

AFRICAN CULTURE AND CHRISTIANITY: A REFLECTION ON DIVERGENCE AND MEETING POINTS IN THE NIGERIAN CONTEXT

By

Bolarinwa Adebayo Oluwasegun Ph.D

Department of Religious Studies and Philosophy,

Redeemer's University Ede, Osun State Nigeria

adebayo4christ2001@gmail.com; 07032177099

Abstract

One of the beautiful gifts man possesses is the gift of culture due to its diversities and the variance making the world a unique place to live. The approach to culture establishes that it deals with the totality of human life and social relationships. The practice of Christianity within a given culture is discovered to be at logger head with the culture of Africans based on the initial orientation of the people at the point of inception from the western missionaries. This has unnecessarily led to various contests over the years which are unhealthy to the spread and development of both phenomenon in relating together. In the quest to find a nexus between Christianity and the African culture, this study using a comparative approach, establishes that Christianity can be practiced in the culture of the Africans without necessarily making the people lose their cultural identity and still uphold the basic tenets of the Christian faith. In advancing this thought, the research used the descriptive method. The study therefore concludes that, understanding is essential for both phenomena to cohabit together, thereby recommending that cultural leaders and Christian leaders are to view situations progressively and respect the practices of both faith and culture respectively.

Introduction

The way of life is generally referred to as culture and this clearly is relative to a given people in a given geographical location at a particular time. Culture on the one hand explores the entire ways of people's life while Christianity on the other hand focuses on religious practices only as specified for adherents of the Christian faith.

Within the African worldview, the practice of Christianity has always been at logger head in finding expression in the cultural understanding of the people. This has actually led to serious alienation of the African mind with the wrong notion that, practice of Christianity is a total abortion of the culture of the Africans. This orientation is not untraceable to the interwoven nature of African traditional and cultural practices.

Utilizing a comparative approach, this paper surveys the culture of African with specific focus on Yoruba people of Nigeria and the practice of Christianity, thereby examining how the practice of Christianity could be successfully carried out in the African context without necessarily losing the cultural identity of the people.

Concept of Culture

Culture is important for all things man does in the beliefs that create religion, wars, the way of life and many challenges (Lebron, 2013). It is no gainsaying that, culture is one of the most vital parts of human living but very complex to summarily arrive at a definition for and this is responsible for the various definitions ascribed to the phenomenon.

Culture, as it is usually understood, entails a totality of traits and characters that are peculiar to a people to the extent that it marks them out from other peoples or societies. These peculiar traits go on to include the people's language, dressing, music, work, arts, religion, dancing and so on. It also goes on to include a people's social norms, taboos and values. Values here are to be understood as beliefs that are held about what is right and wrong and what is important in life. A fuller study of values rightly belongs to the discipline of philosophy as posited by Idang (2015) which in critical understanding expands things that are upheld as it varies from one place to the other; based on the rational comprehension of the people.

The discussion about culture is traced far back to the nineteenth century which according to Idang (2015), Edward B. Taylor is reputed as the scholar who first coined and defined culture in his known work titled "Primitive Culture" (1871) and reprinted in 1958. Taylor saw culture as that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs or any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of a society. This definition captures the exhaustive nature of culture. One would have expected that this definition would be a univocal one – but this is not so. In fact, there are as many definitions of culture as there are scholars who are interested in the phenomenon, thereby showing the peculiarity and vitality of the concept to the existence of man and what they stand for in the various geographical locations occupied on the globe. Culture embraces a wide range of human phenomena, material achievements and norms, beliefs, feelings, manners, morals and so on. It is the patterned way of life shared by a particular group of people that claim to share a single origin or descent. In an attempt to capture the exhaustive nature of culture, Bello (1991) sees it as "the totality of the way of life evolved by a people in their attempts to meet the challenge of living in their environment, which gives order and meaning to their social, political, economic, aesthetic and religious norms thus distinguishing a people from their neighbours".

Culture can also be seen as referring to the totality of the pattern of behaviour of a particular group of people. It includes everything that makes them distinct from any other group of people for instance, their greeting habits, dressing, social norms and taboos, food, songs and dance patterns, rites of passages from birth, through marriage to death, traditional occupations, religious as well as philosophical beliefs (Aziza, 2001).

