viewed on 30/01/2022 @ 10.59am

¹¹Eusebius, *The History of the Church from Christ to Constantine*, trans by Williamson G.A., Penguin Books, London, 1965 (5. 16-19) pp.160-168. Montanus a neophyte to the Christian faith is the founder of the group called Montanists, he was from Phrygia a province of Anatolia. He claimed to be in the line of the succession of prophets and declared his mission to bring about a return to the simplicity of the early church and to announce the fulfillment of the prophecy Pentecost. He had two female assistants. They claimed to be under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and prophesy in ecstatic visions, urging their followers to fast and pray.

¹²These are Christians who celebrated Easter on the fourteenth day of the month of Nisan whichever day of the week that might be, that is on the day of the Jewish Passover (they celebrate at the full moon of the Passover). This was prevalent in Asia Minor and Syria. They emphasized the death of Jesus and see Jesus as the true paschal victim. Cf.: Quartodecimans | Encyclopedia.com viewed on 31/01/2022 @ 8.30pm

¹³Quasten Johannes, *Patrology*, vol. 1, Ave Maria Press, Indiana, p. 77

¹⁴Eusebius, *Op. Cit*, (5, 24), pp. 171-172

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 173. Series of local councils and synods were held in Palestine, Pontius, Osrhoene in the East and Rome and Gaul in

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the West in 193 AD on the Quartodeciman controversy.

¹⁶Quasten Johannes, *Patrology II*, Ave Maria Press, Indiana, pp. 341-342

¹⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 342 – 343; Cyprian, *Epp.* 67 – 75; cf. Keresztes Paul, Two Edicts of Emperor Valerian in *Vigiliae Christianae*, vol. 29 no.2, North-Holland Publishing Company, June 1975, pp. 81 - 95

¹⁸At this synod the canon of the scriptures was affirmed. The record of the synod read thus: “The Canonical Scriptures are these: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua the son of Nun, Judges, Ruth, four books of Kings, two books of Paraleipomena, Job, the Psalter, five books of Solomon, the books of the twelve prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezechiel, Daniel, Tobit, Judith, Esther, two books of Esdras, two Books of the Maccabees. Of the New Testament: four books of the Gospels, one book of the Acts of the Apostles, thirteen Epistles of the Apostle Paul, one epistle of the same [writer] to the Hebrews, two Epistles of the Apostle Peter, three of John, one of James, one of Jude, one book of the Apocalypse of John. Cf. *Codex Canonum Ecclesiae Africanae*

¹⁹The Council of Arles was said to have been convoked by Constantine one year after promulgating the edict of Milan after Christianity became a legal religion in the Empire. The Council was called in order to bring an end to the Donatist heresy.

²⁰Canon 33 – “Bishops, Presbyters, Deacons and others with a position in the ministry are to abstain completely from sexual intercourse with their wives and from the procreation of children. If anyone disobeys, he shall be removed from the clerical office”. Cf.: Synod of Elvira 305 AD | Eastern Orthodoxy (easternorthodoxchristian.com) viewed on 06/03/2022 @ 1.26pm

²¹Eusebius, *Op. cit.*, VII, 27-30; Cf. Lang, U.M., The Christological Controversies at the Synod of Antioch 268/269 in *The Journal of Theological Studies*, New Series, Vol 51 no. 1, April 2000, Oxford University Press, p. 62 and Kelly J.N.D., *Early Christian Doctrines*, Continuum Press, New York, pp.117-119, 158-159.

²²*Ibid.*, VI, 33

²³Canon 11 of the Synod of Neo Caesarea, 315, cf. CHURCH FATHERS: Council of Neo Caesarea (A.D. 315) (newadvent.org) viewed on 07/03/2022 @ 8.43pm

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**ENHANCING QUALITY E-LEARNING IN BUSINESS
EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN NIGERIA:
A PRAGMATIC APPROACH**

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Abstract

The study determined strategies for enhancing quality e-learning in business education programme in Nigeria: A Scientific Inquiry Approach. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study and descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The study was carried out in Anambra State, Nigeria. The population of the study consists of all (105) one hundred and five business educators. The instrument for data collection is a structured questionnaire. The instrument designed for the study was subjected to face and content validation. The Cronbach's alpha method was used to obtain overall reliability coefficient of 0.79. Eighty-eight (88) copies of the questionnaire were returned after administration. The research questions were answered using means and standard deviations. The null hypotheses formulated for this study were tested at a 0.05 level of significance using Independence Samples t-test. The study revealed that Business educator agreed that funding and effective administration could be used as a strategy to ensure quality e-learning in programme. The study recommended that curriculum planners should constantly review business education curriculum to accommodate recent development in technology.

Introduction

With the recent growth in globalization and information revolution in all sectors of the world, education is meant to create intellectual capacity for knowledge production. Keeping pace with this change requires new thinking on how to utilize learning resources to acquire knowledge and skills necessary to get and retain a good job. In Nigeria, tertiary education is expected to provide its recipients with long learning practices to compete favourably in the globe. To achieve this there is a need to change our obsolete mode of instructional delivery and maximize the juicy benefits provided by e-learning. E-learning is an offspring of information and communication technology that has made teaching and learning delivery including in business education more convenient. Business education is part of the courses offered in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Business education prepares its recipients to enter and advance in jobs within business environments. Atakpa (2011) opined that business education equips its recipients with vocational knowledge, skills, competencies for employment, and advancement in a broad range of business career¹. Business education programme was developed to produce competent, skilful and dynamic business teachers, office administrators and businessmen and women that will effectively compete in the world of work.

To achieve these lofty goals of business education, the use of modern technology becomes paramount as a means for instructional, pedagogical delivery and learning. Nwazor (2012) have faulted the business education programme because of its inability to prepare students and graduates for real-life situations². According to Mohammad (2015) instructional delivery in business education should enable students to link school activities to what is obtainable in a work setting³. Also Mohammad (2015) observed that the advent of Information and

Communication Technology (ICT) and the Internet has greatly influenced the way knowledge is conveyed which resulted in the development of e-learning.

E-learning is an alternative to the face-to-face traditional teaching method. e-learning calls for using of electronic technology to deliver instructions, assess and monitor learners, evaluate and give feedback to relevant stakeholders. e-learning is all about learning with the use of technologies, presumably computer and other modern-day tools like technology and communication infrastructure for teaching and learning delivery (Ahmad, 2012).⁴ Eze, Chinedu-Eze and Bello (2018) opined that e-learning is concerned with the holistic in the corporation of modern telecommunication equipment and ICT resources into the education system⁵.

Tertiary institutions where business education is offered lacks modern instructional facilities, to impart knowledge and skills needed to maintain quality education in our school system (Anioke, 2011).⁶ Anioke emphasizes that even when those facilities are available, it is either under utilized, not sufficient for the students, not serviced, maintained or obsolete to stand the test of time or not of the required quality. The process of students acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge through e-learning to stay relevant for successful employment can be affected if the e-learning technologies lack quality.

Quality is paramount in all human endeavours as such that all sector, organizational transformation efforts and activities focus on quality to get the best output. Okoro (2012) depicts quality and that there is direct responsiveness between standard and quality (the higher the standard, the higher the quality and vice versa).⁷ Quality in e-learning built its content, pedagogy, and learning results around technologies (Bremer, 2012).⁸ there is a shift to a system that utilizes students' needs, data, and information used for decision-making, administrative input, as well as learning outcomes' to improve the educational experience and learning (Thair, Garnett, & King, 2006) ⁹.

Quality e-learning in business education programme will provide stakeholders with access to requisite information through technology to support relevancy, growth and professionalism in business education. Nnorom and Gaius-Oke (2013) identify some criteria for measuring quality in business education, which includes quality of resource input, content, process and output. The inability of business education to operate effectively with e-learning can affect the quality of outputs from the programme¹⁰. Enhancing quality e-learning in business education would lead to innovation in teaching and learning as well as motivate students to engage actively and independently in the learning processes to fit in the social life and world of work.

Though several tertiary institutions offering business education are making positive attempts to implement quality e-learning strategies to enhance equity, quality, share instruction technology resources, compete in a global environment of higher education and meet the rising demand for tertiary education. Adelekan (2013)¹¹ and Ilechukwu (2013)¹² stated that the high cost of e-learning hardware, inadequate skilled manpower for e-learning implementation and management, incompetent instructors that can teach with e-learning facilities, inadequate funding of education as well as high cost of installation and maintenance of relevant e-learning technologies. The problems that are bedevilling business education are compelling for the implementation of quality e-learning strategies.

Olufunwa, Waziri and Olorunmolu (2013) stated that for business education programme to achieve their goals, they must put in place quality enhancing strategies that will ensure the production of quality graduates for national development.¹³ These strategies include funding, proper utilization and effective utilization. Business education is necessary for sustainable progress in intellectual capacity building of knowledge of the world of work, skills, business attitudes, concepts and self-sustainability. Thus an inquiry into strategies for enhancing quality e-learning in business education programme becomes paramount.

