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AN INTERPOLATION OF WEBER'S PROTESTANT ETHICS AND WORK LIFE

JOHN MARK

Department of Management, Faculty of Management Sciences,
Rivers State University, Port Harcourt

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Abstract

Using the church as a type of protestant community in Nigeria, it is probably true, the paper claims, that the Weber's ethical thesis can work in Nigeria's organization-setting. For one, the paper argues that human nature is same all the world over. Adherence to moral need in one region of the world can also be embraced in another social space. The paper then enhances its claim by adopting a quantitative approach where six churches in Nigeria were selected. These include three from the Pentecostals and three others from the orthodox. Among them are the Deeper Life ministries, Winners Chapel and the Redeemed Christian church(Pentecostals).For the orthodox they include; the Methodist, the Anglican and the Catholics. The study further, out of these churches, selected 120 administrative staff,20 from each church. The churches were selected based on proof of internal economic success over the years. The data was analyzed using Z-test of mean and likert scale. In all, the paper intends to find out if Weber's protestant ethics contributed to their economic success. Conclusion rendered from the result of the research is that the economic growth or success of of Nigeria is largely tied to the moral life of the people.

Introduction

The emergence of capitalism and work life economy perhaps stemmed from the free ownership of the means of production of goods and services. While it is called the free market economy, mainly dominant in the West, it began soon after feudalism lost its value, perhaps beginning from the 16th century when capitalism finally emerged. Although positions however are that capitalism had existed in

all human societies as its one nature of man to acquire more wealth for himself.

Starting from the 16th century in England, the capitalist goal was between the accumulation of wealth as a means to enlarge the production desk and the use of machines in replacement of labour. Some scholars had posited that the emergence of capitalism would someday lead to industrial

revolution that was tied to the agitation of labour (Sutherland et al, 2004).

Thus then the collapse of industrial era has however not improved the economy of nations as companies are rather becoming more capitalist oriented. In the West this sort of trade system or organization practice has advanced to a thing of corporate capitalism; a situation where organizations and companies now pool their resources together to control the means of production. Thus then, as these companies and organizations grow more powerful, the human capital agents are being reduced to nothing (McCroskey et al, 1996; Richmond et al, 2009).

Weber then post that both the economy and the society depend on each other to be better practiced, especially as against the human society from becoming a dumping group for these multinationals. In Nigeria therefore, companies are moving towards clusters thereby becoming more powerful than necessary. Analysis of sociologist- claim is necessary as it is capable of checking the cannibal practice of these multinationals. Weber in his protestant ethics claims that in the early stages of capitalism in Europe, protestant value of hard work, efficiency, honesty, trust and strict organization contributed to the economic growth and success of protestant communities. A number of them who criticized the life of English men took it upon themselves to form a new world where things could work. The idea Max Weber tries to encourage in organizational behaviour is that the worldly success has been misconstrued by high corporate owners to mean eternal life.

Although, Weber's position was criticized by various writers of his day, thus beginning with such men as Kurt

Samuelsson who argued that there is a strict disparity between religion and economic action. The argument advanced by the Kurt is that the Spirit of selfishness, frugality, political and social pressures are necessary significant factors on the advancement of any organization than the Calvinist theology would do. Hence on this research, the paper intends to situate the collapse in work life in Nigerian on the thesis of Weber.

Statement of Problem

While the organization work place is fast in collapse in Nigeria due to incompetence, dishonesty and labour distrust arising from moral decay, the study claims that this can be checked, considering the fact that human nature all the world over is the same. The study hinges its claim on Weber's protestant ethics in the growth of the organization. In many ways, the paper argues that based on the fact that human nature is the same all the world over, it probably implies that Nigeria industrial workers can be checked. Weber's protestant ethics made a huge economic success in the early 16th century based on spiritual well-being of the workers.

Objectives of the Study

The paper has the objectives below;

1. To see if Weber's protestant ethics is actually in practice in Nigeria setting of the church.
2. To see if Weber's protestant ethics adds in work life practice in Nigeria's organization setting of the churches afore.

