The Sociological Implication of Human Capital Development on Church Growth in Recent Time in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni

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Abstract

This study examined the sociological implication of human capital development on church growth in recent time in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni, Rivers state, Nigeria. The study was guided by two research questions and two corresponding objectives. The study made use of Social Capital theory. This study adopted the Correlational research design. The population of this study is (357,041) which consists of adults gathered from churches in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni in Rivers State, Nigeria. Respondents were purposively (deliberately) selected and sampled to achieve the adopted study design of this work. Interviews, focused group discussions, and field observation were used for data collection. Thematic analysis was performed and supervised by the researcher's supervisor on the data acquired from the various research instruments utilized in this study to determine its validity and congruence with its research aims. Findings of the study showed that there is sociological implication of human capital development on church growth, in that prosperity gospel, as it exists in churches in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni, deals with the issue of payment of tithes (ten percent of one's income) to the church

thereby raising the financial standards of the church. From the interviews conducted, interviewees claimed that they believed in paying tithes and offerings from their income to God through the church. It is a matter of individuals' faith and capability. The study recommends that churches should improve on their accountability regarding the resources contributed by members to ensure they are properly utilized for the overall growth of the church in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni. Church members should be constantly trained and mentored in order to maintain the doctrines of the church to aid internal and extension growth in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni.

Keywords: Human Capital Development, Church Growth, Anglican Diocese and Entrepreneur.

Introduction

Human beings are the greatest resource a church has. The investment in the development of this resource is crucial to achieving organizational goals. Church growth is not solely dependent on spiritual guidance but also heavily relies on the available human resource. Human Capital is a crucial input for any institution that wants to fulfill its goals; it will constantly aim to develop the knowledge, skills, and talents of its members in order to progress and be more productive. Human capital is frequently defined as "the knowledge, skill competencies, and attributes embodied in individuals that facilitate the creation of personal, social, and economic well-being" (OECD, 2001).

As the world globalizes and becomes more competitive in many aspects of human life, there is a need for the church to adopt several strategies and motivations to advance the course of the gospel in order to be able to reach the entire earth. This is where human capital development lends itself naturally as a veritable strategy to reach out to a large audience. The church goes beyond the building; the church can have the greatest impact when its human resources are fully and strategically developed. As a result, it becomes critical for the church as an institution to enhance its members for the task ahead. Church growth lies on acquaintance with the policies, values, goal and development of followers mentally, spiritually and socially.

The more knowledgeable, skilled, and resourceful individuals a nation, institution, or society has, the greater it's national, societal, or institutional growth and development. This indicates that a well-rounded process of improving individuals' necessary information, skills, efficiency, and values by supporting them in achieving better living in their surroundings will promote the collective goal. In church context, human capital includes the talents and abilities of the Clergy, church workers, and the entire congregation who worship in a particular church. In the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni, the church is made up of the Clergy, and Laity. The Clergy are the ordained pastors who are vested with the duty of administering the sacrament, and lead the spirituality of the church. They are also seen as the administrators of the local churches where they are posted to serve. However, the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni also has some laities who are called church workers. They are appointed or elected lay members of the church with specific duties assigned to aid the smooth running of the local church where they serve. The laity are seen as the church members who are not ordained. The effective coordination and development of these human resources of the church can cause significant growth and better vibrant church congregation. Human capital encompasses the investment in human knowledge, skills, education, health, and per capital income of the church congregants which will enable them to become productive and impactful.

