

Impact of Christian Values and Ethics on Educational Management for Promoting Healthy Living in Nigerian Schools

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ABSTRACT

In the dynamic landscape of contemporary education, the influence of cultural and religious values on educational management has become an increasingly important area of study. This paper examined impact of Christian values and ethics on educational management for promoting healthy living in Nigerian schools. A sample of 300 participants (250 students, 40 teachers and 10 school administrators) was selected from urban and rural secondary schools through the purposive sampling technique. A structured questionnaire and semi-structured interview schedule were used for data collection. Simple linear regression analysis was used to analyze the hypotheses formulated at the .05 level of significance. Results revealed significant influence of the incorporation of Christian values and ethics into educational management practices on both the promotion of healthy living (Beta = .309, $t = 10.957$, $p < .05$) and educational management practices (Beta = .238, $t = 6.172$, $p < .05$) among students in Nigerian secondary schools. It was subsequently recommended, among other things, that educational institutions should actively integrate Christian values into their curriculum design.

Keywords: Christian values and ethics, educational management, healthy living, students

INTRODUCTION

In the dynamic landscape of contemporary education, the influence of cultural and religious values on educational management has become an increasingly important area of study. In Nigeria, a nation marked by its rich cultural diversity and deep-rooted religious traditions, the integration of Christian values and ethics into educational management holds significant potential for promoting holistic well-being and healthy living among students. This study aims to investigate the impact of Christian values and ethics on educational management and its role in fostering healthy lifestyles within the context of Nigerian schools.

The importance of values and ethics in education has been widely recognized, with their ability to shape not only cognitive development but also the moral character and behavior of students (Lickona, 2019). The role of religion, particularly Christianity, in shaping ethical norms and fostering moral growth is well-documented (Elior, 2019). In the Nigerian context, where a substantial portion of the population identifies as Christian, exploring the potential of Christian values and ethics in educational management becomes particularly pertinent. Nigerian society has undergone significant transformations over the years, leading to the incorporation of traditional values alongside the teachings of Christianity. The Christian faith emphasizes principles such as compassion, integrity, humility, and a commitment to serving others (Matthew 22:39; Galatians 5:22-23). These values align closely with the promotion of healthy living, encompassing physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

Education is a powerful tool for instilling values and shaping behaviour, and its role in fostering healthy living cannot be overstated. Nigerian schools are uniquely positioned to leverage Christian values and ethics to create a conducive environment for students to develop positive habits, make informed decisions, and lead fulfilling lives. Educational management, also known as educational administration, borrows principles and practices from several disciplines like economics, sociology and political science. Management is essentially concerned with keeping organizational operations working smoothly and successfully. Educational management refers to the administration of the education system in which a group combines human and material resources to supervise, plan, strategize, and im-

plement structures to execute an education system. Educational management can be viewed from two perspectives: As an academic discipline and a group of people that includes teachers, head teachers, principals, counsellors, bursars, provosts, rectors, vice chancellors, registrars, and other education professionals at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education. Educational management is a comprehensive effort intended to achieve some specific educational goals or objectives. The effectiveness of educational management is a function of the knowledge, creativity and cultural potential of the people. Educational management refers to the practical measures for ensuring the system to work for achieving the goals or objectives of a school or educational institution (Akpan, 2016).

The potential influence of Christian values and ethics on educational management and its impact on promoting healthy living in Nigerian schools is a topic of immense significance. By delving into this subject, this study aims to contribute valuable insights that can guide educational policymakers, school leaders, and educators in creating environments that facilitate holistic wellbeing and character development among students, in line with the teachings of Christian principles.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What influence does the incorporation of Christian values and ethics into educational management practices have on the promotion of healthy living among students in Nigerian secondary schools?
 2. What is the perceived impact of Christian values and ethics on educational management within the Nigerian secondary school environment? Hypotheses
- Ho1: There is no significant influence of the incorporation of Christian values and ethics into educational management practices on the promotion of healthy living among students in Nigerian secondary schools.
 - Ho2: There is no significant perceived impact of incorporation of Christian values and ethics on educational management practices within the Nigerian secondary school environment.

METHODS

Research design

A mixed-methods research design was utilized to gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of Christian values and ethics on educational management and healthy living promotion. This design allowed for the integration of both quantitative and qualitative data, providing a holistic perspective on the research topic (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The use of both quantitative and qualitative methods allowed for triangulation of findings, enhancing the credibility and comprehensiveness of the study's results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

Participants

A sample of Nigerian schools from different regions and demographic backgrounds was selected to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the impact of Christian values on educational management and healthy living promotion. Data were collected from students, teachers and school administrators to capture diverse perspectives. A sample of 300 participants was selected from urban and rural schools, different religious affiliations, and varying socio-economic backgrounds through the purposive sampling technique.

Data collection

Data collection was in two phases: Quantitative phase and qualitative phase. The quantitative phase involved the development of a structured questionnaire based on the research questions and existing literature. The survey included Likert-scale items and demographic questions. The questionnaire was administered to students, teachers and school administrators to assess their perceptions of the incorporation of Christian values and ethics in educational management and its impact on healthy living promotion. The qualitative phase involved the use of semi-structured interviews which were conducted

with some selected the participants to delve deeper into their experiences and perspectives. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis.

