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RESEARCH ARTICLE



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Opposition to Women in Congregational Leadership: A Sociocultural Perspective

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Abstract

Although many efforts have been made in time past in demonstrating that women are similar to men, there still appear to be a widespread persistent belief that women are indeed inferior to men even until today. What is even worrying is the theological backing that this sociocultural belief of society enjoys. One notices in the literature that God ordains, sanctions, and upholds the spiritual authority of women today as he did in time past as his official spokespersons and leaders of his people. However, the evidence and discussion presented in this paper demonstrate that problems with women being accepted as leaders by congregations, gender differences in pay and promotions, and the experiences and dissatisfaction of women clergy who feel constrained by these gender discrimination is widespread. The paper discusses this phenomenon and presents an often neglected perspective in the discourse – the sociocultural perspective. It interrogates the various stands on women and leadership in congregations. In doing this, the paper explores the position of women in the Old Testament through to the New Testament and the centuries following.

Keywords: Opposition; Women; Congregational Leadership; Sociocultural; Old Testament; New Testament; God.

Introduction

It is quite curious to know that beginning in as far back as the earliest Christian churches in the first century, and continuing through to today, the religious role of women has been the subject of constant debate. It just does not seem to go away. Church councils, theologians, and religious authorities have sought to time after time deliberate on and define the proper position of women in the church. These have almost always been inconclusive. Even in cases where these definitions appear definite, they only appear so in theory. Practically, one always finds the reality, which sometimes widely differs from council resolutions per se.

One wonders why the case of ordaining women as priests has been a problem for these many decades. This ought to have been a minor problem but it however seems to have been the bane of many churches for years. Why is it that women have still not fully realized their right to follow a vocation to the priesthood after years of struggle? Similar to several other occupations, the male-dominance and control of the clergy has been well documented (Bock, 1967; McDuff & Mueller, 2002).

Evidence suggests that women clergy have had to do with inferior conditions of work and also grapple with workplace inequalities (Chang, 2000; McDuff, 2001; Schneider & Schneider, 1997). In situating the literature well in perspective, one could notice some level of gender discrimination in congregations. Gender is an ascribed status, so when decisions of personnel are based on gender rather than one's qualification, competence or job performance, then gender discrimination is said to have occurred (Ngo et al., 2002). This is often seen in the ensuing grievances, resentment and dissatisfaction felt by those who pursue that course.

Constantly, women who have wishes of dedicating their lives to the Christian ministry have faced the difficulty of the capacity in which they could serve and how far they could go. The manifest basis of many congregations' opposition to women's leadership has been the Apostle Paul's statement that women should not teach or speak in public. The difficulty with this order of organisation however lies in how to reconcile this assertion of the Apostle Paul with his statement that there is neither "male nor female" (Galatians 3: 28). Also, Paul's relation with women in ministry in the early church and women's position in particular in the early church make a reliance on his earlier assertion even more problematic.

Women are in the majority in most religious organizations in Ghana and many societies as in the case of many other social settings. It is common knowledge that a majority of the people or rather, participants in all religious organizations in Ghana are women. This is especially the case in Christian churches or congregations. This fact notwithstanding, women's involvement and/or participation in leadership positions have been abysmal. Rarely does one find women at the very top in congregational leadership in Ghana and Africa as a whole.

The paper discusses this phenomenon and presents an often neglected perspective in the discourse – the sociocultural perspective. It interrogates the various stands on women and leadership in congregations. It explores the position of women in the Old Testament through to the New Testament and the centuries following. Here, we discuss into detail some of the main factors inhibiting (for want of a better word) women from rising to the top of congregational leadership. In this exercise, attention is tilted towards the case of women clergy from around the world with the spotlight on the sociocultural context of Ghana.

Latent and Manifest Opposition

Although many efforts have been made in time past in demonstrating that women are similar to men, there still appear to be a persistent belief that women are inferior to men even until today. What is even worrying is the theo-political backing that this sociocultural belief of society enjoys. Customs, related to the fundamental belief that women are inferior to men are often revered in society which both tend to justify and maintain forms of inequality in institutions of society. In some cases, these customs and beliefs manifest in extreme prejudice and discrimination directed at females in the society.

It has been suggested that women face some form of gender discrimination in religious congregations in most parts of the world including Ghana. How does one assess such a claim? Gender discrimination is said to have occurred when personnel engagement (or employment, in the case of organisations) decisions are based on gender, which is an ascribed status, rather than on one's qualifications, technical competence or job performance (Ngo et al., 2002). To assess this, we use what is called social comparisons. This gives information on the types of treatments and/or outcomes (such as increases in salary or promotions, etc.) that are possible to be achieved by each of the sex groupings (Major, 1994).

According to Sentilles (2008), "women endure sexual harassment, individual discrimination, and systemic discrimination on a regular basis (Sentilles, 2008, p. 17). Although the fear of harassment has been a constant reality for female clergy (Lind, 2005), there appear a dearth of information in terms of empirical literature concerning sexual misconduct, especially as it relates to sexual harassment within churches (Birchard, 2000; Frame, 1996). These are recent reports,

presupposing that there is deepening discrimination against women and that also, many women have become silent sufferers in the church.

From a unitary perspective, many have expressed their desire to see women as priests and bishops for the sake of the church becoming one whole church where women are allowed to fulfill their pastoral gifts, spirituality and leadership (Key, 2012). This wish is yet to be realized in full.

In a directive of the preparatory committee of the Bishop's Conference of Finland's Evangelical-Lutheran Church (Helsingin Sonamat, 2007), no minister of the church is allowed to refuse cooperation with female colleagues; and it is mandatory to conduct church services with all fellow colleagues. The committee also shared the opinion that ministers who dissent the ordination of women can be obliged to execute duties that infringe on such convictions.

In Finland, the controversy to the opposition of the ordination of women stemmed from the interpretation of a provision that was enclosed in a 1986 decision by the Synod of the Finnish Lutheran Church. The synod opened the ministry to women and also declared that those who stood in opposition shall continue to have freedom to operate in the church and possibility to be ordained and appointed to different posts in the Church. This resulted in discriminatory practices in some congregations; in such congregations, the priest allots shifts at work as per gender. These female priests are sometimes rescheduled when a churchman who opposes the ordination of women visits the church.

There is a much more complex variety of reasons aside from mere theological convictions (especially in churches which have passed resolutions to ordain women ministers) why there are not more women leading churches. Women are said to often find it difficult to get the opportunity to be curates in larger churches, or hold associate posts for which reason many of them lack the relevant experience when it comes to appointments to heading larger churches. While there exist a general and open acceptance of women in many churches today, as in the case of Finland's Evangelical-Lutheran Church, there is equally some residual conservatism and a prevailing unwillingness to upset the status quo (Leimon, Moscovici, & Goodier, 2011, p. 110) weighted with an aura of sacred tradition when it comes to appointing an incumbent to lead a congregation. Sometimes these recruitment processes do not follow best practices. This is because there are often strong opposition even among the laity in the church. These are powerful conservatives who wield a lot of authority in most local churches.

The related concern is that only few women are found leading larger churches. This is so in many churches including the Anglican Church worldwide. Research reports on the Episcopal Church in USA reveal among other things that while women are assigned priests in charge of relatively larger congregations, they are yet to be considered candidates of many of the large parishes in most dioceses (Sullins, 2000). It is important to note where these reports are coming from; the USA is a place where women have been ordained priests for so many decades. This leaves the effects of the many advocacies today shrouded. Why are women still not leading larger churches? One would be quick to point to their lack of experience; but many women have served in various positions in the diaconry before moving on to become priests in many of these churches. There are reports that some of these women have had over 18 years of working experience as priests in charge of smaller and medium sized churches. This is far more than the experience many men have had before taking charge of larger churches.

The point is that many of these orthodox churches fully recognize female priest but put restrictions on their rising to the top. Some have referred to attitudes exhibited by the Synod as reacting to bully tactics (Charman, 2012). In case you have a difficulty with the use of the synod – the synod comprise of delegates, who are not to act as representatives (either of themselves or views of groups they belong to) but play significant assignment of discerning what God is calling the church to be and do (Charman, 2012). To this, the important question asked is 'What does it mean spiritually for us as individuals and as a Church if, after having prayed for guidance, we now refuse the clear prompting of the Holy Spirit?' This long struggle of accepting women in the ministry has had enormous and unquantifiable consequences on the spiritual and emotional wellbeing of these women (Charman, 2012).

Women who were ordained in recent times, according to a report by (Charman, 2012) were more confident that the church is on the course of progressing to a full recognition of women's ministry. This revelation is worth an intellectual interrogation. This is because in contrast, women

who had been ordained longer had their reservations about the church accepting women's ministry fully. The latter view might clearly be due to the experiences of these women clergy in the ministry.

Many women clergy have called for people to recognize their God-given talents and qualities instead of their gender. Many of these women have been disregarded and branded to be the curate or priest's assistant (Charman, 2012). Although, women were first ordained to the office of priesthood in the Church of England in 1994 (Key, 2012) fewer women move from priests to becoming bishops. Also, despite the fact that consecrating female bishops have been permitted in Northern Ireland and in Scotland, reports indicate that none has yet been elected to the high office. An admission made by the Right Reverend Gregory Cameron is particularly worth noting: "The Church changes very slowly and you have to learn to live with that." One would however wonder what the real reasons for these very slow changes are. Bishop Cameron is said to have acknowledged that the changes come into effect with time, since this allows for pastoral care to be drawn up for those who are still opposed to women bishops.

It is quite interesting to find that even though The Church of England is headed by The Queen who holds the title of "Defender of the Faith and Supreme Governor of the Church of England", the consecration of women to the office of bishop has become years of never ending struggle. Worthy of note in all of these is the challenge posed by lay people in the church. Evidence suggests that the opposition to the leadership of women is even high among some laity than the councils. In many cases, powerful congregants have resisted the appointment of women priests in their congregations. These conservatives unfortunately have sometimes been the biggest financiers of church activities in their regions, thereby making their positions quite enduring.

It would be quite erroneous to think that the strong opposition to the leadership of the female in Christian churches has solely come from men. There are many women who also vehemently oppose the ordination or consecration of women for the high jobs in the church. Zoe Ham, a female from the Church Society is reported by Siobhan (2012) a freelance journalist as saying: "I believe that God teaches us in the Bible that men and women are completely equal in value and dignity (both made in the image of God, both can be saved through faith in Jesus Christ) but different in the roles God has given them to play in the home and the church. I believe that men are to sacrificially lead as the head and that women are to lovingly submit, that's why I love playing out my role as a woman in the church".

From the above quote, and in the pool of many such positions, it is not surprising that this opposition continues to be steepened in many congregations all over the world. Women were first ordained as clergy in the Finnish Evangelical-Lutheran Church in 1988 (Helsingin Sonamat, 2007). Nonetheless, a marginal minority comprising mainly of male clergy continue to contest the ordination of women (Helsingin Sonamat, 2007). Fortunately, opposition to the ordination of women is unconventional in the parishes of Greater Helsinki area. According to this report, no cases have been reported in Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa, and Kauniainen about the refusal of a male conservative minister to carry out services with a female minister. Forecasts released by the Union of Finnish Clergy indicate that the gender distribution of clergy in the whole country is likely to skew towards a female majority by the end of 2015 (Helsingin Sonamat, 2007).

Contrary to this however, an incident was reported in Vammala, Western Finland where a conservative male assistant vicar rejected to work with a female pastor at the altar (Helsingin Sonamat, 2007). Many lady pastors have given many remarkable and well written sermons which never sunk in (Carroll, Hargrove & Lummis, 1983). Such pastors are not able to effectively perform their roles due to the fact that they receive little or no cooperation at all from their congregation. A parish lay leader was of the opinion that a "handsome, outgoing, friendly energetic, magnetic-type man is what it takes to get the hard-to-get people to participate" (Carroll et al., 1983).

According to clergywomen, seminary faculty, and denominational executives, one set back women pastors are confronted with in getting good job placements compared to their male counterparts after the first couple of parishes is opposition to women pastors from lay people in parishes. The oppositions vary from being subtle to latent; obvious and then deliberate demonstration of sexist attitudes.

A cursory look at the literature reveals expressions such as the following used by people (mostly men) who stand in opposition to the ordination of women to ministry: "Women's place is in the home, not the pulpit"; "women are temperamentally unsuited for ministry"; "I simply can't conceive of having a woman as a minister"; "I believe that religious leadership has been given by

God to men and therefore would not favor a woman as a pastor of a church”; “Of course, women are subordinate to men and therefore cannot rule over men in the church” (Carroll et al., 1983, p. 139).

According to (Carroll et al., 1983), lay leaders are sometimes unwilling to engage female pastors or priests because they are of the opinion that the mass of their congregation are against women in the pulpit. Carroll et al. (1983) cites Lehman (1981) who postulates that a major block to parish hiring of women pastors is their fear that hiring a woman might upset other parishioners, with ensuing, deleterious effects on the whole congregation.

Another worry to having a female clergy stems from the issue of the public image of the church. It is observed that a number of churches have a larger portion of their regular members as women and therefore having a female clergy will portray the church as a woman’s organization even though a female leadership would have been suitable (Carroll et al., 1983). According to Carroll et al. (1983), three-fourths of Lehman’s American Baptist sample in 1977 perceived that, for most persons, there was a general incompatibility between the image of minister and that of woman. Interestingly, the 1981 data, replicates this proportion generally, not only for American Baptists, but for all other denominations as well.

At this point, a look at women’s position and activity in the Old Testament and in the early church will do our discussion a lot of good. In the following subsections, we consider women’s authority and position in the Old Testament through to the beginning of the early church and beyond. This is followed thereon with the place of sociocultural considerations in the present discourse.

Women’s Position in the Old Testament

The enormity of evidence on the authority of women in Christian history makes the present challenge and debate on women’s priestly position quite difficult to comprehend. In the Old Testament, God ordained and anointed women to represent him among his people as much as he did with men (1 Kings 19:16; 1 Chron 16:22). In Deuteronomy 18:19, we find that not abiding by the words or instructions of the Lord’s prophets has terrible implications. Failure to obey the words of God’s prophets represents a rejection of the sovereignty of God. In the same book, posing as a prophet without the sanctioning of God has equally dire consequences.

Where is this discussion heading? God sanctioned women as prophets who exercised spiritual authority over the whole of Israel. These women functioned as leaders of Israel under the unction of the Holy Spirit, the evidence of God’s sanction (Micah 6:4). Moses’ sister, Miriam was prophet of Israel and exercised spiritual authority over both men and women in the whole of Israel. I brought you up out of Egypt and redeemed you from the land of slavery. I sent Moses to lead you, also Aaron and Miriam. (Micah 6:4). While some would be quick to point to Miriam’s punishment for opposing her brother (Mose’s) marriage to Cushite, it is important to note that there is no evidence to the effect that her calamity was linked to her divine authority over Israel (Num. 12:2).

One can speak of many other powerful women, examples being Huldah (2 Kings 22:14) and Deborah (Judges 4 & 5). Looking at Deborah, her power and authority over Israel as God’s prophet and judge is well documented. Although a woman, Deborah exercised spiritual, civil, as well as judicial authority over the whole Israel (Judges 4:4-5). Her leadership and jurisdiction included even the military leaders of Israel. The unction of God was on Deborah so much so that the commander of Israel’s army at the time, Barak, would not want to go to battle in her absence. In the case of Deborah, there was no failure recorded for which anyone could attack the success of her leadership in Israel.

The Position of Women in the Early Church and Beyond

Following from the evidence discussed earlier, women continued to operate with authority and prophesied (Luke 1:46ff; Luke 2:36ff). The important place and roles of women in the early church is equally not in doubt.

It is quite interesting and a seeming contradiction to find that women were instrumental in Paul’s ministry. Paul recognized the role of these women and acknowledged their service to the church as ministers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In Romans 16: 1-2, St. Paul praises Phoebe, the deacon, for her exemplary leadership in the church of Cenchreae. The congregational leadership of Mary (the mother of John Mark), is also mentioned in Acts 12:12. Prophetesses were referred to in

general by Paul at 1 Corinthians 11:5. Luke also mentions several specific female prophets, such as Anna (Luke 2:36) and the four daughters of Philip of Caesarea (Acts 21:9), Elizabeth (Luke 1:41-45) and Mary, the mother of Jesus in Luke 1:46-55 (Eisen, 2000).

For example, at Acts 18:26, we read about Priscilla, who functioned as the theological teacher of Apollos, a man who, by the time he met Priscilla, had already converted to Christianity and been educated in the Scriptures (Eisen, 2000). In Romans 16:7 the Apostle Paul also identifies Junia as a senior in the faith to himself and labels Junia and her husband, Andronicus, as “outstanding apostles”. It is the only time that Paul refers to anyone other than the twelve (apostles) or himself as ‘apostles’. This is quite significant if we are to engage in fruitful discussion of what Paul said or did not say.

This is not to suggest that one is unaware of the secondary position of women to men in the early church. However, there were also settings in which women served as presbyters and even bishops. Evidence available suggests that women in the early church served as prophets, instructors, apostles and deaconesses. These were the times preceding and following Apostle Paul’s assertion in 1 Corinthians 14: 34–35 and 1 Timothy 2: 11-12. While there exist a traditional position among some historians that women exercised no authority in the early church, recent studies reveal that women had as much authority as their male counterparts within the early church in the first three centuries. It is important to note that these roles held by women in the early church were much in line with the teachings of Christ himself and with guidelines set out by the Apostle Paul.

Although some of these early scholarly works held that women in the first five centuries of the early church only served as widows and deaconesses, the recent studies show that women held many more religious positions with greater authority than earlier assumed in literature. Women in the early church (especially, as widows) taught, anointed women during baptism, cared for the sick, vetted deaconesses and also received offerings. Some of these women provided assistance to bishops at baptisms and the Eucharist. They also administered communion and instructions on theology to the homebound or the sick.

The role of the “apostle” traditionally reserved for men were also held by women in the history of the early church. These apostles proclaimed with authority the good news of the resurrection of Christ and the forgiveness of sins. They were respected and held in high esteem as bearers of the message of Christ (Romans 16:7). There were powerful women recognized in the early church. They include the Samaritan woman (John 4:5-30), Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9-10), and Priscilla (Romans 16:3) among others.

The earliest bishops in the New Testament are generally mentioned without any particular gender description. These bishops were also community administrators. Given that this was the case, women could be said to have served as bishops in those times. Knowing that women were leaders of house/community churches, it would be correct to suggest that Priscilla, Lydia, Nympha, Tavia, and the widow of Epitropus were examples of females who functioned as bishops. Some scholars have also maintained that some of these women also functioned in the more traditional sense of a ‘bishop’ overseeing the metropolitan church communities in both Montanist and mainstream Christianity (Eisen, 2000, p. 209).

There are many other instances after the Bible days that women held very high and important positions in the church. The episcopal ordination of St. Brigit of Kildare is one case in point. Bishop Mel of Ardagh is said to have consecrated Brigit in Ireland in the fifth century. Bishop Mel in a report is said to have been “... intoxicated with the grace of God there, did not know what he was reciting from his book”, and ended up consecrating “Brigit with the orders of a bishop” (Davies, 1999, p. 33).

Inscriptions from second through fourth century tombstones mention female presbyters named Ammion, Epikto, Artemidora from Asia Minor, Greece, and Egypt, respectively. It is worthy of mention also that we also have literary evidence from Epiphanius who wrote of and criticized Christian communities that allowed women to serve as presbyters and bishops from the fourth century (Eisen, 2000, p. 116-128).

Moreover, evidence in the Celtic Church shows that women and men equally preached the Gospel. They all presided at Mass and administered other sacraments. In the sixth century, it is reported that three Roman bishops at Tours wrote a letter to two priests of Breton, Lovocat and

Cathern, in which letter they expressed their disgust at the fact that women were permitted to preside at Eucharist (Ellis, 1996, p.142-144)

Mention is also made of other women, like Catherine of Siena and Birgitta of Sweden who confronted the corruption and abuses of the institutional church of their time. According to a report by Ellsberg (2005), Birgitta, acting on her “authority as God’s messenger”, insisted that the pope leave the comforts of Avignon and return to his proper seat in Rome” (Ellsberg, 2005, p. 135). One time, she denounced the pope as ‘a murderer of souls, worse than Lucifer, more unjust than Pilate, and more merciless than Judas.’ The pope did not respond to her calls for reform of the church, but he did approve the Rule of her new religious order, which is The Brigettines, or Order of the Most Holy Saviour.

Some of these courageous women including Joan of Arc, endured condemnation and in some case excommunication during their lifetimes by the church for what can be termed as their holy disobedience.

The place of Sociocultural Considerations in the Discourse

Women in the early church were respected as apostles, prophets, and teachers. These women according to available literature performed liturgical duties alongside men as deaconesses, widows, and as presbyters and bishops on some occasions (Wemple, 1981). As Suzanne Wemple puts it, when it became profitable to be a bishop or priest, traditional Roman and Germanic misogyny enabled Biblical passages to be easily taken out of context and used to subjugate women.

Wemple presents the transformation of the position of women in the early church in such brevity with clarity: In the early Christian communities, men and women were subject to the same moral precepts, and women served as auxiliaries to men in the propagation of the faith, pastoral care, and the administration of the sacraments. Only in the fourth century, when Christianity became first a favoured and then an exclusive state religion, did the male hierarchy begin to disqualify women from auxiliary ecclesiastical functions. Particularly in the West, where the active participation of women in religion came to be associated with heresy, Eve’s role in the Fall and the ritual impurity of women were used as excuses not only for excluding women from the diaconate, but also for enforcing celibacy on the ministers of the altar (Wemple, 1981, p. 191).

The position of women in the church from the above quote and the discussions so far, has been a fluid one. It has changed over time; but these changes could be linked to the desires and ambitions of powerful men. Following Hofstede’s (1980 & 2001) revelations, a society’s level of masculinity or femininity can be seen in relation to the gender role differences in values of that society. Men in masculine societies are considered assertive, competitive, and focused on material success, while women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life in society (Hofstede, 1980, 2001).

Ghana is culturally a masculine society. Gender roles socially appear clearly distinct in such societies (Hofstede, 2001). Gender differences in work attitudes and behaviours are largely influenced by several other organizational contexts which may include role expectations associated with one’s gender and position which is most often than not, culturally contingent. Research has revealed the existence of both latent and manifest cases of gender discrimination against women in many Ghanaian organisations (Akuoko, 2008; Amoah, 2013). The patriarchal nature of the Ghanaian society and its implications for leadership in organisations has been well acknowledged by these authors.

Resisting the “rule” or the leadership of the woman is fond of many men. This has generally been blamed on “the problem of the male” –the fear of the feminist retribution (Amoah, 2013; 2014). This situation defies organisational type or outlook. It is therefore important to put the debate on the position of women in congregational leadership in the right perspective. Once we understand that the woman’s position in business and their professional pursuits in organisations have generally made the headlines in many discussions, we would not find it too surprising what is happening in the church. The case of the church which comes with additional barriers of theological issues coupled with the patriarchal history and residual conservatism noted earlier by Leimon et al. (2011), makes the struggles even more pervasive and challenging for women.

Amoah reports in a recent study, the observation of a Reverend Minister of the Presbyterian church of Ghana as follows: It happened in the Presbyterian Church, when they were thinking of ordaining women, they came out strongly that they don’t want any woman to come and be

administering communion. It has still not been solved though we have female ministers now. In fact, I dare say that some congregations would never accept a female minister in Ghana” (Amoah, 2013, p. 97).

The above quote summarises and puts in proper perspective the case of women clergy in Ghanaian churches which have succeeded in ordaining women ministers. It is important to note that while some are struggling to have their female clergy accepted by congregations, many other churches are still grappling with the question of whether to accept the ordination of women or not. In Ghana, the church of Pentecost still does not ordain women as pastors. Although, there are deaconesses and many prophetesses in the church, there appear to be a glass ceiling, well stained, to prevent women from looking any further in their quest to serve God and humanity.

What is even more curious in the church of Pentecost in Ghana is the practice of restricting pastors’ wives in the kind of profession they could engage in or pursue. Once a woman’s husband is ordained a minister of the church, the regulation requires that she quits all her professional and occupational pursuits (except in cases where she is a nurse or teacher). The teaching and nursing professions are the only professions permitted for the pastor’s wife in this church. Clearly, one finds an institutional attempt to keep women subservient to men in and out of the church.

Anthropologist George Murdock did a cross-cultural survey of 324 pre modern societies around the world (Murdock, 1937). He found in this study that work activities in all the societies were sex typed. Example, in Somalia, women tend the livestock which was not the case in other societies even on the African continent. Clearly, from the said study, one can argue that there is nothing in the anatomy of women and men that require that they be assigned different works in society. In other words, anatomy does not on its own sort men and women into different occupations. It has been proven in Murdock’s cross-cultural research and many other works that pursuits which are deemed masculine in one society may be considered feminine in another sociocultural setting and vice versa.

Patriarchy has variously been blamed for sex discrimination and sex – role stereotyping in society. Patriarchy is basically used to describe a society in which men dominate women. In such societies, there is the assumption and believe in human hierarchies based on gender and military might. Although patriarchy may be universal as put forward by many scholars, its effect in society can be said to be varying in many respects. Coming back to our primary subject of women in congregational leadership, evidence show that women clergy in Finland are much more, compared to other places in the world. This leaves us with the question of ‘what accounts for these variations around the world’? Your guess after reading these pages is as good as ours. The variations, in our view are due to the different sociocultural contexts.

Following from the evidence presented so far, one cannot but notice that God ordains, sanctions, and upholds the spiritual authority of women today as he did in time past as his official spokespersons and leaders of his people. However, the literature and discussion presented here show that problems with women being accepted as leaders by congregations, gender differences in pay and promotions, and the experiences and dissatisfaction of women clergy who feel constrained by these gender discrimination is also well documented.

In the text below, Jesus appears to be very clear in showing that the place of the woman is not only in the ‘home’. On the chosen role of Mary, the master makes it explicitly that this role is what is most needed and that no one should take it away from her: As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her." (Luke 10: 38-42 NIV).

