

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING OF BAPTIST MISSION IN ORIIRE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OYO STATE

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Abstract

Nigeria is naturally endowed with natural resources that if properly harnessed by effective leaders can take the country to a greater height. Nigerians have not also been enjoying the dividend of democracy as expected and this has culminated to economic recession and various social vices in the country. It is on this note that this paper assesses Christian mission and training of youths, so as to ensure that leaders who know what leadership entails take the mantle of leadership in Nigeria. To achieve the aforementioned objectives, total enumeration sampling technique was employed in selecting the churches used while random sampling technique was employed in selecting twenty Baptist adherents per church totaling two hundred respondents. Data collected for the study was analyzed using tables, frequency counts, percentages and rank order statistical test. The findings of this work showed that Baptist Mission in the area of study laid emphasis on leadership training, and that there were age limits for the training of youths in the Baptist Mission. It is thus recommended that parents should work hand in hand with the Missionaries in the training of youths for leadership role. Age limit should also be put into consideration in the training of youths for leadership role.

Introduction

The emergence of Christian Missions in Nigeria was in the 15th century. This early attempt was through the efforts of the Roman-Catholic Portuguese. The objectives of this Mission can be categorized into wanting to plant the seed of Christianity along the coast of West-Africa, and to have concern for the well-being of Nigerian. They believed that one of the factors that helped Jesus Christ during his earthly ministry was the practical assistance that Jesus Christ gave to the people. For example, He changed water into wine, raised Lazarus from death, healed the sick and a host of others.

The development and growth of a nation cannot be divorced from the quality

of leaders that rule such country. Leaders are like driver driving a car in which the success of a journey depends on his/her methods and ways of driving. Bible does not silent on the importance of leaders in a successful community. Jesus Christ explained the fact that leaders are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men (Matt. 5:13).

The Holy Scriptures essentially regard leadership role as primarily from God. It belongs to God and manifests his absolute sovereignty. All other authority originates from God and appointed to serve God. This is in particular true of the authority of kings and rulers over their

subjects and the nations. There is no authority except from God and those that exist have been instituted by God (Romans 13:1). Leaders are therefore the servants and ministers of God for the common good of their subject and they are to exercise their authority in the spirit of service; training of leader should not be taken with the hand of levity because leadership determines the growth or the otherwise of a nation. This might not be unconnected with leadership issue in Baptist polity in Ogbomoso.

Leadership means the act of controlling or leading a group of people in a particular organization so as to achieve certain objectives. Gbadero (2003) opined that Nigeria as a country is in the stage of poverty because of dearth in quality leadership, especially exemplary leadership which is depicted by 'the do as I do' syndrome and 'not do as I say.' His position is germane and cannot be doubted. However; he has not spelt out ways through which religious organizations can help in bringing solution to the aforementioned problem. This has created gap in academic discourse.

Related to the above assertion, Adeniji (2008) opined that the behaviour that wins one respect is to live by example i.e. to be a role model. If one wants to gain commitment and achieve the highest standards, such one must be a model of the behaviour that he expects of others. To model effectively, one must be characterized with good behaviour. As a leader in any organization, one is expected to stand up for his beliefs. The first commitment that one must make is to clarify his personal values. Eloquent speeches are not the same as personal values. His deeds are far more important than his words. Thus, his words and deeds must be consistent. Looking at the position above, it is obvious that the author has pointed out the qualities that a leader must exhibit. The qualities as

pointed out cannot be overlooked; but it has not exhausted all the expected qualities.

As a corollary, leaders imagine an exciting, highly attractive future for their organization. They have visions and dreams of what could be, they have absolute and total personal belief in those dreams, and they are confident in their abilities to make extraordinary things happen. Every organization, every social movement, begins with a dream. Yet, a vision seen only by a leader is insufficient to create an organized movement or a significant change in an establishment. A person with no constituents is not a leader, and people do not follow until they accept a vision as their own. Leaders cannot command commitment; they can only inspire it and enlist others into the vision. One cannot ignite the flame of passion in others if he does not express enthusiasm for the compelling vision of the group.

