Poverty, Social Injustice, Religion and Insecurity in Nigeria: The Imperative of Essencism as A Philosophy Towards the Restoration of Democratic Values

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ABSTRACT

Despite unbroken democratic governance in Nigeria in the last twenty years, there has been an upsurge in poverty, social injustice, religious violence and insecurity. The logic that democracy is the government of the people, by the people and for the good of the people, which serves as a mechanism for the promotion of socio-economic development, peace stability and mass participation of the people in their affairs tends to be invalidated in Nigeria. It is reasoned that as the world headquarter of poverty, insecurity remains a constant decimal in Nigeria. This is because poverty breeds insecurity and an idle mind is the devil's workshop. This paper analysis the correlations between poverty, social injustice, religion, and insecurity in Nigeria. It contends that violent conflicts characterize Nigerian democracy, and threatens the stability of governance institutions, promotes insecurity and creates the vicious cycle of poverty, and violent crimes in the country. This makes it difficult for the government to discharge its primary function of providing security of lives and property. The paper sees Boko Haram, banditry and kidnapping as socio-religious phenomenon that portray the socio-economic, political and ethnic problem that emerged due to bad leadership and governance. Consequently, Boko Haram and bandits have expanded their frontiers beyond Nigeria to other neighbouring countries. The theoretical framework of this paper is that insecurity as typified by Boko Haram, banditry and kidnapping have their roots in poverty and social injustice, which characterized the country's governance system. It argues that corruption, human rights violations, marginalization, and other political vices that characterize state institutions and governance system can be eradicated through the educational system that is anchored on Essencism as a philosophy. This philosophy will through the educative process liberates the minds of the citizens, and implant in the citizens ethical values that will be presented as national ethics.

Keywords: Poverty, Social Injustice, Religion, Insecurity, Essencism, Violence.

INTRODUCTION

With the emergence of democratic governance in Nigeria on May 29th, 1999 after several years of military dictatorship, Nigerians generally expected to benefit from the dividends of democracy. This expectation is anchored on the logic that democracy promotes freedom, social justice, equality, fairness and establishes institutions that ensure the even distribution of the resources of state. Democracy as a political system is regarded as a potent tool for social engineering that can create wealth and empowers the citizenry to better economic livelihood and sustainable development of the country. However, the reverse seems to be the case in Nigeria despite the high expectations due largely to the level of deprivation experienced by Nigerians during the military era.

The military years were characterized by economic sanctions from western powers, and this hampered economic development of the country. This manifested in the slow economic growth and corruption prevalent in Nigeria that promoted highly incidence of poverty and inequality. The return to civil rule was therefore greeted with exuberant by Nigerians. The argument that democracy promotes economic development, peace and prosperity made it possible for the citizens to hope for development and stability of the country through democracy. The great expectations of Nigerians that hoped for the transformation of the country, and prosperity of the people through democracy has been dashed due to current situations and happenings in the country.

In retrospect, twenty years of democratic governance, the situation in the country has become very pathetic. This can be seen in the high level of poverty, unemployment, social injustice, religious violence, inequality, nepotism and insecurity. In fact, poverty, inequality, unemployment, nepotism, religious violence, social injustice and corruption have been on the increase exponentially since 1999. The Nigerian economy has been in shamble, and is just coming out of recession while the country has become the world headquarters of poverty. Most Nigerians have lost their job between 2015 and 2019 due to unfavourable economic climate and this has led to increase in crime rate and insecurity in the country.