Notwithstanding the call above by the master, the discussions point to years of attempts to prevent women from taking their rightful places in the church. As was well acknowledged by some scholars, the cases of Deborah and Huldah in the Bible call to question the assumption of human hierarchies on the basis of military might and gender. These women ministered by the authority of God through the power of the Holy Spirit. In this respect, to suggest for example that the ordination of women as ministers is not biblical is to suggest that the calls, sanction and unction on

these women in ministry and their exercise of authority over men and women were at odds with God's own will. This would appear scandalous since it casts doubt on God's consistency.

Conclusion

We side with the argument that rather, the church is not harnessing its God-given talents by opposing women in the ministry. As such, the church has been illustrated as the fearful steward in the Bible who instead of working with the talents given to him, decided to bury it (Charman, 2012). Over the years, many gifts have been frustrated and restricted and competent leaders have also been lost to churches that appreciate women's ministry all over the world. So, rather than trying so hard to silence women, we need to support and encourage their recognition as ministers of God called to serve in his vineyard.

While acknowledging the changes the hitherto traditional field of ministry is undergoing through the ordination of increasing number of women into the ministry of some Protestant denominations (Carroll, et al., 1983), we equally note how difficult it is to change cultural images formed on the basis of sacred traditions. Similar to the many cultural traditions that have persisted worldwide, many people still see the ordained ministry in Ghana as a masculine one. As such many women despite contemporary efforts, both in and out of the church, still face several difficulties in breaking through this traditional glass ceiling. From a sociological viewpoint, one must understand the struggle of women to gain entry into the ordained ministry as part of the larger movement of women into traditional male occupations and professions. This is essentially what the present paper represents.

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REVIEW ARTICLE



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The History of the Olympic Capital Sochi 2014: the Scientific Research Aspect

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the formation of the historical school for the study of the region of the city-resort of Sochi. Regional history is an integral part of the formation of the historical area of the country, dictates the internal processes of registration of statehood, imposes the specifics of the internal and external policy of the state. Sochi as an object of scientific study is the result of the efforts of the last two decades scientists Sochi State University, which raised the question of the transition from the level of regional studies, local journalistic literature to the theoretical approaches of historical analysis using the apparatus of the scientific method. The city of Sochi – the capital of Winter Olympic Games of 2014, leading to interest from foreign historical schools, researchers. This provides a historiographical analysis of the history of Sochi and makes for international studies focus on the role of regional historians, in light of the historical processes which took place on the Northern Black sea region in different periods of historical time.

Keywords: city-resort Sochi; historiography; Black sea coast; regional history; scientific school, historian-researcher, ethnographer.

Introduction

Traditionally, the region in the works of various scientific orientations is considered in the Federal status of the resort of the Russian Federation in the framework of the administrative-territorial district of Krasnodar region. The researchers focused their attention on rare for the country of natural beauty and subtropical climate, close to the French Riviera. However, systematic study of all aspects of the formation and development of the region is still there, which suggests the need to consider in this article the complex of research works: dissertations, articles, essays and archival data. In 2011 scientists V.E. Schetnev made the first step in the analysis of scientific research practices of the previous decade on the basis of Sochi State University, [1] the author stressed the need not only to continue the work, but also to bring it to the level of nationwide significance. Later T.P. Khlynina addressed to the subject of the historiography of the Big Sochi. [2]

Materials and methods

The teaching of area studies in educational institutions of different levels opened up a new opportunity for the practical application of scientific research by historians and researchers. Titanic work of ethnographers, use of the personal archives with collections of priceless materials, photographs, interviews of the oldest residents of the city, their work in the archive services of the

cities Sochi, Novorossiysk, Krasnodar, St. Petersburg and Moscow have opened new horizons in the study of the history of the city. The work of Museum employees, their relationship with local historians have allowed historians-researchers [3] to explore the region on the background of large-scale historical processes, inverted the fate of the country as a whole.

The principles of historicism and objectivity required from the author to produce the systematization carried out the dissertation defense, released monographs about the history of the city, to assess their quality from the scientific-theoretical and practical standpoints.

Discussion

Scientific and historical discourse of historians and regionalists allows us to highlight certain milestones in the history of the Sochi resort region: ancient, as evidenced by numerous artifacts, remnants of the material culture of the ancient tribes, Byzantine, Genoese and Ottoman heritage succeeded each other. The modern history of the city begins from the time of the Caucasian war and the Russian-Turkish war conflicts affecting the region and the local tribes when in April 23, (new style) 1838 landed a detachment of Russian troops, marked the beginning of the first Russian settlement. The events of the Caucasian war cause disputes among experts, in connection with the fate of the local tribes, the conduct of military operations, the deaths of civilians and military on both sides. [4-7]

The history of the resort is maintained with important dates: June 14, 1909 – the opening of the first resort of the institution – "the Caucasian Riviera", but the status of the town Sochi has received in July 31, 1917. Therefore there are the following lines in urban development:

- 1) 1838 – 1917 – from Fort to urban settlement;
- 2) 1917 – the beginning of the 1930s – the formation of the Soviet power in the region and the creation of the first Soviet resort establishments;
- 3) 1933 – early 1940s – the first master plan for the reconstruction of Sochi-Matsesta;
- 4) 1941 – 1945s – Sochi – city-hospital;
- 5) 1946 – 1961s – the formation of material and technical base of the resort;
- 6) 1961 – 1970s – development of Sochi as "all-Union health resort";
- 7) 1980 – 1991s – resort city in terms of adjustment policies and the existence of socio-economic crisis;
- 8) 1991 – 2000s – a systemic crisis of resort infrastructure in the conditions of refusal of the state policy of paternalism;
- 9) 2007 – 2014th – the project for construction of Olympic infrastructure, the rebirth of the city during the Olympic Winter games 2014, Paralympic games and post-games legacy.

Results

Education of Sochi State University and the opening of the Department of Russian history made possible for local historians and researchers to make scientific discussion on a number of dissertation researches in various historical stages of formation and development of the resort city Sochi. The chronological approach requires first to put forward the work of the chief of archival services of the city of Sochi I.A. Tveritinov about the peculiarities of socio-economic development of the Sochi district in the second half of the XIX – XX centuries. [8-10] That is followed by the lighting of K.V. Taran the socio-political movement in the Black sea province during the First Russian revolution 1905-1907. [11-21] But the greatest contribution was made by A.A. Cherkasov, who first studied on the theoretical level, the peasant movement on the sea during the revolution and Civil war, while studying various issues in ancient, medieval and modern history of the region. [22-55] Scientific study of T.A. Samsonenko about the history of Sochi-Matsesta all-Union resort became the basis for investigations of the role of the Soviet state in the resort construction. [56-60] In addition to urban construction, which is given to the authors of many works, O.V. Bershadskaya focused on the Black sea village in the conditions of the NEP, having considered the socio-economic conditions. [61-66] Historian O.V. Natolochnaya paid close attention to the period 1945-1953s, when the city of Sochi and Sochi residents after World War II restored the sanatorium base, striving for socio-economic and cultural development of the resort. [67-76] 1960–1980-ies have been studied by historians from different positions of social, economic, cultural, educational. [77-81] Particularly acute controversy among historians and local historians called the period of perestroika and the collapse of the USSR, which caused this crisis in the resort region. [83-96] New

page in the history of the city is 1990–2010s, when Russia gained sovereignty after the collapse of the USSR. The resort became the city's border with the Republic of Georgia and went through a period of severe socio-economic crisis, as the whole country, which confirms the position of regional history is an integral part of the history of the country. In 2007, the city-resort of Sochi, became the Olympic capital of 2014 and showed the transformation of the region, simultaneously arousing interest in its history, [97-102] showed the need to explore regional history and to continue working on a monograph about the history of the resort city. [103]

Conclusion

Held historiographical analysis suggests the author as a need to produce a monographic study, which should cover the history of the resort city from antiquity to the present. This will extend the work of local lore, Museum and teaching, will give the opportunity to see new directions in the scientific study of the region.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE



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The Impact of Quality Service Provided by SRM Hospital on Outpatients

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Abstract

Consumer's perceptions about the health care services play an important role when choosing a hospital. The quality of service is crucial to both the outpatients and the service providers. The dimensions of the service quality are reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. Customer's expectations and experiences vary with services. When there is a shortfall between expectation of service level and perception of actual service delivery, it is called customer gap. The causes of customer gap include; not knowing what customers expect, not selecting the right service designs and standards, not delivering to service standards and not matching performance to promises. This paper focuses on the level of service quality rendered by SRM's hospital, the patient-physicians' relationship and to examine the pre and post service of outpatients in the SRM's hospital. A structured questionnaires and interviews were constructed to provide answers to the research questions using a sample size of 50 [employees and outpatients]. It was found out that some outpatients were satisfied with the services rendered by the hospital with reservations for more improvement. It was also found out that, there were gaps between the outpatients' expectation and perception about the service rendered by the hospital. It was recommended that a competent marketing executive should be employed since marketing is the voice of the healthcare industry.

Keywords: Service quality; Healthcare; Outpatients; Expectation; Perception; India.

Introduction

The primary goal of every organisation is to reach its peak with respect to its mission and vision statement. Key to this ultimate organisational dream is service or product quality, largely

provided for customers. In a survey done among Chief Executives in the United States, Times Magazine observed that approximately 47 per cent listed customer satisfaction as the main goal of their business (Boone & Kurtz, 1999). In a recent study on service quality and satisfaction, results suggested that customer niche is very unique, with several inimitable characteristics (Asiedu, & Sarfo, 2013).

With the influx of several healthcare organisations, it is important to examine healthcare service delivery quality. An important model in this domain is the SERVQUAL model, which was originally developed by Parasuraman et al., (1988). This model was later redefined in 1991 as a multi-dimensional scale to capture customer perceptions and expectations of service quality which involves the calculation of the differences between expectations and perceptions on a number of specified criteria (Brown et al., 1993). SERVQUAL highlights the major quality requirements of delivered service in five dimensions namely Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, Empathy and Tangibles (Zeithaml, & Bitner, 2003). This quality can also be influenced by several factors.

The study by Brady et al., (2001) replicated the superiority of SERVPERF model for measuring service quality. The SERVPERF model measure the perception on various dimensions of service quality. The patient places trust in the service provider that they will do the best according to their knowledge and ability to help them heal. Health care involves a certain amount of vulnerability. The doctor has a level of knowledge about the body, its functioning and diseases which puts them in a powerful position.

Quality service is therefore defined as 'trust' in health care, and usually defined as a set of expectations that the patient has from the doctor and the health care system to help them heal. This set of expectations includes appropriate diagnosis, correct treatment, non-exploitation, genuine interest in the welfare of the patient and transparent disclosure of all information. As a result, service quality in health care is like a forward looking covenant between the doctor and the patient.

Changing Trends in Healthcare Service Quality

Quality in health care is defined as the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs (Korwar, 1997). India has been witnessing an increasing concern regarding the quality health care services especially after globalisation and liberalization policies. With the increase in urbanization and standard of living of the people, the awareness on health care services also increases. The consumer's expectation on the quality in health care services is increasing at a faster rate. Service quality has been shown to be an important element in the consumer's choice of hospitals (Lynch, & Schuler, 1990). Health care service quality is giving patients what they want [patient quality], what they need [professional quality], and doing so using fewest resources, without error, delays and waste, and within higher level regulations [management quality] (Overtreit, 1992). Health care deals with different services such as hospital services, diagnosis services, physician consultancies and some other emerging fields.

In the present study, the focusing services are all health care services rendered to patients. Perceived quality of care has demonstrated effect on household decision making with respect to demand for healthcare. Perceptions of quality care may ultimately be responsible for whether a particular patient or user will be willing to return to a facility and, or refer other people. Given that, research has proved that satisfaction assessment and service quality perceptions are closely connected, it can be useful to examine Lambo's comment in terms of user's perceptions of quality (Fowler, et al 1999). According to Lambo (1989), capacity utilization at the primary level is grossly low.

Consequently, there is overcrowding of the secondary facilities due to patients "lack of faith" in the lower facilities. A lack of faith that is premised on users' perception of the systems output quality as doubtful and therefore offering little or no help in needful hours. Clearly, providers concept of quality of care cannot readily be evaluated technically by consumers of healthcare; thereby making their perception of quality [hence satisfaction] all the more important to ensure customer retention rates at the primary care (Dawn, & Thomas, 2004). Therefore, the general problem of interest in this study is the issue of quality of care to outpatients.

Gopichandran (2013) Doctor/health care provider’s behaviour and approach

In the rural and the migrant interviews, certain behavioural factors of the doctor/health provider were highlighted in his research as important for a good health care provider-consumer relationship. According to his research behavioural competence was classified as a major dimension of trust during the first iteration of his analysis. But he stressed on a more important theme that has emerged as perceived technical competence as more important as behavioural competence and people were willing to accept transgressions in behavioural codes as long as their health got better. Therefore in his research decided that behaviour and approach of the doctor played the role of factors determining trust rather than dimensions of trust. Some of the components of the behaviour and approach of the health care provider that were identified by the community were:

i. Kindness and compassion

“More than half of the healing takes place because of the kind words of the doctor. Only the remaining is because of the treatment. When we come to a new hospital we are clueless. At that time the doctor should be kind and talk to us patiently. The reason why we prefer private doctors to PHC is because the private doctor talks to us patiently. He spends time with us and checks us up thoroughly. He talks to us and explains everything. That is very important...” – an elderly man in a rural area.

ii. Putting themselves in the patient’s shoes and understanding them

iii. Listening to the patient

iv. Addressing all doubts and questions

“The doctor also patiently answers all the doubts and questions that I have. I told him that I am not sure what to eat and what not to eat. He told me that I can eat anything except sweets and meat. He also asked me to reduce the amount of sugar that I put in coffee and tea. He was very kind to me and did not talk rudely at all” – elderly woman with diabetes in a rural area.

v. Explaining the treatment

vi. Touching the patient

“Once I had an insect bite in my leg. My leg became very much swollen. It was very painful. So I went to the PHC in Guduvanchery. The doctor there just looked at me and wrote something in the prescription and sent me away. She did not even touch me (holds the hand of the interviewer and gestures). She did not even take my pulse. I felt very upset.” – A young migrant construction worker.

Amoah-Binfoh and Bempah (2014) Model of Quality Service

According to Amoah-Binfoh and Bempah (2014), healthcare services means making available healthcare or Medicare services to the different categories users in such a fashion that they get quality services, at a reasonable fee structure, on right time/place and in a decent way. The patient perceptions on quality cannot be ruled out. Summary of their model is illustrated in Figure 1.

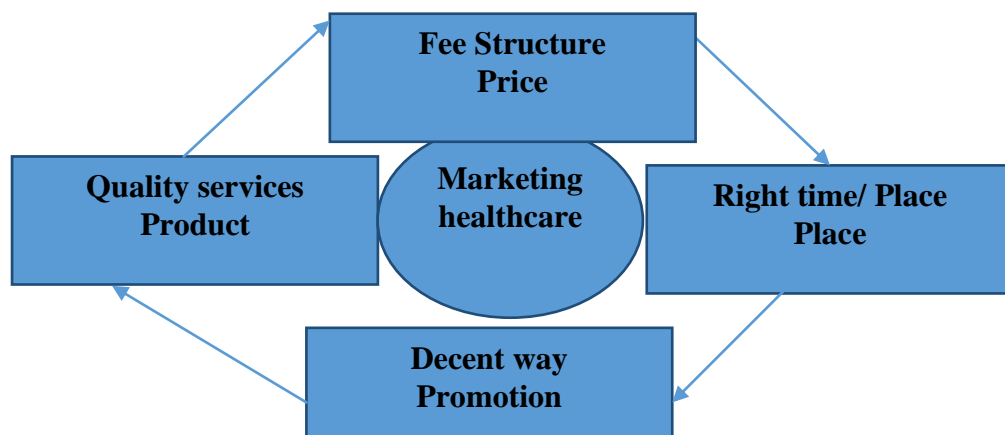


Figure 1: Model of Quality Service

In effect, this study seeks to examine the importance of quality service rendered by SRM hospital, assess the patients and health-workers relationship and to examine the pre and post service of outpatients.

Method

This research specifically used none probability which is the accidental method of sampling because it gives the researchers the opportunity to accidentally choose respondent who in their opinion are thought to be relevant to the research topic.

The period of research was conducted from October, 2014 to January, 2015. Sample size is explained as the required number of units that the research wants to work with or the number of units under study. The sample size of the study was 50 participants.

The main setting for this study was SRM Medical College Hospital, (private) Kattankulathur Tamil Nadu, India. This is a 750-bed hospital houses a wide spectrum of medical specialties and subspecialties. The staff tends to 1,000 patients daily. Employees from such corporate as Carborundum Universal, TATA and Johnson Controls Automotive seek treatment, along with people from all over Kancheepuram district.

Discussion

Both inpatients and outpatients vary in requirements and increasingly demanding higher standards of service. Now most of the service providers have improved patients/customers service in order to compete with their competitive service environment. From the above analysis, it was clear that income has a major role to play in the outpatient services.

Whereas the affordability of the hospital was very keen, skills and competency have a strong association with regards to outpatients (safety, concern, reliability, empathy and assurance). Also there should be an improvement in the modern technology pertaining to operation and diagnostic treatment. Technology advances coupled with the rising needs of people created tremendous demands for new services (quality). For continuous improvement communication is very important therefore the hospital has to consistently improve their communication channels.

Results

From the Table 1, it is clear that the association between the main variables [age, gender, occupation and location] were not significant. This implies that the analysis has failed to accept the null hypothesis. Thus it was concluded that there is no association between age, gender, occupation and location with regards to outpatients' service.

Likewise, for the analysis between income and outpatients services, convenience location of the hospital rejected the null hypothesis. Thus there was no association between income and outpatient services. There was a significant association between income and cost & physical ambience of the Hospital, therefore the null hypothesis was accepted.

For determining the association between diagnostic services and outpatients relationship building, years of knowing SRM hospital (.033), skills and competency(.003) were lesser than .05. Thus, at 5% level of significance, the null hypothesis was accepted. The null hypothesis was rejected since there was no association between modern diagnosis & treatment, modern operation and outpatients relationship building (ORB).

However, for determining the association between skills & competency and outpatients relationship building (ORB), the corresponding p values were .002 (friendliness & Courtesy), .000 (listening to patients) and .002 (safety and concern) at 5% level of significant. This implies that the null hypothesis stands accepted. Therefore there was a significant association between skills & competency and outpatients relationship building (ORB).

Similarly, there was a significant association between communication level and pre & post service of outpatients. The corresponding p values were .000 (Receive message), .013 (New programs) and .001 (Call for review). This also implies that null hypothesis stands accepted. Therefore it can be concluded that there was a significant association between communication and pre & post services of outpatients.

Table 1: Chi-Square Test of Variables

Variables	Categories	χ^2 Value	df	p
Demographic	Age	8.600	4	.072
	Gender	.720	1	.396
	Occupation	4.000	4	.406
	Income	27.280	3	.000
	Location	4.080	3	.253
Diagnostic services	Years of knowing SRM hospital	8.720	3	.033
	Skills and competency	14.320	3	.003
	Modern diagnosis & treatment	1.000	2	.607
	Modern operation	3.160	2	.206
Skills & competency	Efficiency nursing	20.200	4	.000
	Friendliness & Courtesy	15.120	3	.002
	Listening to patients	42.880	2	.000
	Safety and concern	13.000	2	.002
Income	Convenience Location	5.320	2	.070
	Cost for you	9.160	2	.010
	Overall cleanliness	9.040	3	.029
	Communication level	3.040	2	.219
Level Communication	Receive message	19.480	2	.000
	New programs	8.680	2	.013
	Call for review	14.440	2	.001

Recommendations

The researchers recommend that a competent marketing executive should be employed in SRM hospital and other like settings in India since marketing is the voice of the healthcare industry. Marketing must be solid internally as well as externally.

As service quality is holistic, both management and clinicians must be involved in delivering absolute services to meet patients' expectation.

Lastly, in this intense competitive environment, a health care institution survives, not by doing whatever it can, but by doing what it does best within the constraint of patients' demand.

Acknowledgement

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that they do not have any conflict of interest.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE



Health Consciousness and Eating Habits among Non-medical Students in Ghana: A Cross-sectional Study

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Abstract

Health consciousness is a determinant of healthy lifestyle. A healthy lifestyle in effect is a necessary condition for academic success. The study was conducted to examine the relationships that existed between health consciousness and eating habits. A sample of one hundred and fifty (150) students from the University of Ghana comprising of all four levels in the undergraduate programme were selected through a convenience sampling technique for the study. Data was collected through self-administered questionnaires which included questions that captured demography, health consciousness and eating habits of the respondents. The age range of the respondents was between 17 and 25 years. Results revealed a significant positive relationship between health consciousness and eating habits ($p < 0.05$). Findings and limitations as well as conclusions are discussed.

Keywords: Health Consciousness; Eating Habits; Non-Medical Students; Cross-sectional Study; Ghana.

Introduction

Attitudes towards individuals and circumstances in general refer to the relatively stable analysis of objects, individuals and events that occur in the environment. Attitudes towards eating habits especially the consumption of fast foods is due to a lot of factors such as lack of time and stress which most young adults do through a lot at this stage of their lives (Nelson, Story, Larson, Neumark – Sztainer & Lytle, 2008). Some of these factors may be conscious or unconsciously stored in the mind of the individuals. In view of this, individuals may develop attitudes towards eating that they are not aware of. Eating habits are the various patterns of behaviour exhibited by individuals towards foods, eating and lifestyle in general. An attitude towards circumstances depends on the individuals' knowledge. The importance of any knowledge affects their behaviour as well as their behaviour change including their eating habits (MacDowell, Bonnell & Davies,

2006). In addition to this, individuals make change easily when they realize that the benefits of the change are more than that of the costs involved (Nutbeam & Harris, 2004).

A research conducted by Dutta-Bergman (2005) investigated health orientation using four subscales which included health consciousness, he found out that patients' orientation toward their health impacted the extent to which they actively participated in their physician-patient relationships such that patients who were actively oriented toward health, sought out health information, held strong health beliefs, and participated in a variety of healthy activities. These findings suggest that a person's health orientation of consciousness may determine whether he/she would engage in behaviours that may promote health such as healthy eating behaviour.

Though our cognitive processes influence our eating habits, our environment and upbringing – mood, kind of work / job do influence our eating habits and other behaviours as a whole. One of the best predictor of a human beings food preference, habits and attitudes would be information about the ethnic group of that individual rather than a biological measure. This implies that the longer a person lives in a society, the person easily adapts to the norms and values of the society even if it is the individuals' place of birth or not. Moreover, individuals are affected by what they see especially children. A study conducted by Odgen (2003), suggested a general association between a parent and a child's attitudes to food. They reported a consistent correlation between parents and children in terms of their snack food intake, eating motivations and body dissatisfaction. In addition to that, they conducted a study into the relationship between a parent and a child's eating behaviour and they reported a clear relationship between a mother's food nutrient intake and that of her pre-school children and also, suggested that parents could be targeted to help combat negative eating habits. Most of the researches carried out on eating habits were conducted in Europe especially the USA and the UK and few in Australia. Fewer researches have been conducted in Asia and in Africa.

The outcome of these researches cannot be fully generalized to individuals in Ghana because of the cultural differences that exist between these settings. With less research in Ghana and the current rise in obesity and other unhealthy eating habits among young adults there is a need for a study in these areas to find the cause. This study is aimed at examining the relationship between health consciousness and eating habits.

Method

Population and design

The study was carried out on the Legon campus of the University of Ghana using a cross – sectional design. A single population of 150 made of students in various levels in the undergraduate level. The students from level 100 to 400 were targeted population because of the ease in access. Students were used also because they have attained certain level of education – primary, Junior High School (JHS) and Senior High School (SHS) and thus have a wider level of knowledge. With this technique – convenience sampling technique, the levels of the variable were represented as well as the sub – group of the sample hence it reduced sampling error. Objectives and benefits of the study were explained to respondents orally and in a written form attached to the questionnaire and they were assured that information obtained was kept confidentially.

An approval from the department was sought before the research was carried out in that a copy of the questionnaire was submitted and approved before it was administered to the participants. Participants were asked to participate in the study voluntarily considering their interests and time schedules.

Measures

The first part captured the demography of the participants such as age, level and religion. The second part was the health consciousness scale which was developed by Gould (1990). The 9–item Health Consciousness Scale was used to capture the participants' dispositional attitude about their health on a 4–point Likert scale from 1 to 4, where 1= describes you very little to 4 = describes you very well. The Cronbach alpha of the scale reported by the authors was 0.72. In the present study the Cronbach alpha recorded was .88.

The third section of the question comprised of the Eating Attitude Test [EAT-16] (Berland, Thompson & Linton, 1986). There are various versions of the EAT. Though EAT-26 is the most commonly used version, EAT- 16 was used instead of EAT- 26 because of the similarities of items

on the EAT – 26. Also some validation studies report a better fit for the 4-factor 16 item version of the EAT compared to the 26 item version (Belon, et al., 2011; Ocker, Lam, Jensen & Zhang, 2007). The factors that make up the EAT- 16 include dieting, food pre-occupation, bulimia and oral control of the EAT – 26. The internal consistency recorded for the EAT-16 in this study was .79. The EAT – 16 has a 6–point interval response key in which case responses ranged from “Never” (1 mark) to “Always” (6 marks). The scale measured the attitudes of participants as well as concerns and behaviours related to food, weight and body shape towards eating and such items included: “I am aware of the calorie content of foods”, “I avoid foods with high carbohydrate content” and “I am terrified about being overweight”.

Results

Out of the 150 respondents, majority were females with males being the minority. This is as a result of the high interest of females to participate in the study. Thus, the findings ought to be interpreted within this scope. Summary of the demographic data are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of demographic characteristics of sample

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Sex:		
Male	58	38.7
Female	92	61.3
Age:		
17 – 19	31	20.7
20 – 23	114	76.0
Others	4	2.7
Level of study		
100	43	28.7
200	57	38.0
300	16	10.7
400	32	21.3
Religion		
Christianity	145	96.7
Islam	4	2.7
Others	1	0.7

The main hypothesis in this study was to identify whether an increase in health consciousness will lead to healthy eating habits. A Pearson r was used to test the hypothesis with outcome summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of means, standard deviations and correlations between health consciousness and eating habits

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	r	$p - value$
Health consciousness	145	24.04	6.923	143	0.369	$p < 0.05$
Eating habits	141	39.58	11.396	139		

In this hypothesis, it was expected that there should be a link between health consciousness and eating habits. From the summary table, there is a significant relationship between the health consciousness of the students and their eating habits. The higher the health consciousness for the students ($N=145$, $M=24.04$ and $SD = 6.923$), the better the eating habits of the students [$r= 0.369$, $p < 0.05$].

