

**GOD AND GLORY: THE INTER CHRISTIANITY AND BRITISH
COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION IN THE EVANGELIZATION AND
DEVELOPMENT OF IGBO SOCIETY**

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DOI: [10.13140/RG.2.2.22485.19681](https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.22485.19681)

Abstract

Before, the advent of the colonial master and Christian missionaries in Igbo territory, there had been an existing system of administration and religions practices of the people. The Igbo people already had a way of serving their deities and ruling themselves. So, colonialism and Christianity being a foreign rule to the Igbo people which attracted resistance from them. Despite the resistance from the people, colonialism and Christian missionaries were able to make good impact which cannot be forgotten in the historical development of Igbo territory. They made a lot of impact in the development of Igbo nation through western education, school, churches, commerce, trade, human right protection and elimination of slave trade. Thus, this paper is aimed at examining colonialism and Christian missionary enterprise in Igbo territory. This study adopted expo-factor research design to collect data through the review of literature in textbooks, journals, records in the department of religion and internet. This research employed discourse analysis method to analyze the contents of the study. This study found that colonial government and the Christian missionary bodies work hand in hand in achieving their goals in Igbo territory. The colonial masters assisted the Christian missionaries through security, protection and transportation while the Christian missionaries reciprocated by training indigenous converts to work in various offices of the colonial administration. So, this interplay which existed between colonial government and Christian missionary contributed a lot in the development of Igbo society. Thus, this research concludes that colonialism and missionary movement in Igbo territory brought development in the form of urbanization, school, churches and hospital establishment, commerce, trade, human right protection and elimination of slave trade. Hence, the study recommends that that the lessons learnt from the cooperation between colonial government and Christian mission bodies in achieving their goals in Igbo territory should be emulated for future development of the Igbo society.

Keywords: God, Glory, Christianity, Colonial Administration, Evangelization Development

Introduction

Colonial rule is an issue that took place in Africa and Asia countries from Europeans powers. Colonialism took the form of economic exploitation of the weaker nations by the stronger countries. For example Nigeria, Ghana and Cameroon was colonized by the Britain. Longman Dictionary (2000) opined the stronger country rules a weaker country and establishes its own trade and headquarters there. The emergence of colonialism was as result of stoppage of slave trade in 17th and 18th century, industrial revolution that lead to the increase demand of raw materials for the industrial production, new market opportunities found by Europeans in Africa, civilization and urban development brought by Christian missionary that yield to modern practice of agriculture and population explored. So, because of these opportunities found in Africa by Europeans, and during 1884-1885 Berlin conference, the European stakeholders took decision to conquer Africa nations. As a result, the France, Great Britain, Portugal and Germany shared Africa countries for administration (De Blij and Peter, 1997). Thus, Nigeria being one of the countries in Africa and as well as the largest populated country in Africa witnessed colonial rule. Even the so called Nigeria was named by European powers to amalgamate the North and Southern protectorates to achieve their economic and political purposes.

However, the British colonial government and the various Christian missionary bodies will never be forgotten for their respective and collective roles in civilizing Igbo society. Just as many European countries colonialized most countries in Africa such as Ghana, Cameroon, Benin Republic, amongst others except Ethiopia, Igbo territory was not left out. Colonialism took place in Igboland and the system found therein was not organized in so much as in Hausa and Yoruba. The historical fact is that Igboland was evangelized through colonial machinery. It is not an overstatement to say that colonialism aided missions in Igboland during the nineteenth century.

The colonial government worked hand in hand with the Christian missionaries to achieve their administrative goals. The colonial government used Christian missionary bodies as instrument to carry out apostolic mission in Igboland. They aided Christian missions while the missionaries in turn trained personnel who worked for the colonial government administration in Igbo territory. Therefore,

this study aims at examining colonialism and Christian missionary enterprise in Igbo territory pointing areas of cooperation and partnership.

Conceptualization of Colonialism

Colonialism is seen as the domination of a country by foreign countries. It is the act of imposing rules and regulations to weak countries by stronger countries. According to Okon (2014), colonialism is defined as the imposition of foreign rule by an external power which culminates in the control and exploitation of the conquered people. Foreign rule can be imposed through political deception and propaganda. Iwe (1985) defines colonialism as a phase in the evolution of Africa characterized by intensive geographical explorations, the slave trade, the scramble for Africa, the territorial ambitions and pretensions of the Western nations, the imposition of alien rule and institutions, the planting of Western forms of Christianity, acculturation, racialism and exploitation. From Iwe's explanation, colonialism was a forceful move to rule and dominate African continent by the Europeans without mutual consent of Africans.