Democracy has been seen as a means for sustainable economic development in several countries. This is quite different in Nigeria. The major features of Nigeria's democracy has been increase in poverty, upsurge inequality, ethnic and religious agitations and general violence and insecurity. With democracy in Nigeria, the country has witnessed an unprecedented level of social vices, such as political violence, social injustice, ethno-religious conflicts, kidnapping, militancy, armed robbery and of recent, the activities of the dreaded Islamic sect known as Boko Haram. It is therefore reasoned that the failure of the democratic government to bring the dividends of democracy through the development process into the country as experienced in other countries prompted several Nigerians to vent their anger on government through violence. It is the manifest frustration of the people that has resulted in some of the citizens taking up arms against the country. This has led to debates on the correlation between poverty, social injustice, religion and insecurity. Nigeria is a leading producer of crude oil and natural gas yet majority of the citizenry live in abject poverty, amidst religious violence and social injustice. Consequently, the high level of poverty, social injustice and political manipulation of religion have been seen as the main sources of insecurity in Nigeria.

This paper seeks to justify the claim that poverty, social injustice and religion play prominent role in the current insecurity situation in the country. It asserts that political manipulation of religion and its globalised nature of divide along two angles of Islam and Christianity further complicates insecurity in the country. It is the position of the paper that Essencism as a philosophy through the educative process can be used to implant in the minds of Nigerians a new national ideology, culture and consciousness, which are currently lacking in the country. With Essencism, all Nigerian citizens will be made to imbibe a new ethical consciousness to know what is good and what is bad.

The Nexus between Poverty and Insecurity

The idea that poverty breeds insecurity is debatable, and is an issue that has not been comprehensively settled among scholars. To some there is a clear link between poverty and insecurity, others argue that there is no empirical correlation between poverty and insecurity, but contends that insecurity is caused by some other factors. However, empirical evidence tends to support the facts that poverty, inequality and social injustice breed conflict, anger and insecurity. This can be seen in the idea that "a hungry man is an angry man". Clearly, anger can breed violence, which can expose people to danger, and this suggests insecurity. Despite this argument many scholars have carried out researches in attempt to debunk this and therefore invalidate the logic that poverty breeds insecurity. These scholars maintained that there is direct connection or correlation between poverty and conflict, but argue that certain factors like political instability, ethnicity and resource control are vital causes of insecurity (Collier & Hoeffler, 2002; Collier, Hoeffler and Soderborn, 2001; Fearon, 2004).

The fundamental questions here are; what is the cause of insecurity in developing countries such as Nigeria? Is it ethnicity, religious intolerance, resource control agitation or bad governance? These questions has not been provided answers to by scholars. Although, ethnicity, resource and bad governance could contribute to

insecurity in a country like Nigeria but there is no direct correlation between any of these and insecurity especially in Nigeria. However, the argument seems settled recently through findings by some economic and conflict experts. According to these experts, there exists a causal link between poverty and insecurity (Miguel, 2007; Ngwana, 2012; Odumosu, 1999; Rice, Graff and Lewis, 2006). The deprivation theory of Ted Gurr attests to this argument. This theory offers explicit explanation as to why people are into violence. The psychological aspect of the theory states that "aggression is always a consequence of frustration" and also, "frustration always leads to some form of aggression (Leeds, 1978). The poor according to Odumosu (1999) become violent due to their deprivation and needs. This situation tallies significantly with the insecurity challenge or situation in Nigeria. Frustration, lack, want and denial are the major reasons most of the youths in Nigeria especially in the North take up arms against the Nigerian state. This manifests in the payment of hundred and five hundred Naira by Boko Haram to some suicide bombers for them to embark on suicide missions. Also, most of the members of Boko Haram are recruited through payment of money. Indeed the Almajiri system in the North that symbolizes poverty, is a breeding ground for Boko Haram members. This system poses serious security challenge to Nigeria, hence, it has been described as a time bomb.