Discussion

The objective was to explore the relationship that existed between health consciousness and eating habits specifically if higher levels of health consciousness will reflect in higher levels of eating habits and that was supported. This means that if an individual is aware of health benefits, diseases and how to maintain good health, he or she is influenced by this information and it reflects in choice of food as well as time in eating. The study revealed that there is a relationship between health consciousness and eating habits but not a causal effect. In the study, females exhibited high levels of health consciousness than the males. Only few of the males responded for an awareness in their health status while the majority cared less about their health. The increase in health consciousness for females can be attributed to social and psychological factors that influence the way females think about their body shape and health in general. The results indicate that a large number of female respondents were concerned about their health, and interested in acquiring information on health topic.

A measure of positive outcome expectancies, knowledge, self – efficacy, parental consumption (social norms) were important in the success of health consciousness (Reynolds, Yarock, Franklin, & Maloy, 2002). The knowledge about the benefits of healthy living as university students influences the pattern of eating. This adds weight to the argument that positive outcome expectancies are likely to play a significant role in influencing the choices people make about the foods that they consume.

A study conducted by Kempen, Muller, Symington and Van Eeden (2012) on reading of food labels which has an effect on health consciousness and eating habits showed that reading of food labels among respondents increased an awareness in health due to the nutritional information provided as a result the respondents were more health conscious and that reflected in their eating habits. Health conscious eating can give the individual the energy needed to get through the day, while keeping you healthy and strong. Eating for health means more than just aiming to lose weight; the individual may not even need to lose weight at all. A healthy diet is well-balanced and nutritious and is custom-tailored to an individual's lifestyle. Eating habits are health conscious when one makes the time for each of the meals needed for the day. While it's true that overeating is bad for your health, so is not eating enough. If one regularly skips meals, the individual loses the adequate amount of nutrition needed. In fact, skipping of meals to lose weight is an unhealthy choice and may have the opposite effect: because your body thinks it won't be getting enough food throughout the day, it'll actually put more food into storage by converting it to fat if you don't eat three light meals and a few light snacks throughout the day. Nevertheless, as stated by Bandura (2001, p.1), "The capacity to exercise control over the nature and quality of one's life is the essence of humanness". Based on this theory, it can be argued that, individuals feel good if they are able to control their eating habits and health in general, thus the need for health consciousness. In general, respondents were sure whether they knew more than other consumers about nutrition information on food labels, or whether they were able to comprehend nutrition information on food labels. For most male respondents, they were uncertain if they read nutritional information on food packs, however, they were sure not to consume foods that will lead them to develop some diseases especially pot belly. This uncertainty is common, as research has pointed out that consumers still find on-pack nutrition information to be confusing, and not always easy to understand (Kempen, Muller, Symington, & Van Eeden, 2012). However, the expectation that consumers learn more about nutrition when they read nutrition information on food labels, and subsequently increase their nutrition knowledge, still remains and directs that their eating patterns.

Limitation

The sample used was relatively small with unequal gender groupings due to poor interest of students', especially the males. Nonetheless, this study has implications for future studies in the area of psychology, food and nutritional habits.

Recommendations

Based on the outcome of the study, we recommend that a qualitative technique and interviews should be used to have a deeper understanding and analysis of reported behaviour and actual outcomes. Also, we also recommend the development of some instruments among the Ghanaian populace for clinical application.

Conclusion

The fact that a relationship exists between health consciousness and eating habits and that it could be validated in this study statistically, confirms that food labels on food packs and advertisements through the use of classical conditioning are a useful source of information through which a consumer's food choices can be shaped and that will promote healthy lifestyles. New food-labelling legislation needs to promulgate a healthy lifestyle through the use of food labels, to encourage more students and consumers as a whole to engage with the label information.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that they do not have any conflict of interest.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE



Reward Systems and Performance of Sales: A Descriptive Study among the Ghanaian Insurance Industry

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Abstract

Ghanaian managers over recent years have taken a steady pattern of organizational policies, aimed specifically at enhancing employees' development and management. Significant among these measures are recognition and rewards management. The system of rewards at selected Ghanaian Insurance Companies within it Southern Sector operations affected the performance of employees in the sales and marketing of products. Descriptive results indicate that, reward strategies are significant in providing an incentive to employees to work. It is recommended that total rewards should be extended to cover job security and other benefits in the form of recognition.

Keywords: Reward Systems; Sales Performance; Insurance Industry; Marketing; Ghana.

Introduction

This is a strategic tool used by managers to implement policies aimed at enhancing positive effort from employees at the workplace. Although all organizations have their reward systems, there are differences with respect to its application. Consequently, while some managers see rewards as being only monetary compensation, others recognize it as something more than remuneration. According to Patchen (2003), devoid of rewards, a large number of potential employees would not make an effort to join organizations or if employed, may not be liable to come to work or carry out their duties in line with the spelt out organizational procedures or goals.

Rewards are good in every organisational setting. Every employee needs to be compensated for the work he does. A reward can be seen as what one achieves through hard work (Metzer, 2001) or an incentive that influences the repeat of a positive behaviour or serves as an incentive for a repeat of that behaviour because the outcome has been pleasing (Caroll, 2003). The attractiveness of a reward is in how much of it that is on offer and how much the individual values the type of reward that is being offered. In effect, the more an individual values the type of reward and the more of it that is offered, the greater the motivational potential (Black, & Lynch, 2003).

The types of rewards available to employees and the manner of their distribution can influence the satisfaction of employees and the effectiveness of an organization. According to Zagoria (2005), rewards are intrinsic if they relate to feelings of personal achievement, growth and development including excelling in a very challenging or physical activity or a feeling of competence, achievement, responsibility, significance, influence and personal growth, status symbol, security, verbal recognition, symbolic awards, plaques, trophies and all other forms of benefits employees receive apart from pay. These types of rewards are called non-financial rewards

(Zagoria, 2005). Rewards that are tied to work-related activities are generally extrinsic and they include monetary rewards such as salaries, fringe benefits, bonuses or stock options and may also be described as financial rewards (Zagoria, 2005).

To some degree, the nature of intangible rewards that an organization provides serves as an attraction to potential employees in deciding on where they will work if they had the choice (Knowles, & Borje, 2004). Rewards have been noted as strengthening employee's loyalty, raising motivation, increasing job satisfaction (Black & Lynch, 2003) and foster a team-spirit among employees (Schein, 2004). Employees have different motivations why they work. While money represents an important motivator, the existing reward system that prevails in an organization may be the reason why some others are comfortable doing their jobs. Non-financial compensation or reward systems in most organizations include the provision of health, housing, canteen facilities, recreation and social programs, plaques, certificates of recognition, awards, security and job organization.

Among some Insurance Companies in Ghana, it appears as if most of these services and benefits do not exist and for the ones that exist, the administration seems not to be fair to all employees. The result of this appears to be a factor for the high labour turnover especially among the Sales and Marketing personnel at the Company with the associated repercussions such as the loss of key skills, knowledge and experience, disruption of operations and the negative effect on employee morale. The study was therefore undertaken to examine the effect of rewards on performance among the Sales and Marketing staff of Insurance Companies in Southern Sector.

Method

Participants

A Purposive sample of employees at Insurance Companies in the Southern Sector of Ghana was selected. This comprised of eighty-five (85) Sales and Marketing employees, four (4) top-level management members and sixty-six (66) middle-level management members.

Measures

The instruments used for data collection were questionnaires and a structured interview guide. The questionnaires had five (5) sections; A, B, C, D and E. Section A asked for responses on the biographical data of the respondents. Section B elicited responses on the reward strategies employed by respective Insurance Company. Section C assessed the importance of a reward system for the employees. Also, Section D examined the relationship between employee performance and reward strategies. Finally, Section E requested for responses relating to the challenges faced by the Company in the administration of reward strategies. The questions were designed based on a Likert-type scale with the following options – very often, often, sometimes, seldom, not at all.

A structured interview guide, based on research questions were developed to provide some meanings on the issues relating to sales force orientation, training, motivation and field sales organization, was also used for the Management members covered in the study.

Results

Reward Strategies of the Insurance Companies

As evident in Figure 1, rewards play a key role in providing an incentive to the employees' efforts to work harder. This is indicated by the 80.3% and 19.7% responses that were obtained for 'very often' and 'often' respectively.

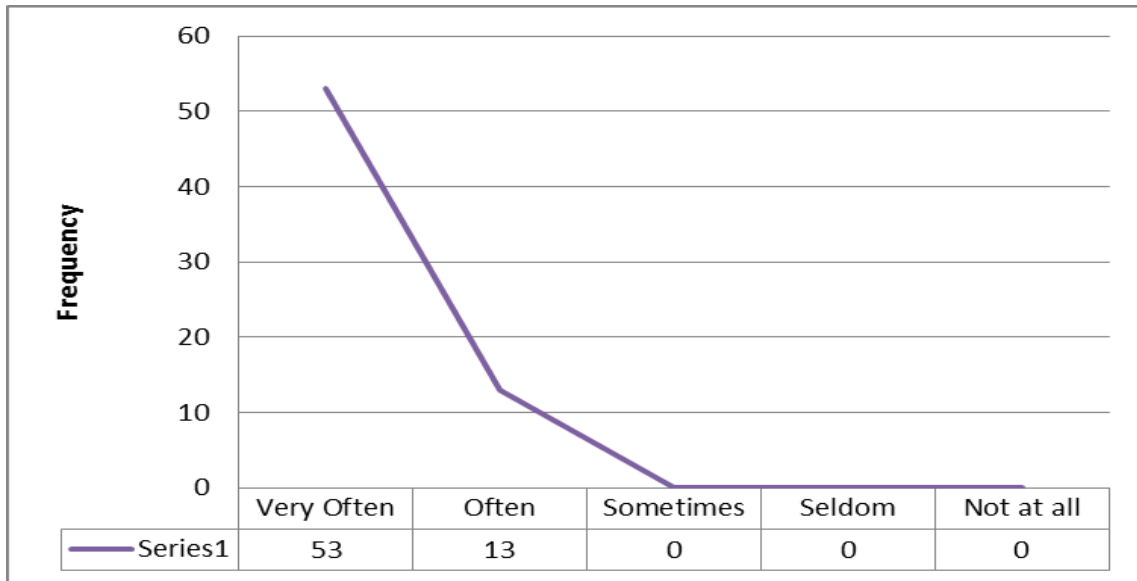


Figure 1: Views on the key roles of rewards

Responses on what a good reward system does

An examination of the data from the respondents who selected ‘very often’ and ‘often’ summed up to 100.0%. This suggests that a good reward system pays the right people the right amounts for doing the right things. All the four (4) management employees interviewed expressed opinions that fell in line with the same position. An example of an opinion is: *“If you offer a good reward system, the right people will be motivated for doing the right things”* (Manager 1).

The employees were also asked to respond to how often the company implements an equitable reward system that is congruent with its strategic objectives. From the analysis, 13.7% and 12.1% of responses totalling 25.8% were in favour of ‘very often’ and ‘often’ respectively. However, a large proportion of the respondents (74.2%) indicated that the company only sometimes implements an equitable reward system that is congruent with its strategic objectives.

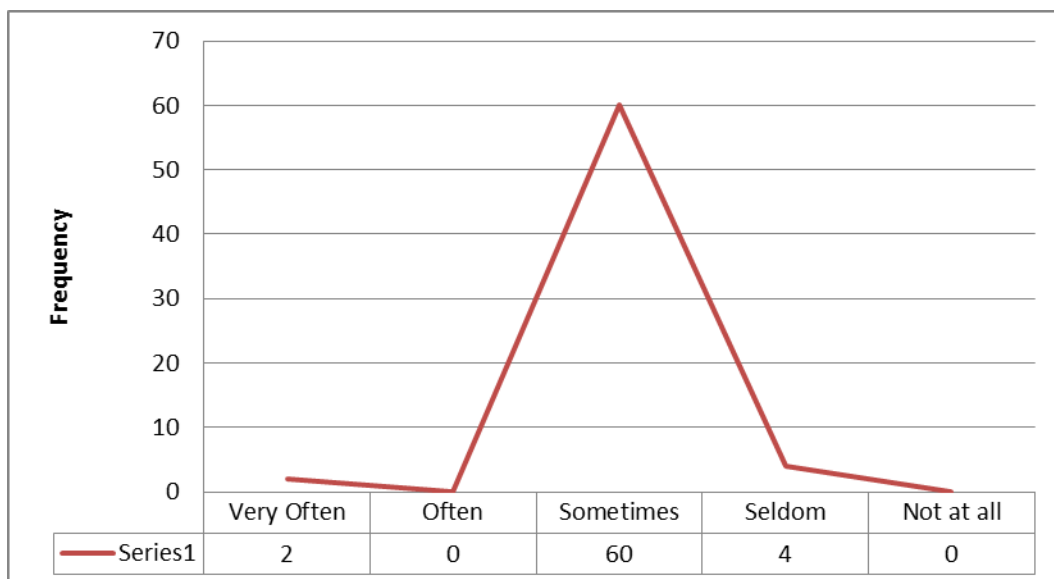


Figure 2: Views on the use of reward to promote skills and develop knowledge

The respondents expressed varied views; 3.0%; 90.9%; and 6.1% stated ‘very often’, ‘sometimes’ and ‘seldom’ respectively. The 90.9% of the responses indicate that the company sometimes relies on a system of reward to promote skills and development.

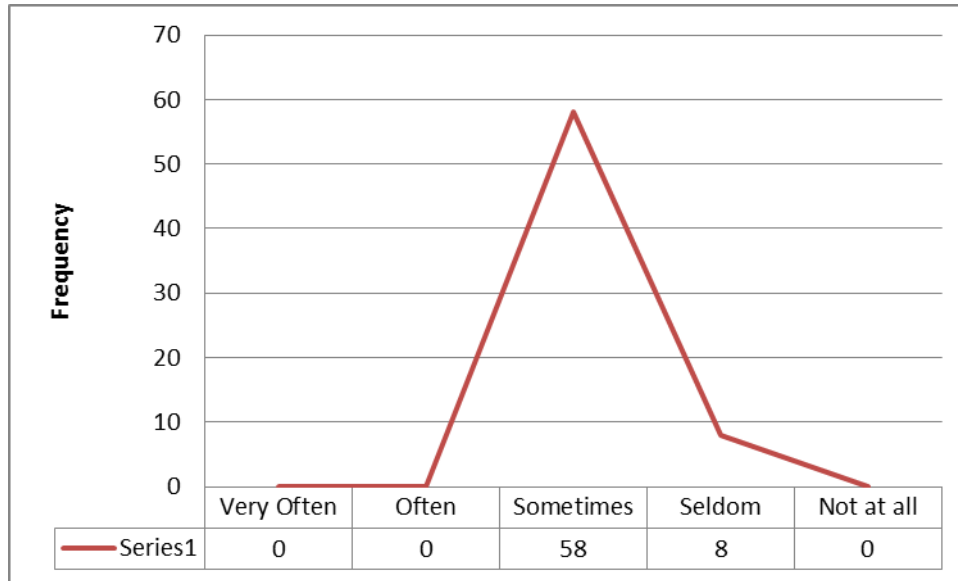


Figure 3: Views on the use of reward to promote corporate culture

From Figure 3, a large number of respondents (87.9%) stated that it is only sometimes that a reward system is used to contribute to the company’s corporate culture.

Furthermore, the study addressed the frequency that companies reward system defines the guiding principles and an implementation plan for administering rewards.

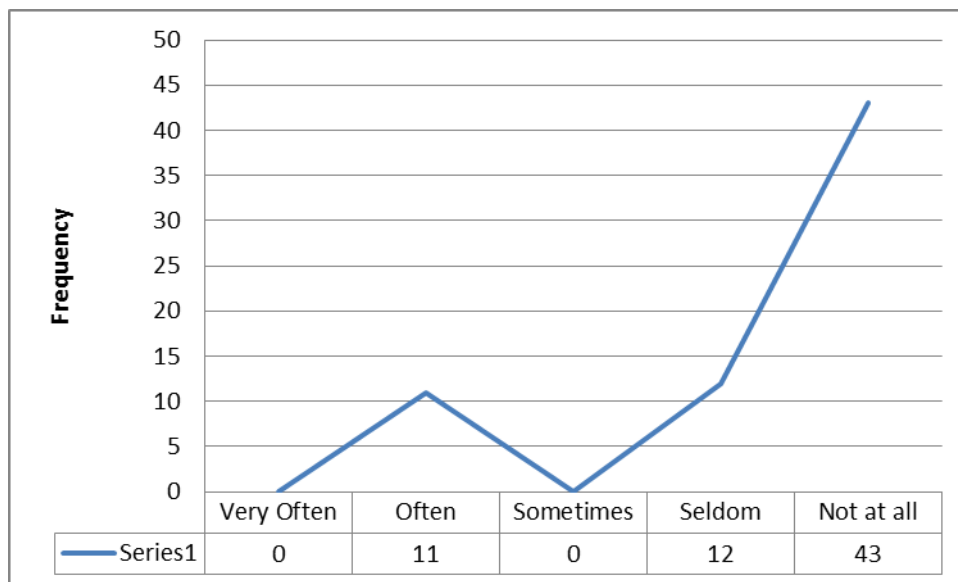


Table 1: Views on the use of reward as a guiding principle

A company’s reward system defines the guiding principles and implementation plan but the responses show that 65.1% of the respondents disagreed with this view.

Import of a Reward System to Sales and Marketing Staff

The study also examined the import of a reward system to sales and marketing staff. The study therefore sought to determine whether employees place a great emphasis on intangible rewards when deciding on where to work.

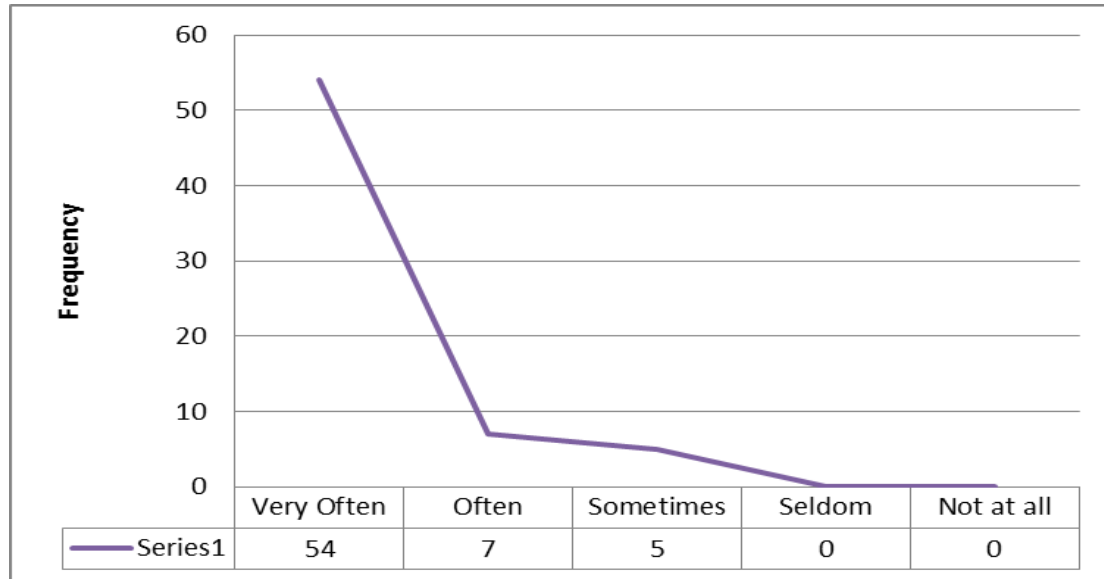


Figure 4: Views on whether rewards influence employees’ choice organizations

As evident in Figure 4, 81.8% and 10.6% of the respondents indicated ‘very often’ and ‘often’ respectively. These show that they place great emphasis on intangible rewards on deciding on where to work. All the four (4) management employees interviewed shared a similar opinion. An example of an opinion is: “the attraction of employees to most organizations is based not only on their reputation and image in the eyes of the public but on the security, benefits and rewards that they offer to their staff” (Manager 3).

On the question of how often rewards serve as a basis for employees’ commitment to give off their best, 13.6% respondents indicated that the types, quality and frequency of rewards they receive very often influence them positively in the effort they put in at the work place. Nonetheless, 86.4% disagreed as they stated that it only does this sometimes.

With respect to whether a total reward system provides an opportunity for personal growth, 66.7% of respondents from the company were of the view that they form an important opportunity that contributes very often to personal growth. The other respondents constituting 33.7% also agreed that they often provide such an opportunity.

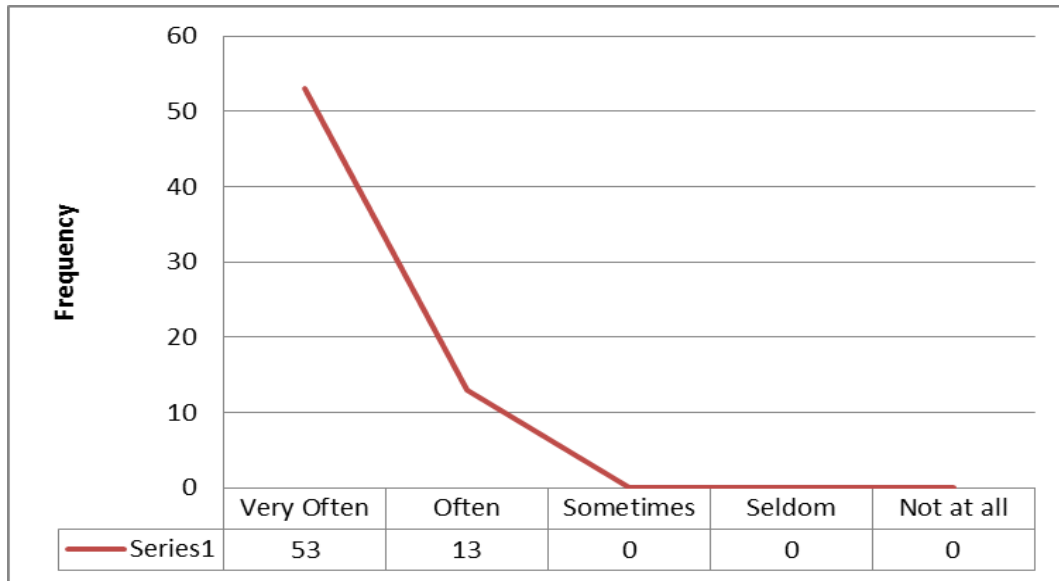


Figure 5: Views on rewards on recruitment, retention and performance levels

In addition, Figure 5 shows 80.3% and 19.7% of the respondents agreed that ‘very often’ and ‘often’ respectively rewards enhance recruitment, retention and performance levels. None of the respondents selected any of the other response and the views of those interviewed supported the ones the employees expressed.

Relationship between Reward Strategies and Employees’ Performance

The study also discussed the relationship between reward strategies and the performance of employees.

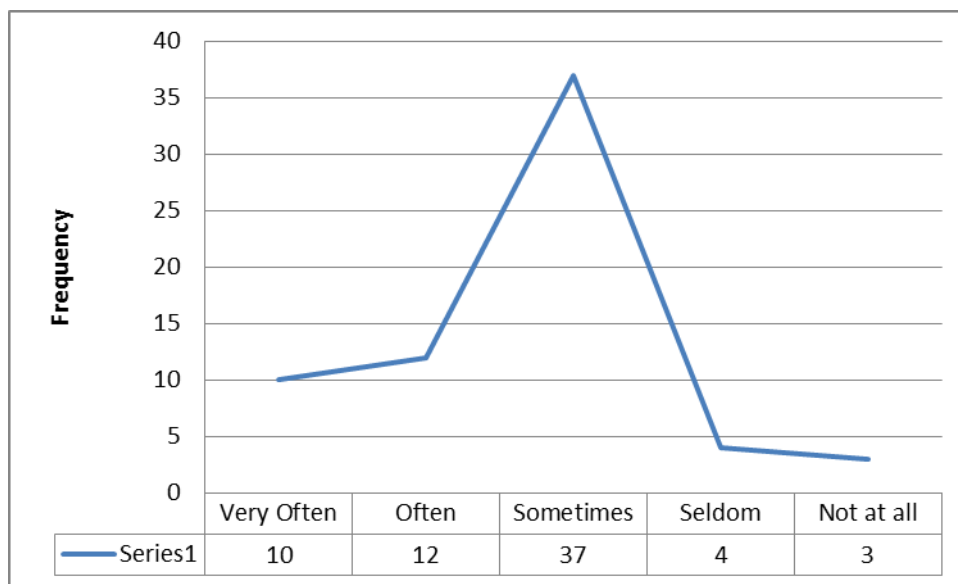


Figure 6: Views on knowledge of rewards and the achievement of objectives

According to 15.1% of the respondents, their organisations very often achieve its objectives because of employees’ knowledge of the existence of rewards. Another 18.2% of the respondents agreed that this is often the situation while 56.1% of them indicated that their companies only sometimes achieve objectives because of employees’ knowledge. Further responses of 6.1% and 4.5% for ‘seldom’ and ‘not at all’ respectively were also obtained for the same assertion.

Moreover, the interview outcomes indicate that two (2) of the management employees believe that employees' knowledge of existing rewards helps the company to achieve its objectives but the other two (2) of them disagreed by stating that it seldom does. They cited reasons why knowledge of results and its existence may not make the company achieve its objectives. An example is: "while some employees have a natural desire to work towards achieving set targets, others delight in the pride of having an association with the company" (Manager 4).

Challenges Faced by the Company in the Administration of a Reward System

From the study, 59.1% of the respondents stated that their companies very often face the challenge of providing certain rewards. Similarly, 40.9% respondents indicated that 'often' such challenges are faced.

Three (3) out of the four (4) management employees agreed that the company faces problems in providing certain rewards in that it experiences limited resources at times. For example: "There is non-involvement of the employees in decision-making involving rewards management" (Manager 3).