Colonialism took place in African continent. Colonialism is not a new thing in African soil as greater number of African societies was colonized by European countries with exception of Ethiopia who resisted Italian invasion. Apart from political subjugation and infantile domination of the subject people, economic motivations are often the fundamental reasons for colonial occupation. In Igbo historiography, colonialism represents the period when the British conquered and exploited the human and natural resources endowed in Igbo soil through the use of superior military force. Okon (2014) states that, Africa did not negotiate for colonial rule. It is unnatural and illogical for any sane person to willingly surrender his freedom in preference for servitude. Even when host communities purportedly signed treatise, objective historical scholarship has shown that such treatise were products of visible intimidation and manipulation.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopted Marxist exploitation theory as its framework. The Marxist exploitation theory was developed by Karl Marx in 1867. The theory explained the issue of an unjust social relationship based on unequal power and unequal exchange of value between employees and their employers (Young, Iris Marion, Allen and Danielle (2022). It is unfair taking advantage of another person because of their inferior position, giving the exploiter the power (Dowding and Keith,

2011). Karl Marx based his exploitation theory in two principles welfare under socialism and communism. These two principles according to Karl Marx guide the distribution of welfare to individuals according to their work and needs. He said that exploitation occurs when these two principles are not met then the workers are not receiving the reward commensurate to their work and needs. The amount of labour put on in the production process is embodied in the goods and exploitation occurs when someone purchases a good, with their revenue or wages for an amount unequal to the total labour he or she has put forth (John and Roemer, 1982) This labour performed by the workers for a period of time is equal to the labour embodied to the goods that make up the net national product (NNP). John and Roemer (1982) remarks that, the Net National Product is then parceled out to the members of the population in some way and this is what creates the two groups, or agents, involved in the exchange of goods exploiters and exploited. In Marxist theory which capitalist based, the exploiters are the bourgeoisie who own the productive resources that aid the exploitation.

Whereas, the proletariat are the exploited who receive less than the average product he or she produces. If workers receive an amount equivalent to their average product, there is no revenue left over and therefore these workers cannot enjoy the fruits of their own labours and the difference between what is made and what that can purchase cannot be justified by redistribution according to need (Dowding and Keith, 2011).

Thus the Marxist exploitation theory is criticized on the basis that the Marx believed that that capitalist does not do any work in production process. Also, that it is argued that Marx's theory of exploitation is untenable. According to Steele and David Ramsay (1999), the theory believed that in the situation where there is competition in market situations, an employee's contribution to marginal output determine his or her compensation. Similarly, owners of machines and real estate are compensated according to the marginal productivity of their capital's contribution to marginal output. Steele, David Ramsay (1999), still noted that "this does not in any way touch the ethical argument of socialists who acknowledge non-labour contributions to marginal output, but contend that it is illegitimate for a class of passive owners to receive an unearned income from ownership of capital and land". Other area of criticism of the Karl Max theory of exploitation is believes that there is prospect of surplus value emerging from sources other than labour. When grapes are harvested and crushed, labour is used. However, when yeast is

added and the grape juice is left to ferment in order to get wine, the value of wine exceeds that of the grapes significantly, yet labour contributes nothing to the extra value. Marx had ignored capital inputs due to placing them all together in constant capital translating the wear and tear of capital in production in terms of its labour value. Desai and Meghnad (2002), opines that value, and surplus value may come from somewhere other than labour. Also, that the exploitation theory of Karl Max did not observe the variation of time in the process of production.