It has been shown by studies that eighty percent of conflict resulting in deaths happened in less economic advantage states, that is, in poor countries (Sanchez and Nunez, 2007; Burton, 1997). It is an established fact that most conflict, violent and insurgency are triggered by poverty and other related factors that tend to hinder development in any society (Gurr, 1970). This can be seen in the Boko Haram insurgency in Northern Nigeria where the rate of poverty is highest. Most of the security challenges confronting Nigeria today since 1999-2019 are traceable to high degree of poverty, inequality and social injustice perpetrated through the systematic manipulation of religion. This assertion is aptly explained by Casimir, Nwaoga and Ogbozor (2014) thus:

Nigerian poverty situation has been described as an embarrassment and irony to her abundant natural resources buoyed by oil wealth discovered since 1957. Poverty has led to frustration and anger amongst the poor and the marginalized cultural and religious groups in the country. Poverty among the unemployed youths in North fuelled by corrupt Northern leaders has been identified as cause of the Boko Haram violence. Most of the recruits used by the sect as members and suicide bombers are drawned upon the former Almajiris (poor street children, from poor Muslim parentage), who had been denied formal education, but had been exploited while growing up by rich Islamic clerics who use them as street beggars to ask for alms on the streets of Northern Nigeria. The Boko Haram sect usually offers food, shelter, security and alternative succor to these homeless children and youths to get their support (62).

This provides empirical evidence of the causal relationship between poverty and insecurity in Nigeria. Also, the unemployed youths who have even been educated but have no jobs are also recruited by the Boko Haram members. The North as geopolitical zone has been on the saddle of leadership of the Nigeria state more than the Southern part but yet poverty and illiteracy are highest in the North. The reason for this is largely due to the exploitative mechanism put in place by the Northern leaders and elites. Poverty is institutionalized in the North for political gains of the elites through the manipulation of religion and ethnicity that often result in ethno-religious crisis. Salawu (2012) as cited by Awojobi (2014) captured this more graphically when he states:

It is important to note here that the failure of the Nigerian leaders to establish good government, forge national integration and promote what can be called real economic progress, through deliberate and articulated policies, has led to mass poverty and unemployment. This has resulted into communal, ethnic, religious and class conflicts that have now characterized the Nigerian nation. Poverty and unemployment served as a nursery bed for many ethno-religious conflicts in Nigeria because the country now has a reservoir of poor people who are prepared to kill or be killed for a given course at token benefit. This explains why ethno-religious crises that ever occurred in Nigeria, have a large turnout of people (including the under-aged fighters (361).

This collaborates our position that poverty is orchestrated in Nigeria for selfish reason by the leaders. So, until this situation is reversed in Nigeria through a deliberate educational reform anchored on a sound philosophy that will through the educative process create wealth and empower the citizens through productive activities of employment, insecurity will continue to be a problem.

Social Injustice and Insecurity

Social injustice and social insecurity can best be described as amorphous terminologies that have no codification relevance in the legal system of Nigeria. Social injustice is more of an ethical term within the jurisprudential template in the definition of social norms or ideal. This have empirical relevance when the society generally permits or encourage any form of oppression that tend to infringe on the fundamental human rights of the citizenry without challenge. To Ugwukah (2014) social injustice is a concept that have to do with the denial of fairness or justice in the society when it comes to "division of rewards and burdens and other incidental inequalities". As a concept it is different from justice or injustice in law that cannot be regarded as "moral in practice, or from the concept justice within a coherent ideological system, which focuses on just process rather than an incidental inequalities". Social injustice emanates from "the distribution of advantages and disadvantages in society", which are not carried out on the basis of equity or equality or inequality in the sharing of societal rewards, burdens and resources. So, the diverse perceptions on the "presence and inevitability of social injustice" has been described as the root cause of several political conflicts around the world (87). This is a term that offer explanation for the unfair manner the resources, opportunities, offices, responsibilities, etc are distributed in the society. It explains any kind of oppression and all actions that undermine and prevent the citizens from actualizing their full potentials and the exercise of their self-determination.