With the exception of the 30.3% of the respondents who indicated that it is not all the time that it is difficult to measure the value of one reward against the other, all the remaining respondents said that there is a difficulty in doing so because there is no consistency in the kinds of rewards that are provided from one time period to the other to qualified employees.

In addition, 18.2% of the respondents stated that their institutions often face the challenge of designing a reward structure that ensures that it is able to recruit and retain quality employees. Again, 71.2% of the respondents stated that a reward structure sometimes helps to recruit and maintain quality employees while 10.6% of them indicated this as a seldom.

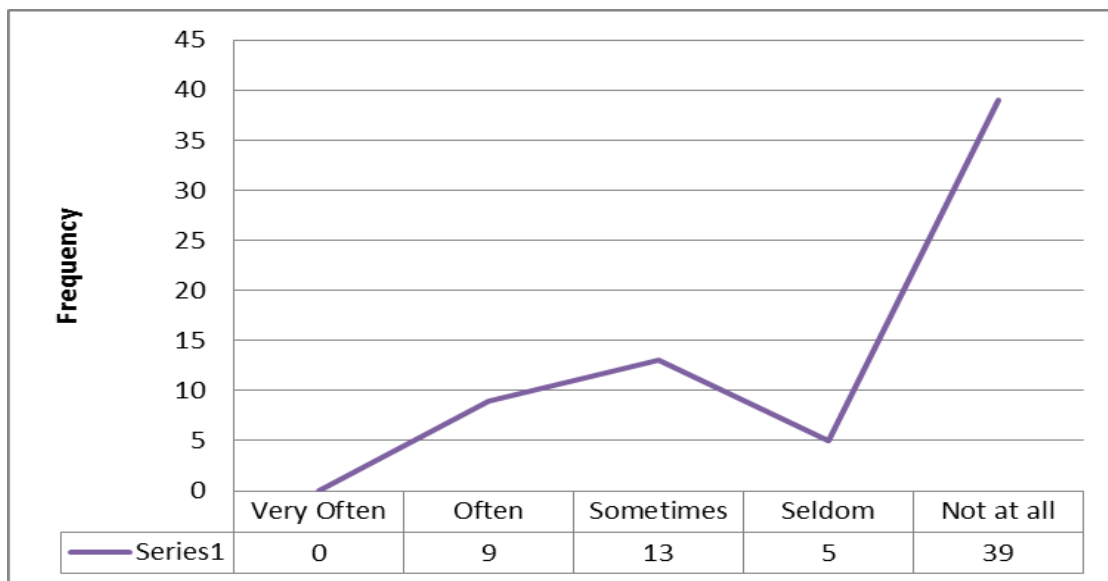


Figure 7: Views on reward policy on competition and the labour market

The responses obtained and presented in Figure 7 showed that majority (59.1%) expressed the view that the company does not develop a reward policy that is competitive with the external labour market.

Discussion

Rewards play a key role in providing an incentive to employees to work hard. The fact that employees recognize that rewards play such an important role is in consonance with the view of Metzger (2001) who in writing on the concept of a reward, asserts in the literature that a reward is an incentive that influences the repeat of a positive behaviour or serves as an incentive for a repeat of that behaviour because the outcome has been pleasing. Baer (2006) intimates the need for

Managers to know their employees more closely. In addition, the best way to know how to meet employees' needs is by asking them how they want to be rewarded or recognized.

With respect to what constitutes total rewards at the company, it was noted that total rewards are most of the time represented by benefits, development and career opportunities. Another important finding is that the company ties its reward package to the company's strategy and sales force strategy. This is supported by the respondents' response of 97.0% for 'very often'.

It was also found out that the company does not use its reward system to fully promote skills and knowledge development. The company also sometimes does not use its reward system to contribute to its corporate culture. The study also revealed that the company's reward system does not define the guiding principles and its implementation plan. Though total rewards should cover benefits, development and career opportunities, Schein (2005) emphasizes that total rewards must also aim at satisfying the basic human needs of survival and security and advises that organizations have to choose relevant rewards over which they have what it takes to provide and manipulate. This position is in tandem with the view of the 31.8% responses received in support of the fact that sometimes a total reward system may range from a simple "thank you" to recognition in the form of the presentation of plaques, certificates and so on.

Again, the study examined the import of a reward system to the Sales and Marketing staff. At the Insurance Companies, most of the employees considered intangible rewards in accepting to work there. The study revealed that reward only sometimes serves as a basis of employee commitment to give off their best. This is evidenced by the 86.4% of the responses in support of this. At the company, a total reward system provides an opportunity for personal growth. The responses of 66.7% and 33.3% for "very often" and "often" lend credence to this.

It is therefore not out of place if proper rewards are given to motivate an organization's sales force because in return, these organizations require them to put up behaviour that will lead to the achievement of corporate objectives by willingly following the defined corporate strategy (Knowles, & Borje, 2004).

The study also brought to the fore that the company uses rewards to enhance recruitment, retention and performance levels. It was also found out that a total reward system has a strong potential to enhance the reputation of the company as an employer of choice. The respondents' responses of 93.9% for "very often" explain why employees see the company as an employer of choice.

Another important revelation from the study is that the successful implementation of a reward strategy may not necessarily lead to enhanced performance on the job as several other factors influence an individual's performance. With respect to the recognition of the effort of employees, the study revealed that most of the employees whose efforts are recognized are encouraged to work harder.

The study also brought to the fore that most companies in Ghana do not involve employees in the determination of appropriate rewards best suited for their needs. The responses of 84.8% for "very often" lend credence to this. According to Stessin (2007), an organization's way of doing things must be both meaningful and beneficial to management, employees and the community in which it exists. By this way, a positive culture is developed. It is therefore necessary for an organization to develop a unique means of rewarding its employees that the employees find pleasing.

With respect to the challenges faced by the Insurance Companies in the administration of a reward system, results indicated that there is no consistency in the provision of similar rewards for qualified employees from one time period to the other at the company. For this reason, it is often difficult to measure the value of one reward against the other. Proactive organizations expect to achieve objectives through employees who are very smart, competent, exhibit a high level of commitment and loyalty at all times. In exchange for these, the employees require to be appropriately rewarded (Knowles, & Borje, 2004). A satisfactory item of reward must be adequate and appropriate to the employee and must not be too expensive for the organization to obtain for its employees. To settle on rewards that may be described as satisfactory therefore requires a joint decision between employees and management.

Another important revelation is that some of these companies sometimes face the challenge of designing a good reward structure that ensures that it is able to recruit and retain quality employees as expressed by the over 71.2% of the responses. It was found out from the study that

companies position variable earnings against basic pay to encourage positive employee behaviour. The study also indicated that companies do not regularly develop a reward policy that is competitive with the external labour market.

Finally, the results indicated that, pay progression arrangements are sometimes aligned with the company's culture or succession planning. Thus, the wrong use of rewards often leads to the absence of a meaningful achievement of objectives and loss of employees. From the literature, Zagoria (2005) also states that the types of rewards available and the manner of their distribution can influence the satisfaction of employees, their personal commitment and the overall effectiveness of the organization but Martocchio (1998) and Morse and Jay (2009) disagree with this assertion. Their opinions complement that of the large number of respondents (86.4%) who stated that the provision of rewards does not always commit employees to hard work. They expressed the view that some employees may take delight as being a part of a team that at all times succeed in achieving set targets and organizational objectives and they derive their joy by being a part of a successful team at the workplace and not through the receipt of rewards.

Limitation

The study was limited to the sales and marketing operations of the Insurance Companies within the Southern Zone covering Eastern, Volta and Greater Accra Regions. These outlets were selected because they had enough Sales and Marketing Executives needed to enable the researcher to do an in-depth study. Thus, findings of the study should be interpreted with respect to this.

Conclusion

In assessing the reward strategies employed by the company, it can be concluded that such strategies play a key role in providing an incentive to employees to work by giving the right people the right amounts for doing the right things and by tying the sales force reward strategy into the corporate strategy. However, the reward strategies are not sometimes equitable and usually do not cover things that would have been more relevant to employees and thus does not contribute to the company's corporate culture.

With respect to the import of a reward system to the sales and marketing staff of the company, it can be concluded that a good reward system serves as a basis for employee commitment to give off their best to the company and that such a system often has a strong potential to enhance the reputation of the company as an employer of choice.

In comparing the relationship between reward strategies and employees' performance, it can be concluded that where the effort of an employee is recognized, he is encouraged to work harder and that when there is a successful implementation of a reward strategy at the company, it leads to enhanced performance.

On the issue of the challenges faced by Insurance Companies in the administration of a reward system, it can be concluded that the company faces varied challenges such as the inability to provide certain desirable rewards to employees, the problem of not being able to measure the value of one reward against the other from one period to the other and the inability of designing a reward system that would make the company keep all of its quality employees at all times.

Recommendations

It is recommended to the management of Insurance Companies should have trained human resource outfit. In this way, it will have the required expertise to devise and implement an equitable reward system that is congruent with its strategic objectives.

Total rewards should be extended to cover job security and other benefits in the form of recognition such as certificates, plaques and valuable others like housing and rent loans that have the potential to be cherished by employees.

In addition to the existing benefits, development and career opportunities should contribute to the companies' corporate culture. This reward system should incorporate the principles necessary to guide its implementation. Such principles should be based on equity and fairness and cover all the necessary elements that would ensure employees' commitment to give of their best and to encourage them to display team spirit.

Acknowledgement

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RESEARCH ARTICLE



**“Pivot” Toward Asia:
The Strategic Direction of Russia’s Foreign Policy Concept
in a Changing Balance of Powers**

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Abstract

The article examines some reasons of the “Russia’s pivot” toward Asia at the turn of the XX-XXI centuries. The Asian policy of the Russia was starting to change at the second half of the 1990s. Russia conducted its policy at the East Asia in a view of the changed balance of national interests, regardless of the ideological considerations and attached a special importance to the economic cooperation. Developing the external political concept and determining the priority areas for development, Russia has had to reckon with the objective processes, occurring in the world. Russia, as the “Eurasian” power, building relations with the Asia-Pacific countries, was to have a vital task - to raise the political and economic cooperation with the Asia-Pacific region to the level, achieved by Russia in Europe. Gradually, the East Asia has become the priority strategic direction of the Russia positioning in the world. For a long time it was thought that using its geostrategic position, Russia could be an important factor in the global political and economic system, linking Europe and Asia-Pacific markets. Russia Federation supported the East Asia countries in ensuring regional security and stability.

Analysis of the Asia-Pacific regional political situation shows that there are significant changes here and these changes are largely connected with the significant changes in the global balance of powers. In the course of the Ukrainian events (spring 2014) and entering the West economic sanctions against Russia in connection with the accession of the Crimea, Russian “pivot” toward Asia, in particular the East Asia, looks entirely justified and reasonable.

Keywords: Foreign policy concept; balance of powers; Russia Federation; East Asia.

Introduction

At the present stage, Russia clearly demonstrates the strategic independence of its foreign policy. Values diversities, incompatibility of the political cultures and fundamentally different approaches to assessment of the world events by Russia and the West, largely, have identified this independence. It is vital for Russia to definite the external economic and politic priorities in connection with the Ukrainian crisis (2014) and changing the world balance of powers.

At the turn of the centuries (XX-XXI), in conditions of the multipolar world existing, Russia was supposed to pursue an active policy at both the European and Asian destinations [See: 1]. In practice, the Asian direction of the Russian foreign policy significantly lagged behind the needs and strategic interests of the Russia [2. P. 182]. In many ways, this was due to the passivity of the Russian presence in the region at the beginning of the 1990s because of large-scale size reduction

of the Russian armed forces at the Far East. This greatly reduced the ability of Russia to act as a deterrent force against the United States, defending its leadership, and China. At the same time, there were not any East Asia states fears about Russia's military or force ambitions in the region and a threat to regional peace and stability with its hand. Such approach to Russia meant a profound transformation of the East Asia states attitude [See: 3].

In the course of the displacing the world capacity development to the East, particularly to the Asia-Pacific region, it was necessary to ensure own Asian external policy of Russia [See: 4]. In November 2011 the administration of Barack Obama “announced a rebalancing of its strategic focus away from the wars of the Middle East to the Asia-Pacific” [5]. Russia should do the same. Modern pivot towards Asia is an opportunity of turning Russia into a real force factor with which the world must be considered.

Materials and Methods

Materials

The major sources for this article are the Foreign policy concepts of the Russian Federation (2000, 2013) and Asia-Pacific regional summit declarations.

Expert opinions, concerning these issues, were collected on open resources, namely on special websites and journal publications.

Methods

The author of the article uses comparative-historical and problem-chronological methods.

Discussion

The Asian policy of the Russia was starting to change at the second half of the 1990s. Russia conducted its policy at the Asia-Pacific region in a view of the changed balance of national interests, regardless of ideological considerations and attached special importance to the economic cooperation. Developing the external political concept and determining the priority areas for development, Russia has had to reckon with the objective processes, occurring in the world.

The second half of the twentieth century was a new step in the increasingly growing interconnectedness, politically and economically. The world became global. Nevertheless, the end of the twentieth century marked by an increasing competition between the three major economic centers- the United States, Japan and the European Union, especially after the European Economic Community adopted the decision on the establishment of the single market in 1992. This had become a serious challenge to the United States and Japan. The United States had begun to strengthen the regional free trade zone- the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), including the United States, Canada and Mexico. At the same time, the United States took an active role in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and considerably stepped up economic contacts with the Latin American countries. Japan, in its effort to reduce the United States and the EU pressure had developed and launched various projects of the economic integration with the Asia-Pacific countries such as the "Asia-Pacific Economic arc", which would include Japan, Russia, China and the South Korea. There were such projects for the South-East Asian states- the "Pan Asian formula of the coexistence" or currency unity - “Jena’s block”, as a part of the worldwide trend of the currency "regionalism" at the beginning of 1990s. Japan was to become the core of these associations.

The decision of the GATT Uruguay Round and especially the activities of the World Trade Organization (WTO) had significantly raised the level of the international economic relations, established the modern rules of the parties engagement in the new environment. Building links at the sub-regional, regional and global levels, all States should be guided by the principle of open, non-discriminatory policy, based on the rules of the WTO system. The Governments had taken into account the mutual influence of global and regional agreements, both within the framework of the established rights and the obligations with the WTO partners and partners on the regional groups. The Article XXIV of the GATT contained the principle that the regional and sub-regional integration groups and participating countries should be guided in case of the customs unions and free trade areas formations - the European Union, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Association of the South-East Asia Nations (ASEAN) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Thus, in fact, was the principle of the "open regionalism”.

However, there were not only benefits, but also the negative impact of the global processes, including economic and financial crises. Main "challenges" of the globalization, rarely considered with national specificity of the countries and peoples were:

- various performances of the "alter-globalists" and "anti-globalists";
- emergence of theocratic regimes (such as in Iran), as political governance forms of traditional, conservative societies, trying to resist the massive effects on them of the globalized world;
- regional integration, including the Asia-Pacific regional integration process.

During the last decade of the twentieth century, the integration processes were very important for the Asia-Pacific region. Asia-Pacific regional integration was connected with a process of total globalization and did not contradict the objective development. The Asia-Pacific integration was the phenomenon, able to defend something that sets it apart from the globalization - the desire to collectively develop a common policy and a common political solution, acceptable to all, taking into account the national interests of the parties involved.

It must be borne in mind that Asia was becoming a centre of the world economic and industrial growth. The creation of new technologies occurred, mainly, in the East Asia. At the beginning of 1990s, the growth of Asian NICs GDP rates (South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Hong Kong) was on average 7.7%, and the economy growth rate of the Association of South-East Asian Nations -Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand - 6.6%. China's economic growth in these years was 7% [6. P. 136].

The economic growth of these countries, as the region in whole, continued to remain relatively high. In many ways, this was due to the fact that Russia was, primarily, an exporter of raw materials. However, rising demand for raw materials occurred where there was a growth of the industrial mass production. That was, in the East Asia. The growing interest of Asian and European countries to the natural resource potential of Russia, especially to the Russian east regions energy resources, had grown steadily since the 1990s. It has become increasingly clear that in spite of the fact that the European Union for a long time would be the largest economic partner of Russia, its role would gradually decline. In some period, Germany has been the largest trading partner of Russia, but than China was far ahead [7].

In general, the analysis of the development at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st centuries showed, that Russia had failed to adequately respond to incentives, outgoing from the Asia-Pacific Region. The weakening of Federal Government attention to the Asian vector of economic and political interactions has contributed to the depression of the eastern regions of Russia and the outflow of the population in European part.

Russia, as the "Eurasian" power, building relations with the Asia-Pacific region countries, was to have a vital task - to raise the political and economic cooperation with the Asia-Pacific region to the level, achieved by Russia in Europe. If at the beginning of 1990s Russian national interests more aligned with the interests of the United States and Europe, by the end of the 1990s the unity of interests with India, China and South-East Asia countries and the importance of economic and political relations with Asia became more evident [8. P. 69]. Such changing of the power structure goals was connected with the changing of Presidents, Prime Ministers, Ministers and other factors.

For a long time it was thought that using its geostrategic position, Russia could be an important factor in the global economic and political system, linking Europe and Asia-Pacific markets. Russia was to be a "bridge" between European and Asian countries, not joining together with either the first or the second. Nevertheless, the practice showed that the idea of a "bridge" between East and West proved to be futile. Russia remained "an independent unit"[9. P. 9].

Gradually, the Asia-Pacific region has become the priority strategic direction of Russia's promotion on the world market. By using the powerful potential of the East Asia states, the cooperation with the region countries could give the impetus to the development of the Siberia and the Far East productive forces, allowing the implementation of the investment projects, vital for these regions. The east regions of Russia Federation (Siberia and Far East) played a special role as to the integration possibilities into the regional economic system. It should be taken into account the continuing misbalance between a reach natural recourses and a small population. This misbalance was a vary important obstacle for the foundation of Siberian, especially East Siberian, and Far Eastern markets and own accumulations, which were necessary for modern economy

infrastructure and using of natural resources more perfectly for region's social and economy development. Some Siberian regions were the regions with high level of the social-economy development, but the Far Eastern region was the region with the least well-being conditions. Because of limit Russia federal budget the Siberian growth of industrial production based on own investments, but the external factor was the main development resource for the Far East and, so, the opportunity of integration into the Asia-Pacific region. It should be noted that the real economic cooperation between Russia and the countries of the Asia-Pacific region was not only and not so much at the highest political level, but at the level of the regions with their legislation and certain features of the investment climate [8. P. 69].

The most of these issues, including the strengthening of Russia actions and enhancing its role in the East Asia for the growth of Siberia and the Far East, as well as the foundations of the strategic concept of the Russian Federation at the Asia-Pacific region in the 21 century, were considered at meetings of the Baikal Economic Forum, held in September 2000 and 2002 in Irkutsk and meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and economy of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in October 2003 in Moscow [10, 11, 12].

Taking into account the specificity of the Russian Federation regions, located at the Asian part of Russia, special hopes were pinned on the APEC [13]. As a member of the APEC Russia had a real opportunity to integrate not only into the Asia-Pacific regional economy, but also into the global system of economic relations. At the various meetings levels, including the Ministerial, in the course of negotiations with the WTO, APEC has provided full support to Russia about the Russia's inclusion into the World Trade Organization [14, 15].

For a long time the Asia-Pacific region was the only world region with the domination of the economic regional ties and security issues have been limited to the strengthening of a peace, stability as well as prosperity. Therefore, Japan and the South-East Asia countries were concerned about the security strategies, in which, an economic component began to play a special role. Moreover, if the United States showed more interest in the military-political cooperation, security issues, the "economic diplomacy" mechanism was very imported for China. Faced with the "policy of containment" on the part of the United States and the continued vigilance of the region countries to its economic and military might, China leadership had to operate the "soft influence" principles in the Asia-Pacific region, including the mechanism of "economic diplomacy", investment policy and socio-cultural aspects of the cooperation.

Russia Federation supported the East Asia countries in ensuring regional security and stability [See: 16, 17, 18]. This concerned above all the efforts of the South-East Asia countries, because for several decades the East Asia security strategy was associated with the ASEAN security strategy. At the turn of the centuries, the structure of the East Asia balance of powers could be expressed in the form of such system as "China - Japan - United States" with the center of the Association of the South-East Asia Nations. The appearance of this system marked on the powers balance of the entire regional security concept. Then Russia and India gradually joined this system. In November 2004, the Russia acceded to the fundamental for the ASEAN Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in South-East Asia (1976). Under the Treaty, participating countries pledged not to use force in the region. This has contributed to the deepening of ASEAN-Russia dialogue and Russia's participating in regional integration groups, the core of which the Association was.

By the beginning of the 21st century, the threat of nuclear proliferation became especially acutely in the whole of the East Asia, in both the South and the North. Russian leadership supported the efforts of the ASEAN countries to establish the South-East Asia nuclear weapon free zone, as real contribution to strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and enhancing regional and global security. The implementation of this project became a new stage in the foreign policy thinking of the East Asia countries. However, the States parties failed to significantly advance as to the process of negotiations with the nuclear-weapon countries, including Russia, to sign the special Protocol of the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear Weapon Free-Zone. According to the Protocol, the nuclear-weapon States undertook a number of commitments: not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons to member countries of the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear Weapon Free-Zone; should declare their intention to contribute to the achievement of general and complete disarmament of the nuclear weapons. The reluctance of the Russia and other nuclear-weapon States to sign the Protocol to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear Weapon Free-Zone was a major limiting factor, reduces the effectiveness of a Nuclear Weapon Free-Zone,

and the entire non-proliferation regime of the nuclear weapons in the region. One of the most logical solutions to this problem was the signing of this Protocol individually by each country of the "nuclear five" with reservations, actual, desired and arranged by all parties concerned.

At the same time, Russia supported the initiative of the South-East Asia countries to establish the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF, 1993) and commended the countries efforts to establish the East Asian community (2005). In this respect, the South-East Asia countries had special strategy. They tried to attract the powers outside the South-East Asia (including "great powers") to ASEAN platform in the multilateral regional arrangements.

The East Asian community originally joined the ASEAN countries, South Korea, China, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and India and was created with a view to strengthening regional peace, stability and economic prosperity [19]. For the first time the idea of the East Asian community was proposed by the Prime Minister of the Malaysia Mahathir Mohamad in the form of creating the "East Asian economic group" (1990) to protect the rapidly developing economies of the South-East Asia states from the influence of the United States in the region and defend the independence of the ASEAN countries. Then Malaysia tried to pull out of the project the Australia and New Zealand. Return to this idea was not by chance because of rapid development of the Asian regional economies (especially the economies of China, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore), as well as the growth of international trade and regional financial cooperation. All this called for closer links between countries in the region and greater integration in the context of the global economic crisis of 2008 [20. P. 37].

At the first Summit of the East Asian community (December 14, 2005, Kuala Lumpur) Russia attended as an observer. Most of the countries, including Malaysia, welcomed the accession of Russia to the East Asian community, but Australia declared that Russia's admission to the East Asian community was a threat to the emerging regional security architecture. Indonesia supported the Australia. It was connected with the fact that Russia was the competitor of the Australia and Indonesia as to supplying of raw materials and energy resources to the Asia-Pacific region, and, above all, the liquefied gas. Besides that, the Australian opposition to the Russia including was caused by the fact that at that time the United States did not the member of this organization. At the second Summit of the Community (January 15, 2007, Cebu), in spite of the fact that the issues of energy security in Asia and in the world were discussed, Russia did not participate, because the East Asian community members-states decided to "stick to the existing format and not to hurry up with the enlargement of the organization" [21]. Russia and the United States officially became full members of the East Asian Community on February 1, 2011 and participated in the Summit of the East Asian community, which was at Bali in November 2011.

During the Summit, countries have attempted to discuss one of the acute problems of the Asia-Pacific region - the territorial dispute between China and the ASEAN member states - Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam, as well as Taiwan, in the South China Sea. The greatest fear was connected with declared China's sovereignty over the entire area of the South China Sea. On the eve of the Summit, China's Premier Wen Jiabao said that "Beijing is willing to discuss the establishment of a special road map to solve territorial conflicts". However, it was obviously that, the United States and Japan participation in this issue - China's competitors in the struggle for the regional political leadership- in addition to directly involved participants, was unlikely to cause a positive attitude on the part of the China to discuss the problem in a format of East Asian Community. During the talks, Wen Jiabao said that China does not approve of the involvement of other States in the negotiations around the South China Sea. "The dispute concerns only the countries that are located in this region," said Wen Jiabao [22].

In this respect, Russia took a more cautious approach than the United States, knowing well how sensitive this issue for China and the countries of the South-East Asia were, like the problem of the China-Japan territorial disputes in the East China Sea. On many issues, the position of the United States has long been not a well for Beijing. Since the mid-1990s, the United States had focused in the East Asia on the "constructive engagement" of China [23]. It was connected with the fact that the strengthening of China as a regional centre against the background of the East Asian regionalism development was regarded by the American administrations as the main threat to establish a global hegemony of the United States. The United States were very concerned that China could reduce the United States regional influence, and replace the USA as a regional leader. So the United States policy in the East Asia was determined by the competition with China.

In addition, United States feared China's policy of "soft influence" in the region, including the mechanism of "economic diplomacy" and active investment policy and strengthening its position at the national and regional levels. The United States position concerning the China's territorial disputes with its neighbors in the South China and East China seas remained one of the sharpest problems. From the Beijing point of view, the Barack Obama administration has openly demonstrated its support to Japan, the Philippines, Vietnam and other rivals of China in these disputes. Beijing's relations with the Washington became much more strained and a closer strategic alliance between Russia and China - more real.

Much of this was due to the fact that announcing in November 2011 the "rebalancing" its policies from wars in the Middle East to the Asia-Pacific region, the United States assumed, first of all, "delaying the belt" around China. This new strategic "rebalancing", or "pivot", included an integrated mix of diplomatic, economic, budgetary and security-related initiatives [5]. The confrontation at the Korean peninsula in the spring of 2013 showed that North Korea's threats of nuclear attack on the United States and the Republic of Korea were the pretext for the concentration of the American military power and presence of the intelligence assets not so far from the Northeast China and the Russian Far East. Therefore, the purpose of such "Asian belt" was not only to counter the North Korean threat and maintain the American bases, but also to surround the main geo-strategic enemy of the United States - China, which together with Russia was a member of the Central Asian alliance against the American hegemony- the Shanghai Cooperation Organization [24].