According to Ayoola (2015), leaders often venture out on what will bring progress to an organization. Leaders do not sit idly by waiting for fate to smile upon them. While luck or being in the right place at the right time may play a role in the specific opportunities leaders embrace, those who lead others to greatness seek and accept challenges. Whatever the challenge, all the innovations involved a change from the status-quo. No one claims to have done his or her personal best by keeping things the same. All leaders challenge the process in order to give room for varieties and development. Leaders set pace for people who are willing to step out to improve. It is impossible for a leader to be the only creator or originator of new products, services or process. Product and service innovations tend to come from customer, clients, vendors, people on the front lines, while process innovations tend to come from the people doing the work. One's primary

contribution to the search for opportunities is in the recognition of good ideas, the support of those ideas, and the willingness to challenge the system in order to get new products, processes, services and systems adopted.

Organizational dreams do not come to reality through the actions of a single leader, Leadership is a team effort. Exemplary leaders enable others to act. They foster collaboration and build trust. This sense of teamwork goes far beyond a few direct reports or close confidants. In today's virtual organization, co-operation cannot be restricted to a small group of loyalists; it must include peers, managers, customers and clients, suppliers, citizens and all those who have a stake in the vision.

Ayoola (2015) opines that poverty has found its ugly head in Nigeria. The impact of poverty is entrenched in almost every facet of life. Larger percentages of Nigerians are poor, peasant farmers and underprivileged. Uncountable youths are the unemployed, the homeless, the sick. Similarly, some women have turned into prostitution while there are area boys, political hooligans or thugs, touts in many of our garages and unqualified drivers who have destroyed many lives, all induced by poverty. Poverty has duplicated morality in the society particularly in the religious community such as church and Mosque. Poverty is one of the reasons while most Nigerian are perpetrating evils even outside the country all in the name of seeking improved daily living.

The collapse of economy, particularly inability of state Governors to pay workers' salaries recently is as a result of flamboyancy of leaders, who made up their minds to devastate our national resources. Ayoola (2015), it is obvious that what we are experiencing today in Nigeria is as a result

of leaders who made our Nation to be bankrupt, because they have bastardized our economy. Nigerians are well baptized into the stream of poverty because we are not under the control of good leaders and we are not ashamed of it. People who stole or looted our money from the national treasuries are displaying their wealth with confidence and receiving hailing and praises from the people who are supposed to challenge them.

Corruption in Nigeria is one of the banes of progress in Nigeria. Majority of our leaders see nothing bad in involving themselves in corruption. This act has also been transmitted to the followers. However, for Nigeria as a country to regain her lost glory, Christian virtues must be imbibed by all and sundry. These include transparency, humility, loyalty, charity, truthfulness, respect which are all virtues that a good leader must possess.

Idowu (2013) enjoins leaders to start with who before thinking of what i.e. he needs to think of people who have the same vision with him in moving the organization forward. A leader as an individual is limited; it is when he is able to surround himself with the right kind of people that he is able to get the kind of result he wants. Without the right kind of people, irrespective of other personal attributes, the best a leader can be is efficient, not effective. He may still get results but it will be at a very high cost. By surrounding himself with the right people, he knows he does not have to macro-manage. Getting the right kind of people builds synergy. With synergy, energy is multiplied and what hitherto was considered unachievable becomes easily attainable(Alechenu, 2013).

Effectiveness is a consequence of appropriate utilization of time. An effective leader is conscious of this and does not give anyone the priviledge of wasting his time

just as he does not grant himself the indulgence of time wasting. Time is the most important resource to an effective leader because once it is depleted, it cannot be replenished.

Statement of the Problem

It is obvious that Nigeria is a country that is blessed with both natural and human resources. However, in the midst of plenty we are experiencing scarcity, to be précised economic recession. Therefore majority have attributed this problem to lack of good and God fearing leaders among those managing the resources of the country. It is on this note that this paper examines roles that orthodox Christian Missions can play in the training of good leaders in Nigeria so as to ameliorate the present economic melt-down that arose as a result of poor governance.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this work are to examine the roles of Orthodox Churches in the training of young ones to become good leaders and to find out the qualities that exemplary leaders must possess. It also aims at identifying the roles that Christian Missions can play in the training of leaders.

Research Questions

1. Does Baptist Mission lay emphasis on leadership training of youths?
2. Does the Baptist Mission have age limits for the training of youths?
3. Does the Baptist Mission often put gender into consideration during training programmes?
4. Do government policies often affect the training of youths in the Baptist Mission negatively?
5. Do parents often cooperate with the Mission in the training of the youths?