It is also important at this juncture to note that, culture is passed on from generation to generation. The acquisition of culture is a result of the socialisation process. Explaining how culture is passed on as a generational heritage, Fafunwa (1974) rightly expressed that, the child just grows into and within the cultural heritage of his people. Culture, in traditional society, is not taught; it is caught. The child observes, imbibes and mimics the action of his elders and siblings. He watches the naming ceremonies, religious services, marriage rituals, funeral

obsequies. He witnesses the coronation of a king or chief, the annual yam festival, the annual dance and acrobatic displays of guilds and age groups or his relations in the activities.

This shows that every human being who grows up in a particular society is likely to become infused with the culture of that society, whether knowingly or unknowingly during the process of social interaction. It is therefore not totally unreasonable not to have all the definitions of culture (because, one cannot actually get the entire various kind of definitions for the phenomenon) and its defining characteristics for us to understand the concept and meaning of culture. Even though there are as many definitions of culture as there are writers, there is an element of similarity that runs through them all.

Culture has been classified into its material and non-material aspects. While material culture refers to the visible tactile objects which man is able to manufacture for the purposes of human survival; non-material culture comprises of the norms and morals of the people. While material culture is concrete and takes the form of artefacts and crafts, non-material culture is abstract but has a very pervasive influence on the lives of the people of a particular culture. Hence beliefs about what is good and what is bad, together with norms and taboos, are all good examples of non-material culture. From the foregoing, it is obvious that culture is shared since it consists of cherished values or beliefs that are shared by a group, lineage, and religious sect and so on. Apart from this, culture is dynamic in the sense that it is continually changing. Culture is not static. In view of this proposition, Antia (2005) states that “culture is not fixed and permanent. It is always changed and modified by man through contacts with and absorption of other peoples’ cultures, a process known as assimilation”. Etuk (2002) has also observed that “cultures are not static, they change’.

Every human society has its own shape, its own purposes, and its own meanings. Every human society expresses these, in institutions, and in arts and learning. The making of a society is the finding of common meanings and directions, and its growth is an active debate and amendment under the pressures of experience, contact, and discovery, writing themselves into the land.

Elements of Culture

Cultural element deals basically with paraphernalia of culture itself. In essence, factors that cannot but be discussed when the issue of culture is being raised. Below are seven basic elements of culture:

Social organisations

This is regarded as a way for cultures to form structure and this is usually seen in the form of cohabitation. Under this element of culture, there are nuclear family and extended family classifications. Where the former comprise of cohabitation of a man, his wife and their children while the latter comprises of the cohabitation of more than two generations- grandparents, parents, children, aunts, uncles and so on all living in the same household (Antia, 2005).

Customs and tradition

This element of culture deals with day to day way of living among a particular people. It ranges from knowledge, food and clothing, music among other things that is being passed down from one generation to the other. In this, various practices could be seen to take place which is peculiar to such people and distinguishes them from other people and such is seen in civilized nations in contemporary times where some foods are referred to as 'local dishes' portraying that such is an identity of the people that should be respected or identified as the case may be (Ezedike, 2009).

Language

This deals with verbal and non-verbal means of communication among people of the same culture. It is a system of sounds, gestures and marks that have meanings understood within a cultural group and as such it could be referred to as 'cornerstone of culture' (Talbot, 1969). Kaur and Kaur (2016) defined Language in itself as the combination of symbols expressing ideas enabling people to think and communicate amongst each other, either verbally or nonverbally. Language helps in the description of reality, share experiences, feelings, and knowledge with other people. Language is a vital element in any cultural setting and this is needed to be imbibed if there will be cross relationship with between people from different cultural setting.