The purpose of this study is to look into the sociological implications of human capital development on church growth. In some ways, God-likeness is about human progress. The mission of the church and its achievements in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni cannot be improved by investing only in physical structures but also in the church's greatest resource - the people, in the same way that Jesus did. Jesus spent time and energy to train, mentor, and empower his community of followers. In the Great Commission, Jesus mandated the church and his followers to witness and proclaim the message of salvation and, in the process raise disciples of all nations on earth. The commission has resulted in the church's expansion not only in terms of the numerical strength of members, but also in the maintenance of the church's spiritual, social, financial, and physical standing as a whole. As the world globalizes and becomes more competitive in many aspects of human life, there is a need for the church to adopt several strategies and motivations to advance the course of the gospel in order to be able to reach the entire earth. This

is where the sociological implications of human capital development lends itself naturally as a veritable strategy to reach out to a large audience, especially in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni.

Statement of the Problem

Though there are many churches in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni, the growth does not seem to be commensurate with their genuine mission and goals. Its hold on the people is steadily eroding as well as its influence on Ogoni public life. There is a clear decline in church attendance, an unhealthy prayer life, a lax culture of bible reading among church members, a decline in giving, a decline in the number of baptisms, reluctance to reform, and so on. In addition to the aforementioned, the excessive number of churches has experienced a decline level on economic, spiritual, and church growth in general. The underdeveloped human capital is a contributing factor. Poor or absent human capital development could have a disastrous impact on society and community growth as well as church growth. The overwhelming number of churches in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni may show potentials for human capital development, but they in no way reflect the value of human capital that can lead to effective church growth for both individuals and institutions. Despite the continued existence of these churches, very few congregation members have access to good healthcare, education, or other essential social services that can affect human growth. The low-income levels of members, as well as hunger, poverty, illnesses, etc., are evidence of this.

Given these issues, it is necessary for the church leadership to reconsider some of the methods that early missionaries used to introduce Christianity to Nigeria and the region as a whole that resulted in the faith's widespread acceptance. Some of the determinants for human capital development that this study suggests are part of these initiatives. A lot of work needs to be done to modify the social narrative because it looks that Christian presence has not of late, sufficiently permeated the heartlands, the rank and file of the Ogoni society through the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni.

Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the sociological implication of human capital development on church growth in recent time in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni. Specifically, the study aims to:

i. examine the sociological implication of the income level of Church members on Church Growth in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni.
ii. investigate the sociological implication of training and the educational level of church members on church growth in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

i. Is there any sociological implication of human capital development on church growth in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni in recent time?
ii. What is the sociological implication of training and educational level of church members and workers on church growth in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni?

Literature Review

Adah (2019) investigated the impact of Pentecostal churches in human development in Kubwa, Abuja, Nigeria, utilizing the development indices: education, health, and job creation. According to the findings of his report, which were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools from data obtained from interviews and focused group discussions, it reveals that the Pentecostal churches engaged in activities such as developing entrepreneur skills, running clinics, schools, and many social projects that benefited both members and non-members of the Abuja society, and it recommends that structural changes be implemented to intensify their effort to improve human decency.

Chagunda (2002) carried out a study on the contribution of the church to human development in third world countries: a comparison of Initiatives in South Africa and India. The research centered on church's involvement in human development and poverty alleviation programmes. It acknowledged that many third world nations received political freedom from western colonialists, but many of those countries failed to successfully exploit the political freedom to improve economic growth and human development. Poverty is therefore one of the major problems facing people in third world countries. The work argued that any form of development should put human beings at the center. Human beings are makers of their own destinies, but only on conditions that they are truly humans, are

conscious of their destiny and their strength and are free from all forms of oppression and exploitation.

Ibiyeomie (2021) undertook a study on Leadership styles and church growth. The study examines leadership styles and church growth of selected Pentecostal churches in Port Harcourt, Rivers state Nigeria. Task-centered and people-centered style was related to church growth. The population comprises the 756 employees of 15 Pentecostal churches in Port Harcourt, Rivers state Nigeria. 254 sample sizes were determined with Krejcie and Morgans (1970) table. The sample subjects were got through simple random sampling technique. Spearman's rank order correlation and coefficient was used for the hypothetical statements. A significant and positive relationship exists between leadership styles and church growth. The study concludes that leadership relates to church growth and recommends usage of both task-centered and peoples- centered leadership styles.