This definition and explanation shows that there has been social injustice in Nigeria since the beginning of the Fourth Republic. This is due to the fact that the principles of fairness and equality has not been strictly adhered to in the distribution of the country's resources, political offices, responsibilities etc. the prevalent social injustice in the country since 1999, which has reached its crescendo between 2015 and 2019 has created several conflict situations in the country. This can be seen in the Niger Delta Militancy, the Odua People Congress (OPC), Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) agitations, the Bakassi Boys and Boko Haram insurgency in the North. Fasehun (2012) as cited by Ugwukah (2014) asserts:

… insecurity in the country emanated from lack of social justice. A country that lacks social justice will have no peace. The cradle of national insecurity anywhere has been the absence of social justice and we know that social justice is absent in our country. So, why should it be peaceful? The level of social injustice currently prevailing in Nigeria is reaching alarming heights and we are beginning to feel the effect in the level of discontent amongst the citizenry as demonstrated by various uprising against the state such as Boko Haram incidence, the Niger Delta Militancy, OPC and Bakassi Vigilantes among others. These social injustices seem are obvious to the common man on the street and has led to a large spectrum of our population to lose faith in Nigeria, if not properly addressed, Nigeria could soon become a failed state (91).

What can be gleaned from this is that social injustice is one of the fundamental causes of insecurity in Nigeria. The high incidences of kidnapping, banditry, Boko Haram and general insecurity in Nigeria are clear manifestations of the high level of social injustices in Nigeria since 2015 till date. Indeed, Nigeria has never experienced this high level of insecurity since after the civil war. The reason for this has been attributed to the nepotism of the present democratic leadership in terms of distribution of national resources, responsibilities, political offices, etc, which tend to be skewed in favour of a particular region and religion. This submission is supported by Orji UzorKalu (2012) when he states that the Boko Haram insurgency and menace is traceable to the weak foundation of Nigeria's federalism since independence. "The reason for the continual crises besetting our nation is simple the foundation on which our independence and federalism were built was faulty. This is evident in the crisis that almost scuttled the effort to build Nigeria into one united, indivisible nation" (71). He also argue that the origin of Boko Haram is due to the existence of sufferings and social injustice in the country. He declares that various groups and organizations have suffered injustice in the hands of the Nigerian states as can be seen in the cry about marginalization from the leaders of the country and unfair distribution of state resources. Indeed many Nigerians are unjustly treated hence they rebelled against the state. "Biafra rebelled under the weight of injustice, Niger Delta did same; the north, the theory claims, came out, under Boko Haram to rebel against injustice met out to them when the presidency was denied to them through party and electoral manipulation by the southern politicians" (Casimir, Nwaoga and Ogbozor, 2014:63).

From this analysis, it has been established that social injustice in Nigeria is a key factor in the general insecurity that is currently being experienced in the country.

Religion and Insecurity

Religion is generally supposed to be a vehicle of peace, but it adherents have taken it as a "neutral category and an empty receptacle into which, they are at liberty to supply its content". This therefore is the origin of the diverse "misrepresentation and misapplication", of religion, which has made it "a portent tool for politics, economic and cultural hegemony and advancement". This situation has made religion a "potent tool for the actualization of political, economic and cultural goals and this has created a situation of disappointment in the world today". Although, it is the "desire of humanity to have freedom, peace and stability, but the state of confusion worldwide due to misapplication and misrepresentation of religion continue to worsen and the future of humanity indeed appears bleak and uncertain" (Ekanem, 2015:86).

What can be inferred from this is that religion has become a source of problem to mankind today. This is clearly due to the inability and lack of understanding of man of God's will. This is because human history is basically that of the history of God's providence, which can be found in Essencism as a philosophy. It is on the basis of this that communism, democracy, religion and even philosophy seems hopeless in the face of the various existential problems that confront humanity in the 21st century.

From this perspective, it is only a phenomenological approach to the study and understanding of religion that can provide the vital definition of religion and therefore lead to a "more sane, acceptable and valuable rendering (conception) of religion in its essential denotation". The essence of religion can only be seen and understood in what the Bible refers to as the fruit of the spirit, which are fundamentally the nine elements of love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, faith (fidelity, faithfulness), meekness and temperance" (Ekanem, 2015:84).