In other hand, Böhm-Bawerk (2004) opposed the idea of other critiques when he said that capitalists did not exploit their employees. That they even aid their workers by giving them money in advance of the revenue from the goods they produced. Böhm-Bawerk (2004), criticized that the entire value of a good is not manufactured by an employee but that labour can only be paid at the present value of any foreseeable output. In addition John Roemer (1982) studied, and criticized Karl Marx's theory of exploitation by using a model to deal with exploitation in all modes of production, hoping to lay the foundations for an analysis of the laws of motion of socialism. In his works published in the 1980s, Roemer posits a model of exploitation based upon unequal ownership of human (physical labour skills) and non-human property (land and means of production). He stated that this model of property rights has great superiority over the conventional surplus labour model of exploitation, therefore rejecting the Karl Max theory of exploitation (John Roemer, 1982).

The Marxist exploitation theory is applicable to this study. This is because when the colonial masters come to Igbo territory, their aim was harness the productive resources of the Igbo people to development their own territory. They opened up some establishments such as school, hospital, modern agriculture and among in order to use that platform for employment of workers. The goods produced by the workers were transferred to the white man land and some of them were sold to the Igbo indigenes on high prices. Also, the Igbo people employed as workers were not less paid considering the quantity labour and output produced by the workers. Even when the Christian missionaries abolished slave trade and engage in palm oil commerce and other commodities their aim was still exploitation using gospel instrument and study of Igbo language. So, exploitation of Igbo people through commerce and employment of labour was the reason behind cooperation between colonial masters and Christian bodies in achieving their goals. Hence, the colonial government helped the Christian missionaries in the area of security, protection

and transportation while the Christian missionaries trained indigenous Igbo converts to work in various offices of the colonial government.

Brief History of Christianity in Igbo Society

The light of Christianity in Igboland shone through the auspices of Church Missionary Society (CMS). Okpalike and Nwadiakor (2015) asserts that, Church Missionary Society (CMS) accompanied a British expedition in 1841 for the exploration of the banks of the Niger to establish Christianity and legitimate trade. CMS later came back in 1857 and opened a mission station at Onitsha. In 1885, Roman Catholic Missionaries (RCM) reached Igbo land making Onitsha her missionary base, the Qua Iboe mission in 1887, Primitive Methodists reached Igboland and made Uzuakoli and Umuahia her mission headquarters. While in the North axis of Igboland, Christianity was brought by the Church of Scotland Mission (CSM) championed by Presbyterian Mission. Njoku (2007) narrates that the Church of Scotland Mission settled at Unwana ("*Unwar-a*") the home of late Ezeogo Akanu Ibiam in 1888 and later spread to Okposi, Onicha, Isu, Edda, Afikpo and to other towns. It was through these various Christian missionary bodies that Christianity spread to the entire Igbo geographical territory.

Influence of Western Education in Colonizing Igbo Society

The inclusion of European stakeholders in the administration of Nigeria could be viewed in two different dimensions. The first dimension emerged in 15th century that led to the discovery of geographical regions by the colonial masters embarked on a project of finding a way that connect to India. With the discovery of routes, Eriwo (2012) notes that, the Portuguese traders were able to get to Benin in about 1477 mille. Also, with about 1472 miles they could get to Lagos and Benin (Fafunwa, 2002). In 1485, the Portuguese traders established trade contact with Benin people and Oba (King) of Benin sent an envoy to the Portuguese royal court. So, because of the trade contact, Portuguese discovered that for the purpose of the trade to be effective between them and the Africans, civilization and urbanization of Africa was very important so as to facilitate the transaction. The missionary believed that, for Africans to be civilized, the best approach was to be converted to Christians and obtain Western education. In order to facilitate the trade contact, Africans accepted to be civilized and as a result, Catholic Missionaries established schools for princes and children of notable chiefs converted to Christians in Benin in 1515. In the same vein, Augustinian monks the bishop of the Diocese of Sao tome visited Warri and converted a son of Olu of Warri and he was baptized with

a name Sebastian. Afterward, Sebastian succeeded his father and gave Portuguese missionaries enormous support and his son Domingos was sent to Portugal to be trained for the priesthood. Despite all these, there were other obstacles that outweighed the favour and which led to the abandon of the project.