Statement of the Problem

The objective of business education programme is to provide training in special skills, and equip students with such competencies that will not make them only employable, but to be self-employed (Olumese, 2009).¹⁴ Also, the adoption of e-learning technologies in business education will enhance the quality of the products to fit into the workplace and business environment in this technological era (Olojo, Adewumi & Ajisola, 2012).¹⁵ E-learning is fast becoming an instructional delivery method of technologically advanced countries due to several benefits of e-learning adoption. In order to be successful in the use of e-learning (University of Craiova, 2020) stated that the instructors should be adequately prepared with the teaching strategies and techniques required to teach and conduct effective e-learning education courses/programs and the students should take their own responsibility for e-learning.¹⁶

In Nigeria, e-learning usage as an instructional method of teaching and learning in business education programme is very minimal, because it seems the instructors are not adequately prepared and students also seems not to be ready for taking their responsibilities and finally institutions seems not ready to provide the facilities needed for e-learning this is why Ezenwafor, Okeke and Okoye (2014) reported that technical and vocational education (to which business education belongs) instructors utilize e-learning to a low extent.¹⁷ The researchers further reported that inadequate provision of teaching resources, as well as lack of skills for utilizing the resources, were some of the major constraints of e-learning adoption by the teachers. The state of the availability and utilization of these e-learning has also drastically affected the achievement of business education programme. This is because no meaningfully teaching-learning process can occur without the appropriate instructional materials and facilities. According to University of Craiova the results revealed by the OECD's Programme in International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2018 showed education systems of the

most countries were not at the desired level to provide online education for students, which the evidence promotes the potential for opportunity gap in education during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The above observations inspired the researcher to be curious to seek strategies to ensure quality e-learning in business education programme in Nigeria. The researcher is worried about the rising dissatisfaction among employers of labour on the inadequate competencies and skills of business education graduates in the use of ICT technologies in their places of work. The researcher viewed these problems and hoped to determine the rating of strategies of enhancing quality e-learning in business education programme.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to determine strategies for enhancing quality e-learning in business education programme. Specifically, the study intends to determine how

1. Funding as a strategy can enhance quality e-learning in business education programme
2. Effective administration as a strategy can enhance quality e-learning in business education programme.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. How funding could be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme?
2. How effective administration could be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance

1. There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female business educators regarding funding as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education

programme.

2. There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female business educators regarding effective administration as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme.

Review of Related Literature

Conceptual Framework

Concepts related to the present study are reviewed here.

Quality

Quality is an important issue in all human endeavors as such all organizational transformation efforts and activities focus on quality (Umoeshet, 2012). Quality is a direct responsiveness between standard and quality (the higher the standard, the higher the quality and vice versa).¹⁸

E-learning

According to Abdelaziz, Riad and Senousy, (2014) E-learning combines technologies such as information and multimedia which alters the traditional learning style and learning environment. Also, Garrison (2011) stated that e-learning is electronically mediated asynchronous and synchronous communication to construct and confirm the knowledge.¹⁹ E-learning means all learning situations where there is significant use of informatics and communication resources.

Business Education

Business education is that aspect of the total educational programme that provides requisite skills to perform effectively as producers, consumers. Idialu (2017) business education makes its recipient productive in teaching, paid employment and self-employment.²⁰ Business education facilitates economic development by preparing learners to impart knowledge to others and handle sophisticated office technologies and information

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systems. The goal of business education is primarily to produce competent, skilful and dynamic business teachers, office administrators and businessmen and women that will effectively compete in the world of work (Odunaike & Amoda, 2018).²¹

Theoretical Framework

The following theory underpinned the study

Thorndike's Law of Effect Learning Theory

This theory propounded by Edward Thorndike (1874 – 1949) is a psychologist that introduced reinforcement for learning cats in a box. He experimented that to the formation of three laws of learning. According to this theory what should be given to the child to learn should be meaningful, to the learner in terms of personal aspiration and interests; the teacher needs to make use of instructional teaching aids and materials to make his teaching lively and interesting.

Thorndike also worked on programmed instruction. In programmed instruction, the student learns with a device while the leader provides guidance, facilities and motivation. The learner should exercise his/her reasoning ability, criticize and contribute to the learning process. Learners should be conditioned to obey simple rates from the initial state while different instructional materials should be used in the process of teaching and learning. The five senses should be used in the learning process. This theory is related to this study because quality e-learning technologies are required in the instructional process to stimulate learning. Its utilization optimizes the teaching process in line with the law of effect learning theory.

Theoretical Studies

Studies related to the present study are hereby reviewed.

Funding as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education

Institutions offering business education cannot enhance quality e-learning without substantial financial support from the government and other donor organizations. Relying solely on students' tuition fees and financial support from the government is always not enough, institutions should be innovative in raising funds by consulting private, public sectors, designing projects which can attract funds from different donor organizations (Dalton Kisanga and Gren Ireson, 2015).²² Institutions struggling with financial constraints use their initiatives to engage in consultancies, attract projects as well as collaborate with a partner with institutions and donor organizations. Institutions could also seek external financial assistance from NGOs, corporate organizations (oil companies, communication service providers, financial institutions etc.) and the wealthy to execute projects like provision of equipment, facilities and structures in the school to promote business education (Danko, 2006).²³ Institutions offering business education should ensure that funds provided by the government, donors are effectively utilized by various units and arms in the school for the achievement of the collective goals and objectives of quality e-learning in the school system

Effective Administration as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education

There is deficient support from institutional administrators, managers, few technical experts to implement and maintain e-learning in business education. There is a need for effective leadership and management and sufficient capacity in terms of systems, personnel and infrastructure; from the administrative aspect of the framework. They are the foundational pillars upon which effective and qualitative e-learning can be built and sustained (Glen, 2005).²⁴ The institution's authority or regulatory/legislative committee on e-learning needs to design effective e-learning strategies as part of the system of the institution. The

strategies must build on and strengthen core competencies and comparative advantage. It has to foster e-learning and ensure that institutions are mutually supportive in the emerging e-learning environment (Okorafor & Ike, 2012) ²⁵

Empirical Studies

The Predictors of Success for E-Learning in Higher Education Institutions

Ghulam, Nawaz and Shadiullah (2012) examined the predictors of success for e-learning in higher education institutions in Pakistan²⁶. The objective of this study was to measure the relationships between the indicators (perceptions about ICTs, educational technologies, development and use of e-Learning) and the criterion variables (problems, satisfaction and prospects) among e-Learning users in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of N-W.F.P, Pakistan. The study found the existence of strong relationships in terms of indicators explaining the dependent variables. However, the impact is different from one variable to another. 81% of Problems, 57% of Satisfaction and 23% of prospects are explained by the Indicators. Problems are significantly explained by all four indicators, while Satisfaction has been predicted by three of the indicators (excluding Perceptions). The study found that only two indicators (Perceptions about ICTs and Educational technologies) predict the Prospects, while Development and Use do not. The surprising finding is that Prospects are not defined by the 'Existing Development and Use Practices'. Rather, their perceptions about ICTs and e-Learning tools strongly forecast the Prospects. Both studies emphasise on the need for quality e-learning in institutions of learning but differ in the area of study which is Pakistan and Anambra State, Nigeria respectively.

Method

The descriptive survey research design was adopted in the conduct of the study. This is best suited for studies that use a questionnaire to explore the opinions of a given population or its representative sample on existing phenomena. However, in survey research, the focus is on people, their beliefs, opinions, attitude, and behaviour. Based on this, the design is appropriate for the study. The study was carried in Anambra State, Anambra is a southeastern state, with 98% of Igbo ethnic group and 2% of Igala ethnic group, and it is the eighth-most populated state in Nigeria. The population of the study consists of all (105) one hundred and five business educators in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. The entire population was studied because the population is manageable. The instrument for data collection is a structured questionnaire titled “Questionnaire” on enhancing quality e-learning in business education programme in Nigeria. The questionnaire was divided into Two Sections A1, A2, covering the four research questions with a total of 14 items to examine how funding and effective administration could be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme. The responses to the Clusters were structured on a 5 point rating scale of Strongly agree (SA)– 4points, Agree (A) – 3 points, Disagree (D) – 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) – 1 point. The instrument designed for the study was subjected to face and content validation. The topic of the study, the purpose of study, research questions and the instrument for data collection will be given to two experts in measurement and evaluations. The Cronbach’s alpha method was used to obtain a reliability coefficient of 0.79. Eight-eight (88) copies of the questionnaire were returned after administration. The research questions were answered using means and standard deviations. The null hypotheses formulated for this study were tested at a 0.05 level of significance using Independent Samples t-test

Results

Research Question 1: How funding could be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme?

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on how funding could be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme

N: 88				
SN	Funding	x	SD	Decision
1	Purchasing of new gadgets for e-Learning	3.42	.798	Agreed
2	Maintaining of e-learning technologies	3.62	.748	Strongly Agreed
3	Funding of Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES)	3.33	.562	Agreed
4	Funding training and retraining of vocational education teachers for quality e-learning	3.10	.728	Agreed
5	Funding research and development for quality e-learning for business education	3.30	.790	Agreed
6	Sponsoring lecturers to seminars and conferences to ensure quality e-learning	3.31	.807	Agreed
7	Providing of funds for e-learning project implementation in tertiary institutions	3.27	.769	Agreed
8	Improving allocation of funds to the business education programme to ensure quality e-learning	2.95	1.005	Agreed
Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation		3.29	0.77	Agreed

Results in Table 1 show that one items had mean ratings of 3.62 which means that respondents strongly agreed while seven items have mean ratings ranging from 2.95 to 3.42 which shows that respondents agreed on the items on how funding could be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business

education programme. However, the grand mean of 3.49 shows that respondents perceived funding as a strategy suitable to ensure quality e-learning in business education. Furthermore, the standard deviation which ranged between .56 and 1.005 indicates homogeneity in the opinions of the respondents.