For religious practice to be considered to have cohered with the essence of religion, it must be judged in relation to the extent it agrees or disagrees with the composite elements in the fruits of the spirit. It is therefore on the basis of this plumb line we can successfully and genuinely demarcate the perverse activities that go under the rubric of religion as can be seen in the activities of Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria today.

Historically, religion has been employed to excuse violence and intolerance throughout the history of mankind. Although it could be argued that things seem more improved today than they were during the "Crusades, Inquisition or Holocaust and Holy War as far as violence in the name of God" is concerned. Basically, violence is still a part and parcel of religion today and this is bound to continue so long religion remains an "exclusionary activity that are anchored on the belief that any person that does not accept their belief is "doomed" to some kind of 'eternal conjured rot such as hell" (Ekanem:89). This kind of exclusionary views throughout human history has led to:

i. The Crusades (Beginning, 1095)
ii. The Inquisition (Beginning 1184)
iii. Reformation (Circa 1518)
iv. Witch Hunt (Beginning Circa 1480 in Europe)
v. The Christian Identity Movement(Circa 1915)

Sources of Religious Violence

It is an established fact that religious violence has been a part of the development and existence of religion. It is also a fact that history has not been able to effectively calm the passions, hatred and brutality that always manifest in the form of religion. Also, the development in science and technology has not been able to moderate and change this "deep rooted religious thinking" but instead has equipped and empowered religious extremists, radicals and fundamentalists to display more hatred and show sophistication in their killing sprees and methods. Although humanity desires and wishes to witness the end to religious violence, but it seems only negligible few understand its causes. More appalling and confusing is the fact that majority of the religious believers and
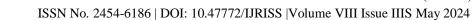
leaders are in total darkness when it comes to the causes and correlations between violence (insecurity) and their religion, which also have to do with their doctrines.

There are clearly five causes and sources of religious violence and Ekanem (2015) lists them as:

1. **Religious Terrorism as symbol, Ritual and Performance:** Religious terrorism is regarded as symbolic event and ritual that must be performed by the adherents and believers. It is considered as a kind of religious duty sacredly and scripturally demanded of the believers of any religion (Christians may argue against this assertion through the non-retaliatory posture of Christians against Boko Haram attacks in Nigeria), but this is taken from historical perspective.

2. **Sanctified Religious Violence as a Religious Devotion and Holy Obligation:** This follow from the first point. This is anchored on the fact that most religions tend to proclaim peace and abhor violence, but inherent and intrinsic in these same religions are traditions and practices that encourage and promote violence. Christianity and Islam preach about peace, war and aggression that not only permitted but sanctified in these religions. The word sanctified here simply means "to be made holy" (Hornby: 1307). It can be seen from here that violence is a kind of religious devotion just like prayer. It is on the basis of this that an average Muslim believes and holds to the belief of violence as sacred duty.

3. **Religious Violence as a Means of Achieving/Attaining Justice:** Although some rationally argued that violence does not achieve anything, but to the fundamentalists it does, why are many people using violence as a means/aim of achieving a different goal? Violence may be used senselessly towards the attainment of different goals, it is a fact that those that make use of this means feel that it is a justifiable mean to achieve their goals.

4. **The Love towards God and Hatred for Humanity:** Traditional theistic religions hold the firm belief that they teach believers that these religions include such ideals of loving God and humanity, but it cannot be substantially defended that the two are always and necessarily compatible. In a sharp contrast to this view, most religious teachings around the world show that loving God is preferred to loving humanity. This absolute and unquenchable love for God and hatred for humanity is a fundamental source and cause of violence in religious circles.

5. **Dogmatic and Unquestionable Doctrines of Religions:** Most religious teachings and doctrines of religions in the world are founded on dogmatism, which makes it impossible for you to ask questions and seek explanations. These teachings and doctrines are transmitted to adherents and followers as sacred dogmas that must necessarily be obeyed without question or rationalization. This dogmatic method of religious doctrines and teachings constitute a highly combustible that can ignite the flame of violence and always do in religious circles (91-92).