On April 28th, 2014 B. Obama ended a four-Asia countries (Japan, South Korea, Malaysia and the Philippines) tour in Manila. This trip was intended as the latest affirmation of America's "pivot" to Asia. But it seems that "his hosts-in Japan, South Korea, Malaysia and the Philippines-took rather more from the visiting American president than they offered up to him" [25]. All four Asian governments were looking for the United States military and diplomatic support, because they were afraid of raising China. The threat from North Korea could be added to this in the case of South Korea and Japan. Japan and the Philippines were in direct confrontation with China as to the disputed islands and shoals, respectively, the East China Sea and the South China Sea and felt most threatened by China.

Conclusion

Analysis of the international political situation at the Asia-Pacific region shows that there are significant changes here and these changes are largely connected with significant changes in the global balance of powers. In the course of the Ukrainian events (spring 2014) and entering the West economic sanctions against Russia in connection with the accession of the Crimea, Russian "pivot" toward Asia, in particular in East Asia, looks entirely justified and reasonable.

For the administration of the United States seemed insufficient to "surround" and "tighten the belt" around China, it began a sharp turn towards Europe for the "tightening the belt" around Russia and the elimination of a buffer between Russia and network of NATO bases on the territories, that previously were the part of the Soviet Union. All this inadvertently leads to strategic rapprochement between Russia and China and developing the most effective mechanisms for the multilateral system of international security, not only in the Asia-Pacific region, but throughout the world, incorporating the principles, which would suitable for all parties, but not just American or European. Will there be a movement to the new cold war with Russia, announced by the White House in April 2014(almost a quarter of a century after the collapse of the Soviet Union) and will the entire world be sunk in this new cold war and the inevitably more powerful arms race depends on the alliance between Russia and China.

Nevertheless, in this strategic alliance it is necessary for Russia to be very cautious and come, primarily, from its own national interests. Russia's orientation to the Chinese market is very significant, but at the same time, developing the relations with China, Russia should not forget the other areas - the Republic of Korea, Japan (despite the deterrent power of these countries unions with the United States), India and the South-East Asia states.

The Chinese leadership clearly seeks to modify the existing international system in their strategic interests with helping of the developing countries and Russia. It traces in the course of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization activities and the BRIC meetings, devoting to the creation of common New Development Bank as a counterweight to the IMF, fully controlled by Washington.

As to China, it is necessary to be very careful. Of course, the Shanghai Agreement on the supply of the Russian gas to China (21 may, 2014) will allow Russia to gain a foothold in one of the most important and perspective markets of the world. This Agreement, certainly, is a geopolitical and economic success of Russia, but, at the same time, it is difficult to quantify the real economic benefits of this project for Russia.

The Chinese leadership does not consider Russia an equal partner. Despite the fact, that Beijing criticizes the West over the irony of what is happening in Russia and her apparent undervaluation, but, often, the China treats Russia the same way. Such irony can be seen in many China's media. As to the world wide policy the Chinese leadership understands that the United States play a key role and China itself has no real potential to reduce the influence of the United States, which is determined not only by a military presence, but also the state of the United States economy [26. P. 58-59]. However, Beijing puts China on the same level as the United States, and due to the economic rising, sees itself as the "number one" leader in the region. At such China's position, Moscow will never agree to the role of the "junior partner" of Beijing in East Asia. Despite the fact that Chinese leadership notes that Russia challenges the ideological hegemony of the West, when criticizing the desire of the West to impose its standards everywhere in the field of democracy, human rights and the free market, the Beijing officials, however, realize that the current rules of the modern global system established by the West. It is this system has enabled China to grow over the past two decades and become the second economic power in the world. In addition, China will continue to enjoy such favorable conditions, but Russia, for now, has not done it yet.

However, in circumstances, where "the language of ultimatums and sanctions is increasingly in the world", and "The unwanted regimes, countries, that adopt independent policies or stand in the way of someone's interests, are destabilized"[27], strategic partnerships with such states is explainable and justified.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE



Body Image and Eating Disorders among Female Students: A Pilot Nutritional Psychology Study in Ghana

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Abstract

Body image and eating disorders have emerged as an essential facet of bio-psychosocial well-being. Although considered less prevalent in Ghana than in the West, body image and eating disorders are issues of global concern. One hundred (100) female participants with a mean age of approximately 21 years were recruited after informed consent for this pilot study. Results showed a positive correlation between body image and eating disorders. In addition, there was no significant difference between the levels of university education on female body image and eating distortions in Ghana. These findings underscore the importance for more future studies in nutritional psychology and related clinical management.

Keywords: Body Image; Eating Disorders; Female Students; Nutritional Psychology; Ghana.

Introduction

Body image is an individual's attitude towards his or her own body. Individuals with distorted body image perceive their body as ugly or even hideous to others. This negative image of self makes individuals enter into various habits that affect eating and other activities of daily living. As the world transit into a more globalised village, problems of body image seem to be universal across genders, race, age and social class.

Body image is not fixed; it varies over time depending on the enabling factors present. Body image is often affected by numerous factors. These may include media, family, friends, teacher, peer and society. As a result, a person's capacity to withstand body image dissatisfaction views as he/she gets older, may be strengthened or weakened over time (Grogan, 1999).

Much of the increasing tendency in troubled body image has been attributed to global advances in media technology. With current advances in cosmetology and media models, definition of a healthy body image has become challenging for some people. In most cases, media exposure paints a picture of "the ideal beauty". This image often leads to some negative effects and disorders due to its unrealistic and impossible demands (Derenne, & Beresin, 2006; Heatherton, Nichols, Mahamedi, & Keel, 1999).

Disturbance of body image and related problems have also been influenced by ethnicity. From a study done among South African multiethnic communities of blacks, mixed race and whites, dissatisfaction with present body size was significantly higher in whites, compared to black and mixed race females (Caradas, Lambert, & Charlton, 2001).

Nonetheless, ethnicity or race showed no significant difference with self-report of body image and eating disordered behaviours (Hrabosky, & Grilo, 2007; Shaw et al., 2004). Rather, eating concerns and depressive affect were seen as significant predictors of body image concerns for both groups (Hrabosky, & Grilo, 2007).

Body image dissatisfaction is often associated with many disorders ranging from minor to severe complications. Common among these include negative feelings about body images and excessive discomforts which may interfere with activities of daily living. In severe cases, this negative feeling affects eating habits which then lead to disabling conditions like body dysmorphic disorder, anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, anxiety, depression, lowered self-esteem, sexual dissatisfaction and dysfunction (Cash, Ancis, & Strachan, 1997).

Due to the cultural beliefs and societal norms, people overlook the fact that the problems of body image and eating disorders are gradually finding its way into the Ghanaian society. The focus of this research is to identify the influence of body image on eating disorders. To the best of the researchers' knowledge, there have not been enough studies done on body image and eating disorders in among Ghanaian female students. In addition, females were selected for this pilot phase since most studies done in the West and Asia described females to be more predisposed to such conditions (Kagawa et al., 2007; Kiriike, Nagata, Sirata, & Yamamoto, 1998; Howk, & van Hoken, 2003).

Method

Participants

A convenience sample of hundred (100) female undergraduate students of the University of Ghana whom were interested in the study was selected. The mean age of the respondents were 20.72 ± 1.57 years with most of them in the 20 to 24 years age range. Since this study was a pilot study to explore a more neglected concept in Ghana, only females [who are noted to be much affected] were selected.

Instruments

The Eating Disorder Diagnostic Scale was used to measure eating disorders (Stice, Telch, & Rizvi, 2000).

The Body Shape Questionnaire was used to measure attitudes towards body image (Cooper, Taylor, Cooper, & Fairburn (1987).

Procedure

Following all necessary ethical requirements for research among human samples, written consents were obtained from all participants before data collection was done.

Completed questionnaires at the end of data collection, were scored and packed into sealed envelopes to ensure confidentiality and safety of responses.

Results

The participants were grouped into lower [100 & 200] and higher [300 & 400] levels. Findings from the analysis in Table 1 showed that there were no significant difference among the two groups of female undergraduates on their body image [$t_{(98)} = 0.092, \rho = 0.927$] and eating disorder [$t_{(98)} = 0.631, \rho = 0.530$] screening scores.

Table 1: Independent *t*-Test Showing Comparison between the Body Image and Eating Disorder Screening Scores of female undergraduate Students

Variables	Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Body Image	Lower Levels	59.98	21.113	98	0.092	0.927
	Higher Levels	60.41	24.952			
Eating Disorders	Lower Levels	13.11	10.144		0.631	0.530
	Higher Levels	11.80	10.522			

On the contrary, the findings in Table 2 showed a significant positive correlation between body image and eating disorder screening scores among female undergraduate students in Ghana [$r = 0.826, \rho = 0.000$].

Table 2: Pearson *r* Correlation between Body Image and Eating Disorder

Variables	Correlation coefficient (<i>r</i>)	<i>p</i> -value
Body image	0.826	0.000
Eating disorder		

Discussion

This study suggests that there is no significant difference between the body image and eating disorder among students in the lower levels and those in the upper levels. The study conducted by Robinson et al. (1996) affirmed these findings. A person's level in an education does not automatically indicate the likelihood of experiencing body image dissatisfaction and/or eating disorder. Nonetheless, social class and level of education have been found in some previous studies to have some effect on the variability within cultural groups than occurs across cultural groups (Alegria et al., 2007; Farmer, & Ferraro, 2005; Striegel-Moore, Wilfley, Pike, Dohm, & Fairburn, 2000). The lack of significant differences might have ensued as a result of the closeness in gap among the educational levels of participants. For instance, there may be a possible difference between individuals with secondary education and university education.

In addition, this study affirms a significant positive association between body image and eating disorder among female undergraduate students. This supports previous studies which had linked the prevalence of eating disorders to many factors including unrealistic body image (Derenne et al., 2006; Robinson et al., 1996). Though, this study could not observe the reason for these finding, the result show quite higher positive relationship ($r = 0.8$) between the two variables. Future studies may look into the interactional factors that maintain and increase the risk for body image and eating disorders among females.

Limitation

Despite the research gaps filled by this study, the sample size although adequate for a pilot study may be limited in scope. It is highly recommended that, future studies in Ghana should increase the number of participants from those with no formal education to higher levels of education.

Conclusion

Body image and eating disorders are issues of global concern. It has been observed that, there is a significant correlation between body image and eating disorders among undergraduate female students in Ghana.

In addition, there is evidence that there was no significant difference between the levels of university education on both female body image and eating distortions in Ghana.

Future research in nutritional psychology and other related areas in Ghana may benefit from a heterogeneous sampling frame, locally sensitive instruments of high ecological validity, and larger sample size.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that they do not have any conflict of interest.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE



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Religious Fanaticism and “Boko Haram” Insurgency in Nigeria: Implications for National Security

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Abstract

Nigeria is commonly adjudged as the “Giant of Africa”. No doubt, the African continent has witnessed drastic socio-political transformation between the periods 1960 to date. Ironically, since Nigeria became an independent nation on October, 1st 1960, she has been confronted with myriad of socio-political challenges. Notable among these, is religious fanaticism. This, in recent times, is encapsulated in grave religious insurgency, manifested in the “Boko Haram” challenge. This paper therefore addresses the relationship between religious fanaticism and security, how they affect each other (positively or negatively). It also examined the present security challenge in Nigeria, and attempts to advance some panaceas in achieving true security. Thus, articulating the benefits of security as genuine precursors for sustainable development of Nigeria. The paper applied historical and sociological methodology in its investigation. It is recommended among others, that the adherents of the different religions should embrace dialogue and tolerance. The government should also pursue the challenge posed by youth unemployment with the right vigour.

Keywords: “Boko Haram”; Insurgency; National Security; Religious fanaticism; Nigeria.

Introduction

Religion and security can be seen as complementing each other. The implication is that, they should work/walk together in order to enhance perfect tranquillity and progress which are the precursors and catalysts for sustainable national development. However, the contemporary situation in Nigeria with regards to achieving the aforementioned goals appears to be an illusion. This gives an impression that rather than harvest the right produces of peace and security, we have anarchy, acrimony, distrust, destruction of lives and property, and indeed mutual suspicion, becoming the order of the day. The present security challenge in Nigeria can be described as terrorism. This is vividly captured by Gwamna (2011), who defined terrorism as a “*weapon that is intended to create fear (terror) and could be perpetrated for a religious, political or ideological goal*”. He further argued that terrorism tactics include “*car bombing, hostage taking, improvised explosive device, letter bomb, kidnapping and others*”. Examining the above definition it agreed with the etymology of the word “terror: as deriving its root from the Latin verb, *terrere*, which means “*to frighten*”, or “*to cause to tremble*” (Juergensmeyer, 2000). Terrorism definitely breeds insecurity, encapsulated by fear and trembling.

Theoretical Framework

No doubt, the perpetration of terrorist acts and violence are reflective of deviant behaviour. Deviance refers to any behaviour that violates the norms of a society and attracts a negative formal or informal sanction (Rothwell, 2012). Each society subscribes to different norms. This has to do with what is proper and right within the society. It is expected that each member of the society complies with the norms, and a violation should incur a sanction or reprimand. The conduct of each member of the society is said to have an overwhelming effect on the society. This is due to the fact that man and the society are involved in each other. Thus, Awolalu and Dopamu (2005) are of the opinion that there can be no society without man.

The work of Akers and Jensen (2011) reviewed the empirical research evidence on the validity of the social learning theory as an explanation of deviant and criminal behaviour. According to them, the social learning theory offers “*an explanation of the acquisition, maintenance, and change in criminal and deviant behaviour that embraces social, non-social, and undermine conformity*”. The application of this to the Boko Haram sect and other acts of violence and deviance can be examined under the four basic concepts of the social learning theory.

The four basic concepts of the social learning theory include (Akers and Jensen, 2011):

i. **“Definition”**: This refers to behaviour learned from socialization into general religious, moral and other conventional values and norms which are favourable to conforming behaviour and unfavourable to committing any deviant or criminal acts (Akers & Jensen, 2011). They further argued that some of the “definition” that are favourable to the deviant are so intensely held as part of a learned belief system. An example of this, they posited, is the radical ideologies of militant groups that are involved in terrorists acts that provide strong positive motivation for criminal acts.

ii. **“Reinforcement”**: Reinforcement in operant conditioning is attributed to Skinner (1953). It is referred to as a response-stimulus-response process in which behaviour produces consequences that in turn produce the probability of the behaviour being repeated (Skinner, 1953). In this instance, the insurgents are reinforced due to the remarkable success they perceive have been achieved through the perpetration of their nefarious activities.

iii. **“Differential Association”**: This refers to “direct association and interaction with others who are engaged in certain kinds of behaviour or express norms, values and attitude supportive of such behaviour as well as indirect association and identification with more distant reference groups”. The implication is that the group, with which one is in “differential association”, provides the major immediate and intermediate social context in which all the mechanism of social learning operates. For example, family, friends and peer groups.

iv. **“Imitation”**: This is the last concept on which the social learning theory is based. This refers to the engagement in behaviour after the direct or indirect observation of similar behaviour by others. The insurgents are motivated to be involved in the act of terrorism as they observe others who have been involved in such behaviour.

The social learning theory could be seen as a basic theoretical framework on which to base the attitude of those who have exploited religion in perpetrating criminal acts and violence. Their activities have continued to “flourish” based on the grounds that they are brainwashed into believing that some form of “eternal reward” and “bliss” await them if they continue their activities (Gwamna, 2011). This is a form of “reinforcement”, as they continue their nefarious activities. The Boko Haram sect is motivated through learned radical ideologies (“Definition”), and response-stimulus-response-process (“Reinforcement”). They are also motivated by direct association and interaction with others engaged in certain behaviour (“Differential Association”). Lastly, they are motivated by engagement in behaviour that has direct or indirect similarity with the observed behaviour of others (“Imitation”). The paper thus has a leaning on the social learning theory as its theoretical framework. It is therefore important before attempting a positive discourse, to first of all examine the term, religion and religious fanaticism.

What is Religion?

It is generally accepted that Religion has no universal definition. However, the writer would consider some definitions of religion. It is important to note that the word religion is derived, etymologically, from the Latin noun, “*religio*”. The common verbs are: “*religere*” (“to turn to constantly”) or “to observe conscientiously”, “*religaria*” (“to bind oneself back) and “*religere*” (“to

choose again”) (Obilor, 1988). It could be safely claimed that most common definitions of religion appear to be etymological derivatives of the above verbs. On the strength of this, Obilor (2002:63) defined religion as “the whole complexes of attitudes, conviction and institutions through which we express our deep fundamental relationship with Reality and not excluding the created order”. On his part, Gilbert (1980:5) stated that religion “describes any system of values, norms and related symbols and rituals, arising from attempt by individuals and social groups to affect certain ends, whether in this world or any future world by means wholly or partly supernatural. The transcendental perspective of religion is aptly captured in the definition of Odumuyiwa (2006:2). He defined religion as “*man’s effective desire to be in right relationship with a sacred transcendental order, controlling human destiny and events, either a prescribed system of rituals and of belief*”. Omoregbe (1993:3) defined religion “as essentially a relationship, a link established by the human person and the divine person believed to exist”. According to Kant (in Odumuyiwa, 2006:2), he stated that “religion is the recognition of all our duties as divine commands”.

It can be deduced from the definitions above that religion conveys the following information, first, features of a Supernatural Being, secondly the belief in that Being and lastly a feeling of awe and mystery in response to the command of that supernatural being. The writer, therefore, defined religion as our “*absolute acknowledgement of dependence on the supernatural Being who sets and controls the entire affairs of life and the universe, hence attracting our reverence and obedience*”. This dimension may have been responsible for the emotional power that religion sometimes have on the adherents. This is exemplified in the actions of some religious adherents who often feel that they are carrying out all activities “for” God, whereas these activities are “against” God. They maim, kill, destroy and loot “for God”. Suffice it to say that these activities are against the society and the people, proximately, but against God, ultimately. No doubt, religion, which is operationally defined as “*belief in the supernatural*” is said to have a profound impact on almost all societies. This could be in the aspect of politics, law, education, culture, behaviour, festivals and so on.

What is Religious Fanaticism?

Simply put, a fanatic can be described as an over-enthusiastic person. It is important to underscore the phrase “over-enthusiastic” since religious fanaticism agrees with this description. Those who are “over-enthusiastic” about their religious belief/position are mostly blinded to the views of others. They attempt in most cases to go to any diabolical extent to perpetrate their beliefs. The zeal, passion and enthusiasm with which they pursue their goals, makes them nothing short of fanatics. This has often been demonstrated among some religious adherents. The writer argued that this cuts across the different religious groups.

It is generally believed in Nigeria that Christianity and Islam are the largest organized religions, with few, declaring open allegiance to “Afrelism” (African Religion). According to www.essential-humanities.net (2012), Christianity, a splinter from Judaism in the early centuries [AD], centers on the figure of Jesus. The central Christian scripture is the Bible. While, Islam, emerged in early seventh-century in Arabia, they believed that different messengers have been sent by God through the ages, but the last and most important of these messengers is Prophet Mohammed. The central scripture of Islam is the Quran. It further posited that Christianity is more prominent in Southern Nigeria, which consists of the Yoruba, Ibos and “Minorities” from the Niger Delta region. Islam is however predominant in the Northern Nigeria. Nevertheless, open practitioners of African Religion are not as numerous as the first two in Nigeria.

The outcome of a recent survey conducted by British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in ten countries, appeared to convey a cheering news! They conducted the survey, tagged, “*What the World Thinks of God*” on countries like, the United States of America, United Kingdom, Israel, India, South Korea, Indonesia, Nigeria, Russia, Mexico and Lebanon. Nigeria came top with “*90% of the population believing in God, praying regularly and affirming their readiness to die on behalf of their belief*”. Thus, Nigeria was declared as the most “*Religious country in the world*” (blue printing.com, 2012). What is the dividend of this position? How positively has it affected the Nation, thus catalysing her towards sustainable development, which would ultimately position her among the committee of Nations? Can it be argued that this is enveloped by consistent demonstration of marked religious fanaticism?

Religion and contemporary security in Nigeria

It is pertinent to consider the word 'security' and its common synonyms in order to have a clear understanding of the word insecurity. This literary approach has become relevant in order to simplify our attempt, thus articulating the point the writer intends to elucidate in the paper. Security shares the same meaning with safety, protection, defence, safe keeping, preservation, care, custody. The corollary of these synonyms is captured in the word insecurity, (Chambers Compact Thesaurus, 1994).

The contemporary security situation in Nigeria and its nexus with religion can globally be mirrored first of all with the September 11th, 2011 (9/11) attack on the United States of America. The dreaded Islamic extremist group, Al-Qaeda claimed that the attack and suicide bombings were sponsored by them (Gwamna, 2011). This, once more, incriminated religion, globally, with respect to world security and peace. A close follow-up to this is the *"linkage of bombings in Nigeria to the radical insurgent Islamic group, Jama'atul Ahlu-Sunnah Hidda'amaati Walkital Jihad, also popularly known as Boko Haram"* (Gwamna, 2011). They claim that Western education is evil and seek to enthrone the full practice of "Sharia" in the entire nation.

In addition, it also seeks to do away with all practices that have Western tainting. It is argued that, *"a critical analysis of all the happenings in Nigeria shows that religion has been a readily destructive tool employed by people who found how extremist some Nigerians are to matters of religion"* (Daily post.com.ng). This is collaborated by Gwamna (2011) who argued that the demonization of religion through its manipulation has assumed unrestrained levels with all the security implications for the Nigerian State and of its corporate existence.

It must be cautioned that the CIA report of 2005, predicting the collapse of Nigeria should not be dismissed or treated with kid's gloves. This is due to the fact that the general state of insecurity in Nigeria presently tends to lend credence to the report (Okolo, 2009). It is no gain saying the fact that religion is diabolically manipulated by these criminals to further their nefarious goals/objectives. Haar (2005) puts this succinctly: "the political manipulation of and mobilization through religion is used or misused in present times". The summary of this position is elucidated by the position of the Nobel Laureate, Wole Soyinka in his annual lecture on religion delivered at the University of Ibadan on 25th January, 1991. His position, as pointed out by Oladipo (1991: 128), surmised that *"I believe, therefore I am, you disbelieve, therefore you are not, and therefore you count for nothing. You are sub-human; you are outside the pale of humanity, outside the concept of community"*.

It is further seen as "us against them philosophy". The writer believes that this appeared to be the morbid attitude demonstrated by most religious fanatics in Nigeria. Although some of the perpetrators of insecurity acts in Nigeria exploit religion as an alibi, others out rightly employ ethnicity and politics. The "first baptism" of terrorism in Nigeria is said to have been experienced on the 50th Nigerian Independence Anniversary. The Eagle Square venue of the celebration experienced an explosion, killing dozens of innocent citizens. The Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND) claimed responsibility (Blueprinting.com, 2012). This however did not carry any religious coloration, as the perpetrators saw themselves as fighting a war of economic emancipation, primarily.

Summaries of Common Religious Crises in Nigeria

The following analysis has well been articulated by Okafor (2007) and Uka (2012):

i. **Post-independence religious crises (1960 – 1966):** Uka (2012) posited that religious crises before and during this time was characterized by mutual respect between Muslims and Christians. Although in 1961, the Sardauna of Sokoto formed the Jamaatu Nasril Islam (JNI). This was an Islamic movement saddled with the sole responsibility of propagating Islam. Some people saw it as the religious wing of the Northern People's Congress (NPC), the Sardauna's political party. Some of their activities were not acceptable to some Muslims who were not members of the NPC.

ii. **Religious crises after the civil war (1970-1975):** The first five years after the civil war were declared as the period of reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction. However, the religious face of the war persisted in form of religious cold war.

iii. **The Sharia crisis (1976-1979):** The major aim of the Sharia was to reform what was seen as the lax practice of Islam among the adherents. The issue of Sharia was been debated by the

Constituent Assembly at that time. The Muslims outside were determined to enforce their argument as they engaged in threats and riots, claiming that if Sharia was not generally accepted by the country, they will make the nation ungovernable. The Muslim Students' Society (MSS) of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria staged a protest, warning the Constituent Assembly. Apart from this, protesters also took to the streets in Zaria and Kaduna for the entrenchment of Sharia (Okafor, in Uka, 2012).

iv. **Religious crises during the Shagari regime (1979-1983):** From religio-political perspective, the Muslims saw Shagari's regime as Allah's will for Nigeria, and the stage set for the "Islamization" of Nigeria (Uka, 2012).

v. **Kano religious crises/Riot (Oct. 1982):** This was adjudged as the first open and violent religious conflict between Christians and Muslims. According to Kukah (1994), the violence was directed towards Christ Church in Fagge, Kano metropolis. The grievance was fuelled by the fact that the church's foundation was laid near a mosque in Kano.

vi. **Religious crises during Buhari's regime (1983-1985):** This was quite visible in the lopsided manner the Supreme Military Council (SMC) was constituted. Most of the members were either northern Muslims or Muslims from the South.

vii. **The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) crisis (Jan. 1986).** This was during the Babangida's regime. It was said that Nigeria sought admission into the organization. This was not acceptable to the Christians. They asked that the provision of the constitution, which puts Nigeria as a secular state, be upheld.

viii. **The Ahmadu Bello University Religious Crisis (June 1988):** During the Students' Union Elections, when it was suspected that a Christian candidate would win the election, violence erupted.

ix. **Kano Riot (11th Oct. 1991):** The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) chapter of the State planned a crusade with a German Evangelist, Reinhard Bonke. Violence then erupted as a group of Muslim youths attacked people in Sabongari and Fagge areas of the State.

x. **Religious crises during the Obasanjo's regime (1999-2004).** It was in January, 2000, that the then Governor of Zamfara State, Ahmed Yerima, introduced the Sharia legal system in his state. Since then most of the other Northern States have also embraced this. The aftermath was several riots and mass destruction of lives and property in the North and other sections of the Country. The vivid picture of the harm done by religious riots during this period is well captured by Crane (2007). She posited that, "Since Obasanjo came to power in 1999, more than 10,000 Nigerians have been killed in sectarian and communal violence. Recent events have only exacerbated the country's deep divisions: The imposition of Sharia or Islamic Law in twelve northern states forced thousands of Christians to flee, while more recently, Danish Cartoons ridiculing the Muslim prophet Mohammed, resulted in attacks and reprisals that killed dozens and injured or displaced thousands in the North and South".

xi. **Yar'Adua and the war against Boko Haram:** The late president, Musa Yar'Adua, staged a formidable war against the relatively unknown Boko Haram sect, killed the leader, Mohammed Yusuf (Blueprintng.com, 2012). This initial victory was said to have been lost under his successor, Goodluck Jonathan. The group then remobilized and re-strategized to unleash terror on Nigerians and the Nation.

xii. **President Jonathan's regime and religious crises:** President Goodluck Jonathan officially assumed the position of the executive president of Nigeria on May 29th 2011. His period has been marred by the incessant onslaughts of the Boko Haram insurgency. They have carried their "war" to different parts and sections of the country. They attacked Police Force Headquarters, Mogadishu Barracks, the United Nations building in Abuja, Independent Electoral Commission's Office in Suleja, a Catholic Church in Madalla, and others. The list of the havoc wrecked on Nigerians and the Nigerian nation by the "Boko Haram" "Jihadists" is inexhaustible. Could this be "killing in God's name"?

