

CHALLENGES FACED BY CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS IN GHANA IN THE KEEPING AND PRACTICING OF INSTITUTIONAL CHRISTIAN VALUES.

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Abstract

- Christian Universities are gradually laying emphasis on training the students towards a career degree and have neglected the students “inner” development; that is the formation of character, beliefs, emotions and morals.

The Paper examines these challenges and recommends some helpful solutions. The study employed the descriptive survey method in data gathering and analysis.

Introduction

- Christian higher education institutions like all other higher institutions play a vital role in the social, economic and political development of a country.

Introduction (Cont.)

- These institutions face challenges in the execution of these rules. “Don’t force students to participate in worship”, a caption in the National Daily Newspaper on 14th April 2015 clearly exhibits the internal struggle within Christian Institutions in Ghana. Administrators of Higher Christian Institutions battle with these societal pressures and demands.

Methodology

- The study adopted the descriptive survey method.

Methodology (Cont.)

- Ten Christian Institutions out of the seventeen perceived Christian Institutions were given questionnaires to answer. The ten were randomly selected using the fish bowl method. The Registrars of these Universities were purposively selected in view of their unique function as professional full-time administrators who have direct oversight responsibility on the administration of their institutions.

Limitation of the Study

- The study focuses on Universities, specifically Christian Universities in Ghana. The State Universities in Ghana are secular institutions and as such the Research concentrates on Private Christian Universities in Ghana. These Private Universities include Christian Service University College, Valley View University College, Presbyterian University College, Ghana Baptist University College, Methodist University College, Pentecost University College, Christ Apostolic University College, Central University and Evangelical Presbyterian University College.

The Establishment of Christian Higher Institutions in Ghana

- The introduction of educational institutions in Ghana largely emanated from the introduction of the Christian Religion (Enoch Darfah, 2013).

The Establishment of Christian Higher Institutions in Ghana (Cont.)

- In Ghana, currently, there are 146 higher education institutions which comprise nine Public Universities, three Public Colleges of Agriculture, seven Quasi- Public Tertiary Institutions, 61 Private University/University Colleges, ten polytechniques, thirty eight Public Colleges of Education, three Private Colleges of Education, ten Public Nursing Training Colleges and five Private Nursing Colleges (National Accreditation Board, 2015).
- Out of the sixty one accredited private Universities not less than fifteen are perceived as Christian institutions.

The Role of Senior Administrators in Christian Universities

- Universities as institutions of higher learning perform important functions that consist of education and training; advancing knowledge through research; strengthening cooperation with the world of work and analysing anticipating societal needs; introducing innovative educational approaches and strengthening higher education management (World Declaration on Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century, 1998).

The Role of Senior Administrators in Christian Universities (Cont.)

- In the maze of these expectations of Universities is the Administrator. Duze (2012) recognises therefore that administration in Universities provides the matrix which binds together various integral and important parts of the University.

The Role of Senior Administrators in Christian Universities (Cont.)

- According to Adegbsesan (2001: 162) University Administrators are categorised into two, the Professional Administrators consisting of the, Vice-Chancellors, Rectors, the Deputy Vice-Chancellors the Registrars, the Bursars, the Librarians, the Directors of Non Academic Units and the Academic Administrators which include; the Provost, the Deans of Faculties and Graduate Schools, Heads of Departments and the Heads of other Academic Units. In the Professionals group are the top Managers who are mostly referred to as Senior Management Personnel/ Executives in most Universities in Ghana.

The Role of Senior Administrators in Christian Universities (Cont.)

- Highly skilled and professional workforce is recruited.
- Staff of the University are motivated and retained.

The Role of Senior Administrators in Christian Universities (Cont.)

- Personnel output is maximised to achieve excellence through their leadership and mentoring programmes.
- Resources needed by the personnel are provided to enhance and maintain effectiveness and efficiency.
- Evaluate staff performance and organise appropriate training programmes for staff.

The Role of Senior Administrators in Christian Universities (Cont.)