The second dimension started in September 1842 in the time the first British Christian mission came to Badagry. By this time, the free slaves from Sierra lone established trade with the Yoruba people and spread the gospel to them. The coverters there brought about establishing the first church there dominated by those ex-slaves. The Christian missionaries however used education as a weapon of conversion of people in Nigeria. The aim of Western education by then was to produce Christians that could read the Bible, and perform services. Fafunwa (2002) assert that “church undertook the business of education not because it regarded education as good in itself, but because it found that it could not do its own proper work without giving its adherents, and especially its clergy, as much of the formal learning as was required for the study of the sacred writings and for the performance of their religious duties” (p. 70). Based on this statement of Fafunwa, it is discovered that the emerging of colonial masters brought about the establishment of Christianity which is a new religion added to the already existing traditional religion of the people. In the same way, western education came in through the coming of Christianity missionaries.

Resistance to Colonial Powers in Africa

Naturally, no reasonable and responsible son will see his father’ s land being taken over by aliens without rising to defend and retake it. The influence of colonialism brought a clash amongst the people. In some cases it may lead to physical fight. This was the case in Africa during colonial era. It is worthy of note that Africans were not adamant to the invasion of the colonial masters. Thus, African resistance to colonial rule will be properly examined below.

Okon (2014) states that scholars, who defend colonialism often give the impression that it was a peaceful and diplomatic arrangement carried out in the interest of Africans. But the greatest evidence to refute the view that Africans accepted colonialism willing was the massive and powerful military resistance which various African communities put up against colonial armies. Markovitz (1977) opines that the resistance from the natives was not only bitter but also well organized. Markovitz (1977) further points to the powerful local army in Dahomey

and Asante who defended their land from the Europeans through prolonged guerrilla warfare but was later defeated through tactical military expeditionary force. Crowder (1971) observed that a good majority of indigenous people opposed European rule with military action, which included tactical guerrilla warfare against the invading armies. Crowder's idea is true because prior to the coming of the colonial masters in African continent, some ethnic nationalities have formidable security force that protected their land, fought against their enemies and so on.

There were inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic wars such as, Onitsha-Obosi war, Owu-Ijebu war among others. According to Abraham (2011), there is evidence that in the pre-jihad Hausa city-states was a body of men drawn from the class of palace slaves who served as bodyguards to the *Sarki* or king. They were known as *dogari*. At the arrival of the colonial masters to Africa, they were initially resisted by the local security men in various places until the colonial masters used their military might to subdue all most all the ethnic groups and brought them under their control except Ethiopia. For instance, at the arrival of Britain to West Africa particularly Nigeria, people like King Jaja of Opobo rejected and resisted British administration with his army but was later defeated. The Aro people also fought with the colonial army but were brought under control by the superior British Naval Squadron.

Arguments on African (Igbo Society) Colonization

There exist arguments among scholars whether the Europeans who colonized Africa had peaceful agreement with the indigenous people or not. Crowder (1971) also debunked the view that colonial occupation was through peaceful negotiation. The greater part of this area was occupied by force of arms, and where occupation was peaceful it was usually because African leaders, having seen the success with which European-led forces overcame their neighbours, decided resistance would be futile. There were of course, numerous instances of occupation by peaceful negotiation but few African leaders desired that political control of their lands should be alienated permanently to the newcomers. Crowder (1971) has estimated that two-thirds of the peoples of West Africa resisted colonial penetration in armed conflict .

Okon (2014) elucidates that resistance was serious in Bornu under Rabe, Opobo under Jaja, the Itsekiri under Nana and Benin under Ovoramwen. The Aro people

of Igboland staged a fierce battle against British army. It was not easy for colonial army to penetrate some communities. Even in situations where African resistance failed, Crowder (1968) attributed it to overwhelming technological superiority of the Europeans. However, the Europeans equipped themselves with sophisticated arms and ammunition of which most of the indigenous army did not have hence, they were defeated. Gann and Duignan (1978) exhibited a glaring Euro-centric ambiguity in the presentation of African response to colonial invasion. Some societies accepted colonial rule, others resisted. Some chose to incorporate with the new rulers in order to manipulate them to their purposes, while others tried to opt out of the imperial system by force. Generalizations regarding the African response are therefore difficult to make. Bohannan and Curtin (1971) have rightly observed that:

The so-called peaceful negotiation was only a culmination of tactical manipulation and intimidation. The European began by sending punitive expeditions through the country as a way of demonstrating their military power... it was a matter of military patrols and gradually increasing pressure for peaceful submission. In the end, it required some measure of consent on the African side, as individuals and then groups within African society began to see the possibility of using the alien presence for whatever advantage it might offer (p. 322).