Religion

This element of culture deals with metaphysical aspect of events in the life of man which in essence implies that there is a supreme being overseeing the affairs of man. It expresses a dependence of man on a greater power or powers (as the case may be) to answer some basic questions about the meaning of life. This aspect deals with upholding or supporting values of life that groups of people feel are very important. But the irony of this element is the fact that, from age immemorial, it has been a source of conflict between people within the same traditional culture and between people of different cultures. It is seen basically in two divisions or classifications in its hovering about God, namely; monotheism and polytheism. Where the former holds a belief in one God (for example, Christianity, Islam, Judaism) while the latter holds the belief in many gods (pantheism, Buddhism, Hinduism etcetera). Besides these two, there is the atheism position which denies the existence of God.

Arts and literature

These are products of the imaginations of human and it is centered on the display of cultural norms and approach to living. It encapsulates the various means of livelihood that exist in a particular culture, these could range from, fishing activities, crop farming, creativities etcetera. Through arts and literature, cultural basic beliefs are being passed from one generation to the other, and the cultural practices are made known to people from other cultures who are unaware of the existence of such practices. This can be perfectly done through music, Literature and folktales.

Forms of government

It is generally believed that, a society without leadership is bound to be stagnated or better still anarchy becomes the order of the day. As such, another important element of any culture is the form of government that exists. This refers to leadership of a particular culture responsible for

organization upholding the values and beliefs of the people. It is usually different from one locality to the other based on the general consensus of the society founding fathers or more importantly as to be readjusted by the people. Government could directly refer to individuals holding power in a society (Ezedike, 2009), this is because they direct the major affairs of the society they lead. There are various forms of governments some of which include; Democracy (here, people have a supreme power, government act and rule with), Republic (leadership with voluntary consent of the people), Dictatorship (this is more ascribed to military powers when used as a means to take over leadership of a people. The people have less to contribute when it comes to leadership).

Economic systems

This element of culture deals with how people utilises limited resources to satisfy their wants and needs by making necessary response to basic needs and the quantity of needs that is required to be produced for people's survival. Economy is seen in the following ways; traditional economy, market economy, command economy (government controls what to be produced), and mixed economy (individuals make some and government make other decisions).

Norm as a Vital Agent of Culture

Norms refer to conditions for social relations between groups and individuals, for the structure of society and the difference between societies, and for human behavior in general. Norms are shared rules, customs, and guidelines that govern society and define how people should behave in the company of others. Norms may be applicable to all members of society or only to certain subsets of the population, such as students, teachers, clergy, police officers, or soldiers in warfare. Norms guide smooth and peaceful interactions by prescribing predictable behavior in different situations. For instance, in the United States, handshaking is a traditional greeting; in other countries, the expected protocol upon meeting someone might be to kiss cheeks, place palms together, prostrate or curtsy. Norms tend to be institutionalized and internalized. Most social control of individuals through norms is internal and guided by the pressures and restraints of cultural indoctrination. Individual cultures sanction their norms. Sanctions may be rewarded for conformity to norms or punishment for nonconformity. Positive sanctions include rewards, praise, smiles, and gestures. Negative sanctions include the infliction of guilt, condemnation, citations, fines, and imprisonment (Long, 1997).

Types of Norms

Sociologists divide norms into four types: Folkways, mores, taboos and laws. These four types of norms are ranked from least restrictive to most compulsory.

- i. Folkways refer to norms that protect common conventions. Most people in a society follow traditional folkways but failure to conform to them is considered illegal or immoral. Examples of common folkways found in the United States include having turkey for thanksgiving dinner or mowing ones lawn.
- ii. Mores refer to stronger norms with associated moral values. Examples of common mores found in the United States include prohibitions against murder, multiple spouses, or desecration of religious symbols.

- iii. Taboos refer to the strongest types of mores. Taboos include the belief that certain activities, such as cannibalism, are outside the bounds of cultural acceptance. Violations of mores and taboos tend to be treated with strong social disapproval or criminal consequences.
- iv. Laws refer to the mores that are formally enforced by political authority and backed by the power of the state. Laws may enforce norms or work to change them. Examples of laws that worked to change existing norms include the liquor prohibition laws of the 1920s or civil rights legislation of the 1950s.