It was reported that there was twin bombings in Anguwan and Gadabiyu areas of Jos in December, 2010. These bombings were aimed at churches, market places and Christian settlements (Gwamna, 2011). The Boko Haram sect claimed responsibility. The arrogance and unremorseful attitude displayed by the perpetrators as they claimed responsibility for the bombings was quite disturbing. Ajaero (2011) captured their position succinctly: "*In the name of*

Allah the mighty who has power over everything, who made fighting the disbelievers an obligation until justice is established on earth. May peace and blessing continue to be upon the last messenger who wages (sic) Jihad the best of it. O Nations of the world, be informed that verily the attacks on suldaniyya (Jos) and Borno on the eve of Christmas were carried out by us, Jama'atu ahlus-sunnah Lidda' await Wal Jihad, under the leadership of Abu Mohammad, Abubakar bin Muhammad Shekar (may Allah preserve him), to start avenging the atrocities committed against Muslims in those areas, and the country in general" (Ajaero, 2011).

It is appropriate to state that the group was immediately disclaimed by the council of Ulama (Islamic Clerics) in Plateau State. On this premise, Gwamna (2011) concluded that, "the outbreak of the Boko Haram sect has given ethno-religious conflicts the radical disposition, unprecedented in Nigeria". His claim is justified by the incessant bombings in different parts of the North: Kaduna, Abuja, Maiduguri, Bauchi, Yobe, Gombe, Okene, and Jos, to mention but few. In their attacks, they make use of locally produced Improvised Explosive Devices (IED).

The Nation and its leadership/security outfits appear to "lie prostrate" to the antics of the Boko Haram sect. This claim is premised on two major arguments. First, according to Attah (2011), "the sad pity of the situation is that nobody can tell for sure what the Boko Haram adherents want. This is because their demands or the issues they want the Federal government to address have not been well articulated for public consumption, thus, leaving people to speculate and indulge in conjectures on their real intention".

Secondly, the then president, Goodluck Jonathan, was reported to have said that "the issue of bombing is one of the burdens we must live with. It will not last forever; I believe that it will surely be over" (Sahara reporter, 2011). Is this a fatalistic claim? Is it a philosophical panacea to the issue at stake or a mere wish? No doubt, the issue of ethno-religious insurgency cannot be wished away through mere semantics or rhetoric.

The sect has made Nigeria a "laughing stock" in the eyes of the world. They have also humbled the nation's security apparatus. "With the successful bombing of police headquarters, police stations, Joint Task Force fortress and State Security Service's offices (SSS), the Boko Haram sect has exposed the Nigerian State to ridicule" (Sahara reporters, 2011). The climax is the recent bombing of the church at the Command and Staff College (Military formation) Jaji, Kaduna State. This experience may be why Okolo (2009) concluded that "what the current trend of violence is imprinting on the psyche of Nigerians is that the government's security apparatus is incapable of guaranteeing the safety and security of its peoples".

It is worth mentioning that the Nigerian nation should not be necessarily intimidated by the state of stupor that the Boko Haram insurgency has placed her. There is the need to identify lasting panaceas to the challenge. Before this, however, it is important to explore some causes of the marked level of insecurity experienced by the nation today. This, more than anything else, will give birth to enduring solutions towards ameliorating the Boko Haram challenge and sundry insecurity problems in the Nation.

Some perceived causes of the Boko Haram insurgency and insecurity in Nigeria

Security, inexplicably, can be said to be the "backbone of any society, and it is inexorably linked with sound political, economic, educational and cultural growth" (Adeogun, 2012). However, the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria poses a lot of insecurity to the lives and property of the citizens, consequently, affecting the socio-economic development of the nation. It is often argued that the causes of the Boko Haram "grievances" cannot easily be identified. Some argued that they are a set of disgruntled charlatans who do not really have a clear-cut aim with regards to their actions and inactions. In the writer's view, this may not be the exact situation, as it can be inferred from their activities that there may be some causes/reasons for their actions. Whether such reasons are cogent or logical is another issue. It is therefore pertinent to consider some of the perceived causes of the Boko Haram insurgency. If anything else, this would assist the nation in identifying some panaceas towards ameliorating the challenge, consequently, checking other forms of insecurity bedeviling the nation.

According to Ensign (2012) and others, the following can be identified as some of the root causes of violence and insecurity in Nigeria. They could overtly or covertly account for the continuous Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria. They include the following:

- a. **Unemployment** – Especially among the youths.

- b. **Poverty**-This is quite palpable in every segment and stratum of the nation's life
- c. **Inadequate security**- In most situations of violence, it would have been perpetrated most devastatingly before help come from the security apparatus.
- d. **Depletion of cultural values**- This is seen in the fact that man no longer attaches the expected value to the sanctity of life. The African virtue of being "your brother's keeper" has been eroded.
- e. **Unchecked movement of persons via the border posts** - No doubt, people from other neighbouring parts of Nigeria have infiltrated the country. Such persons, whose identities cannot be vouched for, and do not also feel they have anything at stake, are ready tools for unleashing mayhem once the opportunity arises.
- f. **Political divisions**- A clear experience that occurred in 2011, with the declaration of Goodluck Jonathan as the winner of the Presidential election, stands out as a vivid point in this regards. Churches, shops and houses were burnt in most of the northern states by supporters of General Muhammadu Buhari of the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC). Police Stations, Electoral Commission Offices and some Federal establishments were also destroyed (Blue Printing.com, 2012). There were also reprisal attacks by youths from predominantly Christian communities in Kaduna State, who reportedly killed Muslims, burnt their Mosques and destroyed property.
- g. **Lack of adequate information**- In our contemporary information age, adequate security must explore relevant information. The contemporary time and age eschews brute force and barbaric approach to information gathering. The right information gathering strategies should be employed as this would consequently nip any anticipated violence in the bud. To say the least, our information gathering mechanism is both out dated and crude. This may be the reason our security outfits hardly have any clue before most of the violence are hatched.
- h. **Politicization of the security system**: Apart from the factors considered above, Adoke (2012) argued that another important factor that is militating against the success story of Nigeria's security system is the "*politicization of the security system as well as corruption*". Those involved in the security arm of the nation are sometimes dichotomized along tribal and religious stand.
- i. **Poor access to quality education**: Ensign (2012) argued that poor access to high quality education and health care, especially in the north, is responsible for the unabated security challenge. Someone had once asked a rhetorical question: "*Show me one of the Children of the elites who are participating in the Boko Haram sect? After all they are all studying abroad*".
- j. **Ethnic politics and mutual distrust**: Okafor (1997) had observed that, "the unhealthy ethnic politics and mutual distrust among various cultural linguistic and ethnic groups in Nigeria are the main causes of Nigeria's social and political upheavals". Uka (2012) concurred by arguing that: "the political behaviour of Nigerians is still greatly influenced by the hyperbolic assumption that one's political destiny is intrinsically and exclusively linked with one's ethnic, linguistic, and to some extent, religious identity".
- k. **The negative roles played by some religious leaders**: Obioha (2008) submitted that, "the occurrence of these conflicts cannot be divorced from the activities of religious leaders, both of Christian religion and Islam" According to him, some of them present "their religion as the best, while others are no religion, or worse still, false religions".

Following the position above, Gwamna (2011) and others also identified the following as some causes of the spate of violence and insecurity in the nation and especially, the north:

- i. **Religion is sometimes used to make people unleash terror against others**. According to George (in Gwamna, 2011), "every religion has its own zealots" and people have used religious books to entice followers to kill others in the name of God".
- ii. **Promise of a blissful hereafter**: Gwamna (2011) had posited that "martyrdom complex" and suicide mission hold much attraction to their terrorist activities with all the promise of a blissful hereafter which will reverse and compensate them for their lost "good things" of this life. This could be said to be one of the main re-enforcers, as they engage in suicide bombings.

Hassan (2010) identified three main causes of the continuous insurgency of the Boko Haram sect. They include:

- i. The grand conspiracy theory of conversion
- ii. The corrupting effect on (Islam) belief, (Imam and Aquidah) of the context of Western education.
- iii. Moral and ethical (Earbiyyah) corruption of the environment of the delivery of Western education.

Gwamna (2011) also identified global politics and events as another major cause of the Boko Haram insurgency. According to him, this includes the new wave of protests and violence in the Arab countries-Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Yemen and the Syria. Other factors can be attributed to the Al-Qaeda link with the group (Isaacson, 2011). Poor leadership in Nigeria is also incriminated as one of the causes of the Boko Haram activities. This is basically due to the fact that the Nigerian leadership has not been able to translate the wealth and resources of the nation to glaring dividends to be enjoyed by the citizens. This of course has engendered deep poverty and lack. The consequence is that the citizenry are then easily manipulated and gullibly recruited to perpetrate all forms of havoc and violence.

Is there any solution in sight with regards to the spate of violence and insecurity in Nigeria? If religion is also seen as the “culprit”, can she be said to be capable of playing any role in ameliorating the situation? Can the Boko Haram insurgency be abated? All these will agitate the mind of anyone that seeks a positive nexus between religion and security in Nigeria!

History of Boko Haram and Timeline of Havocs

The writer undertook a survey of the havocs perpetrated by the Boko Haram insurgents in Nigeria. The history of Boko Haram and their havoc against the Nigerian nation is captured in a chronological order as gleaned from, thenet.ng, thenationonlineng.net, punchng.com, naijagists.com (In, *Daily Encounter with God*, 2015). The events are graphically illustrated, as this would further elucidate the challenge posed by religious fanaticism demonstrated by the Boko Haram insurgents.

The Boko Haram sect holds the philosophy that, “western form of education is forbidden”. The sect is officially referred to as Jama’atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda’ Awati Wal-Jihad. This simply means “People Committed to the Prophet’s Teachings for Propagation and Jihad”. The group which is morbidly militant in her operations is said to have its base in Kanamma, North Eastern, Nigeria (Daily Encounter with God, 2015). The group opposes to anything that has Western origin, including education, ideologies and systems.

The sect who has been in existence since 2001 became popular in Nigeria due to their active participation in the sectarian violence that occurred in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria, in 2009. It is also claimed that the group was founded by Mohammed Yusuf, who was killed in 2009 by soldiers. He was however succeeded by Abubakar Shekau. Other notable members of the group are Abu Qaqaz and Abu Zaid. They act as spokespersons for the sect. The claim by the military that Abubakar Shekau has been killed is still shrouded in mystery as there have been counter accusations and outright rebuttals by the sect.

The Boko Haram sect has remained an albatross both to the leadership and the entire citizens of the Nation. Their crisis which began mainly as sectarian religious crisis between rival Islamic groups in Plateau State in 2009 has metamorphosed to a menacing crescendo of violence. The activities of the sect have led to the death of over 10,000 people in Nigeria, with several also internally displaced (Daily Encounter with God, 2015).

Their heinous activities are captured on the list below:

➤ **June 12, 2009:** Mohammed Yusuf, the Boko Haram leader threatened reprisals in a video recording after the killing of seventeen sect members in a joint military and police operation in Borno State. This occurred after a disagreement by the members of the sect concerning using crash helmets during the burial procession for one of them who died in a car accident.

➤ **July 26, 2009:** Police allegedly killed the leader of the sect, Mohammed Yusuf, under the police watch after soldiers, who arrested him, handed him over to the police alive. The ensuing uprising led to a military crackdown that left more than 800 people dead. A mosque in Maiduguri, Borno State which served as the headquarters of the sect was burnt down.

➤ **September 7, 2010:** Bauchi prison break and 720 prisoners including 105 suspected sect members set free. Four people including a soldier, one policeman and two residents were killed in the raid.

➤ **December 24 and 27, 2010:** A series of attacks claimed by Boko Haram in Central Jos and Maiduguri killed at least 86.

➤ **December 29, 2010:** Suspected Boko Haram gunmen shot dead eight people in Maiduguri, including the ruling All Peoples Party (ANPP) governorship candidate in Borno State.

➤ **December 31, 2010:** Simultaneous attacks on military barracks in Abuja and Kuru, near Jos, Plateau State.

➤ **April 22, 2011:** Yola jailbreak, in which 14 prisoners, suspected to be sect members were freed.

➤ **May 29, 2011:** Multiple bombings in several communities in the North.

➤ **June 16, 2011:** Bombing of the Nigeria Police Headquarters, Abuja.

➤ **June 26, 2011:** Bombings of a beer parlour in Maiduguri, in which 25 people died and 12 others severely injured.

➤ **July 11, 2011:** University of Maiduguri closed down over Boko Haram threats.

➤ **August 12, 2011:** Killing of prominent Muslim cleric, Liman Bana.

➤ **August 26, 2011:** Bombing of the United Nations (UN) House in Abuja. Twenty three persons were killed and 129 others injured.

➤ **November 5, 2011:** Attack on the convoy of Borno State Governor, Kashim Shettima, on his return from a trip abroad.

Coordinated bombing and shooting attacks on police facilities in Potiskum and Damaturu, Yobe State claimed 150 lives.

➤ **December 25, 2011:** Multiple bomb attacks killed dozens including 35 worshippers at Saint Theresa Catholic Church, Madalla, Suleja.

Second explosion hit a church in Jos, killing a policeman

Two attacks on centres in Damaturu and another in Gadaka, Yobe State, claimed four lives.

➤ **January 5 and 6, 2012:** Multiple bombings recorded as the deadliest in Kano killed 180 people.

➤ **February 8, 2012:** Suicide bombing at the Army Headquarters in Kaduna.

➤ **February 16, 2012:** Prison break in Central Nigeria, 130 prisoners released.

➤ **March 8, 2012:** Boko Haram claims responsibility for Kaduna Army Headquarters bombing.

➤ **April 26, 2012:** Simultaneous bomb attacks on This Day newspaper and Sun offices in Abuja and Kaduna.

➤ **June 3, 2012:** 15 Church goers killed in Bauchi.

➤ **July 7, 2012:** Multiple northern villages attacked, claimed more than 100 lives.

➤ **June 17, 2012:** Suicide bombing attacks on three Churches in Kaduna claimed the lives of 100 worshippers.

➤ **August 7, 2012:** Deeper Life Church shooting in Okene, more than 19 people died including the pastor.

➤ **September 19, 2012:** Nigerian Army arrests Boko Haram militants, says it killed Abu Qaqaz.

➤ **December 25, 2012:** A Church was attacked and set ablaze on Christmas Day in Maiduguri, Potiskum, over 27 people died.

➤ **March 5, 2013:** Sultan called for amnesty for Boko Haram members.

➤ **March 18, 2013:** Suicide bombers attacked Kano bus stop, killed 22, and injured 65.

➤ **April 5, 2013:** President Goodluck Jonathan set up Boko Haram Amnesty Committee.

Boko Haram captured some towns – Damboa, Gwoza, Bama and some Nigeria's border towns with Cameroon in Borno State and Mubi, Madagaki and Michika in Adamawa State. Nigeria's Military fought back Boko Haram's attack to retake Konduga, killing about 115 of the militants, several insurgents surrendered their weapons. The sect claimed that it shot down a Nigerian military jet and captured one of the pilots alive. It released the video of how it beheaded one of the pilots.

- **April 14-15, 2014:** 276 girls abducted by the Boko Haram sect from Government Secondary School, Chibok, Borno State. They were believed to have been taken to the Sambisa forest towards whatever destination they were finally taken.
- **May 2, 2014:** 53 of the abducted girls escaped from their captors, claiming to have been raped severally.
- **October 17, 2014:** The army announced a truce with Boko Haram, and an arrangement to release the remaining girls. This was however, refuted by the sect.
- **October 17, 2014:** Voice of America (VOA) reports a meeting of the delegation of the Federal Government and Boko Haram members in Saudi Arabia.
- **October 28-29, 2014:** The sect took over Mubi, the second largest town in Adamawa State, killing scores and displacing thousands of people.
- **November 3, 2014:** Suicide bomber killed 15 people in Yobe.
- **November 4, 2014:** Took over about five more local government areas in Adamawa, renamed Mubi-Medinatul Islam.
- **November 6-7, 2014:** Overran Gashala village, Hong Local Government, Adamawa State, killing more than four persons in the process. The group bombed a new generation bank near Azare, Bauchi State, killing not less than 14 people.
- **November 10, 2014:** Suicide bomber attacked Government Comprehensive Science Secondary School, Potiskum, Yobe, leaving four people dead.
- **November 12, 2014:** Female suicide bomber attacked Federal College of Education, Kotangora, Niger State, leaving a student dead and many others injured.
- **November 14, 2014:** Suicide bomber attacked a filling station along Maiduguri Road in Kano, with at least six people killed.
- **November 16, 2014:** Female suicide bomber attacked Azare market, Bauchi, leaving not less than 13 people dead, with over 60 persons injured.

Sources: thenet.ng, the nationonlineng.net, punchng.com, naijagists.com (in, *Daily Encounter with God*, 2015)

The writer concedes to the fact that the list of atrocities committed by the Boko Haram insurgents in Nigeria may not be exhaustive in this study. Their nefarious activities have led to the death of scores of people while some have been displaced internally. This is quite worrisome as the Government appears not to have been able to bring the sect into total submission. It is disheartening to note that till this moment over two hundred girls who were abducted from Chibok, a predominantly Christian community in Borno State, have not been found. This is one, in many of such similar cases.

However, there is the recent common cherry news that some countries within the West African sub-region, for example, Chad, Niger and Cameroon have joined forces with Nigeria to fight the Boko Haram insurgency. It is also commonly on record that the United Nations and the Africa Union have agreed to give positive assistance to Nigeria in her concerted effort to overthrow Boko Haram. These efforts, it is assumed, would bring about the ultimate tranquillity that the Nation yearns for, thus engendering sustainable development and security.

Below are pictures of some of the abducted girls. The number, no doubt exceeds the pictures displayed by the writer. The photos indicate that these girls in their prime were actually of school age. It is quite disheartening that these young girls, who would have contributed to the development of the Nation, were subjected, against their will, to this heinous experience. The writer wonders why the Nation and all her security apparatus have been unable to wrestle these girls from the hands of their captors. It is hoped that they would soon regain their much cherished freedom. The writer would wish to acknowledge the efforts of well-meaning Nigerians and International friends who have mounted a consistent drive towards freeing the girls. The role played by #BringBackOurGirls, a group that has remained undaunted in the clamour for the release of the Chibok girls, is worthy of mentioning. **Photos:** *Courtesy of This day/Arise TV and Gordon Brown, former UK Prime Minister and now United Nations special envoy for Global Education.* Credit also to myschoolgist.com



Some solutions to the challenge posed by the “Boko Haram” insurgency

The alarming dimension that the spate of insecurity has taken in Nigeria calls for urgent attention. The “pulse” of majority of Nigerians is that the issue of insecurity be addressed aggressively without further delay. However, various solutions could be advanced in this regards. The writer would consider some of them:



Photos: Courtesy of This day/Arise TV and Gordon Brown, former UK Prime Minister and now United Nations special envoy for Global Education. Credit also to myschoolgist.com

1. **Clear separation of the state and religion.** This was also the position canvassed by the participants at the 8th All Nigeria Editors Conference that took place at Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. According to Adeseko and Effiong (2012), the participants opined that the “separation of the state and religion implies equal recognition and respect for all religions and favour to or patronage of none”. According to them, “failure to separate religion and the state, and the continuing politicization and manipulation of religion to gain and retain economic and political hegemony, will lead to the corruption of religion by the state”.

2. **The need to create employment for the teaming youths.** Mammaga (2012), urged, especially the governors of the states in the North to make judicious use of the available resources to create employment opportunities for the youths. This should extend to other states of Nigeria so as to check the vulnerability of the youths in the perpetrating of crime.

3. **Addressing the challenges facing the North:** Tangible efforts should be made to implement the recommendations of the various discussions held on the ways to address the challenges facing the region. This would draw the attention of all and sundry towards the development of the region.

4. **The need for dialogue.** This was underscored by Olokor (2012) when he reported on a symposium staged at the instance of the Vice President Namadi Sambo. Others invited were Pastor Ayo Oritsejafor, the President of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), the Sultan of Sokoto, and President General of the Nigeria Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, Alhaji Muhammadu Sa'ad Abubakar 111 and others. According to them, the symposium was organized "in view of the threat to national security and peaceful co-existence by the current Boko Haram phenomenon in our dear country" Advancing dialogue as one of the main solutions to the challenge of insecurity occasioned by the Boko Haram insurgency, Babatunde Fashola, the governor of Lagos State, said "...I do not know of any conflict that does not end on the table. I don't know one. Ultimately, it will come back to the table either with an international umpire, a diplomat or whatever, and I have always asked, why end up there when we can start there...."

5. **Setting up of a commission for Religious Affairs:** According to Attah (2012) this commission, is to report to the presidency directly. It should also have offices in all the state capitals and they are expected to co-ordinate activities at the ward level.

6. **Use of intelligence network:** There is the need to develop and make judicious use of the intelligence network to decode the security challenges that the Boko Haram sect is posing (Okolo, 2012). The contemporary level of technological development all over the world calls for the application of such in addressing security challenges.

7. **Full weight of the Law should be applied to** anyone who errs, by taking adequate steps and sanctions against violent religious fanaticism. There should be no "sacred cows," as this would serve as a deterrent to others.

8. **Educating and enlightening members of the various religious groups** on the value of love and tolerance as panaceas for peaceful co-existence.

9. **Prohibiting the use of inflammatory statements** against other religions.

10. **Impartiality by the leaders in handling religious conflict,** no matter their religious leanings.

11. **Keeping to the ethics of their religions.** Adherents should keep to the ethics of their religions. It can be safely argued that most religions preach peace; a deviation from this is indicative that we are not complying with the ethics of that religion.

12. **The need to eschew corruption** is also important in steaming the ill-tide of insecurity in the country. There is no way a corrupt nation can guarantee the dividends of the abundant natural resources for all. It then follows that this inequality engenders revolts and conflicts. Those who feel cheated can readily take up arms once any opportunity beckons, even if not justifiable.

13. **Determination and deep political-will by the leadership** of the nation to confront the security challenge headlong. The government should rise from her present state of stupor and cowardice to confront the issue.

If the above solutions and others are considered, then the challenge of insecurity and especially the Boko Haram insurgency would be brought to the barest minimum.

Conclusion

The state of insecurity in Nigeria, occasioned by religious fanaticism, especially the contemporary ethno-religious and religio-political crises in Nigeria, gives an impression that religion is the culprit in the entire scenario. Although religion is often indicted in most situations with regards to the present insecurity in Nigeria. Suffice it to say that religion is of immense value to human existence. Its cardinal ethics (no matter the religion) is "love". According to Makinde (2007:347), the problem is not necessarily with religion, but with its practice. He further submitted

that “Religion intrinsically is no evil. The extent to which religion becomes evil is the way and the extent to which it is practiced. The evil of religion lies in the nature of its practice. When the practitioners of religion practice it badly either out of ignorance of what religion is or out of selfish reasons (as the case has always been), religion becomes evil”. This is also supported by Obioha (2005:46), where he argued that conflicts, wars, bloodshed, wanton destruction and looting of properties, exploitation, and so on, are results of “bad religion”. According to him, “Religion qua religion is intrinsically no evil. Religion is absolutely virtuous rather than vicious.” It is the position of the writer that “bad religion” captures clearly the reasons for the present state of insecurity in Nigeria, especially ethnic and politically motivated conflicts that have found religion as a ready “bride” to exploit, due to the bad practice of religion. The writer is of the opinion that religion can readily be employed in achieving genuine and lasting security in Nigeria. This becomes possible as every figment of fanaticism is eschewed.

Recommendations

1. Adherents of all religions should see beyond their narrow/parochial spheres as they embrace the spirit of dialogue.
2. There is the need for all and sundry to appreciate the sanctity of the human life. You cannot take life at will; after all, you did not create it.
3. The government should mobilize all apparatus to address the issue of insecurity
4. There is the need for regular religious dialogue at the instance of all stake holders.
5. The government should tackle the challenge of youth unemployment with all vigour.
6. Moral instructions to inculcate values in the youths should be introduced at all levels of education- primary, secondary and tertiary.
7. Education should be free and compulsory at least to the senior secondary school level, with emphasis on vocational education for self-employment. This would engage the “almajiris”, who are believed to be easily exploited as ready tools for religious violence in the north.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE



TRIPS Agreement, International Technology Transfer and Least Developed Countries

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Abstract

The author examines the role of the trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPS Agreement) in facilitation the international technology transfer to least developed countries (LDCs). The primary purpose of this study is to investigate the new conditions of technology development of LDCs connected with TRIPS adoption. Special attention is paid to the potentials of Article 66.2 for solving the problem of LDCs capacity building. The article presents detailed analysis of the discussions on the impact of the TRIPS provisions concerning the strengthening of the intellectual property rights (IPRs) and the protection of technology transfer to LDCs. An important finding of this study is the recognition of the need to take urgent measures for the transition unto a new model of partnership between developed countries and LDCs in area of technology transfer and IPRs protection. The study concluded that a new model needed to be elaborated at the international level should be based on the effective implementation of Article 66.2 of the TRIPS Agreement.

Keywords: International Technology Cooperation; Intellectual Property Rights; Developing Countries; Technology Transfer; Capacity Building.