Ibiyeomie (2020) did a research on human capital development and church growth. The study surveyed human capital development and growth of the Nigerian churches as related to training, monitoring, and self-development of workers and followers. A survey of 30 randomly selected churches in Rivers state, Nigeria was carried. The findings revealed that human capital development is related to churches growth in Nigeria. The study recommends continuous development of workers and followers to increase performance.

Iche (2015) carried out a study on the impact of spiritual gifts on church growth: a case study of Upata Baptist Association. This research work is an attempt to find out the roles spiritual gifts played in the growth of churches. Five churches within Upata Baptist Association were selected to represent the eighteen (18) churches that make up the association. These churches were central Baptist church, Edeoha; first Baptist church, Ikata; divine Baptist church, Ula-Upata; First Baptist Church, Ihuaba; and Amazing Grace Baptist Church, Ihuowu. Questionnaire was used to elicit necessary information from respondents in each of the sample churches. Thereafter, the result was used to judge the entire population. Chi-square (simple percentage) descriptive analysis was used to analyze the data collected, whereupon these findings were made. Eighteen (18) spiritual gifts were examined for use in the sample churches. The study revealed that all the (18) spiritual gifts

were present in these churches, but were not adequately harnessed and natured towards church growth. It was likewise discovered that some members are either not aware or uncertain of the presence of these gifts in their lives. Furthermore, it was also found out that available gifts were not channeled towards church growth. The result empirically showed that there is no impact of spiritual gifts in the growth of the churches in Upata Baptist Association. In lieu of the findings, the researcher recommends that pastors should emphasized more about spiritual gifts from the pulpit. Also, enough time should be employed to ministry activities of the church rather than spending more time on programmes and organizational activities. Furthermore, a discipleship training courses of the Nigerian Baptist convention should be taken more seriously, and may even be adopted and be contextualizing to the native language of Ekpeye people. Again, the churches should be structured to be ministry-oriented rather the already existing organization-oriented to cope with the contemporary ministry trend and impact positively to the community where the churches are located.

Iheanacho (2020) in his work on Christian religious principles in human capital development: An insight into catalytic Christian virtues, argued that Christian cardinal virtues have become principles or guidelines to Christian moral actions. It's capable of transforming the human capital inherent in the individual Christian. Christian imbibed virtues or learned behavior should transcend the scope of believe and inertia to a position of being a catalyst to human capital development. This work opines that this transformation of Christian moral value will produce in the Christian adherent fruits and successes necessary in this present time. The work adopted hermeneutics as its interpretative model. It found out that some Christian adherent have not come to the awareness that Christian virtues are catalyst for human capital advancement. This can remain adamant and less productive unless they are taking as principles of human daily actions. It suggests that Christian believers should harness and develop their natural talents for perusal community gain.

Isuu (2020) published a study on leadership competency and church growth. The study examined leadership competency and church growth and a survey study of 25 randomly selected churches in Port Harcourt Rivers State was carried out. The population was 125 leaders of the churches, but only 96% (120 leaders) were used

as sample. The data was analysed with pearson product-moment correlation coefficient statistical tool. The findings revealed that leadership competency is related to church growth. It was thus concluded that leadership competency enhances church growth by increasing the spiritual and numerical growth.

Theoretical Framework

The study made use of Social Capital theory. The study applied Social Capital Theory which posits that a network provides value to its members by allowing them access to the social resources that are embedded within the network. This concept has evolved over three periods. The first period was at the beginning of the last century up to 1980.The second period was in 1980s to 1990s, when Pierre Bourdieu (1986), James Coleman (1988), and Robert Putnam (1995) developed the concept. Finally, from the 1990s onward, several scholars have developed a strong interest in the construct, with the aim of expanding the content of the term, to investigate the role of various scientific fields. E.g. economics, psychology, health, education, etc. the first person who used the term "social capital" was the PedagogueLyda Judson Hanifan (1916), who described it as element of everyday life such as goodwill, mutual sympathy, and the breadth of social contact. In 1961, the Economist, Jane Jacob defines social capital as the existence and functions of social networks in the big cities of the US and claimed that it is the real of these cities regarding their economic development. In the 70s, the Economist, Greg Loury (1977) used the term in his study of social inequalities across various ethno-racial, groups, defining it as the networks of family and social relations that can promote the knowledge and ability of a person, according to Loury, individual social connections determine their access to education, work, and other social goods.