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means, and standard deviations, to summarize participants' responses on the survey items. Inferential statistics, such as simple linear regression analyses were conducted to test the hypotheses at the .05 level of significance. The qualitative analysis involved the analysis of interview data using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Transcripts were coded, and themes were identified to capture participants' insights on the impact of Christian values and ethics on educational management and healthy living.

RESULTS

- Hypothesis 1—There is no significant influence of the incorporation of Christian values and ethics into educational management practices on the promotion of healthy living among students in Nigerian secondary schools.

Table 1: Coefficients of the simple linear regression analysis for the influence of the incorporation of christian values and ethics into educational management practices on the promotion of healthy living

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. error	Beta	t	
1 (Constant)	13.252	2.530		13.704	.000
ICVE	.439	.054	.309	10.957	.000

Note: ICVE: Incorporation of Christian values and ethics

Table 1 revealed significant results (Beta = .309, t = 10.957, p < .05). The null hypothesis is rejected, while the alternative hypothesis is upheld. It is concluded that there is a significant influence of the incorporation of Christian values and ethics into educational management practices on the promotion of healthy living among students in Nigerian secondary schools. Table 1 further revealed that promotion of healthy living can be predicted from incorporation of Christian values and ethics by means of the regression equation:

$$\text{Promotion of Healthy Living} = (0.439 \times \text{Incorporation of Christian Values and Ethics}) + 13.252.$$

- Hypothesis 2—There is no significant perceived impact of Christian values and ethics on educational management practices within the Nigerian secondary school environment.

Table 2: Coefficients of the simple linear regression analysis for the impact of incorporation of Christian values and ethics on educational management

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. error	Beta	t	
1 (Constant)	10.306	4.074		17.052	.000
ICVE	.217	.092	.238	6.172	.000

Dependent variable: Educational management practices. Note: ICVE: Incorporation of Christian values and ethics

Table 2 revealed significant results (Beta = .238, t = 6.172, p < .05). The null hypothesis is therefore rejected, while the alternative hypothesis is upheld. It is concluded that there is a significant influence of the incorporation of Christian values and ethics on educational management practices among students in

Nigerian secondary schools. Table 2 further revealed that educational management practices can be predicted from incorporation of Christian values and ethics by means of the regression equation:

Educational management practices = $(0.217 \times \text{Incorporation of Christian Values and Ethics}) + 10.306$.

DISCUSSION

The findings from this study provide valuable insights into the relationship between the incorporation of Christian values and ethics into educational management practices and their impact on promoting healthy living among students in Nigerian secondary schools. The first finding was that there is a statistically significant positive influence of the incorporation of Christian values and ethics into educational management practices on the promotion of healthy living among students in Nigerian secondary schools. The positive beta coefficient of 0.309 indicates that as the incorporation of Christian values and ethics increases, the promotion of healthy living among students also increases. The implications of this finding include the following:

1. The incorporation of Christian values and ethics seems to provide a strong ethical foundation for students, which could influence their decisions and behaviours related to health.
2. Christian values such as compassion, self-discipline and responsibility can align with healthy behaviours and encourage students to make choices that positively impact their well-being.
3. Integrating Christian values into educational management could contribute to the holistic development of students—physically, mentally, and spiritually.

The second finding was that there is a statistically significant influence of incorporating Christian values and ethics on educational management practices among students in Nigerian secondary schools. The beta coefficient of 0.238 indicates a positive relationship between the two variables. The implications of this finding include the following:

1. Schools that incorporate Christian values and ethics into their management practices might cultivate a culture of ethical leadership among educators and administrators.
2. By emphasizing Christian values in educational management, schools can actively engage in character education, fostering qualities such as integrity, empathy, and respect among students.
3. The integration of Christian values might contribute to a positive and inclusive school environment, which in turn can support healthy living and overall well-being.

In a nutshell, these findings collectively underline the potential positive impact of integrating Christian values and ethics into educational management practices in Nigerian secondary schools. By incorporating these values, schools can create an environment that not only focuses on academic growth but also on the development of students' character, ethical decision-making, and healthy lifestyle choices.

Based on these findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Educational institutions should actively integrate Christian values into their curriculum design. This can be achieved by developing lesson plans and materials that emphasize virtues such as compassion, empathy, honesty and respect, which contribute to a healthy and harmonious learning environment.
2. To effectively implement the incorporation of Christian values and ethics into educational management practices, educators should receive continuous professional development. Workshops and training sessions can be organized to equip teachers and administrators with the knowledge and skills needed to integrate these values into their teaching methods and interactions with students.
3. Educational stakeholders, including principals and administrators, should lead by example in upholding these values. They should demonstrate ethical behaviour, transparency and fairness in their decision-making processes, fostering an environment that encourages healthy living and overall well-being among students and staff.
4. Schools should engage parents, guardians and the community in the educational process through organizing seminars, workshops and outreach programmes to create awareness about the positive impact of Christian values on students' well-being. This involvement can help reinforce the integration of these values both inside and outside the school environment.
5. Schools should adopt a holistic approach to health education that considers not only physical health

but also mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being. They should also incorporate Christian values into health education curriculum in order to nurture students' overall development and equip them with the tools needed to navigate life's challenges with resilience and a positive mindset.

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