Research Question 2: How effective administration could be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme?

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on how effective administration could be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme

SN	Funding	<i>x</i>	SD	Decision
9	Ensuring optimal maintenance for a quality e-learning environment	2.98	.934	Agreed
10	Ensuring institutions are mutually supportive in the emerging e-learning environment	3.49	.743	Agreed
11	Partnering with stakeholders for quality e-learning	3.55	.710	Agreed
12	Designing a cardinal national development policy, plan, programme	2.86	.805	Agreed
13	Supervising teachers to ensure quality e-learning	2.91	.655	Agreed
14	Training and developing teachers for quality e-learning	3.42	.656	Agreed
Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation		3.20	1.49	Agreed

Results in Table 2 show that all the items had mean ratings of 2.91 to 3.55 which mean that respondents agreed. However, the grand mean of 3.20 shows that respondents perceived effective administration as a strategy suitable to enhance quality e-learning in business education students. Furthermore, the standard deviation which ranged between 0. 65 to 0.93 indicates homogeneity in the opinions of the respondents

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female business educators regarding funding as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme.

Table 3: Summary of t-test analysis between the mean responses of male and female business educators on how funding can be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-value	p-value	Decision
Male	34	3.30	0.34	86	0.06	0.99	Accept Ho
Female	54	3.30	0.40				

The data from the table indicated that there is no significant difference between the mean response of male and female business educators in tertiary institutions in Anambra State on how funding can be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme ($t= 0.06$, $df= 86$, $p= 0.99 > 0.05$). the hypotheses were accepted indicating that both genders do not differ significantly in their mean responses on how funding can be used as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female business educators regarding effective administration as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme.

Table 4: Summary of t-test analysis between the mean responses of male and female business educators on how effective administration as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-value	p-value	Decision
Male	34	3.22	0.45	86	0.50	0.73	Accept Ho
Female	54	3.30	0.40				

The data from the table indicated that there is no significant difference between the mean response of male and female business educators in tertiary institutions in Anambra State on how effective administration as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme ($t= 0.05$, $df= 86$, $p= 0.73 > 0.05$). the hypotheses were accepted indicating that both genders do not differ significantly in their mean responses on how effective administration as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme.

Discussion of Findings

Findings of the study indicated that the respondents agreed that purchasing of new gadgets for e-Learning, maintaining of e-learning technologies, funding of Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES, training and retraining of vocational education teachers for quality e-learning, funding research and development for quality e-learning for business education, sponsoring lecturers to seminars and conferences to ensure quality e-learning, providing of funds for e-learning project implementation in tertiary institutions among others are strategies through which funding could ensure quality e-learning in business education programme. This findings is in line with finding of Dalton Kisanga and Gren Ireson (2015)²⁷ that relying solely on students' tuition fees and financial support from the government is always not enough institutions should be innovative in raising funds by consulting private, public sectors, designing projects which can attract funds from different donor organizations.

The study also revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female business educators regarding funding as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme.

Findings of the study indicated that the respondents agreed that ensuring optimal maintenance for quality e-learning, integrating of mobile computing devices to ensure quality e-learning, partnering with stakeholders for quality e-learning, supervising teachers to ensure quality e-learning, training and developing teachers for quality e-learning among others are strategies

through which effective administration could ensure quality e-learning in business education programme. This finding is line with the assertions of Okorafor and Ike (2012) that the strategies must build on and strengthen core competencies and comparative advantage to foster e-learning, to ensure that institutions are mutually supportive in the emerging e-learning environment.

²⁸ The study also revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean rating of male and female business educators regarding effective administration as a strategy to enhance quality e-learning in business education programme.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that strategies for ensuring quality e-learning in business education include funding to acquire the required e-learning technologies and effective administration. For business education programme to meet its objectives of equipping recipients with skills, self reliance among others, there is need to restructure the programme to enhance quality e-learning.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made

1. Government at all levels should ensure that competent business educators, technologist in e-learning are employed. This can be achieved through recruiting by merit not party loyalist or tribe.
2. Curriculum planners should constantly review business education curriculum to accommodate recent development in technology.
3. Internal and external quality supervision of programme should be carried out regularly by the school authorities and NUC to ensure the compliance of the required standard for business education programme.
- 4 Adequate e-learning facilities and resources should be provided by the school authorities and government.

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**THE PRIEST: LEADING THE JEWISH COMMUNITY
AT WORSHIP**

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Abstract

Pentateuch recounts the movement of the people of God from Egypt to the promised land. As they journeyed they worshipped God the way they knew best. As they became more sedentary, the institution of the priesthood began to gain greater importance. This can be seen by the improved manner of their worship of God. At different times and in various stages, they worshipped God according to the circumstance in which they found themselves. Over time, they developed some religious Institutions. Among them was the priesthood. The priest had a specific role. He was charged with the cultic responsibility. What this simply meant was that the priest had to concern himself with spiritual activities. His job had to do with establishing and maintaining relationship with God. This is done through the act of worship, which enables encounter with God. This essay, through the prism of Pentateuch examines the development of the priestly function, especially his role at worship. Utilizing Synchronic-diachronic approach while respecting Pentateuch canonical framework, the priest has been seen to occupy a central place in the worship tradition of the people. This role of the priest as a leader of the worshipping community will be helpful in the understanding of today's priest. It is in this light that the paper is unambiguous about the character of the priest in relation to leading at worship. The outcome of the research is that the priest while serving the people is expected to lead them to God through daily worship of God.

Key Words: God, Priest, Worship, Sacrifice, People, personal relationship

INTRODUCTION

Prior to the enactment of the Law on Mount Sinai¹, the Priesthood was yet to be instituted. Hence Sacrifices were offered by the head of the family (*Paterfamilias*).² The patriarchs were at the foundation of the life of the people of God-Israel. These were the first fathers of the people of Israel. As such, they became the first to exercise this office of presiding at the sacrificial altar. We find this play out in the life of Abraham (Gen 22:1-19) God commands Abraham to offer his only son, Isaac. This serves as a prototype of sacrifices. He was to offer Isaac as a holocaust to God. But he was exchanged for an animal. As soon as the animal was provided, Abraham killed it and performed the sacrifice to God as commanded.

The Patriarchs worshipped in Sanctuaries. A Sanctuary is a holy place where YHWH is present.³ The Israelite could actually identify these holy places or holy abodes. In the wilderness, it was the tent of meeting, while in the monarchic era, it was the temple. The presence of YHWH attracts the construction of an altar for sacrifice. Through this sacrifice, man encounters God in a profound way. Jacob after his many ordeals, built an altar to the Lord who had always been around him to support him in the days of his troubles (Gen 35:1-7). As a patriarch he offered sacrifice on the altar.

In continuation of the worship of God, although Moses was not counted amongst the patriarchs, he had a leadership role and almost could qualify for a patriarch. He experienced God in a most unique way. God tells him to pull off his shoes for he was standing on a holy ground. Moses on his own part shielded his face because he was scared to see the face of God (Exod 3:5-6). This was the prelude to his mission in leading the people

out of Egypt. The transformative moment was the encounter on Sinai and the giving of the covenant code (Exod 19-20). At this encounter, God instructs him to build a tent for him. The significance of this tent (shrine) is that it would be the dwelling place of God (cf. Exod 25:9; 26:1ff; 35:11ff; 36:13ff; 40:2ff; Num 1:50ff; 9:15ff; Jos 22:19; Pss 74:7 and 132:7). In this dwelling place of God, worship will be offered to God.

The covenant with God implied that their life would have to radically change, especially in the aspect of worship. The question that calls to mind is the place for this worship of God. The sanctuary, or the tent of meeting or even tamarisk tree? These places are inadequate to be used for the purposes of worship. The Temple became the immediate response to this new relationship between God and the people. It was like the symbolic Palace of the deity, like the tent, it was the residence of YHWH.⁴ This residence of YHWH would require the services of a Priest because it is Holy.

The structure and division of the temple authenticates the fact of Priests being specially designated to offer Sacrifices. As representative of the people, they continue to exemplify the relationship between God and the people. God adopts the people as his children (Exod 19:5). The adoption of Israel by God is well articulated by Prophet Hosea (Hos 11:1; Isa 1:2; Deut 32:6). He sees in this adoption great implications for them. Thus, it implies that the people of God/Israel have to relate to God in a special way. One basic way the human person relates to God is through prayer. Sacrifice to God is a form of prayer also.

Jewish sacrifice is always celebrated in and by the community. In the words of Mckenzie "Cult is a social worship through ritual performance. It is not private worship and it is not improvised."⁵ The leader is always the Priest since the institution of the nation and establishment of a place of worship requires a certain level of purity and cleanliness on the part of the leader. The holiness code

articulates this very clearly (Lev 17:1-27:34).

This paper titled “The Priest: Leading the Jewish community at worship” examines the role of the Priest in the community especially at the time of the building of the temple. The work is divided in four sections: Section one is an introduction to the work. The second section addresses the Priest leading the people at worship especially as the temple was established and dedicated for use. Worship has to take place in a specific location. This is in comparison to an older location like tent of meeting *’ōhel mō’ēd*. Indeed, the tent is a place of meeting; signifying the meeting of YHWH with Israel. It was at this place that YHWH found it convenient to reveal himself through oracular utterance.⁶ The Priests in the early beginnings were often consulting oracles for the people. In the third section, the focus will be on the different sacrifices. In treating this, the role of the Priest as leader at the offering is clearly indicated. The biblical texts are very specific in respect of what the Priest has to do. Finally, the paper will conclude with a look at the theology of sacrifice in the Jewish community.