However, Social Capital Theory became grounded in the 80s and 90s. It was first systematically introduced by Pierre Bourdieu, a sociologist (1986) who approached it as individual's access to a collective resort. Pierre distinguished between four forms of capital: economic capital (property right), the cultural capital (various assets such as University degrees), the symbolic capital (which reflects the social prestige of an individual) and social capital (referring to resources derived from social connection). Economic capital is the basis. All the other types of capital stem from this through a series of complex and non-

automated transformative processes, and under certain conditions, may be converted to economic capital (Bourdieu, 1986). For example, through social capital, individuals can gain easy access to financial resources such as investment capital. In a similar vein, James Coleman (1998), a sociologist of education distinguished between physical capital such as machines, human capital such as social skill and knowledge, and social capital such as social relationship, and he highlighted the roles of social capital in the creation of human capital. Example, family and community support may create development opportunities for young people. Again, Bourdieu and Colemen adopted personal approach to social capital, Robert Putnam (1995) proposed the collective approach that defines it as a public good. As opined by Robert Putnam (1995), social capital concerns the amount of trust and social participation which is available in a community, a city, or a state, and may facilitate inter personal cooperation, from which all community members may benefit irrespective of their unique investments in social networks.

Methodology

Research Design: This study adopted the Correlational research design. According to Nwankwo (2013), Correlational research design investigates relationships between variables without the researcher manipulating any of them. Hence, the suitability of the design.

Population for the Study: As at the time of this research, the population of the entire members of the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni was three hundred and fifty-seven thousand, and forty-one (357,041) (Source: Diocese of Ogoni Synod Report, 2023). The population of this study consists of adults gathered from churches in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni in Rivers State, Nigeria. The members were picked from the seven (7) Archdeaconries, two (2) Deaneries, and a Cathedral Group of Churches that make up the Diocese.

Sample and Sampling Techniques: It is relatively difficult to cover the entire population studies. Consequently, a sample is usually chosen for effective investigation. This is to ensure reliability, coverage and completion of the study on record time. It addresses the question of "whom" to be included in the study; i.e., that position of the population to be taken as the representative of the study. Hence, respondents were purposively (deliberately) selected and sampled to

achieve the adopted study design of this work. This technique ensured that participants were ideally suited to contribute comprehensive insights, which aided in the achievement of the work's stated purpose. The purpose is to involve persons who have expertise of the subject due to their positions, experiences, and observations in the church throughout the time. A total of twenty-six (26) persons, including the Bishop, Clergymen, and members were interviewed. The focused group target population was twenty-four (24) persons divided into two groups of twelve (12) each. Thus, the sample size of this study is fifty (50) persons.

Sources of Data: The goal of data gathering is to obtain information that will help researchers. Data were gathered mostly from primary and secondary sources for this research. The researcher gathered data in the field through personal interviews, focused group discussions, and field observations.

Method of Data Collection: The key information collection methods for the study were interviews, focused group discussions, and field observation. The interviews were performed in a semi-structured oral interview method, which allows for two-way conversation. It entails a data gathering strategy that is entirely based on asking questions within a predetermined topic framework.

Method of Data Analysis: Thematic analysis was performed and supervised by the researcher's supervisor on the data acquired from the various research instruments utilized in this study to determine its validity and congruence with its research aims.