Introduction

The careful attention that our contemporary society pays to the process of international technology transfer is caused by the fact that technologies are a deciding factor of economic, social and innovative development at both regional and global levels. The provision of access to technology for developing and more especially for least developed countries (LDCs) is a paramount item of global Agenda. The list of more sensitive technologies for LDCs is needed each day for development. Multiplicity of technological innovations may be needed for information technology, water treatment, waste management, renewable energy technology, biotechnology, marine technology and sustainable forest management and usage of forests.

With respect to all these, it should be stressed that international transfer of technology to LDCs is one of the most actively discussed issues of international economic relations and international relations in the area of aid to development in past fifty years. International technology transfer is considered to be significant tool that is able to reduce the remaining, permanently modifying knowledge and technology gap between developed and developing countries. Results of international technology transfer depend, at best, on modes of the latter

having, inter alia, some negative aspects such as conservation of technological dependence of LDCs on developed countries, i. e. technological colonialism. That is why various international instruments assign obligations of developed countries to carry out technology transfer to developing countries having the low technology and innovative capabilities. So, Article 66.2 of the Agreement on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPS Agreement) imposes some obligations on developed countries to create incentive for enterprises and institutions in their territory with the aim of increasing of transfer technologies to LDCs.

Issues on TRIPS Agreement, International Technology Transfer and LDCs

The problems associated with the transfer of technology to developing countries and particularly to LDCs had been discussed during the past five decades. Results of these discussions are numerous bilateral and multilateral initiatives at the international levels. These initiatives have become the basis for the elaboration of legal norms laid down in national legislation and international instruments, such as various sources of soft and hard international laws.

Concurrently, in a given international documents, the right of developing countries to access technologies has been recognised. I should stress that this right may be voiced as a consequence of extreme interest of developing and especially to LDCs in obtaining these technologies, particularly related to innovative technologies. Due to international technology transfer, developing countries globally could gain access to technologies that may be new to them.

More so, the right to access new technologies should be understood as one of the elements of right to development. Hence, the transfer of technology to developing countries is of a great concern. Discussions on setting up the New International Economic Order (NIEO), which is an integral part of the New International Technology Order (NITO) include the new order of international technology transfer. The relevant content and extent of intellectual property rights (IPRs), as well as regime of IPRs protection are as part of the latter.

The contemporary conception of international technology transfer goes beyond a purely economic approach [1, pp. 2-3]. The conception of knowledge and technology as public goods lays down the foundation of modern concept of international technology transfer [2 – 3; 4, pp. 1-3]. Hence, the idea that knowledge, information and technologies are both public and individual goods is the focus of the Draft of the Treaty on access to knowledge [5]. In seeking to promote the transfer of technology and knowledge to developing countries, the core objective of this project is to take into account the need for a balanced vector of development of IPRs and protection of them (part 3, part 4).

I want to underscore that, technologies are global public goods of intellectual nature. They enable us form appropriate conditions which are necessary for the realisation of human right and protection of life from one generation to the next generations. Hence, the core challenge for policy in international cooperation is to set up and maintain an effective access to technological information and knowledge. Another challenge is to devise the special mechanisms for deploying them effectively within an economy and other sectors of society. It is true for all range of countries, since the right to development in conjunction with the right to access to technology is universal.

The central theme of my paper is that the IPRs is necessary for the transfer and diffusion of technologies but do not factor their restriction. It implies that, there is a potential need to use the Intellectual Property (IP) international system to act as a horizon for national and international regulation for the technology transfer. This will thereby provide the path for implementing the provisions of international instruments on technology transfer with additional IPRs protection. However, patent security is a subordinate aspect of technology transfer and diffusion of technologies.

It is germane to understand that technologies are global goods, and the implicit aim of an international system of IPRs protection is to facilitate technology transfer to LDCs other than to restrict them. This paradigm articulated in conventional instruments concluding provisions on technology transfer covers international instruments in the sphere of IPRs protection. In effect, this demonstrates not only the TRIPS Agreement but also other instruments of the WTO.

Transferred technologies, including technology transfer for development goals, may also be proprietary, for example, biotechnologies. This moment is taken in consideration by international instruments. Consequently, international instruments referring to technology transfer imply protected and non-protected technologies. Un-proprietary technologies, namely technological knowledge as the public goods, are used freely. They are free of charge. This is a feature of access to them. Proprietary technologies, in essence, also are accessible, albeit their accessibility demands authorisation. One of key instruments regulating the transfer of proprietary technologies is the TRIPS Agreement setting up the congruent minimal standards of IPRs protection around the world.

International technology transfer, being a critical factor of sustainable rate of economic growth and development in whole, is very sensitive to implications of IPRs protection. At one time, it should be stressed that role of protection and enforcement of IPRs in international technology transfer is the issue of special global policy in the area that influences all countries, including LDCs.

This may be quite said that the concept of technology transfer also includes, viewing the IPRs, especially patent rights and trade secrets, and in certain degree, the copyright addressing the ICTs and software, in kind of its necessary aspect. Besides the approach to technology transfer as transfer of information and technical knowledge that are results of intellectual activity, the great significance has a specifying of issue on what IPRs do mean as regards technology transfer. With increasing of transnational trade flows, especially flows of sophisticated production and exclusive rights to it, linkage between patents and technology transfer has been getting an overarching recognition not only at the national but also at the international levels.

Intellectual Property Rights and International Technology Transfer

The protection of IPRs relevant to transferred technologies is one of most controversial aspects of policy in the sphere of international technology transfer and encouragement of the latter. There have been a rising in the global markets of IPRs in the world economy. As a result, the international system of IPRs protection and technology markets has become closely connected.

Being such commodities, technologies may be transferred through commercial transactions, i.e. they may be bought, leased or sold, and thus, have utilization and diffusion facilitated through investment, licensing or other transfer arrangements. The commercialisation of technologies and their transfer makes the realization of such goals of technology transfer a very vulnerable facilitation tool for capacity building and development [6, pp. 17-66].

IPRs is both an integral part of technology transfer law and a major aspect of technological advancement. Examples include creation, adaptation, diffusion and usage of available and emerging technologies. Considering the issue of IP impact on ITT is an integral part of proceeding debates on the impact of IPRs on development in general [7 – 9], including economic development and growth [10 – 12; 13, pp. 181-182]. As a result, the empirical findings on different aftermaths of IPRs impact on economic growth in developed, developing and LDCs countries are the basis for understanding the tendency of impact for strengthening IPRs protection on perspectives of international technology transfer, especially to countries with lower middle income.

Indeed, technology transfer acts as an extremely broad concept, not only referring to IP aspects. Butler and Gibson highlight technology transfer as a dynamic area of study by examining such traditional topics like IP management, risk management, market identification, role of universities, as well as public and private labs [14, p. XIII]. However, protection and observance of IPRs is an utmost controversy. This is because of licensing agreements issues which are one of the main channels through which the transfer of technology can be carried out.

Review Analysis and Respective Implications

1. The role of the TRIPS Agreement for the development of an international technology transfer: concise analysis

Despite the fact that the TRIPS Agreement was inspired by pharmaceutical TNCs, it provides the scope and extent of IPRs disciplines that is unprecedented at the international level. The adoption of the TRIPS has become as starting point for globalization of IPRs as a new level of

development of an international system of IPRs protection. This protocol had made international standards to become the basis for an essential evolution for national systems in directing their convergence around the world [15 – 18]. It is well-known that the TRIPS as the first comprehensive agreement contains set of minimum standards covering IPR protection in main IPRs areas. These standards as a requirement should be provided by each Member of the WTO. Moreover, the TRIPS require the member countries to develop appropriate mechanisms to enforce protected IPRs.

The adoption of the TRIPS which was conditioned by the globalization of markets has been accompanied by dynamic growth of investment, trade of technology and high tech products (doubled between 1980 and 1994) [19, pp. 19-40]. Differences in IPRs protection having been conferred by national laws globally have restricted cross-boundary technology exchange. Thus, this had rendered weak the patent protection in many developing countries. Firms from developing countries with weak regime of IP protection have striven to obtain the access to foreign high tech products in order to copy it and also gain the benefits associated thereof. This demand has led firms which have heavily invested in Research and Development (R&D) to put pressure on their national governments to strengthen their international IPRs regime [20, pp. 3-4]. TRIPS as central part of global legal system in the area of IPRs, has had important implications for global economic growth. This global trend in economic growth had also significantly affected international technology transfer. Some analytics underscore emerging significant changes and specificity of international technology transfer after the adoption of the TRIPS in 1994 [21 – 23]. Indeed, the TRIPS encompasses majority of countries, therefore its implications for global economy and international technology transfer are certain.

It should be remembered that until the TRIPS in 1970-1980, the policy of ‘world society for development’ had focused on questions of imperfections in the transfer technology mechanisms and possible conditions for increasing their effectiveness. Some issues raised with this policy included how to reduce costs connected with transfer transactions and how to also remove negative obstacles of market character, for example, defects in international market.

It seems that the adoption of the TRIPS led to an increase in market. To be precise, trade approach to international technology transfer and departures from above mentioned coordinated paradigm of international technology transfer, taking into account the interests of developing countries. Before the adoption of the TRIPS, IPRs created artificial barriers instead of promoting the innovation. This practice made dissemination of the knowledge costly. Thus, the close connection between patents, trade and technology transfer was recognised in Articles 7, 8 and 66.2 of the TRIPS Agreement. For that reason, discussion on IPRs protection was displaced to focus on global policy on technology transfer. This shift rests on the basis that, IPRs protection is the vehicle for economic development through trade.

Nonetheless, this shift does not mean a negation approach to technology transfer as tool for the realization of the ‘right to access to technologies’ in the context of the ‘right to development’. It may be expounded by the fact that, the trade and trade aspects of IPRs as well as a new way posing technology transfer, continue to have the profound human rights foundation. Moreover, the TRIPS seek to invoke the setting of basic principles for the balance between protection and enforcement of IPRs. On the one hand, it also seeks the promotion of technology development as well as the transfer and dissemination of technologies. Under the preamble of this Agreement, there is a stipulation of terms due to the coordination between goals of national systems of IPRs protection and goals of development and technology progress.

In accordance with Article 7 of the TRIPS, protection and enforcement of IPRs should contribute to the promotion of technological innovation, transfer and dissemination of technology, mutual advantage of producers and users of technological knowledge. Also, it provides the balance between rights and obligations in a manner conducive to social and economic welfare. In the opinion of J. He, this balance as an objective is formulated ambiguously and, hence, cannot be actively considered by the WTO panels [24, p. 827]. I can agree with this suggestion in view of the complex content of the balance as a needed objective. It appears that the balance is an idea rather than a principle though, in reality, it is a principle rather than an idea. This is because, it materialises in a multitude of provisions in flexible mechanisms (so-called flexibilities).

The provisions in the preamble and Article 7 reflect a new paradigm of economic development. This paradigm postulates that economic development should be estimated in terms of human development. According to Dutfield and Suthersanen, supplements, in turn, should entail economic development by incorporating social welfare considerations and sustainable development [25, p. 272]. Also, the goals of welfare and development achieved through technology transfer, diffusion and application of technologies particularly meaningful for developing countries have been embodied in flexible mechanisms of the TRIPS. These include; compulsory licensing, parallel import, transitional period and so on. In respect to the international technology transfer depending on patent system, much can be noted in Article 29.1 - regarding the disclosure requirement, Article 30 and 31 - concerning exceptions and limitations to the exclusive rights, and Article 40 - with respect to control over anti-competitive practices in contractual licenses.

It is well-known that for developing countries, there is a desirable path to adopt technologies without paying monopoly rents through, for example, compulsory licensing. The TRIPS assigns legal principles in accordance with which the sovereignty and the independence of developing states to adopt decisions on exploiting the flexibilities enumerated in Agreement are respected. Flexibilities give developing countries the latitude to acquire technologies without paying the rights holders their full reward for using protected result of intellectual activity. Appropriate measures provided for, include the fact that, they are consistent with the provision of the Agreement, and may be needed to prevent the abuse of IPRs rights by rights holders or to resort to practices that unreasonably restrain trade, or adversely affect the international transfer of technology.

3. Article 66.2 of the TRIPS and problems of its implementation

The empirical generalizations of technology transfer to LDCs [26] show that technologies protected by patents are not reaching them. As a result, the TRIPS Agreement, in itself, is hardly capable to improve situation with technology acquisition for poor countries. However, the TRIPS have great potential reflected in its preamble.

This conclusion was recognized by negotiators and became the basis for introducing Article 66.2, which obligates the developed countries to encourage the technology transfer to LDCs. As Article 66.2 stipulates, "Developed country Members shall provide incentives to enterprises and institutions in their territories for the purpose of promoting and encouraging technology transfer to least-developed country Members in order to enable them to create a sound and viable technological base". It should mean that transferred technologies are protected by patents and other intellectual property rights. Concomitantly, developed countries are required not to be distressed concerning issues about the protection of IPRs to transfer technologies, but also to intend that these technologies would promote technical development of developing countries.

Clearly, LDCs are in want of more effective implementation of requirements of Article 66.2. The TRIPS Council in 1996 agreed that developed country members would provide annually information on the technical cooperation activities in order to facilitate the Article 66.2 implementation [27]. The WTO has shown up certain concern on the implementation of Article 66.2 in the Doha Decision on Implementation-Related Issues and Concerns that has been adopted by the WTO Ministerial Conference in November 2001. Reaffirming that the provisions of Article 66.2 of the TRIPS Agreement are mandatory, ministers agreed that the TRIPS Council shall put in place mechanism for ensuring the monitoring and full implementation of the obligations in question. In accordance with Para 11.2 of this Decision, developed country members shall submit prior to the end of 2002, detailed report on the functioning in practice of an activity to stimulate their enterprises for the transfer of technology in pursuance of their commitments under Article 66.2. These submissions shall be subject to review in the TRIPS Council and information shall be updated annually.

The TRIPS Council in 2003 also decided on the procedures for submission and reviewed the reports of developed country members, and agreed on the list of issues to be reported [28]. Following the Decision of 19 February, developed countries have to submit reports on their technology transfer incentives for implementation of Article 66.2 of the TRIPS Agreement on an annual basis. Decision has detailed the information that developed countries have to supply by the

end of the year on how their incentives are functioning in practice. This decision was reviewed in full when the TRIPS Council met in September and November 2003.

At the same times, various decisions of the TRIPS Council have raised the question of technology transfer and reiterated the commitment to implement Article 66.2. The WTO Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and public health [29] also reaffirmed the commitment of developed country members to provide incentives to their enterprises and institutions to encourage and promote technology transfer to LDCs-members pursuant to Article 66.2. This will provide a permanent updating sequence in the monitoring mechanism of Article 66.2 implementation and equal performance of decisions passed by the WTO with regards to increasing effectiveness of technology transfer to LDCs [30, 31].

The implementation of the provision in Article 66.2 is in a critical focus of experts and international organizations, for example the WHO. As remarked by C. Correa, Article 66.2 does not provide assessment of nature and magnitude of the incentives that should be applied to enterprises and institutions in developed countries in process of fostering technology transfer to developing countries [32]. Some experts have questioned the effectiveness of Article 66.2 because its provisions are restricted by technology transfer to LDCs and are not applied to developing countries. S. Moon has stressed that the submissions concerning to Article 66.2 by developed countries to the Council of TRIPS were irregular and did not provide sufficiently detailed data to determine whether Article 66.2 led to any additional incentive beyond business as usual [33, p. 7]. In addition, as noted in Para 7 of Report of European Communities, there are two factors that limited the efforts of developed countries to encourage and promote transfer of technology to LDCs. These factors are; (a) they do not own the vast majority of such technologies and (b) they cannot force the private sector to transfer its technologies [34].

During the meeting of the Council for TRIPS on February 17, 2011 [35], some WTO Members made various proposals on how to streamline the notification process under TRIPS Article 66.2. Issues raised by WTO Members were related to underline the content and format of the Article 66.2 reporting mechanism, as well as to substantive aspects of the implementation of its provision. As a substantive aspect, Members raised questions about the scope and definition of transfer of technology in general terms in relation to Article 66.2 in itself, and in other specific contexts. Furthermore, attention was paid to the specificity of reported programmes provided for LDCs in particular, the nature of incentives for technology transfer, and the choice of appropriate technology in line with priority needs identified by the LDCs themselves. Moreover, WTO Members have held in focus, the sustainability in ensuring continued access to technology in a view of the distinction between incentives for technology transfer to be reported upon under Article 66.2 and the technical assistance activities to be reported upon under Article 67 [36].

Despite of lacks of Article 66.2 implementation, it is indispensable to state that the TRIPS have, in general, great potential for realization of purported benefits, specifically from technology transfer. As above-mentioned, definition of technology is enshrined in the convention concluding provisions on technological cooperation. In the framework of the implementation of Article 66.2 of the TRIPS Agreement, the lack of definition was viewed by some commentators as allowing reporting Member to stretch the definition of technology transfer to meet the obligations under that provision without making the necessary policy changes.

3. Impact of the TRIPS on international technology transfer to LDCs

After the adoption of the TRIPS, issues on impact of stronger IPRs on technology transfer, especially to developing countries and LDCs are largely in focus of attention by international organizations and experts [37]. As C. Correa explains, this interest arises from the continuing technology gap between the North and South that is growing since the TRIPS was been adopted. He stated that, the fear about the enhanced protection given to IPRs will not effectively promote the development process but will rather limit instead, the access to technology which has been voiced by many developing countries [38, p. 3].

The new circumstances of functioning concerning international technology transfer which is connected with the coming of TRIPS into force resulted in new content of discussion on the impact of IPRs on international technology transfer. It should be remembered that, developed countries

having initiated negotiation of the TRIPS have referred to arguments that stronger IPRs would entail some positive effects, for example, the increasing of FDI and technology flows in developing countries and the stimulating the domestic innovation. IPRs are the real vehicles of technology transfer that can foster the exchange of technology.

In a different way, stronger IPRs protection is expected to expand formal channels of transfer and diffusion of technology. At the same time, it is necessary to avoid overstating, insofar as pointed findings is applied only to recipient countries with good imitative potential. In other cases, an aftermath of such strengthening is zero. Most broadly, more strong IPRs protection is capable of increasing the formal channels of technology transfer via international trade, inflows of FDI and licensing but into countries imitating technologies and having certain technologic potential. Consequently, there seems to be a certain evidence for positive impact of IPRs on formal technology transfer, at least, at the bilateral level. Thus, results of stronger IPRs protection is ambiguous in theory and practice and depends on concrete conditions of different countries. R. Rasian having analysed an experience of India, NIEs, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and other countries has preferred to given conditions like the technological capabilities and IPRs infrastructure. He has induced that poorer economies are unlikely to enjoy a compliance with obligations under the TRIPS [39].

Like these conclusion R. Mashelkar indicated that impact of the TRIPS provisions on developing countries will be according to level of their economic and technology development. Middle-income countries, for example, Brazil and Malaysia are likely to benefit from spur to local innovation under stronger IPRs. Other countries, for example, India and China that are endowed with appropriate intellectual property infrastructure, can gain in the long term some benefits from stronger IPRs. He summarizes further that LDCs with their minimal level of innovative development will face higher costs without the offsetting benefits [40, p. 310].

Insofar as the modern world economy is the economy of IP, international technology markets are very sensitive to broadening of scope of IPRs protection, in particular to extension of patent duration. The significant broadening of scope and duration covered, for example, in the TRIPS Agreement may lead to difficulties in international transfer of technology. There are concerns about the impact of stronger IPRs protection on international technology transfer. As a result, the potential of increasing of IPRs protection is not always clear for developing countries [41].

The reforming of patent systems in developing countries in the direction of establishing stronger patent laws after the TRIPS adoption have positive impact on technology import to these countries. In addition, there was a reduction of possibilities to imitate the patented technologies. That has meant a strengthen position of foreign firms but have not resulted in solving the problem of capacity building. K. Maskus, for example, stressed that empirical evidence show that enforceable patents can increase inward flows of international technology transfer in middle-income and large developing countries but probably have little impact in LDCs. This conclusion is similar to B. Hall's viewing in accordance with which stringent patent rights protection. Indeed, it is believed that it encourages FDI and technology transfer to developing countries with middle level of development, though, very little evidence exists to the effect that stronger patent protection can encourage indigenous innovation in developing countries [42]. Accordingly, international technology transfer should lead not only to technologies influx but also to stimulate domestic innovation. Referring to previous quantitative researches, he reasoned that IPRs do not often contribute to economic growth and development of countries with threshold of GDP below US 3,400. Countries with low level of development have no possibility to make R&D, appropriate potential to imitate, absorb, assimilate foreign inventions in order to meet consumption needs and fulfil economic goals. Finally, the reinforcing of IPRs protection in accordance with global standards restricts free use of knowledge and technological public goods, as well as increases the cost of technology acquisition.

A positive impact of strengthening of IPRs protection on technology transfer and, accordingly, on economic growth and innovation depend on economic and technology level of concrete country. The demonstration of positive impacts in respect of non-innovative developing countries, including LDCs, is likely to be the foremost problem of global policy in area the of IPRs protection and of international technology transfer.

With regards to the poorest countries, stronger IPRs do not lead to all appearances of substantial benefits for innovation growth and technology diffusion. Moreover, high level of administrative cost for developing patent systems and potential abuse of market power in small closed markets along with enforcement of the TRIPS will result in losing out from acceding to the TRIPS. In addition, regime of stronger IPRs may create difficulties for technology imitation as significant lever designed to develop the innovative potential of various industries in LDCs with some slight technological potential. Into the bargain, the TRIPS restrict free use of technologies and knowledge but these restrictions are not absolute.

It should not be supposed that LDCs are absolute antagonists of any protection of rights to results of intellectual activity. As M. Islam stated, LDCs like Bangladesh could benefit from increasing demand of IPRs protection especially for patented agricultural and pharmaceutical goods [43, pp. 5-10]. With the aid of expert departures from that through appropriate rights, these countries can use their comparative advantage of reverse-engineering, thereby adding value through adaptation of existing technological goods accessed due to formal and non-formal channels. According to Islam, the TRIPS Agreement however obliges its Members, irrespective of their level of development, to strengthen IPRs protection, including comprehensive control over technology diffusion. Indeed, as I suppose, the TRIPS increase position of rights holders. In consequence, it must not be forgotten that this consolidation is balanced by provided flexibilities, being a repercussion of compromise between developed and developing countries. In consideration of these flexible mechanisms, the TRIPS should not be regarded as international instrument serving only the interest of one group of countries.

Unconditionally, the logic of development within the international system of IPRs protection is that protection is strengthening, but the latter includes development of regimes of limits and exceptions as a part of flexibilities. That is why the strengthening of IPRs protection may fully be consistent not only with interests of developing countries having succeeded in technology and industrial development and transforming now to technologic donors, but also with interests of LDCs. At the same time, regarding LDCs, indeed, there are many forthcoming problems. A similar conclusion has been made by Falvey *et al.* having investigated the effect of IPRs protection under the TRIPS standards on economic growth in 79 countries. These experts in their article have shown that such effect depends upon the level of development, although positive, significant effect took place not only in high-income countries but also in low-income countries. In the first case, economic growth was based on encouraging innovation by stronger IPRs protection. Additionally, change in relation of LDCs to IPRs protection led to enhancing the technology flows. Nevertheless, Falvey *et al.* proposed that, middle-income countries may have offsetting losses and reduced scope for imitation of technologies that a long period of time might have laid down in the background of their economic growth [44].

In spite of the TRIPS, definition of sufficiency expressly refers to stimulation of technology transfer which is rather concerned with the scope, use and enforcement of IPRs. Therefore, mechanisms for implementing the balance between the IPRs protection and the technology development stimulation through transfer of technology have not been provided. This had led at the level of international organizations to discussions about mechanisms of impact of IPRs upon technology transfer disciplines.

In contrast to LDCs, potential of the TRIPS for technologically and economically advanced developing countries, certainly, will be realized in positive manner. Stronger IPRs protection seems to be a key factor in order to foster the firms engaged in imitation of technology to shift their resources towards generation domestic innovation and their commercialization, as well as the development of high-tech business as a strategy for these countries. India, for example, sets itself a task to transit to high tech export structure. This is a task of state and business. A. Lal and R. Clement emphasised, among other things, that “India is posed to generate new business start-ups in the high tech area that can help it become a major competition in the world economy” [45, p. 96].

Countries having succeeded in innovative activities in recent years, for example China, may obtain the benefits from stronger IPRs. In contrast to poorest countries, advanced developing countries have possibilities to obtain the benefits from formal channels of technology transfer and

integration to R&D activities of developed countries. This had led to a track of age where the policy of IPRs protection was at the national level where various flexibilities have facilitated technology diffusion. The TRIPS Agreement has also shifted the bargaining on flexibilities from the national to the international levels, having uniformed these mechanisms within the international system of IPRs based on minimum standards of protection. Reality created by the TRIPS Agreement obviously drives at question that does benefit most from these changes. It is clear that developed countries, their innovators and right holders, or rather TNCs, have benefitted most from these changes. However, developing countries, in whole, continue to depend on either spill overs or formal technology transfer from signed countries and their R&D centers.

Increasing the strength of IPRs protection in pursuant to the TRIPS reduces the possibility of technology transfer via free of charge transmission from North to South. Thus, it restricts the means of obtaining technologies by channels of formal transfer that is associated with substantial costs. It means that there is a correlation between potential increasing of price and reduction of access to available technologies, on the one hand, and high tech production, on the other hand. An important element worth stressing is that, both advanced developing countries and LDCs need informal channels of transfer of technologies that provide development or create their innovative sector. This channel should not be diminished in its importance. According to C. Correa, LDCs policies in the field of technology transfer should be focused on mobilizing the informal modes of technology acquisition and should address the situation of firms at more advanced stage of technological development. In addition, the given policies should include mechanisms to expand acquisition and to ensure the exploitation of equipment and machinery, and should elevate bargaining capacity of the more advanced firms to obtain technologies through licensing agreements [46].