Bohannan and Curtin (1971) have also observed that in some cases colonial occupation started when an African government requested military assistance from Europeans against its internal enemies: In 1858 in the *almamate of Bundu* (now in eastern Senegal), a certain Bekar Saada was one of a number of contestants in a succession crisis. He entered into a military alliance with the French, on terms that left him as an independent monarch. As a result he won control of Bundu until his death in 1885, and the French made him a *chevalier de la Legion d' honneur* out of gratitude for his cooperative attitude toward their expansion farther to the east. It could be said that some ethnic groups in northern Nigeria willingly accepted colonialism and Christianity to avoid being taken over or controlled by the Emirate system of the Fulani.

In Igbo territory, while some indigenous people for instance Aro people rejected colonial invasion as Nwosu (2011) points out that *Okonko* society is a militant organ of the village government openly and stoutly but unsuccessfully resisted the imposition of British rule in the area. Whereas some people in other towns chose

to cooperate with the colonial government in order to obtain favour from them. Nwosu (2011) further narrates that chief Njamanze provided a local guide to the expeditionary forces on their way to Arochukwu. Njoku (2003) opines that some men were identified to have provided local guide to the colonial forces. Prominent among these were Onyekwere of Ahiara and Chilaka of Umunama. Njoku (2003) further stated that Onyekwere Njoku followed the colonial soldiers to any destination they desired. In the case of Chilaka Ukpo of Umumama, he was said to have aided the colonial soldiers in the neighboring communities particularly the Oboamo. And it was on this account that the colonial administration in Owerri rewarded both with warrants (Nwosu, 2011). Those who rejected and opposed the Whiteman government did this using some military tactics. Kalu (1985) has identified the various types of resistance to European conquest:

Ranging from primary resistance (bow and arrow) through romantic, charismatic (religious), to dane-gun confrontation. Africans did not fold their arms or meekly surrender their fatherland. In Ahiara Mbiase, the people dug trenches in which they mounted spikes and covered the top with leaves. The conquering troops after the Aro expedition, fell into those trenches... In retaliation some villages were burnt (pp. 129-130).

The fact that British overpowered African resistance and successfully imposed colonial rule should attest to the point that African military resistance was ineffectual. Okon (2014) states that, the conquest of Africa was very simple and that it was carried out with ease. Frequently African armies of 20, 000 were defeated by European-led armies of 2,000 or less. Few Europeans were involved, often no more than one hundred, occasionally only a dozen or so. Africa was conquered by Africans trained and officered by Europeans and fighting with European arms. The normal pattern was that a European-led army of African soldiers administered a crushing defeat, following which African resistance collapsed. It could be observed that the quality of African resistance can best be understood in relation to military and political weakness of the various ethnic groups in Africa even when African resistance was strong, led by military commanders of superb intelligence and backed by a unified and determined people, it was overcome by the vast military superiority of European weapons.

Many scholars are of the opinion that colonialism was by force and that its tendencies were for exploitation of African continent. Contrary to the ideology that Europeans forceful dominated Africans, some reputable Western scholars

have said that Africans willingly accepted colonial rule in their interest. A strong proponent of this view was Emerson (1960) who listed the positive legacies of colonialism to include:

New means of transportation, communication health care, education and higher standard of living. A plausible case can... be made for the proposition that the future will look back upon the overseas imperialism of recent centuries, less in terms of its sin of oppression, exploitation, and discrimination, than as the instrument by which the spiritual, scientific, and material revolution which began in Western Europe with the Renaissance spread to the rest of the world. (pp. 6-7).

Uzoigwe (1978) points to other proponents like Robinson and Gallagher who argued persuasively that economic motives did not constitute the driving force behind colonial occupation. The proponents further contend that Africa did not have much economic and commercial potentiality to attract the interest of British manufacturers, merchants and investors. Colonialism, according to them, was more of a philanthropic and humanitarian intervention aimed at salvaging an atomistic continent from self-extinction through outlawry and perennial conflict.

The justification of colonial rule as a philanthropic and humanitarian gesture has been refuted by many Africans. Okon (2014) disagrees with the above line of thought. For Okon the assumption of the theoreticians of colonialism that Europe had no commercial interest in Africa is incorrect. Africa was indeed of commercial value to Europeans. During industrial revolution in Europe, it was mainly from African continent that Europeans acquired raw materials at cheap labour, Africans captured and sold as slaves provided the needed manpower in plantations in Europe.