African Culture and Values

Having explored the concept of culture, it is vital to proceed in bringing it down to Africans and this is done by exploring the African culture and value. African culture, as Ezedike (2009) explained, refers to the sum total of shared attitudinal inclinations and capabilities, art, beliefs, moral codes and practices that characterize Africans. It can be conceived as a continuous, cumulative reservoir containing both material and non-material elements that are socially transmitted from one generation to another. African culture, therefore, refers to the whole lot of African heritage. Idang (2015) explored the African culture and value in the following six subsections - social, moral, religious, political, aesthetic and even economic values of a culture.

Social values

Social values can simply be seen as those beliefs and practices that are practised by any particular society. The society has a way of dictating the beliefs and practices that are performed either routinely by its members or performed whenever the occasion demands. Hence, we have festivals, games, sports and dances that are peculiar to different societies. These activities are carried out by the society because they are seen to be necessary. Some social values, especially in African society, cannot exactly be separated from religious, moral, political values and so on. This is why we can see that in a traditional African society like Nigeria, festivals which are celebrated often have religious undertones, they end with sacrifices that are offered to certain deities on special days in order to attract their goodwill on the members of the society. Social values are backed by customary laws. They comprise those traditional carnivals that a people see as necessary for their meaningful survival. For example, the new yam festival as practiced in typical localities of Nigeria has a way of encouraging hard work and checking famine. It is a thing of shame for any man to buy yams for his family within the first two to three weeks after the festival. Doing so would expose a man as being too lazy. These festivals really discipline the society because nobody is to do anything when it is not time. For instance, new yam could not be eaten until the new yam festival has been celebrated.

Moral values

African culture is embedded in strong moral considerations. It has a system of various beliefs and customs which every individual ought to keep in order to live long and to avoid bringing curses on them and others. Adultery, stealing and other forms of immoral behaviours are strongly discouraged and whenever a suspected offender denies a charge brought against him, he would be taken to a soothsayer or made to take an oath for proof of innocence. An illustration is given by Idang (2015) from Ibibio land about a very radical means of detecting a criminal in any given situation. He expressed that;

Ukang (ordeal) is very popular as a method of crime detection. The soothsayer who specialises in it sets a pot of boiling oil, drops a stone into it and asks the suspects to attempt to retrieve the stone. The guiltless can reach to the bottom of the pot and retrieve the stone without the hair on his arms getting burnt. But when the culprit approaches the pot, it rages and boils over in a manner that even the most daring criminal would hesitate to make an attempt at retrieving the stone. The fear of being made to go through such ordeal or to be stripped naked and taken round the community as in the case of stealing, adequately checks crimes of some sorts.

It could also be added in the build-up of African moral value that, a lot of African proverbs warn the Africans against evil conduct and, as posited by Mbiti (1977), proverbs are therefore a major source of African wisdom and a valuable part of African heritage which can in no way be toyed with. African culture has a moral code that forbids doing harm to a relative, a kinsman, an in-law, a foreigner and a stranger, except when such a person is involved in an immoral act; and if that is the case, it is advisable to stay away from such an individual and even at death, their corpses would not be dignified with a noble burial in a coffin and grave.

Religious values

Religion in African societies seems to be the fulcrum around which every activity revolves. Hence religious values are not toyed with. African traditional religion, wherever it is practiced, has some defining characteristics. For instance, it possesses the concept of a Supreme Being which is invisible and indigenous. It holds a belief in the existence of the human soul and the soul does not die with the body. African traditional religion also has the belief that good and bad spirits do exist and that these spirits are what make communication with the Supreme Being possible. African religious values seem to permeate every facet of the life of the African and the African believes that anything can be imbued with spiritual significance. The worship of different deities on different days goes on to show that the African people hold their religious values in high esteem to the extent that, some Africans can go to the extent of killing or dying for the sake of upholding their religious values.

Political values

The African society definitely has political institutions with heads of such institutions as respected individuals. The most significant thing about the traditional society is that the political hierarchy begins with the family. Each family has a family head; each village has a village head. From these, we have clan head and above the clan head, is the paramount ruler. This kind of political arrangement is observable in the southern part of Nigeria. African societies have their council of chiefs, advisers, cult groups, and so on. It was believed that disloyalty to a leader was disloyalty to God and the position of leadership was either hereditary or by conquest. In Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, for instance, even though the traditional political institution was overwhelmingly totalitarian, there were still some checks and balances. Any ruler who attempted to usurp powers was beheaded by the Ekpo cult. Antia (2005) writes that “such checks and balances were enforced by the existence of secret societies, cults, societal norms, traditional symbols and objects, various classes of chiefs who performed different functions on the different aspects of life”.