2.0 *’ōhel mō’ēd* as a place to encounter God

As Israel made a covenantal pact with God in Exodus and in Deuteronomy, it would be important to note that they, like true nomads, had no fixed place for worship. The temple as it is understood is a fixed structure in which public worship takes place.⁷ At the time of the judges, temples were not built yet. Prior to that time Genesis presents God and humans living in the garden. This concept of garden in Eden (*gan-bā’ēden*) comes to us through the hands of the Yahwist tradition.⁸ What the tradition presents to us is the first explicit mention of a housing location where God and the human person met. In short, they were very precious in the sight of God and as a result, shared same abode as this tradition would make us understand. Unfortunately, as

they sinned against God, they were expelled from this abode (Gen 3:23). The fall of man led to his expulsion from the garden and thus, a new place to encounter God was imminent. This is particularly important for the continued communication of God with the patriarchs. The sacrifice of Isaac in Genesis 22 gives us a great knowledge about the place of worship. Indeed, there is no place specifically built or set aside. Abraham simply followed instructions to bring Isaac to a place God has chosen for the sacrifice of his son. Nonetheless, he made an altar for this sacrifice in Gen 22:9. All through the narrative of the Patriarchs, there is a mention of altar and sanctuary as the normal venues/place to worship God. This continued until the time of the Exodus.

At the time of the Exodus, the people encountered God through the instrumentality of Moses. The tent of meeting was the medium of encounter (Exod 33:7). In Exodus 39:32 there is a mention of the people completing the construction of the abode of the tent of meeting. This command of God to Moses to construct a place of meeting indicates the importance of worship in the life of the Israelites as previously indicated. The story of man and God began with the story of creation.

The creation stories by the Priestly (codex) tradition⁹, represented by P and Yahwist tradition, represented by J, present God as the only creative principle/force.¹⁰ In the story, we find specific features whereby God and humanity are brought together within a given space. One of the accounts did not provide a specific space, while the other did. The Priestly account did not inform the reader about the exact venue God situated man, whom he made in his own image and likeness (Gen 1:26). In this verse, there was a divine consultation prior to the creation of humankind in the image and likeness of himself. This much the writer tells us. One can only imagine that humanity was placed in the universe. The J account states that God created man and placed him in a garden (Gen 2:8). For the first time, there is an

explicit mention of the garden in Eden *gan-bə'ēden*. God gave man abode at the garden. For the creation of woman according to J account, God made man fall into a deep sleep and took a rib of his to fashion woman (Gen 2:21-22).

All these activities happened in the garden. Hence, in this way there is an understanding of the abode inhabited by humanity and God. The relationship between God and these persons was one of reverence and fear as they continued to inhabit the garden of Eden.

It is important to note that the human person is destined to worship God as portrayed by the work of J. The P tradition has a similar thing. For this reason, the account climaxes in the creation of man with the provision of *Sabbath* as a day to rest and worship. In this way, humanity partners with God while fulfilling the law of Sabbath. Here, Sabbath does not only signal the end of God's creative activity but signals also cessation from work in order to give time to the worship of the One who began the entire process of work in the universe. It is in light of this that the Israelite community relates to God in a way of worship, communion and atonement.¹¹ This relationship that is spelt out in worship allows itself to be differentiated in segments such as: the ideas of gifts. Little wonder Exod 20:2 reads, "I am the Lord your God who brought you from the Land of Egypt, from the house of slavery/work."

God, by identifying himself as the God of the people who led them out of Egypt implies, they were obligated to worship him. Having been adopted Israel feels obliged to serve and worship God. Since worship is therefore a substantial part of their life, the Priesthood was instituted to see to this activity.¹² In the patriarchal time, worship was conducted by *Pater familias* (head/father of the house/family). God's presence always evokes adoration and worship. For the Israelites, this worship is usually led by a designated authority, which resides with the-*Pater Familias*

during the Patriarchal time and by Levitical Priest after the Sinai event.¹³ Worship has therefore been performed unbroken since the time of Abraham. Although the Priest was focused on offering sacrifices and worship, this does not in any way exhaust the Priestly office.¹⁴ It is crucial to note that worship creates an opportunity for the human person to encounter the divine. The Ark of the covenant represents the divine and thus makes him present wherever it is deposited. It should be noted that as the people got more settled and ceased to wander, they had a more permanent place to worship. The temple represents a progressive development in the economic life of the people.

2.2 The Ark of the Covenant taken into the Temple as the new place to encounter God:

There was an upward economic improvement after the death of king Saul. By the time David took over the governance of the people, he built on the already existing economic prosperity; and saw the need to make Jerusalem a central place for religious and civic purposes.¹⁵ To accomplish this, he decided to bring the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem from Baalah in Judah (2 Sam 6:2). The journey from Baalah did not continue due to the death of Uzziah who was judged to be irreverent with the Ark of the Covenant (2 Sam 6: 6-9). At this point, the Ark of the Covenant was deposited in the house of Obed Edom in the city of Gath (2 Sam 6: 9-11). As David heard about the blessing the ark of the covenant was bringing to Obed Edom he decided to get the Ark of the Covenant back to Jerusalem. It was brought into Jerusalem amidst dancing and celebration (2 Sam 6: 16-19). One important thing to note is that the Ark of the Covenant was housed in the tent of meeting. David found it not dignifying enough for God. Comparing his abode of Cedar with God's abode in a tent and the implication there of, he decided to build a temple for God, where the Ark of the Covenant could be housed (2 Sam 7: 1-7).

However, Nathan the Prophet told him that his Son after him would build the temple for him (2 Sam 7: 8-16). In this way, as Solomon became King, the project to build a temple for God was his primary goal. He had an elaborate preparation before the temple was built (1 Kgs 5: 1-18; 2 Chr 2: 1-18). Solomon was a very wise King. He got the materials for the temple ready before commencing its building. After all the preparations he built the temple in seven years (1 Kgs 6: 1-38). Solomon brought the best skilled men to build the interior of the temple especially the paraphernalia for worship (1 Kgs 7: 38). This was to make sure that the temple was a fitting place to house the Ark of the Covenant and to worship God. 1 Kgs 7: 40-45 gives a summary of the list of the temple furnishings. The temple was furnished with Gold, Silver, Bronze and other elements.¹⁶ After the temple had been completed, Solomon set out to bring the Ark of the Covenant into the temple (1 Kgs 8: 1-13; 2 Chr 5:2-6:2). The coming of the ark of the covenant into the temple makes it really an exceptional place. At this point, Solomon gathered all the people in the temple and addressed them, offered prayers, blessed the people and dedicated the temple (1 Kgs 8: 14-66). God in response to Solomon appeared to him as he did in Gibeon (1 Kgs 9:2). At this appearance, God assured Solomon that he heard his prayers and consecrated the temple as a place to offer worship forever (1 Kgs 9:3). The appearance of God and the confirmation of his acceptance of the temple dedicated to him marked the beginning of a centralized location for the worship of God. This invariably establishes logically the office of the Priesthood whose function would be to step into the Holy of Holies and all the other marked out and reserved areas in the new Temple. Now the Priesthood will become the focus of the nation since a temple has been built and dedicated for worship. Priests were to lead the people in the worship of God.

2.3 The Priest and the Temple

Numbers 3:1-4 trace the origin of Israelite Priesthood. Here Aaron is specifically named and his children identified by name. Two of the Sons, Nadab and Abihu died because they were unholy to the Lord in their priestly services. Cultic offerings would require the purity of the Priests in question. And this is why sacrifices were reserved to Priests alone. For this reason, the Priest must strive to be “cultically” clean. The Aaronic Priesthood started after the adoption at Sinai (Exod 20:2a). Their adoption as God’s own implied that they have to worship God in a rather exclusive manner, and with certain prohibitions. The prohibitions are presented in the imperfect tense, which has the nuance of the future with the tone of an imperative mood *lō’ ta’āseh-lākā pesel* (do not make for yourself a statue). This prohibition holds even for the future generation to come.

It is completely forbidden here to carve an image in the form of idol. This idea is muted by the use of *pesel,ā’* while the use of *tāmūnāh*. focuses attention more on pictures or images that are not carved. God does not want his people to make any representation for themselves. This prohibition is probably so to help them pay particular attention in the worship of the one God with whom they have entered into a special relationship. The Priest has the sacred function to moderate the action of the people in respect of this command. This Priesthood is hereditary. Numbers 25:11-13 presents God entering into a covenant with Phinehas son of Eleazar and grandson of Aaron, the Priest. God communicated through Moses that he would establish Pinehas as Priest over the people. Assisting the Priests are the Levites. This is articulated in Numbers 3:5-8 (cf. Num 1:50). In this pericope, God instructed Moses to get the Levites to assist Aaron in the services of the tent of meeting and especially the tabernacle. Levites are given to taking care of the tabernacle (*hammīškān*) as this text indicates. These Levites are the sons of Jacob.¹⁸

It is important to note that there seems to exist some conflicts in the roles of the Levites and Priests as contained in Pentateuch. In Numbers 3:6 the Levites were to assist Aaron, while in Exodus 32:25-29 the Levites were chosen in opposition to Aaron because he supported idolatry at some point in time. In Deut 10:6-9, we read that they were chosen by Moses after Aaron's demise. The way to resolve this is to have a reliable genealogy of the Priestly lineage.¹⁹ Prophet Ezekiel seems to articulate quite clearly the various categories of Priests/Levites. In Ezk 44:6-14, the prophet delineates the roles of Levites. In doing so, he brings to clarity the fact of the different gradation of Levites: Levites who served in Sanctuaries, and Levites who served at the temple in Jerusalem. 2 Kgs 23:9 mentions Levites of lower ranks.