Discussion of Findings

The Sociological implication of church members' income level on church growth in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni

The study hypothesizes that there is sociological implication of Human Capital development on church growth, in that prosperity gospel, as it exists in churches in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni, deals with the issue of payment of tithes (ten percent of one's income) to the church thereby raising the financial standards of the church. From the interviews conducted, interviewees claimed that they believed in paying tithes and offerings from their income to God through the church. It is a matter of individuals' faith and capability. Most participants agreed

that they are taught to pay tithes and offerings to the church and defended the practice claiming God, after all, gave them all they owned. They expressed confidence that such practices do not affect their finances negatively rather it increases their income. A participant for example, remarked to the question if the surplus money she gives to the church would affect her finances; "If I am to give base on that (work of the cross), there is nothing that can be enough even if I should give myself it can never be enough. It is willingly, nobody is compelling me, and it is not by compulsion. I wish I had more. Once I am paid, I remove my tithes and offerings before anything".

An interviewee narrated how she gave tithes to God as a child and she received a gift from someone, worth almost 30 percent more of what she gave. Surprised with excitement, she attributed the gift to her tithes and made the pledge to pay tithes on any of her money. However, as if making excuses for God, she said, "But I don't count my giving based on what I am getting, I just give. It is not what is coming back, it may not come back in cash but at least I am alive, and I am breathing and the church is being built". From the claim above, her entire existence is the intervention of God, even if she is alive and healthy; it is seen as reward of tithes. And so, she kept paying and kept giving herself and resources to the growth of the church. And as such, feels satisfied and retains her prestige in the church and the church keeps growing financially as well. This also implies that church members who are financially buoyant feel happier donating to the church as they are fully aware of the reasons and the implications of their financial donations to the church.

Another participant when interviewed explained how she was not able to gain admission into the higher institution of learning for so many years until she attended one of the bible study classes where she was taught that meditating daily on the word of God (Bible) enables one to have good success. She accepted the teaching and began to meditate on the word of God daily as she was taught and after a little while, she was able to gain admission as she imbibed the bible reading habit and practiced same on her textbooks; hence, she was able to read and pass her entrance examination into the higher institution of learning. She further explained that that same habit of studying also enabled her to become the best graduating student from her department. Thus, she had always been committed to the teaching ministry of her church. She also confessed that she has won some

people to the church through her testimonies, especially the youths who love education. As a result, she has decided to remain a member of the church for life. This kind of thinking is expected of typical Nigerians living in a country with collapsed health system, ineffective educational system, insecurity, low life expectancy etc. In Nigeria, poverty, banditry, insecurity, unemployment etc. constitute threats to a decent standard of life of many; hence, if one is healthy, has a job and can feed their family three times a day, it is deemed a miracle and it is attributed to the divine. Such stories abound among members of the

However, when asked what their motivation in continuous giving to the church is, the interviewees stated many reasons; those reasons range between supporting the ministers who do not have any other source of revenue, supporting the growth and the projects of the church, and giving for evangelical outreaches. Some do because the bible encourages giving, while others express thanksgiving to God for God's blessings and so forth. The majority believe that giving is not only abiding by the instructions of the bible. One participant in an interview put it this way, "The holy book says bring ye the full tithe into the store house of God that there may be food in my house" (G. N. Ferd-kabari, Personal Communication, March 10, 2024). Another participant, emphasizing the proportion of giving referred to the bible saying; "Each man should give according to the measure at which he has" (B. Nwidag, Personal Communication, March 22, 2024).