- Senior Administrators coordinate the daily administrative programmes of the University College.
- Their curriculum design have to be abreast with the constant global transformation in the world of business and technological advancement.
- They maintain a congenial teaching and learning environment by providing the necessary resources needed.

The Role of Senior Administrators in Christian Universities (Cont.)

- The financial administration of the Universities is controlled and supervised by Administrators of the University. Adegbsesan (2001) agrees that Professional Staff should be concerned about how they manage the education resources allocated to them.

The Role of Senior Administrators in Christian Universities (Cont.)

The Administrator in the Christian Institution in performing the aforementioned diverse roles as other Administrators of Higher Institutions has more demanding expectations to fulfil.

- Custodians of the institutional culture. The Christian University is identified by their Christian values.

The Role of Senior Administrators in Christian Universities (Cont.)

- Have to ensure that the Christian faith is integrated into teaching and learning.
- The social programmes on campuses are tailored to ultimately impact the University's Christian Values.

Challenges in the keeping and Practicing of Institutional Christian Values

- Acquiring resources and maintaining Christian Standards.

Challenges in the keeping and Practicing of Institutional Christian Values (Cont.)

- The National Accreditation Board and the National Council for tertiary Education expectations on curriculum design.
- The University is influenced by the challenges, constraints and pressures bearing upon it from the environment (Duze, 2012).
- There a major challenges in the provision of the human resource needs.

Challenges in the keeping and Practicing of Institutional Christian Values (Cont.)

- Managing academic and non-academic staff to ensure compliance with the University's Christian values is a formidable task.

Results and Discussions

The Existence of Christian Values in Christian Institutions

- This study revealed that with almost all the Universities had well-documented Christian values in their students handbooks, constitutions and staff policies.
- A review of the Vision, Mission and Core Values of the Institutions revealed that five of the Institutions had integrated their Christian Belief in these policy statements.

Results and Discussions (Cont.)

The role of the Administrator and Challenges in the Maintenance and Practice of Christian Standards in Universities

- The study reveals that the Administrators have conflicting views on their role in the maintenance and practice of the Christian values of their Universities. Rieckkhoff (2014:29) in a study of Catholic Schools Principals, recommend that leaders of Christian Institutions should be faith leaders, guiding the faith development and faith life of all constituents.
- All the Administrators mentioned that Christian activities are planned on weekly and monthly basis. The Christian Leader has to provide spiritual growth opportunities for faculty and students (Rieckkhoff, 2014:29).

Results and Discussions (Cont.)

The role of the Administrator and Challenges in the Maintenance and Practice of Christian Standards in Universities (Cont.)

- Attendance of these programmes in two of the Institutions were not compulsory for both staff and students and this is a major concern to Administrators since the situation makes it difficult to insist on students and staff attendance.
- All the University Administrators admitted that punctuality to Christian arrangements is a matter of concern.

Results and Discussions (Cont.)

The role of the Administrator and Challenges in the Maintenance and Practice of Christian Standards in Universities (Cont.)

- The Administrators were asked to specify the other activities that have been integrated with their Belief. The list included, staff evaluation students representative council programmes, students admission, teaching of staff, curriculum preparation and recruitment of academic staff. Almost all (six) of the Administrators had not incorporated their faith in all the programmes.
- Other Challenges identified in the maintenance and practice of Christian values included the admission of students with various religious affiliations which make it unpractical to force students to abide by the University's Christian regulations.

Recommendations and Conclusion

Administrators of Christian Institutions need to understand the peculiarity of their institution as a faith based tertiary institution. The Administrators have to ensure the following:

- Assist the institution in defining its Vision and Mission that will point out its Christian Faith
- Promote the introduction of policies that will promote Christian Values
- Create a conducive Christian environment that promotes faith based teaching and learning
- Intensify the organisation of spiritual programmes
- Incorporate the Christian Faith in all spheres of the University's administrative activities.
- Administrators should serve us role models

Conclusion

- The Christian University's survival in the maintenance and practicing of institutional Christian values evidently largely depends on the Administrators of these institutions as such the critical need for Administrators to take up this responsibility and support their Universities in this pursuit.

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