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Abstract- That Nigeria is described as extremely corrupt is no longer new. A series of academic seminars are being organized to address this deadly "virus" in the country. Unfortunately, the academic sector has not fared better. This paper aims to examine the credibility of the academic sector as teaching examples and watchdogs in Nigerian society. It adopts historical, analytical, and expository methods with a case study of the Apostle Paul's instruction to Titus in Titus 2:7-8. The findings of this study reveal that the majority of academic practitioners fail to translate their religious values into their day-to-day operations. Also, the impact of religion on Nigerian citizens, particularly in the academic sector, is at a low level. The study recommends that academicians should imbibe religious values as they discharge their duties.

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I. Preamble

Odunuga (2017) has described the situation in Nigeria as a "cinematic tragedy." He was responding to another frustrated analyst who asked a rhetorical question. "Is anybody alright in Nigeria?" (Odunuga, 2017). Yes, "Nigeria is corrupt. Fantastically corrupt too" (Olawoyin, 2017). Ironically, Nigerians are religious. Notoriously religious also. To buttress this point, Odunuga (2017) remarks that:

> We have not even touched on the vexing issues of ethnicity and religion-two things that have festered the feeling of mutual suspicion and distrust in the land. But the irony is that these peoples (Nigerians) are often united in looting. There is no ethnic or religious coloration when it comes to impoverishing the poor and making life solitary; poor, nasty, brutish, and short.

Academic seminars and what have you are often organized for attitudinal change and re-orientation. Although not many promises of paper publications are often fulfilled, those published are usually not based on moral conviction but for promotional purposes. Scholars are always fast at blaming the unworkability of the Nigerian systems on every other sector, like the military, politicians, and judiciary, to name just a few. But the problem is our inability to look inward to appreciate the fact that the change ought to begin with us. The assumption here is that the resultant effect of the derailment in our value system is not only being felt in the social, political, or economic spheres; the academic sector must take a share, if not larger, be it in administration, teaching, or seminar organizers.

To appreciate the above assumption, Idowu Akinlotan (2017) opines thus: "The Frenchman, Jem-Baptist Alphonse Kar, carried a fitting epigram in the 19th century to capture the wastefulness and futility of such idealistic campaigns. *Plus ca change, plus c' est la meme*, he moaned. Roughly translated, "The more, things change, the more they remain the same."

As Nigeria is not working, so is the academic sector. As Nigeria is deeply religious, so also is the endemic religious situation in the Nigeria's academics.

This paper is out to examine the impact of religion on checking fraud in Nigeria, particularly as it affects academics and academicians as enlightened examples in society.

II. Religion and its Focus

As a universal phenomenon, religion is difficult to describe. It depends, to a very large extent, on which angle one looks at it and from which school of thought one belongs. The impact of this observation is captured by Nida (1968:20) as he observed that:

> Religion, since it is so vitally related to the total structure of human personality and behavior, can be studied from a number of different perspectives, e.g. ethical behavior, social participation, systems of belief and ritual performance. However, communication, a phase of religion often neglected is one of its most strategic and diagnostic features for its is precisely in the area of communication that religion differs principally from philosophy, its closets ideological competition.

There are a few important things one can take from the observation of Eugene Nida above. First, religion, in whatever way one looks at it, must relate with the personality of humanity and its behaviour. This, perhaps, should be in the mind of Turaki (1999:71) when he describes religion as a process, "consisting of being and a theory of meaning," In this case, man must first exist before delving into religion. There is no way, however, that a man would exist without the involvement of feelings, behavior, and beliefs (Maolomo, 2016). In a capsule form, after one's existence comes the introduction of religion. Except, however, a person allows the practice of such a religion to affect his or her

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value system, which, of course, is the main focus of religion, that process cannot be adjudged religious. Referring to Nigeria and Nigerians, Abogunrin (1986:11) opines that:

> Value systems have broken down and the churches and mosques appear to be helpless. We are all suffering from the disease of misplaced values. The church and mosque have not been able to check the extravagant dressing and spending of their members. It is high time we stopped chasing the shadow. Our nation needs to be born a new morally, ethically, socially and spiritually. We need a new-orientation and a new vision to change our wrong values for the right ones. Religious people must not only profess but also practice their religion.

III. The Religious Overview of the Nigerian Academics and Academicians

This paper has proposed that the main focus of religion must be its critical effect on individual value system. But as it appears, religion and the Nigerian value system are antipodal and opposed to one another. However, in bemoaning the non-existence of religion in our moral values, Abogunrin (1986) broadcast a new orientation and a new vision as the two pillars for attitudinal change.

The two pendulums upon which the two pillars must ride either serially or simultaneously have also been suggested by Eugene Nida (1968, 20). These are "religion and philosophy." "Philosophy" as a compound word is coined from two Greek words of "*philos*" and "*sophia*" technically rendered as "love" and "wisdom". It is not difficult to hear people define a philosopher as a "lover of wisdom." The preposition "of" has somewhat watered down its true meaning. It is difficult to find anyone, not in love with wisdom. Ironically, wisdom is not always reflected in our behavioural patterns, particularly concerning our understanding and association with our society. The best conventional definition of wisdom ought to be reflective and to make it reflective is to make wisdom work in any situation one finds himself me. Love for wisdom would therefore be appropriate. The assumption here is that when one is in love with something, he or she thirsts for it and then pursues it to a logical end.