Cope of the Study

The scope of this study is an assessment of Baptist Mission in Oriire Local Government and the role she can play in the training of God fearing and good leaders. We are not concerned in this study with how they are training their members on how to gain eternity or about their liturgies. The result of this study is also opened to generalization.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employs descriptive survey research design in addressing the issue of Christian Mission and Leadership Training of Baptist Mission in Oriire Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Population of the Study

The study covers the entire Baptist Churches in Oriire Local Government of Oyo state including Pastors and members of congregation in the said churches.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Oriire Local Government is divided into ten wards with a total of ten existing Baptist Churches. Thus, total enumeration sampling technique was employed in selecting the churches while random sampling technique was employed in selecting twenty Baptist adherents per church totaling two hundred respondents.

Instrumentation

The instrument used in this work was a structured twenty items questionnaire titled: Baptist Mission and Leadership Questionnaire (BMLQ) comprising sections A and B. Section 'A' dealt with biographical data of the respondents while Section 'B' dealt with questions relating to topic under review.

Validation of the Instrument

The instrument was validated by

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experts in church History from Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso to ensure face and content validity of the instrument. Sample of the instrument was administered on twenty Baptist Pastors and adherents in Ogbomoso Township outside the study area. Data collected were analyzed through Pearson product moment/correlation coefficient which yielded 0.76, hence, the instrument was adjudged reliable. Having sought for express permission from the Baptist Conference, Ogbomoso, the instrument was personally administered on the subjects; translating the items to some

while others filled theirs on their own. The instrument were administered within a week and retrieved for further processing.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected for the study was analyzed, using tables, frequency counts, percentages and rank order statistical test.

Results and Discussion of Findings

Research Question 1: Do Baptist Missions lay significant emphasis on leadership training of youths?

Table 1

Analysis of Baptist Mission's Emphasis on Youth Leadership Training

S/N	ITEMS	F	%	Rank Order
1.	There are programmes within the Baptist Churches to train youths for leadership roles	110	55.0	1 st
2.	Baptist Mission does not concern with leadership training	20	10.0	4 th
3.	Leadership has nothing to do with the Kingdom Assignment	40	20.0	2 nd
4.	Baptist Mission has specialists who train youths for leadership roles	30	15.0	3 rd
	TOTAL	200	100	

Source: Author's Field Work 2017

analyzed, using tables, frequency counts, percentages and rank order statistical test.

Research Question 1: Do Baptist Missions lay significant emphasis on leadership training of youths?

Results and Discussion of Findings

Table 2

Analysis of Age Limits in the Training of Youths in The Baptist Mission

S/N	ITEMS	F	%	Rank Order
1.	Children have right to receive leadership training within Baptist circle	20	10.0	3rd
2.	Baptist Mission has age limit for the training of leaders	130	65.0	1st
3.	Age group has nothing to do with leadership training	40	20.0	2nd
4.	Leadership training is only meant for the aged	10	05.0	4th
	TOTAL	200	100	

Source: Author's Field Work 2017

Table 2 shows that the Baptist Mission had age limit for the training of youths with the aim of ensuring the effectiveness of the training as it is obvious in Item 2 which was ranked 1st. It is also in against Item 4 which was ranked least.

Research Question 3: Does the Baptist Missions often put gender into consideration during training programmes?

Table 3

Analysis of Gender Consideration in the Leadership Training of Baptist Mission

S/N	ITEMS	F	%	Rank Order
1.	Leadership training is only meant for male in the Baptist Mission	10	05.0	3rd
2.	Gender is not a barrier in the training of youths in the Baptist Circle	142	71.0	1st
3.	Females are often regarded as secondary citizens	43	21.5	2nd
4.	Males often yield positively to leadership training than their female counterpart	05	02.5	4th
	TOTAL	200	100	

Source: Author's Field Work 2017

Table 3 shows that gender is not a barrier in the training of youths in the Baptist Mission since both male and female have potential to become leader in the society as contained in Item 2 which was ranked 1st as against Item four which was ranked least.

Research Question 4: Do Government policies often affect the training of youths in the Baptist Missions negatively?