Majority of participants disagreed that their practice of giving part of their income to church does affect their income status negatively rather it increases their income status. A participant, who runs a business in Ken khana Archdeaconry, attributes her seed sowing to the miracle of promotion in Rivers State Civil Service for which she used to work. That her experience, which some other interviewees corroborated, is whenever she receives more salary, she pays according to the amount of money she has. She knows that if she receives more money, she will pay more money and the church will have more money being used in church growth programmes. Hence, "the saying is true for me, when you have more money, you will pay more money, and the church will have more money for its prgrammes and projects leading to church growth" (G.N. Ferd-kabari, Personal Communication, March 10, 2024). One participant in the focus group discussion1 was at odds with her opinion as she believes, people are observing mere religious

rituals, and it would be profitable to invest such money because, "it (giving) does affect your income because you cannot live the kind of life you want to... It will not improve the standard of living and does not grow the church because the church leadership does not judiciously manage the donations made to the church for its growth. It is a superstitious hype to say that your standard of living will improve when you give and that the church will grow. It is not true. Until you invest and the church stop collecting money from members will more people come into the church…" (Focus group discussion 1, March 28, 2024). He further considered the cost of transportation, offerings, tithes, and feeding as other expenses on the finances of members.

A member was sick and could not come to church, and when she was asked, she remarked that 'she was very well' the previous day. She avoided saying 'she was sick' because of the positive confessions which prosperity gospel teaches; 'whatever you say, that will come back to you'. The pastor of St. Augustine church mentioned this principle in his sermon to his members during the service referencing a Bible passage, Numbers 14:28: "Say to them, 'As I live', says the Lord, 'just as you have spoken in my hearing, so I will surely do to you" (Ven. S.L. Belnadogbara, Sermon of pastor of St. Augustine church, March 24, 2024). It conveyed the idea that members need to be careful with what they confess with their lips because those same things will come back to them.

Part of this sociological implication of Human capital development on Church growth is evident in the one-week programme that include Evangelism, visitation to the sick, poor, prayer and fasting sessions, Bible studies, Debate, and launching organized by one of the churches in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni, (St James Church, Kira Women Ministries) from Monday 4th to Sunday 10th March, 2024 during their Mothering Sunday celebration. It encouraged every member and non-members alike to donate towards the renovation project going on in the vicarage of the church. Members with financial capacity donated cash, and other materials. The Professionals and Artisans donated their skills towards that infrastructural development. The educated ones handled the bible studies and kept proper record of all the income and expenditure within the week. Pressing further to elicit reasons why the church organized such programs instead of just gathering together to worship God alone, the Resident Clergy wife of the church revealed

that it is about giving the members the opportunity of using their gifts and skills to grow the church. Similarly, in one of the churches in Ken Khana Archdeaconry, the Priest in his sermon in one of the Sunday services in 2023 precisely on Sunday 2nd December, while speaking on the roles of members in church growth, advised members on how to release whatever God has enabled them to possess either cash or skill for the growth of the church. Clarifying the concept of giving in this Sunday message he encouraged his members to give to the church, the priest proclaimed that: Anyone who contributes towards the growth of the church will be highly blessed by God. Thus, the people were motivated to donate generously towards their upcoming evangelical outreach.

Sociological implication of training and educational level of church members and workers on church growth in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni

The Social capital theory and the McGavran theory on church growth are relevant here because the notion highlighted that human capital theory by James Coleman (1998), a sociologist of education, distinguished between physical capital such as machines, human capital such as social skill and knowledge, and social capital such as social relationship, and he highlighted the roles of social capital in the creation of human capital. For example, family and community support may create development opportunities for young people. Again, Bourdieu and Coleman adopted personal approach to social capital; Robert Putnam (1995) proposed the collective approach that defines it as a public good. As opined by Robert Putnam (1995), social capital concerns the amount of trust and social participation which is available in a community, a city, or a state, and may facilitate inter personal cooperation, from which all community members may benefit irrespective of their unique investments in social networks. The purpose of training is to help employees obtain the required knowledge and skill for performance and being able to develop the abilities to full, within the areas that are relevant to the job. It also builds their confidence on the job. This will improve performance and make them work more efficiently and effectively. It fosters more productivity and boost organizational image. Thus when church members and workers are trained and educated, their performances are boosted and as such, aid church growth. When the church growth strategies are effectively and efficiently applied, its results are massive.