Another apologist of colonialism Rodrigues (1968) pointed to the humanitarian and civilizing mission of the European race. According to Rodrigues, it was through colonization that the African was elevated to the status of a human being; colonization, principally that practiced by the Portuguese, raised the Negro to the status of human being, to the extent that they considered him to be their equal. The argument here is value-loaded and ethnocentric with a faulty conclusion that it was colonization that aided the full development and maturation of the African to the status of a human being. This is because some parts of Africa like Egypt was among the places that cradle of civilization started from. For Okon (2014), apart

from technological superiority, there was also a concomitant feeling of moral and racial superiority. The white man was theoretically placed at the top of the hierarchy, while the black man who was deemed irredeemably inferior and senseless was placed at the bottom. Thus the conquest of Africa and the subsequent scramble and partition of the entire continent were carried out supposedly in the interest of Africans who required many years of tutelage to become normal human being. Along with the capture of African soil, colonial masters robbed the African man of his government, condemn his religious ideas, and ignore his fundamental conceptions of justice and morals, all under the name of civilization and progress (Okon, 2014).

Effects of Colonialism and Christianity on Igbo Society

Promotion of Christian Religion

It is true that Christianity today is the legacy of colonialism and Christian missionary activities in Igbo land. Christianity is the white men religion and the advent of colonial masters and missionaries inoculated some belief system in the life of the Igbo people. Thus, the colonialists and missionaries worked together and subdued African traditional religion. Fafunwa (2002) assert that “the missionaries depended on the Europeans for help to in keeping the rebellious African Chiefs in their place, while the European authorities hoped to conquer by religious persuasion what they failed to achieve by force of arm” (p. 70). Perhaps, it could also be comprehended from this statement that, the introduction of the Christianity by the colonial master was not for the religious sake rather for their love for the “father or son or holy spirit” but to achieve the hegemony. Kraemer (1938) enunciates that, it could also be argued that the introduction of the Christianity is aimed to completely up root the existed norms as it is said that “the primitive religions are all destined to be perish and disappear” (p. 30).

Abolition of Evil Practices

The arrivals of colonial masters and Christian missionaries helped to stop most ritual practices that are against the right of people in Igbo society such as *osu*, human scarifies to deities and other traditional and religion practice to appease the gods of the land.

Western Education

The advent of colonial masters coupled with the activities of Christianity missionaries brought Western education to Igbo land. A Uniform was introduced

and school boys and girls had to dress, behave and speak like Europeans. The aim of western education was fundamental literary based in reading arithmetic, writing, Bible knowledge, Christian literature to produce Christians who could read Bible and as well serves as agents, clerks and interpreters for Colonial masters and Christian missionaries to facilitate trade.

Promotion of Trade

The arrival of whites especially before the abolition of slave trade boosted commercial activities of the kings as well as some dignitaries who collaborated with the whites in slave trade. This helped in transporting Igbo traditional religion to the Latin America such as Brazil and Cuba. It can also be seen after the imposition of ban on slave trade that seeking the legitimate trade also puffed up the saving of the merchandisers who served as intermediary between the British traders in the coast and the peasant in interior land.

Development of Modern Transportation Infrastructures

The colonial master and Christian missionaries succeeded in building effective transport network in Igbo land. According to Olubomehin (2001), the railway was introduced first in Lagos in 1896 and reached Abeokuta in 1900. A year later, it reached Ibadan and by 1909 it connected the border of the Northern Nigeria. Beside railway, roads were also constructed. The first road was built in 1906 from Oyo to Ibadan so as to link with the railway line. In 1907 another 30 miles was constructed linking Oyo to Ogbomoso and 27 mile road from Oyo to Iseyin. By 1910 and upwards, Ikirun to Ila, Osogbo to Ilesa and so on were constructed and extended to Igbo territory.

Provision of Social Amenities

The presents of modern hospitals, health research, electricity, water supply and other social infrastructures were the legacy of colonial masters and Christian missionaries.