Aesthetic values

The African concept of aesthetics is predicated on the fundamental traditional belief system which gave vent to the production of the art. Now art is usually seen as human enterprise concerned with the production of aesthetic objects. Thus, when a people in their leisure time try to produce or create objects that they consider admirable, their sense of aesthetic value is brought to bear. Aesthetic value is what informs a people's arts and crafts as it affects their sense of what is beautiful as opposed to that which is ugly. The aesthetic value of a society influences the artist in his endeavour to produce aesthetic objects that are acceptable to the society in which he lives.

Economic values

Economic values of the traditional African society are marked by cooperation. The traditional economy, which is mainly based on farming and fishing, was co-operative in nature. In typical African land, which is characterized with communal living, friends and relatives would come and assist in doing farm work not because they will be paid but so that if it happens that they need such assistance in the near future, they will be sure to find it. Children were seen to provide the main labour force. That is why a man took pride in having many of them, especially males. The synergetic nature of the African society is what made two or more individuals to pool their resources together and uplift each other economically through the system of contributions called *esusu* (thrift without interest) in Yoruba part of Nigeria. This section could be rounded off with the words of Idang (2015) again in which he stated that, since values are an integral part of culture and culture is what defines a people's identity, then the values that a people hold are what differentiate them from other people. It does appear that cultures always try to maintain those values that are necessary for the survival of their people.

Christianity and African Culture

Checking through the mode of practice between Christianity and Africa culture, there are some viewed similarities and there are some points of clashes that can be referred to as discrepancies.

Similarities

Below are some obvious similarities:

Both instills discipline: Christianity have a high level of discipline for individuals based on the fact that there are dos and don'ts in the scripture and erring fellows are to be sanctioned and disciplined thereby, restored to the right path. Similarly, the African culture holds with high regard discipline in the society, the younger ones are to regard elderly in the societies and the conducts of individuals in a community is to be communally sanctioned.

Both condemn bad attitude: Both Christianity and African culture do not give room to encourage rude or bad attitude. Very similar to the previous point being discussed above, bad characters are always condemned and the society frowns at any manifestation of bad attitudes.

Both engage in knowledge building and learning efficiency: knowledge is the attempt to improve ones idea about a given situation or circumstance. The pursuit of knowledge and efficiency in learning is largely encouraged in both Christianity and African culture, they encourage the people to seek and know more about God and all that is to be known in the society respectively.

African culture extensively emphasises the need for people not to be lazy as the Bible also encourages same, therefore, it is expedient to establish that both have similar approach to efficiency of learning and knowledge building.

Both engage in spirituality: the African culture and Christianity both engage in spiritual activities. They both have the orientation of mysterious activities which are seen to be beyond human control. They have the idea of man being constituted by spirit beings and as such, there is the emphasis on having consistent rapport with the spiritual world; when Christianity emphasises relating with the Holy Spirit, African cultural orientation emphasises relationship with the forefathers.

Discrepancies

The points of discrepancies are discussed below:

Sacred Animals: After the advent of Christianity in Africa, there was no town-wide conflict between traditional religion (African culture) and Christianity. But conflicts later started creeping in from some converted Christians who felt that because they had been converted to Christianity, they were no longer bound by the norms of the traditional religion. In some parts of Africa like Igbo land in Nigeria, there are certain animals regarded under the traditional religion as sacred and are, therefore, not hunted or killed for food. Such animals are respected and treated kindly by the adherents of traditional religion and to harm them is a serious taboo, the violation of which is regarded as *nsọala* (abomination). But in Christianity, according to the book of Galatians, everything created by God is pure and clean. Man has dominion over them, and as such, can kill and eat them.