Centralization of worship and religion in Israel happened with the establishment of the monarchy. The worship of God will take place here forever. It is obviously clear that the temple is a central place for the worship of God. Hence, the Priests are expected to carry out their official duties in the temple. The temple is a reminder about the presence of God.²⁰ However, God's presence among the people is not as a result of any temple made by man.²¹ God does not really need the temple for his presence to be felt. Hence, the importance of the temple is only seen in the opportunity it provides the people to have a place of encounter with God through the availability of ritual celebrations. McKenzie notes that the major role of the Priest was to offer sacrifices, make rituals of purification and rituals of blessing.²² In this way he mediates between God and the people.

2.4 The mediatory role of the Priest

Solomon was glad to have succeeded in building a temple for God. The Priest is the one designated to provide service in such a Holy place. The temple is therefore the new '*ōhel mō'ēd*' (tent of meeting). It is understandably so because they are no

longer a wandering people. The building of the temple and its consecration precisely brought to an end the significance of the tent of meeting, and the housing of the ark of covenant.²³ The temple represents the economic wellbeing of the people, who were once on a journey from Egypt to a promised land and lived in tents at those difficult moments. God equally followed them encountering them in the tent. In the temple, the Priests lead the people in prayer. He brings them to God by offering sacrifices for them and brings God's blessing to the people as he offers the Sacrifice. According to Brueggemann, "The sacrificial system is presented as a gift of God's grace that makes a relationship possible."²⁴ This relationship between God and the people is understood within this tradition as a mediated process. As a matter of fact, Israel does not have any immediate access to God. However, access to God is gained through authorized personnel and procedures.²⁵ No one can play this role other than the Priest at the temple as he has been designated by Moses. There seems to be an underlining implication for the construction of the temple. It has made worship assume a complex form. We shall be looking at the various forms of worship in a place dedicated for that singular objective.

3.0 SACRIFICES AS MAJOR MEANS OF JEWISH WORSHIP

The worship of God can be done in varied ways. For the Israelites, the primary way they worship God is by way of sacrificial offering. The book of Leviticus has copious references about regulations for worship and religious ceremonies in ancient Israel. The Priests were entrusted with the sole responsibility of presiding at the celebration of these sacrifices.

3.1 Holocaust offering (*'ōlāh qorbān*)

There are two kinds of Holocaust offering made here. One is

animal burnt offering, which comprises (*mīn-habbāqār*) cattle, herd or ox, and (*mīn-haṣṣō'n*) small cattle, sheep, and goats; and the other is a turtle dove (a bird holocaust offering) *mīn-hā'ôf 'ôlāh*. Animals to be offered are usually without blemish (Mall:6-14). Its name '*ôlāho* literally means 'that which goes up in flames'. It is taken from the verb *lālôt* which means "**to ascend, to go up**". It is often used in relation to going up to Jerusalem with special sense of going to the temple for Sacrifice. In all cases, the animals are totally consumed by fire on the altar (Lev 1:9). In this way, the pleasant fragrance coming from the victim that is burnt ascends to God. God is always pleased by the wonderful fragrance of the Offering. This offering previously would take place at the tent of meeting (*'ôhel mô'éd*) before the building of the temple (cf. Exod 26; 29:42-46; 40:34-38 for tent of meeting). The procedures are contained in vv. 3-9 (a bull), 10-13 (a male sheep or goat and 14-17(turtle doves or pigeons). For the first two animals, the penitent brings the animal at the entrance of the tent of meeting, places his hands on the animal, and then it is slaughtered. But the high point is at the time the Priest takes the blood to sprinkle at the altar. It is indeed the sole job of the Priest. He does this because blood is dear to God (Lev 1:5). This is one job that the Priest cannot delegate. For the bird, there is a slight difference. The Priest does all the ceremonies. It is not taken to the entrance of the tent of meeting. Rather, he goes with it to the altar to perform the needed sacrifice. At the end of the ceremony, the Priest burns the whole victim (Lev 1:13,17). In fact, the total destruction of the victim for sacrifice indicates that the sacrifice is a more solemn offering than all other sacrifices.²⁶ This explains the reason for the elaborate elucidation of the ritual. By the nature of this sacrifice, it is sometimes called "the whole offering"(*'ôlāh kēlîl*).²⁷ There is a reference to the whole offering in Exod 20:24-26. This sacrifice is offered in celebration of an undertaking that YHWH has brought to a successful

conclusion.²⁸ It is counter Jewish culture to fail to give thanks to YHWH upon reception of a favour. There is also a sense of burnt offering reflected in grain offering.

3.2. Grain offering (=qorbān mīnḥāh)

The text of Lev 2: 1-16 provides information about the prescriptions for the grain or cereal offering. The word *mīnḥāh* ‘simply means “**gift, tribute (eliciting favour)**” (NRSV 144). It is interesting to note that this is equally a burnt offering as in the case of the *’ōlāh*. There are two types of grain offering: raw vv.1-3 and cooked vv.4-10.

The raw grain offering is presented with some oil and frankincense. Frankincense is an aromatic resin found in Arabia and East Africa.²⁹ Now the important thing is that the Priest takes a portion of the raw grain offering to the altar and burns it to God as a pleasing aromatic offering (Lev 2:2).

As the instruction goes only a part of the grain is offered in fire.³⁰ This part of the ceremony is what makes the offering acceptable and therefore very important. The same process for the cooked grain offering is attested to in Leviticus. The Priest removes from the cooked grain offering its token or memorial portion as it is called *’zkārātāh* (and offers this as a pleasing burnt offering to God.³² This burnt offering is supposed to bring the penitent to a gracious remembrance.³³ It is interesting to note that the law requires just a portion of the grain to be burnt. This felicitation that grain offering brings serves as the reason for a *shelamim offering*.

3.3 Shelamim Offering

The term “*Shelamim*” is not easily translated. However, it could be understood as: “gift, payment, communion, covenant, peace, whole and salvific.”³⁴ This offering is motivated by the positive condition of the penitent. *Shelamim* offering may be

divided into three groups: thanksgiving, votive and freewill.³⁵ As animal is involved in this offering, the Priest takes the blood and sprinkles around the altar. This is the sacrifice par excellence since it is far more important and more frequent than all the other sacrifices.³⁶ The sacrificial meal is a social act prompted by a joyous occasion.³⁷ The worshipper invites people to the meal (Exod 32:6; Deut 12: 18; Judg 9:27 and Zeph 1:7; and they were invited to eat and drink before Yahweh (Exod 34:15; 1 Sam 9:12ff; 16:3f; 2 Kgs 10:19).

The Priest is the only one who touches the blood of the victim because it is very holy. Again, as in the case of the grain offering, portion of the sacrificed animal is burnt.³⁸ The difference between *Shelamim* and *Olah* (Holocaust) is that it is the offering whose meat could be eaten by non-clergy/ non-Priests. This makes it a less holy offering since the laypersons partake of the meal.³⁹ This offering serves as communal feast between God and Israel. But they are instructed that the fat and blood belong to God. The people are to remove the fat and hand on to the Priest. The Priest puts this upon the altar for burning.

3.4 Sin Offering/ Purification Offering

The Hebrew word used for sin/purification offering is *ləḥattāṭ*... This word means “sin” and so the captioning of the offering as “sin” offering. Technically, since the offering is not for an individual, but for the purpose of avoidance of the desecration of the sanctuary, the title as purification offering may be very *ad rem*. This is an offering made for purification of unintentional sins.⁴⁰ There are other occasions that would necessitate the sacrifice of a sin offering. These are: consecration of the altar (Exod 29:15,26ff; 30:1ff; Lev 16:16); when the altar has in anyway been desecrated, invariably this will necessitate ritual cleansing⁴¹; or against pollution of a Nazirite (Num 6:10ff) or other defilements (Lev 12:6). In this way, the people avoid

and escape the wrath of God. This is the first time reference is made about the Priest possibly having sinned (Lev 4: 3).

If the anointed Priest has sinned, and then bringing guilt on the people, he shall bring for expiation a young and unblemished bull as a sin offering to God. He will perform the ceremony as stated. There are some specifics about the offering in verse 6. The Priest dips his fingers into the blood and sprinkles it in front of the curtain of the sanctuary. The blood that is sprinkled acts as a cleansing detergent. In this way, the tabernacle complex is cleansed from inadvertent transgressions (Num 15:22-31). Verse 7 gives further instruction on how to dispose of the remaining blood. The Priest then removes the necessary parts to be burnt on the altar to God. In the meantime, all the skin is taken away outside the camp to an ash heap and burnt. If the community has sinned, the elders shall place hands on the bull. The same prescription as above is followed by the Priest. The bull is also taken outside the camp. There is a little nuance with the sin offering of a ruler. Every other thing is observed except for the following:

- a. the Priest puts with his hands some of the blood in the horns of the altar of burnt offering and the rest poured out at the base of the altar of burnt offering.
- b. and all the fat shall be turned into a smoke offering (nothing is said about how the skin is handled). This indeed is a significant difference from the sin offering of the Priest and that of the community.