LDCs are more vulnerable to any strengthening of IPRs protection. Therefore, they are very interested in extension of the transition period in process of the TRIPS implementation. Article 66.1 clearly ascertains that the Council of TRIPS shall, upon duly motivated request by a least-developed country Members, accord extensions of this period. This provision is premise on the right of LCDs to extent transitional period. These countries are very interested in comprehensive stocktaking of technology transfer obligations that have been accepted by developed countries. They should demand the effective implementation of these obligations under Article 66.2 of the TRIPS. Nonetheless, S. Moon detailed that, there was almost no evidence of new incentives that had been put in place as result of Article 66.2 [47]. As the consequence of this problem, it is believed to be needed to develop the new models of partnership between developed countries and LDCs. This call of the times has been articulated by D. Foray brilliantly [48].

Conclusion

The problem of international technology transfer to LDCs gains in special importance in the context of transition to sustainable development. It is a clear that multilateral agreements on IPRs, especially the TRIPS Agreement, are implicitly oriented to sustainable development due to postulating the balance between interests of public and interests of rights holders. Continuing discussions within global policy in the area of international technology transfer to LDCs will continue to concentrate on adapting the TRIPS provisions to new tasks of international development. These are done with regard to the potential use of Article 66.2 and other TRIPS mechanisms to facilitate the transfer of sustainable/clear technologies to LDCs. In the end, there should be wider discussions of these issues.

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RESEARCH ARTICLE



Self-Concept and Variables Related to Preparedness for Dental Practice: Basis for a Proposed Program Enhancement

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to obtain information about graduating students' self-concept and variables related to preparedness for dental practice. A self-constructed questionnaire which was first validated by 26 administrators, selected faculty and students of the School of Dentistry of Centro Escolar University, Manila, were personally given to the graduating students. The respondents were the 198 graduating students for March 2014. Foreign students were also included in the study. Using a 5-point Likert scale, the questionnaire assessed the self-concept and variables related to preparedness for dental practice self-perceived preparedness. Statistical tools that were used for the study are percentage, frequency, standard deviation, weighted mean, t-test and analysis of variance. The data gathered were interpreted as very large extent, large extent, moderate extent, little extent, very little extent. Based on the findings of the study, most of the graduating students see themselves prepared to a large extent for dental practice. However, the clinical infirmary ranked the lowest in its group with number of module units available, safety, cleanliness and orderliness of the infirmary and modernity of equipment giving the results of to a moderate extent. Moreover, the lack of training dental emergencies as well as Orthodontics and Periodontics will need to be addressed by program enhancements such as additional hours in subjects, workshops and seminars.

Keywords: Dental Education; Dental Practice; Graduating Students; Program Enhancement; Self-Concept.

Introduction

"The clinic is the learning environment to which all our students aspire" [1]. It is the place where future dentists are moulded. It is the venue where students experience things, gain interests and adapt principles. The learning environment and the students therefore play a big role in attaining the mission and vision of a learning institution. Both factors are interdependent and affect assessment of an educational system. Preparing a professional dentist entails a lot of responsibilities. Pierre Fauchard developed dentistry as an independent profession from medicine

[2]. To keep up with the demands in skills and knowledge of being a professional dentist, a study on the graduating students' self-concept and variables related to preparedness for dental practice can help the University prepare its students to face the demands of being a dentist. Learning and teaching are two entities that constitute success. Vittitow, in his honors thesis entitled "Empowering the World Through Dentistry," said that Dentistry is a very specific trade that one develops after years of education and training [3]. The challenge for dental schools worldwide has been to design and implement clinical curriculum models in which patient-centered, comprehensive care is the norm, and, at the same time, ensure that each student has an appropriate mix of 2 patient care experiences that are part of general practice [4]. A responsible dentist in order to be successful should be able to strike a balance between its humanitarian and economic motives. As in any discipline, focus on preparation of the students to face the future and to be able to carry on with the demands and responsibilities of the chosen profession has been the primary goal of institutions worldwide. The dental workforce is an important healthcare resource. It is therefore important to understand the views and career expectations of new entrants to the dental profession to protect and develop this resource [5].

The learning environment of a student is important. Educators should take into consideration the environment and the needs of the learning student. In a 2009 ADEA survey conducted in the United States of America, 38 percent of the responding seniors reported feeling underprepared for practice administration [6]. Dhima also found in her study that factors such as inadequate exposure of students to a dental specialty, lack of faculty numbers or mentors in a specialized field who are available to work with the students, and lack of opportunities for students to treat patients who require care in those specialties can affect ones career [7].

Over the past decades, the field of dentistry has come up with countless innovations. As with innovations, some things are left behind. With the development of newer materials and advanced techniques, the learning process has to be dynamic, which has to be catered for in the teaching curricula for the students to stay current with the latest in the world [8]. In a 2013 study, European students' self-assessment of their own proficiency serve as a helpful means to make a realistic evaluation of dental curricula and the assessment of the effectiveness of specific courses [9]. The data gathered by the researcher were used a basis for program enhancement in the School of Dentistry of Centro Escolar University. In this study, the researcher tried to assess the self-concept and variables related to the preparedness for dental practice of graduating students of Centro Escolar University, Manila.

Methods

The descriptive survey method was used in conducting the study. Survey as a technique of descriptive research method is a fact-finding study with adequate and accurate interpretation. The respondents of the study were the prospective graduating Dentistry students of March 2014 of Centro Escolar University Manila. Out of the 198 respondents, 115 were female and 88 were male. A central element in survey research is the questionnaire used as an instrument to gather information. Part I dealt with the demographic profile of the patient that includes age, gender, years in college, nationality and type of intended practice. Part II dealt with the self-concept of preparedness for dental practice of graduating students of Centro Escolar University, Manila. A self-constructed questionnaire was used for the study. The second part required the graduating students to rate the variables related to preparedness for dental practice using the scale 5 (VLE) = Very large extent, 4 (LE) = Large extent, 3 (ME) = Moderate extent, 2 (SE) = Small extent, 1 (VSE) = Very small extent.

The researcher requested 6 experts to validate the questionnaire. They were administrators and faculty of the School of Dentistry, an English teacher, a curriculum and supervision teacher in graduate school, an expert in education and a psychologist. Furthermore, the researcher conducted a test on the validity of the instrument used. A dry-run was done by 20 graduating dental students. Selected graduating students who validated the questionnaires were not included in the study. The researcher asked the respondents for their feedback in answering the questions. The researcher then improved the questionnaire based on the respondents' suggestions.

The researcher sought the permission of the Dean of the School of Dentistry, Centro Escolar University, Dean Maria Jona D. Godoy to conduct a study in the school. The researcher also wrote a letter to the Dr. Rhoda C. Aguilar to request for the number of graduating dental students.

After which, a cover letter was prepared for distribution to the respondents to avail them of the official information explained in the study. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to the respondents and gave them sufficient time to answer the questionnaire. The data were treated in relation to what was asked in the specific objectives. For the purpose of analyses, percentage and frequency values were used on the demographic profile of the respondents - age, gender, years in college, nationality and type of intended practice. To determine the self-concept and variables related to preparedness for dental practice of graduating students of Centro Escolar University, Manila, the researcher used the weighted mean, which is one of the commonly used measures of central location and standard deviation. In comparing the self-concept and variables related to preparedness for dental practice of graduating students when grouped according to age, years in college and nationality, analysis of variance was used. The t-test was used for gender and for the type of intended dental practice.

Results

It is apparent from Table 1 that the respondents are prepared to a large extent in terms of Quality Oral Health Care and Patient Education except in "providing emergency dental services." It ranked the lowest with a mean of 3.41. "Develop and explain treatment plan to the patient" ranked the highest with a mean of 4.06. The obtained standard deviation shows that the respondents are heterogeneous in their self-concept for each of the particulars pertaining to Quality Oral Health Care.

Table 1: Self-Concept of the Graduating Students' Preparedness Regarding Their Dental Practice in Terms of Quality Oral Health Care and Patient Education

Quality Oral Health Care and Patient Education	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
<i>1. Obtain a comprehensive and concise case history</i>	3.88	.726	<i>Large Extent</i>
<i>2. Obtain and interprets diagnostic information</i>	3.85	.629	<i>Large Extent</i>
<i>3. Maintain records of patient</i>	3.97	.754	<i>Large Extent</i>
<i>4. Develop and explain treatment plan to the patient</i>	4.06	.816	<i>Large Extent</i>
<i>5. Perform appropriate clinical procedures</i>	3.98	.746	<i>Large Extent</i>
<i>6. Provide oral and preventive care</i>	3.89	.836	<i>Large Extent</i>
<i>7. Provide emergency dental services</i>	3.41	.955	<i>Moderate Extent</i>
<i>8. Implement and monitor infection control and environmental safety</i>	3.88	.884	<i>Large Extent</i>
<i>9. Gives chair-side and post-operative instruction to the patient</i>	3.96	.818	<i>Large Extent</i>
<i>10. Recalls patient</i>	3.76	.809	<i>Large Extent</i>
Overall Mean	3.86	.563	Large Extent

From Table 2, the number of module units available, safety, cleanliness and orderliness of the infirmary and modernity of equipment elicited a response of moderate extent from the respondents. It obtained a mean value of 3.12, 3.37 and 3.40 respectively. It can be seen from the table that the highest means are on the qualification of clinical instructors specifically the basic dental teachers with the highest average of 3.87 and the clinical instructors with a mean of 3.84. The quantity of clinical requirements also elicited positive results however the clinical infirmary ranked the lowest with number of module units available, safety, cleanliness and orderliness of the infirmary and modernity of equipment giving the results of moderate extent. The related learning experience has positive implications. Dr. Letty Moss-Salentijn said that "By the time our students do their hospital rotations and their residencies, they realize they have knowledge and preparation that helps them acclimate to medical settings more quickly" [10].

Table 2: Self-Concept of the Graduating Students' Preparedness with Regard to Related Learning Experiences

Related Learning Experiences	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
<i>1. qualification of basic medical teachers</i>	3.78	.832	Large Extent
<i>2. basic dental teacher</i>	3.87	.849	Large Extent
<i>3. pre-clinical teachers</i>	3.79	.813	Large Extent
<i>4. clinical instructors</i>	3.84	.897	Large Extent
Mean of Qualification of Clinical Instructors	3.82	.752	Large Extent
<i>1. number of patient requirements</i>	3.65	1.034	Large Extent
<i>2. number of tyodont requirements</i>	3.73	.883	Large Extent
Mean of Quantity of Clinical Requirements	3.70	.871	Large Extent
<i>1. number of module units available</i>	3.12	1.160	Moderate Extent
<i>2. safety, cleanliness and orderliness of the infirmary</i>	3.37	1.054	Moderate Extent
<i>3. good ventilation</i>	3.50	1.067	Large Extent
<i>4. modernity of equipment</i>	3.40	1.058	Moderate Extent
Mean of Clinical Infirmary	3.34	.920	Moderate Extent
Overall Mean of Related Learning Experience	3.62	.693	Large Extent

What is interesting in this data in Table 3 is that the self-concept of the graduating students' preparedness with regard to curriculum was to a large extent with the exception of the sufficiency of the total number of units to prepare students for dental practice under basic medical subjects which is interpreted as to a moderate extent in Table 3. In the Clinical subjects, Restorative Dentistry ranked first with a mean of 4.02 while Prosthodontics ranked second with a mean of 3.63. On the other hand, Periodontics ranked the lowest with a mean of 3.63 followed by the mean of 3.67 for Orthodontics although its verbal interpretation is still to a large extent. The standard deviation self-concept of the graduating students' preparedness with regard to curriculum is quite similar.

Table 3: Self-Concept of the Graduating Students' Preparedness with Regard to Curriculum

Curriculum	Mean	S.D.	Verbal Interpretation
<i>1. Objectives are aligned with the framework of the university mission "Science and Virtue."</i>	3.67	.832	Large Extent
<i>2. The total number of units is sufficient to prepare students for dental practice.</i>	3.43	1.003	Moderate Extent
<i>3. There is a relationship between laboratory activities and lecture concepts</i>	3.82	2.291	Large Extent
<i>4. The objectives are relevant to the needs of the profession.</i>	3.67	.898	Large Extent
<i>5. Instructional materials and other resources enrich classroom instruction.</i>	3.64	.926	Large Extent
<i>6. Varied evaluative techniques like tests, quizzes, recitation, research, group assignments and other innovative techniques are conducted regularly.</i>	3.65	.898	Large Extent
Mean of Basic Medical Subjects	3.65	.844	Large Extent
<i>1. Objectives are aligned with the framework of the university mission "Science and Virtue."</i>	3.61	.855	Large Extent
<i>2. The total number of units is sufficient to prepare students for dental practice.</i>	3.52	.974	Large Extent

3. There is a relationship between laboratory activities and lecture concepts.	3.64	.958	Large Extent
4. The objectives are relevant to the needs of the profession.	3.64	.909	Large Extent
5. Instructional materials and other resources enrich classroom instruction	3.68	.908	Large Extent
6. Varied evaluative techniques like tests, quizzes, recitation, research, group assignments and other innovative techniques are conducted regularly.	3.67	.884	Large Extent
Mean of Basic Dental Subjects	3.63	.766	Large Extent
1. Endodontics	3.72	.993	Large Extent
2. Oral Diagnosis	3.80	.942	Large Extent
3. Oral Surgery	3.76	.966	Large Extent
4. Orthodontics	3.68	.975	Large Extent
5. Pediatric Dentistry	3.75	.957	Large Extent
6. Periodontics	3.63	1.016	Large Extent
7. Prosthodontics	3.83	.942	Large Extent
8. Restorative Dentistry	4.02	.825	Large Extent
Mean of Clinical Dentistry	3.77	.766	Large Extent
Overall Mean of Curriculum	3.68	.713	Large Extent

Discussion

Graduating students of Centro Escolar University perceive themselves as prepared for dental practice. This seems to show that the school is preparing their students to be capable of performing their duties as dentists by the time they graduate. A sizeable amount of students though feel ill-prepared in providing emergency dental care. This is probably a cause for worry and should be addressed in the study school. With regard to their self-concept, for each of the particulars pertaining to quality oral health care, all rated to a “large extent” in their perceived preparedness. This shows a tendency to feel good about themselves and their preparedness and suggests that the school must be doing a good job with their education.

The number of students studying in the institution is very large. Recently, there are renovations being held in the Dentistry building so this may be the reason for their rating of the clinical infirmary wherein clinical infirmary ranked the lowest with number of module units available, safety, cleanliness and orderliness of the infirmary and modernity of equipment giving the results of moderate extent.

The graduating students had the lowest results for Orthodontics and Periodontics. The finding is contrary to the study done in 2004 by Dhima et. al., wherein Prosthodontics is one of the subjects wherein students feel least well prepared for. Although Orthodontics and Periodontics are both fields of specialization, the program may be enhanced by adding additional hours for the subjects as well as conducting workshops during semestral breaks or summer.

Proposed program enhancements for the school are the following:

- Introduce students to the subject Practice Management early in their studies.
- That as students enter basic medical, basic dental and clinical dentistry, the emergencies specific to each subject should be included in the syllabus.
- Before graduation, an enrichment program entitled ‘Enrichment Program on Dental Emergencies’ can be offered.
- Allied Health Workers Day may be implemented.
- Dental “Currency” program can be another option of students of the School of Dentistry to constantly check on current products and find ways and means to be able to bring this to the University.
- Orthodontics and Periodontics Workshop be given.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, most of the graduating students see themselves prepared for dental practice. The graduating students will generally be good and responsible dentists. However, the current program is lacking in preparing graduating dental students for emergency dental cases. Moreover, the number of module units available, the environment of the clinic and the modernity of the equipment negatively affects the preparedness of graduating students. These areas, although minor, are what the school has to look into considering the amount of students enrolled in Centro Escolar University.

Godoy in her study in 2004 stated that the graduates of CEU College of Dentistry are competent as reflected in their participation in the dental circle of professionals committed to provide quality service [11]. This still holds true up to date. Centro Escolar University is still one of the top performing schools in Dentistry. The findings of this study will further enhance the Dental program of the University so as to produce graduates who are confident, competent and most importantly, capable. As quoted from Hendricson in 2012, "We need to focus on the factors that actually determine the extent and quality of students' learning, and try to use these factors to work toward a perfect intersection of teacher, student, and learning environment" [12].

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RESEARCH ARTICLE



Christianity in Africa: A Beacon of Hope for Christianity in Europe

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Abstract

World Christianity has experienced several changes including its spread and decline across the world. Following what Andrew F. Walls terms as “Serial character of Christian advance,” Christianity has moved from Europe, its previous heartland to other continents like Africa, Asia and Latin America. Today in Europe, in general terms, Christianity can be described in words such as ‘declining’, ‘empty pews’, ‘dying’, ‘few pews filled with only old folks’, etc. Given the seemingly hopeless nature of the condition of Christianity in Europe, this article seeks to argue that Christianity in Africa provides hope for world Christianity in the light of the dying state of it in Europe, its erstwhile heartland. The article explores the phenomena of globalization and migration as media through which Christianity in Africa provides this hope to Europe and World Christianity at large.

Keywords: Christianity; Globalization; Migration; Hope; Africa; Europe.

Introduction

What started in Israel twenty centuries ago as a group of adherents professing that some man called Jesus Christ was a son of God and came to die as a messiah to the Jews and a saviour of the entire world has become very widespread as Christianity by the relentless and unflinching pursuits of these adherents. Christianity moved beyond the borders of Jerusalem and Judea—its initial heartland [1] and spread throughout the Greco-Roman world in the early centuries of church history. Following what Andrew F. Walls [2] described as “Serial character of Christian advance,” Christianity moved from one place to the other; declining in one location and simultaneously resurfacing in another location.

During the 18th, 19th and early part of 20th centuries, this serial character of Christian advance as described by Walls saw Europe as the heartland of world Christianity. In fact there were more Christians in Europe than in other parts of the world [3]. At this era, Britain for instance deployed more missionaries outside Europe than any other country, according to Walls. But by the end of the 20th century, world Christianity experienced a paradigm shift in that Europe was no longer the heartland of Christianity; Africa, Asia and Latin America were [4]. Africa in particular has since become the heartland for world Christianity providing hope for the declining church membership, evangelistic and spiritual fervour in Europe. In this article I attempt to explicate on developments that are making Africa stand the chance as a beacon of hope for the declining Christianity in Europe. I will attempt to give a brief history of Christianity in Africa and also touch on

developments such as globalization and migration which I think are major factors that put Africa in this place of exuding hope for the declining Christianity in Europe.

Brief History of Christianity in Africa

Christianity existed in Africa before the missionary encounters of the 19th century. According to Sebastian Kim and Kirsteen Kim [5], quoting John Mbiti, Christianity in Africa is so old that it can aptly be termed as “an indigenous, traditional and African religion.” The origin of African Christianity has links to the church of Ethiopia [6]. Ethiopia had contacts with the Jews way before Jesus Christ was born. This contact is found in the encounter between King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba as recorded in 1 Kings Chapter 10 [7]. When Jesus was born also, he sought asylum with his parents in Egypt to escape the plot of King Herod to kill him as a baby [8]. The Coptic Church in Egypt values this event and also argues that the good news came first to them through the preaching of the apostle Mark who is believed to have been martyred in Alexandria [9]. Moreover, the case of the Ethiopian eunuch (an African) who met the evangelist Philip on his way back to Ethiopia from a worship time in Jerusalem is often considered in talking about the history of Christianity in Africa. This eunuch who was a high ranking official in charge of the Ethiopian Queen’s finance, believed the gospel of Jesus Christ preached to him by Philip and was baptised by him (Luke 8:27-39) [10].

According to Dyron B. Daughrity, Africans were present on the birthday of Christianity: the day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2, because mention was made of people from Egypt and Libya [11]. He also indicates that Africans first preached the gospel to non-Jews before anyone because the account of Acts 11:19 talks about believers coming from Cyrene witnessing to Greeks in Antioch. He further posits that the great apostle Paul could have been ordained by persons including Africans in the church in Antioch as Acts 13 records it. For Daughrity, Africa’s extra-canonical pedigree is equally impressive. St. Anthony the Great, the father of monasticism, was Egyptian. Several African church fathers defined the Christian faith for us as we understand it today: Athanasius, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Cyprian and Tertullian. Indeed, Athanasius was the leading theologian in the Trinitarian controversies as well as in the determination of the biblical canon. Athanasius’s home city, Alexandria, was well known as “the leading academic centre of the ancient world.” Alexandria and Carthage (Tunisia) were pivotal in shaping the earliest medieval Western universities. (...) the most important theologian in Christian history, Augustine (354-430), was an African Berber from Algeria [12].

Moving away from these instances of early forms of Christianity in Africa, it is worth pointing out that sub-Saharan Africa came into contact with Christianity through the missionary efforts of Europe in the 19th and early 20th centuries. However, during this missionary times, “(...) for every missionary there were dozens of African leaders,” Daughrity [13] indicates.

Today, out of the 59 countries in continental Africa, 31 countries have Christianity as the dominant religion [14]. Most Christians in Africa today are Protestants and Pentecostals/Charismatics while the Roman Catholic Church draws about a third of Christian number in Africa [15]. The ancient orthodox church which is found mainly in the Nile Valley constitute a tenth of the Christian population in Africa [16]. Christianity in Africa is now more vibrant and energetic than it is Europe. According to Daughrity, citing from Terence Ranger, by 2030 there will be more Christians in Africa than there will be Latin America [17].

Globalization

Given the background of Christianity in Africa and how it is currently growing, it gives one the sense that indeed it can offer the hope of keeping world Christianity moving despite its decline in Europe which used to be the heartland of Christianity until the rise and spread of secularism. But how African Christianity can offer this hope is my concern. I find the phenomenon of globalization as providing Africa the platform and medium to provide hope for Christianity amidst its decline in Europe. Considering globalization as a concept and phenomenon, I like to draw on the definition giving by Robert J. Schreiter: “Globalization (...) is the extension of the effects of modernity to the entire world, and the compression of time and space [18].”

For Schreiter, globalization first works by extension: spreading the effects of modernity to other parts of the world through the help of communication technologies such as faxes, modems, computers and the internet. Giving this feature of globalization, churches in Africa both

Pentecostal/Charismatic and Protestants are able to extend their style of worship and pursuit of the Christian faith to other parts of the world. Today, churches in Africa, especially the Pentecostal/Charismatic ones use the internet to stream their worship services live online to the rest of the world and also put a lot of information about the Christian faith on the homepages of their websites.

They also draw on the technology of satellite to broadcast on channels that can be watched globally. The first effect of modernity that was extended to the rest of the world through globalization was “western culture [19],” but now with this same extension effect, Africa can and is able to transmit the passion, spiritual energy and fervour of Christianity to Europe where these are dying out among many Christians there.

Moreover, Schreiter’s definition of globalization talks of compression which he explains us the compression of time and space such that events occurring around the globe can be witnessed instantaneously through technology. By the compression of distance due to the advent of faster means of transportation such as airplanes, African churches are able to send missionaries to Europe and other parts of the world easier than they could before. Moreover, there is an increasing phenomenon of Pentecostal and charismatic churches in Africa establishing overseas branches in Europe which is partly a consequent of globalization.

Some leaders of these churches also travel to Europe and other parts of the world to preach the gospel. The Light House Chapel International, a charismatic church headquartered in Accra, Ghana, for instance, has an outreach division called Healing Jesus Crusade led by the Bishop, Dag Heward Mills which travels the continents preaching the gospel. That aside, through the compression of time and space, people around the world have much contact with another than before. This happens in the context of migration by which Africans and Europeans get to meet.

Migration

Migration considered as factor that can help and already, in some respects, helps Christianity in Africa provide hope for the declining Christianity in Europe can well be understood in this piece when discussed in relation to globalization as explained before now. By the compression of time and space through the technology of travel, many more people, especially Africans are able to travel easily to different parts of the world including Europe than before. Many of these African migrants move to Europe and other parts of the world for very different reasons. Some constitute an academic class who go for research and higher academic studies (like I am currently doing in Germany); others are on political basis but the majority are on economic grounds [20]: to seek greener pastures and better their lots.

Nonetheless, Asamoah-Gyadu, citing Jehu J. Hanciles, has asserted that, “into whichever category they fall, African migrants have always carried their faith with them to the Diasporas [21].” As they find themselves in this new context, they share their faith with their new neighbours because for them the decline of Christianity in Europe is a call for mission and evangelism [22]. This context created by migration provides a platform for Africans to share their Christianity characterized by passion, energy and spiritual fervour to Europe.

The most important aspect of the Africa Diaspora is African migrant churches. These churches are set up to provide worship and fellowship avenues for African Christians. They do not only attract African Christians, but as a result of their missional and evangelistic identity, they attract other non-Christian Africans as well as Europeans. I have visited some African migrant churches [23] in Germany and found not only Africans but also native Germans who were very much at home with the African liturgical worship: loud singing accompanied with drumming, clapping, dancing and praying aloud which is diametrically opposite to mainline German Lutheran, Evangelical and Roman Catholic churches.

As much as most of these Diaspora churches are mostly Africans in membership like the Kingsway International Christian Centre in UK, others have majority non-Africans in membership like Pastor Sunday Adelaja’s Embassy of God Church in Kiev [24]. The large number of the Africa Diaspora has burgeoned African migrant churches and their corresponding impact on the declining and fainting spiritual strength of Christianity in Europe. According to Daugherty, citing Afe Adogame, Africans bring the gospel to parts of the West where Christianity has faded out or silenced [25]. I agree with Daugherty and think that this task, often referred to in mission studies as

'reverse mission [26]' is tenable in the context of the Africa Diaspora which is a consequent of migration.

Conclusion

Following Andrew F. Walls concept of the serial character of Christian advance, I think that the decline of Christianity in Europe which once was a heartland of world Christianity [27] has caused a paradigm shift such that Africa has found itself as the heartland of Christianity. And with factors such as globalization and its effect on migration, Christianity in African is afforded the opportunity to provide hope for world Christianity. Christianity in African is providing a kind of hope that says that the fact that Europe, the erstwhile centre of world Christianity, is now experiencing a decline in Christianity characterized by empty pews, and few pews filled with old folks, churches converted to restaurant, residences, shops and pubs [28], is no indication that Christianity is declining in general. While believing that Christianity in African can and is providing this hope through the help of globalization and migration, the question still stands to be asked what measures are Christians in Africa, both home and in the Diaspora putting in place to save them from going the same way Europe is going: declining Christianity. This is an area to explore and also for Africans to humbly reflect and work hard to sustain the strength of the pulse of Christianity in the continent.

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