It is on the basis of this that Babawole (2010, as cited by Casmir, Nwaoga and Ogbozor (2014) explained that, this revealed in contemporary society that conflicts and wars usually happen due to religious differences. Eme (2010) as cited by Casmir, Nwaoga and Ogbozor (2014) states that Nigeria is repletes with religious differences that usually lead to various tragic violence that killed several innocent people, destruction of properties and dislocation of several communities in various parts of the country. It is also the position of Eme (2010) as explained by Casmir, Nwaoga and Ogbozor (2014) that the "Boko Haram insurgencies is a conflict between a particular Islamic sect and the rest of the Nigerian Christian Community" that fear that they will be affected if the agenda of the sect to Islamize the whole of Nigeria is realized (63).

From the above historical analysis, we can argue rightly that there is a causal relationship between religion and insecurity in Nigeria as can be seen in northern Nigeria through Boko Haram terrorism, banditry, kidnapping and general insecurity. Clearly, poverty, social injustice and religion are three fundamental factors that contribute to the general insecurity in Nigeria presently. But the question is, how can these root causes of insecurity be tackled to end insecurity in Nigeria?

Essencism as a Restorative Philosophy towards Democratic Values

Form our analysis, it has been established that there exist causal relationships between poverty, social injustice, religion and insecurity in Nigeria. It can be argued from here that the security challenges confronting Nigeria therefore are due to poverty, social injustice and religion. But how can these root causes or factors of insecurity be tackled? A reflective response to this will be that we must first identify the root causes of these three variable – poverty, social injustice and religion in the Nigerian state.

A critical look at these established variables will show that it is on the political or democratic structure(s) that can be used to tackle these problems. Nigeria has already stated, is not a poor country but the problem as identified by Chinua Achebe is that of leadership. Although we agree with the literary luminary and giant, but the fundamental problem of Nigeria is the poor educational system that is devoid of a philosophical foundation. It is the poor and philosophically barren educational system that produce the leadership of the country, which cannot effectively and efficiently harness the material and human resources of the country to create wealth that will solve the problem of poverty. It is this poor educational system that produce the political leaders that are clueless, uncreative, corrupt, self-centred, nepotic, etc. It is the same educational system that produce political parties and politicians without ideology. Also, it is the educational system that is anchored on a philosophical foundation of Essencism that can inspire the leadership to reflect and think of the consequences of social injustice, and therefore think of a way to establish social justice as a principle of democratic leadership and governance. It is through a sound, qualitative educational system anchored ones sencist tenets that the leaders will know that religion is supposed to be a subjective experience whereby the individual citizens can pursue as a fundamental right and not to smuggle the political and socio-economic dimensions into what is basically a spiritual issue.

Unfortunately, due to the poor educational system that is not founded on a sound philosophy like Essencism, Nigeria has produced leaders that are corrupt, morally bankrupt and who cannot think for Nigeria but only for themselves. It this lack of morality and sense of justice which Essencism, could have provided that has led to the massive looting of the national, state and the local government treasuries in the country by the leaders. These therefore lead to poverty and social injustice in the country. To sustain themselves in power, the leaders resort to the manipulation of religion and makes it a state policy to sponsor people to Holy Pilgrimages to both Mecca and Jerusalem. These clearly contradicts the constitutional secularism of the country. It is the socio-economic and political interests tactically introduced by the leadership of the country that tend to make religion such a sensitive and combustible issue in Nigeria. This is further compounded by the dogmatic nature of religion, and thus makes violence an inevitable social phenomenon in Nigeria. This is even more complex due to the globalised nature of Nigeria's religious divide. Muslims and Christians in Nigeria see themselves not only divided in the country's politics, but equally standing astride a great global boundary line between the two religions. At the same level, both globalization and democratization in Nigeria have fostered great pluralization within both Islam and Christianity, which is vitally essential in the prevention of us-or-them perspective and thereby dampen inter-religious polarization.