The sin offering of an ordinary person calls for the use of a she (female) goat. Every other thing is done as in the case of the sin offering of a leader. Now, if a sheep is used, the penitent has to bring a female sheep without blemish. All other procedure is followed. In all this, the Priest plays an unsubstituted role. In fact, without the Priest, the offering will not take place. This offering completely shows that the human person stands in constant need

of the mercy of God. Not even the priest is spared. As a matter of fact, he equally offers sin offering sacrifice for himself. This is further explained in the Letter to the Hebrews. The new testament priesthood continues the tradition of the old priesthood.⁴²

3.5 Reparation/Repayment offering (Leviticus 5:14-26 BHS)

lā'āšām. is usually translated as “guilt offering”. It covers a gamut of things. The kind of sins that fall under this offering include sacrilege committed against sacred things, unidentifiable sin, and fraud arising from a false oath. There is no elaborate explanation as to how this was to be performed by the Priest. The important thing is that the Priest presides over it. The same priest will have to always use incense at offering. At this point we shall consider the offering of incense as sacrifice.

3.6 Offering of Incense

Almost all the offerings that involved burning would be accompanied by incense. Exod 30:34-38 gives a detailed instruction on how the incense is to be prepared. Indeed, it is most holy to God. Due to its Holy character, the High Priest alone can offer incense as a sacrifice. Consequently, he burns incense in the morning and evening (Exod 30:7-8.). This was initially burned on censers (Lev 10:1; 16:12; Num 16:17-18). Incense burning made atonement for sins by propitiating the divine wrath (Num 16:46-48). On the day of Atonement, the High Priest burns incense in order to appease God so that He might relent in his punishment to the people (Lev 16:12-13). God relents in his punishment because the smell of the incense always would be pleasing to Him. This is largely because the ancient Israelites believe that incense has miraculous power and can help them assuage God and get what they ask for. Consequently, the priest offers daily incense to God. Incense is a solid substance that produces fragrance when burnt.⁴³ It was made from aromatic gums and spices. Exodus 30:

34-35 gives details about its production. Most scholars think it got into use in Israel around 6th Century B.C.⁴⁴ Amongst the ancient near east people this was an essential element used in their temples. Incense was constantly burnt during worship in Canaanite religion and beyond (Jer 7: 9; 44: 17).⁴⁵ Apparently the use of incense seems to have assumed a sacred value. In this way, it became restricted for use by the priest and high priest, who lead the people in worship. At this point it may be expedient to look at the theology behind all this.

4.0 ITS THEOLOGY

The function of priest as leading the people at worship goes beyond the Old Testament. Even the New Testament attests quite strongly to this. He performs that action based on the ontological nature. The Letter to the Hebrews in a most succinct and clear manner corroborates it. Hebrews 5:1 state unequivocally: “Every high priest has been taken out of mankind and is appointed to act for men in their relations with God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins; and so he can sympathize with those who are ignorant or uncertain because he too lives in the limitation of weakness.” This New Testament text synthesizes perspicuously the duties and obligations of priest. Primarily the priest is to offer sacrifices for himself and the people since the priest has connection with God and stands in for the people. Further, the Fathers of the council have this to say, “Offering the immaculate victim, not only through the hands of the priest but also together with him, they should learn to offer themselves.”⁴⁶ He has to make atonement for his own sins and the sins of the people.

In Leviticus 4:3 we read about the sin offering offered by the high priest for his own sins. Since priests are humans, they are fraught with human weaknesses. The only way YHWH can be appeased after one has sinned, priest or the people, is to offer sacrifice as prescribed. Through this act of sacrifice, the

relationship between the sinner (this time the priest) and God is restored/made whole. Normalcy returns then to a relationship that sin had turned asunder. Without the priest, it would be hard for such a reconciliation to take place. One cannot evidently in the face of this deny the centrality of the priest, as a healer, mediator, reconciler and promoter of humankind. Worship of God has a psycho-somatic effect. The spirit influencing the body, and in some instances changes its course. Humanity employs the intellect in order to be able to abstract and formulate a clear pattern establishing the connection between God and humankind who is worshipped through the mediatory role of the priest. Central in all this becomes the position the priest occupies as leader of the worshipping community.

5.0 Conclusion

In this paper, I have tried to establish the fact that the Priest is at the center of leading the people in the worship of God. The centrality of the place of Priest has been established by looking historically about how the Israelites have offered sacrifice in the temple.

Their days in Egypt and the subsequent freedom serve as the incontrovertible reason for their worship of God. They have to pay homage to the one who set them free from the land of slavery and moved them to a land of freedom. Indeed, if they were not set free they would never have been able to worship God in the manner in which they did. This facilitated the building of the temple. It was in this temple they encountered God and held worship at different times. Indeed, the Priest became the man who led this worship at different times of the year so that the people maintained a good relationship with God on the spiritual realm. If the Priesthood had not been established, the construction and dedication of the temple would have been a futile project. It is therefore important to underscore the fact that the Priest remains the custodian of Jewish communal worship at the time of the existence of the Temple.

Endnotes

¹Rainer Albertz, *Historia de la Religion de Israel en tiempos del Antiguo Testamento*, Vol. 1 De los comienzos hasta el final de la Monarquía (Tr. Dionisio Minguez), 1999, p.55.

²Rainer Albertz, *Historia de la Religion de Israel en tiempos del Antiguos Testamento*, p. 65.

³George Buchanan, “Sanctuary” in *Harper Collins Bible Dictionary* (Paul J. Achtemeier ed.) Bangalore: Theological Publications, 2009, p.971.)

⁴John Mckenzie, *Theology of the Old Testament*. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1974, p. 51.

⁵John Mckenzie, *Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 37.

⁶John McKenzie, *Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 48.

⁷Roland De Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1991, p. 282.

⁸This is one of the four traditions that played an important role in the composition of the Pentateuch. Its name is derived from the use of YHWH in the text of the tradition. The tradition dates back to the 10th and 9th century B.C. Its materials are directed to the Southern part of the kingdom. For more detailed reading see J. Alberto Soggin, *Introduction to the Old Testament*. Louisville, Kentucky: 1987, pp.114-117; Peter F. Ellis, *The Men and the Message of the Old Testament*. Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1962, pp.81-94.

⁹This is another tradition that contributed towards the composition of Pentateuch. It is a historiographical work with different subsidiary strata. Of all four traditions this seems to be the youngest. It dates back to the 6th Century B.C originating from the Southern kingdom (Jerusalem). It was this tradition that brought together all the existing traditions to form the Pentateuch. For further reading see J. Alberto Soggin, *Introduction to the Old Testament*. Louisville, Kentucky: 1987, pp.150-161; Peter F. Ellis, *The Men and the Message of the Old Testament*.

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Collegetown, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1962, pp.73-80.

¹⁰Norman Whybray, *Introduction to the Pentateuch*. Michigan: Eerdmans, 1995, p. 44.

¹¹Gerhard Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, Vol. 1. *The Theology of Israel's Historical Traditions*, p. 254; Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament Vol. 1*, Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960, pp. 141-176; Harold Rowley, "The Meaning of Sacrifice in the Old Testament", *Bulletin of John Rylands Library*. 33 (1):74-110.p.76.

¹²Roland De Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*, pp. 372, 374.

¹³Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament Vol. 1*, p.396.

¹⁴Gerhard Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, Vol. 1. *The Theology of Israel's Historical Traditions*, p.244.

¹⁵Roland De Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*, p. 312.

¹⁶Roland De Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*, pp. 312-313.

¹⁷Roland De Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*, p. 360.

¹⁸Roland De Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*, p.360.

¹⁹Roland De Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*, pp. 360-361.

²⁰Washington Jarvis, *Prophets, Priests and Kings: The Old Testament Story*. New York, NY: The Seabury, 1974, p.127.

²¹Washington Jarvis, *Prophets, Priests and Kings: The Old Testament Story*, p. 128.

²²John McKenzie, *Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 54.

²³Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament Vol. 1*, p. 397.

²⁴Walter Brueggemann, *An Introduction to the Old Testament. The Canon and Christian Imagination*. Kentucky: Westminster John Knox, 2003, p. 68.

²⁵Walter Brueggemann, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*.

The Canon and Christian Imagination, p.68; Gerhard Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, Vol. 1. *The Theology of Israel's Historical Traditions*, p. 248.

²⁶John McKenzie, *Theology of the Old Testament*, p. 46.

²⁷Hermann Schultz, "The Significance of Sacrifice in the Old Testament." *American Journal of Theology* 4 (2): 257-313,p. 270; Norman Snaith, "Sacrifices in the Old Testament." *Vetus Testamentum* 7(3):308-317, p.310.

²⁸Gerhard Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, Vol. 1. p. 255.

²⁹Cf. New Revised Standard Version, p. 144.

³⁰Hermann Schultz, "The Significance of Sacrifice in the Old Testament."p. 267; Norman Snaith, "Sacrifices in the Old Testament." Pp.314-315.

³¹Cf Lev 2:4-10

³²Cf Lev 2:9

³³Gerhard Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, Vol. 1., p. 257

³⁴Cf. New Revised Standard Version, p.145.

³⁵Norman Snaith, "*Sacrifices in the Old Testament*", pp. 313-314.