Factors that Promoted Christian Missionaries and Colonial Government Partnership in Igboland

It cannot be denied that colonialism aided Christian missionary work in Igbo territory. Some scholars are of the opinion that the functional relationship and unity, which existed between missionaries and administrators in colonial Africa, was not accidental. For instance, Kalu (1980) enunciates that Lord Lugard once endeavored to remind the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S) of what he believed

to be their identical interest, namely that both the government and the missions looked upon the civilization of the black man as their paramount goal. However, below are the implication of the partnership that existed between Christian missionaries and the Colonial Government in Igboland.

Transportation

A look at African topography and location, coming to Africa from Europe was an expensive voyage. However, the European Christian missionaries being zealous to obey the Great Commission decided to come. In order for the missionaries to reduce transportation expenses, they have to join ships sent to Igboland by British government. Ayandele (1966) reports that, the missionaries came into Africa about the same time as traders and colonial administrators. Okpalike and Nwadiolor (2015) asserts that Church Missionary Society (CMS) accompanied a British expedition in 1841 for the exploration of the banks of the Niger. The above viewpoints shows that the missionaries were in the same ship with traders and colonial government officials to Igboland. However the three parties (Christian missionaries, traders and colonial administrators) had different motives. For the missionaries, Crowder (1962) insisted that early missionaries in West Africa had a dual purpose to promote legitimate trade between African and Europeans and to convert Africans to their own religion. Also, Okpalike and Nwadiolor (2015) affirmed that CMS came to Igbo territory with the aim to establishing Christianity and legitimate trade. The traders were involved in buying of commodities especially human being (slave trade), while the colonial administrators were to foster British domination in Igbo land by extension West Africa.

Security and Protection

Colonial administrators occasionally, rendered much help and even physical security and protection to the missionaries (Okon, 2014). It has been said above that the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) accompanied a British expedition in 1841. This is because the missionaries needed protection. Initially, in some areas where the missionaries visited without security officers, they were attacked, killed or robbed of their valuables. Nwosu (2011) opines that when the Roman Catholic missionaries came to Emekuku in Old Owerri Division, they were robbed. Njoku (2007) states that, the first approach by Scottish Church Society to Ikwo clan in North Eastern Igboland failed due to fierce resistance from the indigenous people.

As a result of these oppositions to the gospel, the missionaries beckoned on the British colonial army for help. This led to expedition by British army in various areas noted for fierce resistance. For instance, Njoku (2007) reports that British army led by Captain Roupell carried out three military expeditions which were executed against Ikwo and Ezaa clans in between 1896 and 1919, the clans were completely brought under the control of the imperial powers. Hence, churches and schools were established.

Trade and Commerce

Prior to the advent of Christian missionaries in Igboland, slave trade was dominant. Many Europeans and Americans bought able bodied people captured or conquered through inter-ethnic wars. The Aro people dominated the slave trade markets. According to Nwokeji (1999), documentary evidence overlooked before now shows that Bende an Aro market, was already thriving in slave trade by the 1670s. John Barbot who made at least two voyages to the Biafian Coast between 1678 and 1682. However, James Barbot and John Grailhier referred to a Bendi market where 247 bars exchanged for twenty-three captives. Importantly Palmer (1981) writes that, Igbo captives were considered tractable and hence were highly sought after by some of the slaveholders in the Americans. The above line of thought shows that some Igbo people were interested in slave trade.

However as the missionaries arrived, they kicked against slave trade and in 1807, slave trade was abolished. The missionaries now introduced legitimate trade like mechanized agriculture and other types of modern commerce. Thus it could be said that, the Christian mission made a considerable impact on the trading situation. The colonial government also made efforts to establish companies to foster trade and modern commerce in Igbo land.

Training of Personnels for Colonial Government

As a result of the unfavourable weather in Igboland, many of the Europeans got sick and died. According to Okoro (2018), the CMS in 1841 expedition consisting of one hundred and forty four Europeans, forty eight died of malaria and other illnesses. Among the survivors was Simon Jonas, a liberated slave from Sierra Leone of Igbo parentage (Okpalike and Nwadiakor, 2015). The surviving few could not be able to carry out apostolic work and other duties of the colonial administration in Igbo land. This could be the reason Igbo territory and by extension West Africa was called a white man' s grave.