These collectively present great challenge to Nigeria's security. It is on the basis of this that Essencism as a philosophy can be employed through the educative process to restore true democratic tenets, principles, governance and leadership that think for Nigeria and not for themselves and families. This is anchored on the fact that Nigeria does not have leaders that can think constructively and creatively about the country.

Essencism as a philosophy seeks to develop a complete human personality. This is base on the fact that no aspect of the human nature will be ignored. Man (Nigerian citizens) will be totally developed as both physical and spiritual being through Essencism. It is when the human personality (citizenry) is completely developed that one can begin to talk of other aspects of development. This is anchored on the premise that the development of any nation is dependent on the development of the human person (Ekanem, 2005). This assertion is aptly explained by Omoregbe when he states:

> The most important aspect of development of any country is indisputably the development of human personality. It is, in other words, the moral development of the citizens that constitute the country. To be sure,

there are other aspects of development, for a country is a living organism with many parts, each of which needs to be developed (148).

This is a truism that no logic has been able to contradict or invalidate. The development of a country is basically dependent on the level of the development of the people that make up such a country. This is based on the Platonic dictum that society (country) is "man-writ-large". Also, if any part of the human person is not developed there is bound to be a problem with the developmental process of such a country.

Essencism is a combination of the physical and spiritual dimensions of man into a whole that will create a unique system, character, creativity and culture for the country through education. This effective combination will assist the country in her developmental effort and process, which will lead to social re-engineering and revolutionalized the educational system, which will promote creativity that will lead to technological development, social justice and peace. This is because humanity (citizens) will be viewed from the perspective of its (their) essence, which is to sustain the world (country) through technological development and promote social justice and peace. All humans (citizens) are tied to a common humanity through the Adamic story of creation as found in Genesis 1:26-29. From the scriptural perspective, it is a fact that man is a spirit being as he is created in the image of God. God also placed in man the power to create wealth and an innate predisposition to sustain the Earth and live in peace and harmony. Thus Ekanem and Esien (2014) captures this thus:

Historically, it is established that man's education was divinely designed to reflect his techno-nature and creative potentials… As a result of this inspirational dimension, education seeks to satisfy the spiritual essence of man while the applied science – technology actualized the physical manifestation of man's spiritual development… any educational philosophy that seeks to promote technological advancement or development must first and foremost, lay a spiritual foundation of its education. It is this spiritual development that can lead to inspirational advancement of knowledge (creativity), which practical application, will effortlessly lead to technological development. This then satisfies the physical essence of man since it is through technological advancement that man is provided with physical comfort. But for even the physical comfort to be attained there must be corresponding spiritual level of development. Also inclusive in this spiritual aspect of man's essence is the ethical value of all that is good. It provides man with sound knowledge of what is good and bad (12-13).

From this, it is evidently clear that Essencism will through the educative process provides creative knowledge to all Nigerian citizens. This will naturally promotes technological development, which will help to create wealth and employment to all the citizens. With this, Essencism will help solve the problem of poverty in the country. As explained above, the aspect of "man's essence", which includes "ethical value for all that is good", which will equip all the citizens especially the leadership to have a sense of justice, fairness and equality. This will help equip the leadership with the knowledge of how to fairly, justly and equally distribute the resources, responsibilities, opportunities, political offices, etc.in the country. This will help tackle and solve the issue of social injustice, which is a major cause of insecurity in Nigeria as already analysed and identified.

Also, through Essencism, Nigeria will help create religious traditions and practices that have the necessary resources needed to overcome fragmentation and promote mutual friendship, love and respect among the citizens. Essencism as a philosophy will make it possible for Nigerian citizens to have genuine religious belief that is an "inexhaustible wellspring of mutual respect and harmony among people" (Ekanem 2015). We are in a country and millennium that is characterized by multiplicity of religions and culture, Essencism therefore, will rally all religions and cultures to "provide a common and complementary moral and religious foundation for national unity and peace, and so enhances the growth and communion, instead of being sources of alienation, manipulation and conflict. Through Essencism, religion will be made to fulfill the prophetic and social roles in the country and thereby emphasis the constitutional secularism while functioning as means of social morality and cohesion.