It is in this sense that this paper agrees with Eugene Nida that religion and academia are somewhat related. In the first instance, academicians are supposed to be in love with and in pursuit of wisdom, hence the closest religious and ideological competitors. Another area in which Eugene Nida relates religion alongside philosophy is in the use of communication as a tool and for expression. We must not forget the wise saying that information is power. Both religion and academics are catalysts for education, but both must commune to be heard, and this is without prejudice to formal and informal methods.

But also, as noted by Nida, a most sensitive and sacrosanct fact to be noted is the differences in the use of communication as a working tool for the desired goals. This, however, should be observed in the process rather than in practice. Communication is very much related to the success of both religious and educational communicators. But because of the different types of audiences, the modes might be slightly different. Religious leaders may not have the four-wall classrooms like real real educators, they have their places of worship to gather their audiences for theocratic instructions, and they have to engage in the best form of communication in line with the needs of their communicates. It is also not in tune with reality that religion neglects an important phase such as communication. Apart from, perhaps, African Traditional Religion, Christianity and Islam have never hidden their appellation as "missionaries." No missionary organization succeeds without the important tool of communication, not even in this age of globalization.

Interestingly, however, is the religious influence on the nation's academics and academicians. Onyenechehie (2008:20) is not ashamed to describe the continent of Africa as "Religious Africa." He came about this idea while reflecting critically on African multiple religious heritage. It will, therefore, not be out of place to describe our formal educators as "Religious Academicians."

It is difficult to conclude any accurate statistics about religious demography in Nigeria's schools at any level, general records could attest to the incontrovertible fact that Nigeria's education is permeated and coloured by religious beliefs of various shades. In many areas of our educational life, religion is given priority, whether in admission, administration or academics, sometimes to the detriment of merit. No wonder much has always been expected from academicians in the art of nation-building since, like all other sectors, religion was expected to affect positively their value systems.

IV. Have Nigeria's Academicians Justified their Nation's Religious Heritage?

The answer to the above question can be so far or so near. Leadership is either made or born. In the field of academics, leadership is being made through well-structured learning and exemplary living. This must have accounted for the series of academic seminars serving as probable watchdogs and conscience of the nation.

The revised and updated illustrated Oxford Dictionary (2003:19) makes a wonderful distinction between academe; academia, academic; academician, and academicism. While academe is the world of learning, academia relates to schola's life. Academic, on the other hand, is anything abstract, theoretical, and not

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of practical relevance. As an academician is a member of an academy (intellectual group), academicism is the basic application of academic principles to art-related issues.

The main reason why people don't attach much importance to anything relating to academics is perhaps its theoretical understanding without practical value. No wonder the attachment of the acronym "academic exercise" to anything is not counted as valuable to the existing reality. This, however, does not have to be so in a situation where intellectuals live by what they teach and according to the tenets of their training and certificates. If those involved in bringing to reality communication and transportation gadgets make them of practical value to society at large, there can be no genuine excuse for contemporary Nigerian academicians not to affect society positively and in a practical manner through their various research.

Although there are no proper statistics to account for the level of fraudulent activities in the nation's education system, particularly in the field of academics, that this is so, perhaps due to the typical Nigerian investigative and judiciary system, does not mean the academic sector is free from corruption and fraud.

Ahuche (2013: 57) opines that "the purpose of education is to produce citizens that respect the law and human right since the opposite appears to be the reality" However, he observes:

> It is important to mention here that corruption in the education sector leads to low standard of morality because people cannot read correctly or interpret the Holy Writ and so would have to behave otherwise. Even the parents, leaders and teachers who are involved in examination malpractice or other vices before the children will not be able to correct them because they are guilty of the same offence (Ahuche, 2013: 57).

Although the list of fraudulent activities in the education sector is in-exhaustible, Ahuche goes on to unveil some of them, such as:

> Marking down pupils in order to favour other pupils, allowing influence pedding in the selection of prefects, payment of bribes by schools and teachers in exchange for awards and titles, recognizing false achievements and credentials. Collection of financial allowances…for un taught classes payment of bribes by teachers to school officials for allocations to teach desired classes… favoritism in hiring, appointments and promotion, diversion of funds from government and international assistance ghost teachers and employees on the schools' payroll…directing the locations of construction and services to locations that offer opportunities for gain by oneself, family or friends; tribalism or nepotism in personnel appointment… (Ahuche, 2013: 57)

Despite these and many other atrocities, is there any justification for complaining of falling standard in education and calling for seminars? Is this not enough evidence in favour of half-baked professionals in virtually all fields within the Nigerian landscape? To quote Ahuche again,

> Since corruption impact on core values and ethics during the formative years of young peoples' lives, it will go a long way to undermine an entire generation's core values regarding accountability, personal responsibility and integrity. That is why corruption in the education sector is more detrimental than in others sectors because of its long term effects Ahuche, 2013: 57).