These strategies may include: increasing access to quality education, investing in leadership training and professional development, promoting prosperity gospel, and implementing inclusive skill acquisition. Organizations that prioritize human capital and invest in the development of their workforce often experience a competitive advantage. So also with churches whose members are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge for the work of the church. A study by Ibiyeomie, revealed that human capital development is related to churches growth in Nigeria and that continuous development of workers and followers will increase performance (Ibiyeomie, 2020). The study emphasized that churches that build human capital are more likely to grow. This indicates that developing human capital can lead to tangible benefits to the church. Hence, efforts to advance education and human capital development are crucial for societal progress especially the church.

The leaders (Clergymen) bear the different perspectives McGavran used in his examination of church growth, theology, attitude, and anthropology. The bible is the very focal point of church growth, everything must be within the specifications of God's word, and acting in obedience to the call is an attitude that is correctly matched with some elements of creativity, in anthropology it means that theology must be conveyed through elements of human culture without changing the theology itself. If the church was to grow, it was entirely on the shoulders of the leaders, both clergy and lay. However, the laity has an induced role to play in the overall picture of church growth; church growth is a collaborative obligation of both leaders and followers. A well-mobilized laity is a result of the type of leadership they encounter.

More so, from the interviews conducted, findings show that the Clergymen who are educated seem to have innovative skills that enable them carry out human capital development programmes which aid the churches they pastor to grow. This agrees with the Bishop's connection regarding the training of Clergymen in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that many church members do not understand the teachings of the church doctrines as a result of language barrier will not by any means

contribute to the growth of that church rather, they will create a stumbling block for the growth of such church. Understanding, knowledge, and skill aid obedience and productivity. Lack of knowledge, skill, and understanding hamper productivity and growth.

It will be very awkward to expect a member of the church who doesn't know that giving to the church attracts more blessing from God to give generously to support the church growth. It is when members are well taught, well educated, equipped with skills, and are empowered to be productive that they can in turn carryout activities that could lead to church growth. For instance, when a church has Medical doctors, Nurses, Educated men and women with sound reasoning and mind set, wealthy personalities, they can in turn organize medical outreaches, and other social, economic, and spiritual activities that can boost the image of the church thereby attracting more members to the church as well as enhancing other aspect of church growth.

As pointed out by Kpalap, 2010, when the early church members were mainly fishermen who didn't know how to conduct services and were not financially buoyant, the growth of the churches then were very low. But as time went on, the church saw the need for the establishment of schools, and other skill empowerment programmes to aid human capital development of her members and non-members within her environment. The growth of the church became rapid so much so that many joined the church through becoming pupils in those schools. Many who got better understanding about the church began to convert others to join the church. Those whom the church trained and empowered with skills through which they earned a living began to donate money to the church for her development. The educated ones began to develop strategies that could foster church growth. Today, there are lots of evidences of the sociological implication of these human capital development activities.

Recommendations

Based on the interviews and focus groups conducted in the field, the following recommendations are made:

- The church should maintain her teaching on tithing, and faith healing. The long-sustained poverty has negative sociological impact among young

people and stagnate the church in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni. Their minds must be groomed and reoriented to have a positive attitude of 'can-do' mentality. Furthermore, the habit of dishing out clothes, food stuffs etc. to the poor is not sustainable. Concrete efforts should be made to seek grants from the wealthy members, the government, non-governmental organizations, international organizations to support the plans the church has for sustainable development programs like skill acquisitions, economic programmes, and manpower development that will lift members out of poverty and will in turn aid church growth.

- Churches should improve on their accountability regarding the resources contributed by members to ensure they are properly utilized for the overall growth of the church in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni.
- Church members should be constantly trained and mentored in order to maintain the doctrines of the church to aid internal and extension growth in the Anglican Diocese of Ogoni.

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