³⁶Hermann Schultz, "*The Significance of Sacrifice in the Old Testament*", p.257.

³⁷William Harper, "Constructive Studies in the Priestly element in the Old Testament. VII. The Laws and Usages concerning Sacrifice considered comparatively". *The Biblical World* 18 (2): 120-10, p. 121.

³⁸Cf Lev 3:9-10, 14-15

³⁹Cf Lev 1:1-6:7; 7:19-21

⁴⁰John McKenzie, *Theology of the Old Testament*, p.47.

⁴¹Gerhard Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, Vol. 1 p.258; Norman Snaith, "Sacrifices in the Old Testament", pp. 310-311.

⁴²Cf Heb 5: 1-10

⁴³These are mixed together to produce some good fragrance. The important thing here is the fact that it is meant to be used for a religious ceremony. In other words, private use of incense

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was prohibited. See W.E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger, William White, "Incense" in Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, London: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985, p.322.

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PRODUCTS AND CRAFTS OF THE ENVIRONMENT.

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Abstract

An Esan adage says: “Ejaye Ole-akhor.” Meaning “One resembles his/her dwelling place or environment.” The message is that: “the environment makes the person” or “the person is a product of his/her environment and in turn makes the environment.” Environment here is understood as geographical, socio-ethical and cultural milieu. All that the senses explore and in particular, the physical environment. The opinion of this paper is that, human activities have impacted more negatively on the environment. The environment is reciprocating on a global scale and the consequences are dire for the lives of the elements in the universe, including human life. Humanity is tied in a web with the environment and its elements. Hence, there is need to pay attention to the importance of the environment, its health and the consequences of human relationship with the environment. The consideration is multiple approaches that reveal the complex nature of the human life and its realisation in a given physical community and its universal implication. Using the analytic-exposé and synthetic methods, this paper takes a cue from *Laudato Si* and aims at awakening consciousness about human discipline and integrity as beneficiary and craft of the

environment. The environment needs the attention of all as life is incarnate in it. The health of the environment impacts the well-being of the inhabitants. Therefore, for life to continue in the universe and flourish, all need to harmoniously work to preserve and maintain the health of the environment.

Keywords: Environmental Pollution, Life, Anthropology, Activities, Deforestation.

Introduction

One of the basic things that biology class teaches, is the complexity of the universe and its inhabitants. Complexity because of the interconnectedness of life and the indispensability of the elements in the universe. Furthermore, every particular element from animate to inanimate carry some degree of this complexity depending on its sophistication and the level such element occupies in the hierarchy of things. As particular and distinct as they could be, it is also intriguing to note that they are intertwined in an indispensable life-connection. The opinion of this paper is that, there is no amount of progress in human inquiry and in particular scientific and technological advancement that can obliterate the simplicity and the complexity of the universe. Another opinion that this paper asserts is that the continuous sustenance of the life of any of the elements and in particular on earth will continue to depend on the dynamics of the harmonic relationship of these elements. A harm done to earth is a gradual annihilation of life including human life.

The Problem

The problem is that the earth is bleeding as a result of human activities. Worse still is that today, there is so much information that it is not within the human capacity to keep pace with the events of inquiry including the problem of climate change. So, to even work for a stable solution becomes almost a mirage. The situation is compounded by the fact that social media have blurred the difference between common opinion and authority.

Anything goes.¹ and environmental degradation is on the increase. The gullibility is only frightening as information goes with speed of sound that there is hardly any control of what is consumed by any individual or group: the innocent, the young and old can have access to the same information with little or no moderation. Everyone is a potential professional irrespective of background or experience. More often, ambitions are self-centred and motivation excessive materialism orchestrated in most part by capitalism. It can be said to be a ding dung affair and a tug of war with everyone else. At best it is a chaos of opposites as ... people in different parts of the world today find themselves living in what one could call “a sea of words.” Moreover, global communications introduce what can at times seem like an oppressive overload of information.² What seems to compound it, is that one can conveniently claim that the mind has gone a long way trying to reach full capacity of its dynamic dialectics. Yet the human person is still lost in the maze of his search and his situation could be said to be akin to the pre-civilization period.³ “Human beings have always been brash enough to ask such questions but lacked the necessary gifts to answer them. At last, we are acquiring that ability. What we can’t yet know is whether we will wisely use the remarkable things we’re slowly learning.”⁴ Human activities on the environment has not indicated a prudent management of the vastness of its capacity and a wise use of the results of investigations. At this point there is a need for a tribunal of reason and a return to the search of a compass and indeed a global re-union in the manner of the proposal of Kuhn.⁵ Hence, it is a double-edged sword that can slip through humanity and grand it to flame or an opportunity to reform our priority. Who suffers? The earth, the home of all material (bodied) creatures and the inhabitants.⁶ The consequence of the malaise of the earth is that every element within its ambient will be adversely affected.

Solution

This paper proposes that the integrity of the universe be re-affirmed and the care of it incumbent on all investigators. The truth of reality is one, and all (philosophers, scientists and even theologians) without exception need to realize this truth. The role of the human specie as the centre of inquiry⁷ cannot be compromised and be so understood, however advanced the human mind. Science should continue to explore unrestrained within its method, but with the most august responsibility for the universe to enhance and promote human dignity. Exploration of the universe for economics and industrial purposes must be guided by a comprehensive understanding of its nature, content and ends. One cannot be oblivious of the effects of the reckless devastation of the earth and the repercussion for its life and the lives of the various elements that make up the earth. The goal of all solutions should be leaving a legacy of discipline and the perpetuation of meaningful and fulfilled life for generations to come. The environment is our nurture and we too must pay attention to it.

The Environment

The environment is everything that makes up our surroundings and has an impact on our ability to live on this planet.⁸ It is the totality of the interrelationships between flora, fauna, water, air, land, as well as humans and other living organisms and properties. It encompasses the entire physical and biological realities, as well as their interactions.⁹ It has been characterized as the conditions and circumstances that affect lives. It is the collection of physical, chemical, and biological elements that interact with an organism or ecological community to determine its form and survival.¹⁰ The biosphere is the only place on the planet where life is known to exist. However, we recognize the many efforts science is making to verify other possibilities.¹¹ Within the biosphere, humans arose and evolved. It affects our economy, civilizations, cultures, well-being and it can determine

a lot about our future continuous existence.¹² It's where we call home.¹³

What is our relationship with the environment?

The environment plays a crucial role in human life,¹⁴ as it has a direct impact on the health and the well-being of people, whether they live in cities or in the countryside.¹⁵ Both physical and mental human health are intertwined with ecosystem health. People throughout the world value nature as a source of identity and spirituality and exposure to it can help improve psychophysical health. Contact with nature is linked to improved sleep, less stress, and increased psychological well-being, according to a growing body of studies.¹⁶ Ecosystems help us regulate our climate, control extreme occurrences, prevent diseases, and endow us with water, food, raw materials, and natural spaces where we may relax and unwind. The environment absorbs our waste, supports economic sectors and millions of people's livelihoods, and nurtures our health, culture, and spiritual fulfillment,¹⁷ as well as providing ingredients for traditional medicine, biomedical research, and pharmaceutical development.¹⁸

The advantages that each habitat brings to the general ecosystem cannot be undermined. Water serves as the biosphere's lifeblood.¹⁹ The ocean, is the source of all life on the planet. It provides 90 % of the world's life-supporting space²⁰ and 50–80 % of the oxygen in the atmosphere.²¹ It regulates our weather and climate, provides food and medicine, and many indigenous and local groups see it as sacred and intrinsically valuable.

Farmlands are also necessary for human survival²² because, they provide us with food, fiber, and other necessities, as well as biodiversity habitat, economic opportunity, and spiritual and cultural advantages.²³ At least two billion people, primarily the poor and rural, rely on agriculture for their livelihoods, and land provides us with over 90 % of our calories and protein.²⁴

Forests are part of any nation's most significant asset since they provide habitat for variety of animals and microorganisms²⁵

They contribute to precipitation, regulate streamflow, increase rainwater infiltration and thus allow maximum recharge of groundwater resources and help to control flood.²⁶ True care for such assets of critical life possibility cannot be trifled with or any form of indifference and in fact negative relational disposition can point to many implications – including ingratitude, wastefulness and irresponsibility and then catastrophic consequences.

Environmental Degradation

Environmental degradation refers to the deterioration of the environment due to resource depletion, which encompasses all biotic and abiotic elements that make up our environment, such as air, water, soil, plants, and animals; ecosystem devastation; and the extinction of wild species.²⁷ It is also described as any modification or disturbance to the environment that is deemed harmful or unwelcome. It is a process in which the natural environment is harmed in some way, resulting in a reduction in biological diversity and environmental health.²⁸ Environmental degradation is a severe problem that has captivated the world's attention and has become one of the most widely debated topics locally, nationally, and internationally.²⁹ It is one of the ten biggest risks to the planet, as identified by the United Nations' High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change, which diminishes the environment's ability to meet societal and ecological aims and demands.³⁰ Our environment has been deteriorating for the past two centuries, and it has affected practically every corner of the globe in some way. It is therefore important to pay particular attention to the cause of such anomaly and mitigate it.