As a result of this, there was shortage of European personnel to work in the colonial offices and mission stations. The only way to provide personnel was to train indigenous converts through Western education. Nwadiakor (2016) observes that, the colonial government developed and expanded plus the growth of mercantile houses, the missionary schools came to be the sources of manpower. So these schools intended to produce clerks, messengers, interpreters and so forth for colonial administration and the missionary body. Okafor (2014) asserts that this concern accounted for the kind of school curriculum which paved the way for their school graduates to gain employment with the companies and the Government. Okoro (2018), the generality of the Igbo embraced Western education provided by the missions because many parents began to appreciate its economic value. More fundamentally however, was the fact that the Igbo readily welcomed the Christian faith preached by the missionaries (Anyabolu, 2000). Because literacy was the means of learning and teaching the Christian religion. The Igbo could not but embrace it. As the missionaries observed this, they began to open schools in various towns. It could be said that while the trained indigenous converts work for the colonial administration on six working days, on Saturdays and Sundays, they do church work.

Since mission schools provided the needed power for colonial administration, the colonial government in turn was interested and committed to assisting some of the missions in their educational endeavours. It earmarked some funds, ranging from 30 to 300 pounds sterling between 1876 and 1887 as grants to the missions (Ekechi, 1972). The colonial government assisted some students from mission schools to study abroad. A good example is Late Nnamdi Azikiwe.

Abolition of Cultural Practices Considered Detrimental to Humanity

Prior to the advent of the missionaries, there were certain cultural practices carried out in Igboland such as human sacrifice, killing of twins and so forth. For instance in traditional Igbo society, kings, notable warriors and titled men were buried with their domestic slaves (*Ohu*) to continue to serve them in the spiritual world. Nwabueze (2013) affirms the use of domestic slaves for the burial of their masters and the number to be so used depended on the standing of the master and the number of domestics he owned. This is shown in names like *Akazeze*, *Anyaeze*, *Ugwueze* among others. When a slave owner dies, slaves bearing such name would also be buried along with their masters. With the belief that the slaves will continue

to serve their masters in the spiritual world. The missionaries after arrival began to study the culture of the host communities and found out that these cultural practices were detrimental to dignity of human person. They informed the colonial government about the situation and reported any community refusing to abolish such cultural practices. Thus, such community would be compelled by the power of gun powder to stop such act. Thus, with the joint efforts of Christian missionaries and the colonial government military, such cultural practices were ameliorated. The impact of the church can be felt in the dismantling of inhuman practices and institution such as slavery, human sacrifice, and killing of twins (Obi, Okpala and Ezemba, 2019).

Conclusion

This research having examined colonialism and Christian missionary enterprise in Igbo territory made us to understand that, colonialism is an act of exploitation of weaker nations by a stronger nation. Colonialism uses resources of the weaker nation to strengthen and enrich the stronger nations. Thus, colonialism involved use of subjugation, artificial boarder and sophisticated weapons to force people to accept dictatorship and comply in all the rules and policies of colonialist against the traditional practices of local people. The Christian missionary enterprise refers to the movement and activities of Christian missionaries towards civilization and change of the belief system, norms and tradition of people to white man religion. Thus, colonialism and Christian missionary activities are factors that can never be done away with when addressing the historical development and transformation of Igbo society. During the colonial rule in Igbo territory, many Igbo people used act of resistance to put a way colonialism and Christianity. They did not just fold their arms and sacrifice their authority to foreign rule. There were lots of patriotic and courageous people that laid their life defending their tradition and their religion, but despite the oppositions, colonialism and Christian missionaries were able to make great impact in Igbo nation. The colonial government assisted the Christian missionaries through transportation, security and protection among others. The Christian missionaries reciprocated by training indigenou converts to work in various offices of the colonial administration. Therefore, the interplay between British colonial administration and Christian missionary enterprise contributed immensely in developing in Igbo territory.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of this study.

- i. The lessons lent from the cooperation between colonial government and Christian mission bodies in achieving their goals in Igbo society should be emulated for future development of the Igbo society.
- ii. People should not be capitalized on the negative side of colonialism and missionary activities in Igbo territory but should focus the benefits derived from the colonial rule and gospel news because with them the Igbo nation would have remained a primitive society till today.
- iii. Further research should be conducted on the related topic for further findings.

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