V. Examination of Instructions to Titus on Exemplary Living (Titus 2:7-8)

Though the book of Titus is short and somewhat overshadowed by the longer letters of Timothy, the practical and theological values of the book cannot be overemphasized (Barker & Kolilenberger, 1994:919). We must, however, be a little bit cautious about Pauline authorship of the book of Titus in view of the linguistic argument proposed by P.N. Harrison. Donald Guthrie (1984: 212-228) however, divides the arguments into four categories. These are the problem of the Hapaxes; the problem of the other non-Pauline words shared with other New Testament writings; the problem of Pauline words or groups of words missing from the pastorals; and the problem of grammatical and stylistic differences. For the overall purpose of this work, we shall endeavor to use "the author" where necessary. The writer of Titus is saturated with a clear term of reference. According to Titus 1:5, the task before the recipient could broadly be divided into two: to complete the unfinished business and to appoint leaders[24] in every town.

Although the latter responsibility appears less problematic, the former is somewhat more cumbersome because the unfinished business was not highlighted. Going through the contents within the book however some suggestions could be in view. According to D.E. Hiebert (1994, 919), the author intended for Titus to take care of several unfinished tasks referred to in the body of the letter as involving "organizing the churches, refuting false teachers, and instructing in doctrine and conduct for the church family."

If Titus was not better convinced of the above cut out responsibilities, the author goes on to make the responsibilities clearer by analyzing the qualifications of teachers to be appointed, the need for the church to have qualified leadership, the need for Titus himself to remain a model in conduct and the reasons why such exemplary leadership is necessary.

The author listed three major qualifications of a responsible leader (Lea & Griffin, Jr. 1992, 278-287). These are marriage and family qualifications (Tit. 1:6); personality and character qualifications (Tit.1:7-8); and devotion to sound doctrine (Tit. 1:9). The first depends on choices, the second on individuals and the third on one's level of educational training and influences.

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Titus himself who must appoint and teach others is not exempted. As he was taught he must allow the training received to reflect in his teaching and conduct so as to be a model so that no one will have any negative thing to say not only about himself, but even the author who was his teacher (Tit.2:6-8).

To lay the foundation for such a feat, the writer uses the Greek word "*sophron*" which means self-control, sound-mindedness and sensible behavior (2:4-5). This behavioral pattern was of utmost necessity because of the nature of the people of Crete in which the church was located. In the first place, one of their own testifies that Cretans are always liars, evil and lazy gluttons', to which The author concurs (Tit. 1:12-13). In his observation, Hiebert opines that the author's acceptance of these derogatory terms were not to undermine the people of Crete but to underline the authority of his own judgement (Hiebert, 1994: 925). He goes further to say,

> The triple charge that "Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy glutton" is supported by other writers. So notorious was their reputation for falsehood that the Greek word "kretizo" (to Crete-ize) meant "to lie," "evil brutes" stigmatizes them as having sunk to the level of beasts, unrestrained in their brutality. "Lazy gluttons" underlines their greed as idle sensualists who desired to be filled without exerting personal effort to earn an honest living.

On the other hand, the immoral problems of the people of Crete made their society a fertile ground for false teachers. They began to prey on the people through false teachings for pecuniary gains.

For Titus to make a difference as an instructor, he must live an exemplary life. The Greek word used to describe such exemplary living is "*typon*." As explained by Richards (2002: 542), this word means more than a "visible impression." He argues that it implies "a pattern or example to follow: We teach others God's way by showing them by own ways of life what these ways are". To emphasize the importance of this kind of exemplary teaching, the author uses the different Greek words for "teach" to juxtapose the word "example" and to oppose the kind of false teaching being disseminated by false teachers in the Crete community.

From Titus 2:1 the author uses "*laleo*" which means to speak assert or proclaim. what is the teacher to teach? "*kalodidaskalous*," that is "What is good (2:3). This is expected to frustrate the bad conduct prevalent in the society. Titus must move beyond teaching what is good but "train" (*sophrontizo*) (2:4) others to know, act, and teach the same. He cannot do this successively unless he encourages (*parakeleo)* (2:6) by a way of a close relationship. By these methods, Titus' teaching would move beyond sound doctrine itself into a lifestyle (2:7) that is in harmony with the revealed truths and it will silence permanently his critics and those of his own teachers (2:8).

VI. Conclusion

To take the author's portrait of real Christian teaching seriously as expanded above, we must rethink rigorously many aspects of our contemporary teaching and academic work. Nigeria is exceedingly corrupt, just as Nigerians are uncompromisingly religious, academicians inclusive. Effective communication of a life that is in accord with sound moral living requires much more than speaking to a passive audience; it needs to be made relational and practicalized by acting what we teach. We do not need to be religious teachers before we can affect our societies through what we teach. We belong to one religion or the other and that should be enough to change Nigeria if only we can enforce reality through our ways of life.

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