Health Care: The health condition of the natives before the arrival of the missionaries was so deplorable and, the mortality rate in Nigeria was appalling. There was no known cure for some deadly diseases, which went wild rapidly and caused a heavy death toll among the people. Besides, there was total lack of knowledge concerning many of these diseases (Asadu, 2014). Christians were opposed to almost all the methods, which the traditionalists used when they were ill, or when they got misfortune and suffering. Before the advent of Christianity, the medicine men in Igbo land acted as counselors. Some of them acted not only as doctors but as listeners to people's multifarious problems. They also acted as priests and prayed for their communities. But Christian doctors are unlike medicine men of the traditional religion of the Igbo land.

Sorcery, Magic charms and witchcraft: In the traditional society, when something goes wrong in the welfare of the individual or his family, he immediately wondered who had caused it to happen. In most cases, the individual would suspect that someone had used evil magic, sorcery, or witchcraft against him or his household, animals, or fields. Christians do not believe that sorcerers, witches, and charms have any effect on people or their property. Christians condemned magic; they use prayers and sacrament to drive away dangers and difficulties. So, according to Igbafen (2014), in situations where a diviner or *dibia* (native doctor) was consulted for solutions to family problem to appease the gods, Christian converts in the family insisted that prayer through their priests would be the solution (Moore, 2015).

Mode of Worship: According to Ndulor (2014), defined worship as comprising all modes of giving expression to the various feelings toward the divine power, feelings of awe, reverence, obligation, deprecation, gratitude, hope, and others. The culture of the Africans cannot be totally separated from their mode of worshipping the Supreme Being. This is done through many minor gods or deities but those who profess to be Christians will rather offer services, prayers, songs through Jesus Christ to the Supreme Being.

Ceremonies: the birth of a child is accompanied by various rites, which involve presentation to ancestors and the cleansing of the mother from the “pollution” at childbirth, but the practice of Christianity about naming is in contradiction to the cultural practices, where only the eight day is chosen as a time to christen the baby and doing the dedication of the child officially in the church.

Establishing a Nexus between Culture and Christianity

With the clear view on the Nigerian society, especially within the context of the Yoruba people of southwest Nigeria, culture and Christianity are seen to be workable rather than to be in contrast as perceived by many over the years. First, both are to utilise language as a means of communication and as a result, for Christianity to be well productive, it needs language as an element of culture to be well understood. A typical Yoruba man or woman will understand the ways of Christianity when he or she is communicated in Yoruba language. Such analogy gets to them very quickly rather than having to make them understand English language and to make it more complex for them to understand. As such, language here could be seen as a point of confluence between culture and Christianity through which Christianity needs the culture of the people.

Also, musical expression in the African culture is a great means to express one’s emotion. Africans are known for their expressive actions and ecstasy when it comes to music as it appeals to their mind. This is in alignment with the biblical instruction of praising God which implies that musical instruments and expressions of the Africans can be used in the practice of Christianity rather than always seeking to abolish the cultural musical instruments and tools for foreign ones, thereby relegating the traditional African instruments.

Furthermore, Africans are to come to realise that their identity grows vague with the failure to bear culturally oriented names. Many people in modern day are discovered to only bear Hebrew and Greek names as seen in the scripture, it becomes so extreme when both the first name and last name are English names without any pointer to their culture. Christians should therefore be encouraged to bear names related to their culture and family in order to preserve their cultural heritage and which is clearly not against the biblical teachings. As a matter of emphasis, most names of the Bible also have cultural meaning and they were named based on their tribes and ethnicity in some cases, for example Saul is known to be from the Tribe of Benjamin, and the name “John” was argued not to have ever been heard of the family of Zechariah (Luke 1:59-63).

Lastly, Christianity and culture can blend in regards to societal interactions. This is basically built on the fact that culture deals with interacting with others and this also is similar with Christianity where interacting with the brethren is essential. When the practice of Christianity is well interpreted socially in the African culture, it helps it to thrive. For instance, African culture

have the younger ones respect the elderly ones, when this cultural practiced is abridged, there will be rift or logger headedness between the younger and older generations which is not healthy for the spread and preservation of Christianity. Therefore, it is expedient that the social interaction be properly observed among Christians in light of cultural understanding.