The focus of Essencism is the development of the minds of Nigerian citizens through the educative process. This is because the human mind (spirit) is what makes man look like God and not in terms of the physical appearance of man, but in terms of spiritual knowledge, which makes it possible for man to know the secret of

God's plan and penetrate His mind. Ekanem and Esien (2014) captured this more succinctly when they opine that:

This access to the divine storehouse is what makes discoveries by man possible. Discoveries are made possible through the creative energy of man, through the spirit. In doing this, the mind becomes very vital in all human activities. The mind here becomes the focal lenses upon which man focuses on God and nature to bring about innovations, changes and improvements (15).

This can only be made possible through thinking that transcend the physical. Omoregbe (2001) captures this thus:

The mind… is the power of thinking. Thinking is an act of consciousness and it pre-supposed consciousness. Consciousness is the awareness of our experience (that which undergoes the experience) and the object of experience (that which is experienced). The subject of experience and of consciousness) is an individual. For individual is always an individual consciousness (32).

There cannot be thinking or consciousness without the mind, hence, the mind (heart) is a vital component of Essencist educational philosophy. It is on the strength of this that Uduigwomen (2013), argues that "the mind is the centre of intellectual activity, the seat of consciousness, understanding, or reasoning. It includes feeling, deciding and hence the counsels and purposes of the mind (25). He therefore blame the mind (heart) for all the woes and problems that has befallen and confronted mankind. He declares:

An impure heart will corrupt one's thought, feeling, words and actions. Man is defiled when the evil of his heart is carried out in the behavior of his life. Infact, it is from the heart that behavior is directed towards unlimited heights, good or bad (41).

This position is supported by Kumuyi when he asserts that "the condition of the heart determines what we say with our tongues, what we do with our hands, where we go with our feet. It is the heart that moves or directs other parts of the body that harbours guilt resulting from deeds done by other parts of the body like hands, feet, tongue, etc. also treasure within tells who you are" (www.deeperlifeonline.org).

This affirms the proposal of "Essencism" as a restorative democratic and educational philosophy. This is anchored on the fact that education is the training of the three 3Hs, "The head, the heart and the hand"", the heart (mind) which is spiritual dominates and subjugates other parts of the body. It is the mind that determines what our leaders do that will either eradicate poverty or exacerbate it, it is the mind that makes it possible for our leaders to either fight against social injustice or sustain and institutionalize it, it is the mind that makes it possible to see religion as a subjective experience, which must not be allowed to interfered with national issues or see religion as a potent tool of manipulation and so introduce the socio-economic and political dimensions into something that is supposed to be purely subjective spiritual issue and thereby makes religion to be combustible in Nigeria.

Through Essencism, the minds of all Nigerian citizens including the leaders through the educative process will be totally trained and reformed to be able to be creative and have a deeper sense or knowledge of ethical values of what is good and bad. Through Essencism, a new national consciousness, awareness and culture will emerge. This will make all the citizens to know that corruption is bad and honesty pays. It will help create a new democratic culture that will develop our democracy in which the leaders will see political offices as a means of rendering service to the country and not destroy it through massive looting and corrupt practices. Election through Essencism will be seen as a free choice by the citizens to choose who will render the best services to them and not a "do or die" affair, and a means of getting wealthy. This will become possible only through the educative process from the crèche, primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education. For it is said, "train a child in the way he/she will go, and when he/she grows up, it will never depart from it." The only way to salvage Nigeria from the plethora of problems confronting the country is through the educative process anchored on Essencism, which will restore all the cultural, moral, democratic values that can end poverty, ensure social justice, see religion as subjective spiritual affairs and promote peace in Nigeria.

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