Table 4

Analysis of Governments'Policies as it affects Baptist Mission's Leadership Training of the Youths

S/N	ITEMS	F	%	Rank Order
1.	Government Policies do not encourage Missions to train youths to become good leaders	10	05.0	4th
2.	Government at all levels are capable enough to train youths	20	10.0	3rd
3.	Baptist Mission is working hand in hand with the government in the training of youths	40	20.0	2nd
4.	Government needs to support M issions in leadership training	130	65.0	1st
	TOTAL	200	100	

Source: Author's Field Work 2017

Table 4 shows that the Governments need to corroborate the effort of the Baptist Mission in the training of youths for leadership as contained in Item 4 that ranked 1st as against Item 1 which was ranked least.

Research Question 5: Do parents often cooperate with the Mission in the training of the youths?

Table 5

Analysis of Parents' Impact in the Training of Youths by Baptist Mission

S/N	ITEMS	F	%	Rank Order
1.	Parents need to corroborate the effort of the missions in leadership training	15	7.5	3rd
2.	Parents often co-operate with the missions in the leadership training of youths	15	7.5	3rd
3.	Leadership training must start from home	20	10.0	2nd
4.	Parents need to live by example in the training of youths for leadership role	150	75.0	1st
	TOTAL	200	100	

Source: Author's Field Work 2017

Table 5 shows that parents need to live by example in the training of youths for leadership role as contained in Item 4 ranked 1st as against Items 1 & 2 that ranked 3rd.

Discussion of Findings

Findings from the study revealed that the Baptist Mission in the study area often laid emphasis on the leadership training of youths which is in line with the findings of Ayoola (2015) who opined that leaders must venture out on what will bring progress to an organization. Leaders must not sit idly by waiting for fate to smile upon them. Again, results obtained from the study indicated that the Baptist Missions has age limits for the training of youths for leadership role. Similar view was held by Idowu (2013) who enjoined leaders to start leadership training with people who know the left from the right i.e. people who are of age.

In like manner, gender is not a barrier in the training of youths for leadership role in the Baptist setting. Omotoye (2015) supported this view when he opined that looking at the importance of leader in the society selection of men and women to position of authority should not be based on honorary award, acquisition of certificate, quota system, god-fatherism, but

criteria like God fearing men and women of good integrity should be the yardstick to be used.

Furthermore, findings from the study show that Government needs to corroborate the Baptist Mission efforts in the training of youths for leadership role. This was the contention of Ayoola (2015) who opined that organizational dreams do not come to reality through the actions of a single leader. Leadership is a team effort. Exemplary leaders enable others to act, foster collaboration and build trust. This sense of teamwork goes far beyond a few direct reports or close confidants.

Moreover, findings from the study show that parents need to live by example in the training of youths for leadership role. This position is in line with the submission of Adeniji (2008) that the behavior that wins one respect is to live by example i.e. to be a role model. If one wants to gain commitment and achieve the highest standards, one must be characterized with good behaviour.

Conclusion

The importance of training in the acquisition of leadership qualities cannot be overlooked as shown in this work. Therefore, Churches all over Nigeria should

take leadership training as part of their clarion call so as to have leaders who will rule the Nation (Nigeria) with the fear of God and at the same time restore the lost glory of the country. Leadership training should not be left for schools alone; rather parents, churches and mosques must take it as part of their duty of which they will give account of it on the day of reckoning.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this work, the following recommendations are made:

Leaders must acknowledge the fact that they are representing God and they will give account one day. Leadership training should be the priority of all Missions in Nigeria i.e. it must not be limited to the Baptist missions alone. Since it is for the benefit of the society at large, thus all missions must embrace it.

Leadership training should focus much on the youths who are potential leaders of this country. That is, people of old

age should be given less priority in training them as leaders. Rather, priority should be given to youths.

There should be no gender discrimination in providing leadership training. Government needs to punish leaders who fail to perform up to the expectation of the masses. Any leader that is caught looting public treasury must not go unpunished so as to serve as deterrent to others.

Mundane things should not be part of criteria for the election of leaders; rather fruits of the spirit should be considered. People that have unstained personality should be considered. Leaders who ruled with the fear of God should be commended and reinforced openly so as to serve as an encouragement for others. Orientation of our people to political appointment must change i.e. not to think that gaining of political appointment is tantamount to crossing of the bridge of poverty.

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