Conclusion

Culture and Christianity are of much semblance since both deal with lifestyle of people, culture is the humanly oriented style of living when Christianity is God-centered. Both phenomena can therefore be seen to be human focused and as such, point of meeting can be phantom rather than allowing their points of discrepancies to be broadcasted. This implies that, the points of similarities should be capatialised upon in order to have an expressive point of reference and cohabitation. The quest for Christianity should not be seen dominantly in the light of the cultural view of the westerners, having in mind that the Bible itself was written within the confine of the culture of some people and as such, the African culture is not totally against the biblical positions rather, a clear line should be established between pro-Christian cultural practices and anti-Christian practices.

Recommendations

With the broad examination of the discourse about African culture and Christianity as practiced within the Nigerian context, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Christianity and culture are to be made to blend with each other in such a way that they have one lesson to learn from themselves, thereby developing together.
2. Christian leaders should not discourage their members from participating in cultural activities in the society, provided it does not go against the doctrine they profess. They are to understand that even the westerners brought Christianity in the light of their culture and as such, Christianity can be practiced within the confines of the culture of the people and still uphold their faith in Christ.
3. People should be encouraged to preserve their culture by bearing names, putting on wears, eating foods that are culturally inclined.

References

- Antia, O.R.U. (2005). *Akwa Ibom Cultural Heritage: Its Incursion by Western Culture and its Renaissance*. Uyo: Abbny Publishers.
- Asadu, G. C. (2014). Christianity and national development: Nigerian experience (Doctoral dissertation). Department of Religion and Cultural Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.
- Aziza, R.C. (2001). The relationship between language use and survival of culture: The case of Umobo youth. *Nigerian Language Studies*. No. 4.
- Bello, S. (1991). *Culture and decision making in Nigeria*. Lagos: National Council for Arts and Culture
- Bello, S. (1991). *Culture and Decision Making in Nigeria*. Lagos: National Council for Arts and Culture.
- Etuk, U.A. (2002). *Religion and Cultural Identity*. Ibadan: Hope Publication.

- Ezedike, E.O. (2009). African Culture and the African Personality. *From Footmarks to Landmarks on African Philosophy*. Somolu: Obaroh and Ogbinaka Publishers.
- Fafunwa, A.B. (1974). History of education in Nigeria. London: George Allen and Unwin
- Francis, D. J. (2007). Peace and conflict studies: An African overview of basic concepts. In Gaya, B. S. (Ed.), *Introduction to peace and conflict studies in West Africa* (pp. 32-34). Ibadan, Nigeria: Spectrum Books.
- Idang, G.E. (2015). African culture and values. *Phronimon (UNISA)*, Vol. 16, No 2, pp 97-111
- Igbafen, M. (2014). The Concept of Person in African and Chinese Philosophies: A Comparative Inquiry. *International Journal of Philosophy and Theology (IJPT)*, 2(3).
- Kaur, A. & Kaur, M. (2016). "The Study of Components of Culture: Values, Norms, Material Objects, Language and Cultural Change" in *International Conference on Science, Technology and Management Vol. 6* (New Delhi: IIC), 222-234.
- Lebron, A. (2013). "What is Culture?" in *Merit Research Journal of Education Vol. 1*, 126-132.
- Long, E. 1997. Introduction: engaging sociology and cultural studies: disciplinarity and social change. In E. Long (ed.), *From Sociology to Cultural Studies: New Perspectives*. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 1-36.
- Mbiti, J.S. (1977). *Introduction to African Religion*. London: Heinemann Books.
- Moore, Z. W. (2015). Examining Potential Tourism Impacts of World Heritage Status: An Analysis of Fort Ancient, Ohio. M. A thesis submitted to the School of Planning, University of Cincinnati.
- Ndulor, C. U. (2014). Osu caste system and Christianity in Igbo land (Doctoral dissertation seminar paper). Department of Religion and Cultural Studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.
- Talbot, P.A. 1969. *The Southern People of Nigeria: A Sketch of their History, Ethnology and Languages*. Vol. I-IV. London: Frank Cass.