Causes of Environmental Degradation

While environmental degradation is commonly associated with human activity, the truth is that the environment is always changing. A few biological systems degenerate to the point where they cannot help the life that is supposed to dwell there, with or without the effect of human exercises.³¹ Landslides,

earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes, and wildfires can severely devastate local plant and animal communities, rendering them incapable of functioning. This can occur either as a result of physical destruction caused by a natural disaster or as a result of long-term resource degradation caused by the introduction of an invasive alien species to a new habitat. Humans are not entirely to fault for the latter, which frequently occurs after tidal surges, when reptiles and beetles wash ashore. The Earth itself is a source of ecological problems.³² However, such problems caused by natural degeneration and disintegration are not as fast devastating compared to human activities on the environment.³³ A fact that indicate that the world has its origin and goal towards which it tends.³⁴

Overpopulation, urbanization, intensification of agriculture, increased energy usage and transportation, deforestation, climate change, overfishing, and ozone depletion are just a few of the ways humans are wreaking havoc on the environment, all of which are having a significant influence on our planet.³⁵

Overpopulation and Deforestation

Rapid population increase places a demand on natural resources, resulting in environmental degradation.³⁶ On a global scale, because mortality rates have fallen, medicine has improved and industrial agricultural methods have been implemented; overpopulation has become an epidemic, keeping individuals alive for much longer and increasing the total population without corresponding plan of sustenance and because they need resources the environment is impacted and most times devastated.³⁷ This results in the most part is deforestation, which disrupts the ecosystem, resulting in loss of biodiversity, which increases CO₂ levels, destroying the delicate environment,³⁸ which has the potential to harm every living thing on the planet.³⁹

Agriculture Activities and Industrialization

Agriculture is a long-standing and widely practiced occupation, with significant shifts in farming patterns across time.⁴⁰ Some of these are positive, while others are negative. The use of heavy equipment and chemicals in form of fertilizers can devastate the land and poison waterbodies thereby leaving the environment with disastrous consequences.⁴¹ Plants, fish, and other animals start to perish. Acidity rises in the water. Lakes, like acid rain, become dead zones, with conditions so poisonous that no plants or animals can survive in them.⁴² All these are results of industrialization and imprudent exploitation of natural resources and the environment suffers.⁴³ In addition, industry smoke pollutes the air, and its loudness contributes to noise pollution⁴⁴

Pollution and Global Warming

Pollution is defined as the introduction of toxins into the environment,⁴⁵ and it is another source of environmental degradation that leads to a decline in the quality of natural biotic and abiotic elements.⁴⁶ When the environment is contaminated, it indicates that poisonous elements have made it unfit to live in. Pollution can occur from a variety of places and causes. Humanity continues to deplete essential resources such as clean air, water, and soil, which take millions of years to restore. These eventually lead to global warming as a result of the excess carbon dioxide that is constantly released in the atmosphere from these pollutants. Pollution and waste are unavoidable, from garbage, the millions of metric tons from factories, automobile emissions, agricultural runoff, and poorly managed natural resource harvests.⁴⁷ All these activities eventually heat up the biosphere and the result is environmental degradation.

Consequences of Environmental Degradation

When the earth's natural resources are depleted, degradation develops. Water, air, and soil are among the resources that are

impacted.⁴⁸ Humans, plants, animals, and microorganisms all suffer with environmental degradation.⁴⁹ The consequences of environmental degradation include sickness and mortality in both children and adults. Soil degradation can cause malnutrition in farmers, which can lead to early death,⁵⁰ as well as production losses owing to siltation of reservoirs, transportation channels, and other hydrologic investments, all of which have a direct impact on people's health. Floods triggered by glacial lake outbursts have been known to be catastrophic to human life, affect water supply and impact greatly on agricultural activities.⁵¹ Despite this, a third of the commercial fish stocks in our oceans are currently overfished⁵² and plastic pollution is predicted to diminish marine ecosystem and jeopardized marine life.⁵³ Coal burning is another pollutant to the environment. Sulfur dioxide (SO₂) and nitrogen oxides (NO₂) are released into the atmosphere when humans burn coal, where they rise up and gather in clouds until the clouds become saturated and rain acid, wreaking havoc on the earth underneath them.⁵⁴ Toxins accumulate in the leaves of trees and plants that absorb the acid, causing leaf damage and the death of enormous swaths of forest. Ocean acidification also occur and endanger human life and health by causing starvation and poisoning as a result of changes in food quantity and quality.⁵⁵

The risk of climatic natural disasters may grow as a result of global warming. Sea-level rise damages coastal investments, regional changes in agricultural productivity due to increased frequency of droughts, floods, and hurricanes, and increased incidence of pests, causing a food shortage, as well as disruption of the marine food chain, civil conflict, and decreased economic sources as a result of global warming.⁵⁶ Climate change disrupts the food supply, boosts food prices, and as a result, restricts access to nutrient-dense and healthful meals for some people.⁵⁷

The enormous expense that a country may have to bear as a result of environmental degradation can have a significant economic impact in terms of green cover restoration, landfill

cleanup, and endangered species protection and even loss of revenue from tourism.

As a result of the loss of biodiversity, ecosystem flexibility is reduced, resulting in the loss of genetic resources.⁵⁸ Furthermore, many new diseases, such as the continuing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, are the result of intricate interactions between wildlife, domestic animals, and humans, which are fueled by anthropogenic changes in land use, food production, and trade.⁵⁹ It is the first time that humanity is confronted with a global crisis.⁶⁰ Global environmental changes (GECs) are posing new hazards to human health, and immediate action is necessary to address these serious issues.⁶¹

Ways of restoring and preserving the integrity of the environment

One of the most pressing environmental challenges is its degradation and something concrete and significant needs to be done and without further delay. We must re-establish a balanced relationship within the ecosystems that sustain us in order to reduce future impacts on our environment which is our common home.⁶² However robust the plan for restoration and preservation may be at this time, there are some settings that may never recover depending on the extent of the harm. Nevertheless, the following are some of ways to reduce environmental degradation:

- **Utilization of renewable energy**

Renewable energy can help to reduce Green House Gas (GHG) emissions⁶³ as practical advantage of the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in lower emissions and improved ambient air quality in many locations.⁶⁴ Using renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, hydropower, geothermal heat, and biomass will reduce GHG emissions.⁶⁵ This adopted for both home use and transportation as it is the experience in some parts of the world will save our earth.⁶⁶

- **Industrialization that is long-term**

Flowing from the above is the question of the necessity of industrialization for economic development. In the Nigerian environment and in fact, global platform, it is time to be more concrete about the talk of long-term sustainability. We have sufficient amount of wind and sun energy for instance in Nigeria and elsewhere to sustain an environmentally friendly plan and ecosystems restoration.⁶⁷ Consequently, policies on industrial behaviour and best practices should be enforced. Construction of treatment plants for industrial effluents should also receive adequate funding.⁶⁸

- **Wastewater treatment/recycling and reuse of waste**

To address the problem of water pollution, there is a great need to maintain water sources, find ways of healthy harvest, create and improve on both industrial and municipal wastewater treatment to reduce waste and pollution.⁶⁹ Recycling of water is a popular practice today⁷⁰ and awareness must be created where they are lacking⁷¹ by government and other agencies.⁷²

- **Behavioral shifts in everyday life**

To help our environment and live healthier life, eating habits, disciplines about use of equipment and gadgets must be encouraged and modeled to represent our green revolution.⁷³

- **Ecotourism and ecological restoration**

Tourist attractions should be regulated to aid with ecological restoration. Furthermore, ecotourism should be bolstered in order to support long-term economic viability, cultural preservation, and biodiversity conservation.⁷⁴ Parks and public places should be planted with trees, as restoring green and blue spaces can contribute significantly to human well-being.

International cooperation is important

A combined international effort is required to achieve sustainable environmental goals and protect global environmental resources such as the global climate and biological diversity.⁷⁵ As a result, a responsible international body such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) should play a key role in developing time-bound policies, organizing international treaties, and coordinating global leaders for effective implementation.⁷⁶ Nations also need to be honest about the implementation of such policies for positive change.

Conclusion

Human actions have inherent in them consequences that can bring positive and negative benefits. Our environment is an endowment that has its dynamic dialectics and mechanic trajectorial evolution. The responsibility is on the human person who has moral obligation and environmental discipline to be deliberate and have the teleological consciousness to harness the resources of the universe and make the most of the gains of nature.⁷⁷ The capacity of science cannot be undermined but scientists must be wary of absolutising their capacity and constantly compare notes with all other parties in the exploration of our common home.⁷⁸ All alike must read the book of nature, understand it has an architect and must strive to conduct activities in such consciousness.

Captains of industries and commercial organizations should be open to common sense demands to be moderate and modest in their activities and recognize the ultimate goal of human existence and the role of the environment to transcend personal comfort and excessive materialism. The complexity of life is more than the immediate and the apparent. It goes to the core of the understanding of the need for dialogue that evokes a common concern for our common heritage and the care of our homeland because of its implications for our continuous existence. "The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern

to bring the whole human family together to seek sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change. ... Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home.⁷⁹The will to accomplish this will make our destiny and the pursuit of it a dream worth the rigour and the fruits will be sufficient for a life both meaningful and transmittable in our common home.

Endnotes

¹Cf. one can call to mind the provoking epistemological anarchism of Paul Feyerabend.

²Cf. Williams B. Friend, *Creation and Its Beauty in Human Formation*, A Paper delivered at the Plenary Session of the Pontifical Council for Culture, March 2006. Accessed, June, 2006.

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⁵Cf. Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1962-2012.

⁶Cf. Laudato Si.no. 8

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¹²Laudato Si, no. 34.

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