Questions:

1. To what extent is Weber's protestant ethics in practice in Nigeria organization setting of the church?

2. To what extent is Weber's protestant ethics adding to the work life practice in Nigeria's organization setting of the churches afore?

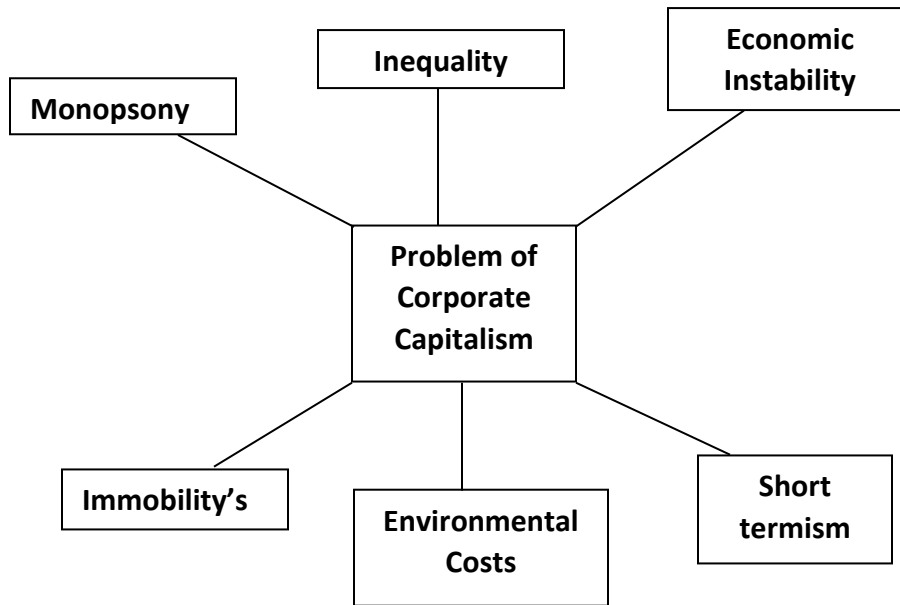
Essentially, it has been noted in Reh (2018) to be more associated with

1. System inequality
2. A centralized power production system
3. Tends to encourage materialism and avarice
4. Immobility of labour among workers. Pettinger (2019) captures these problems with the model below:

Conceptual Issues of Work Life in Nigeria

One aspect of work life in Nigeria is that of corporate capitalism. Corporate capitalism has been criticized for its dominance of administrative cum hierarchical and bureaucratic activities.

5.



On the issue of Inequality

Associated with this problem is the claim that corporate capitalism benefits by accruing its wealth to a small percentage of the population. This implies that the demand for ostentations goods is only limited to a few percent of the labour price. Through this means capitalists' interest

continues to thrive. As avowed in Pettinger (2019) corporate capitalism is not likely to collapse in the near future as the rich pool their resources together to control a large chunk of the economy (Dordevic, 2010; Rowand, 2008; Mwita 2000).

On the issue of a centralized power production system

In the free market system, established firms can gain a centralized power production system, in many ways, a kind of monopoly of power in the control of

the cost of goods and services. This centralized power system encourages or hypes the prices of goods. Advocates of capitalism then argue that it is only

capitalism that can enable industrial freedom.

But this freedom to produce and determine the cost of goods and services can be abused by individuals in the system. For instance, the issue of NEPA is one example of a firm that has monopolized the supply of light. Consumers have no choice but to buy at whatever rate the prices are placed.

On the danger of monopsony

Monopsony is the market power of the producers to control and determine the factors of production. For example, certain organization shares the absolute power (monopsony) in employing of workers into the firm. Through this medium, employers become more powerful in controlling the labour chain. This has the tendency of affecting the nation's human capital as it increases periodic stagnation in real wage growth of the workers while the companies continue to make more profit. (Pettinger, 2019)

Labour Immobility

In societies with high capitalist strife, labor flow is constantly checked as the system has been structured in such a way that workers cannot change their work place or improve on personal value due to fear of losing their job. The consequence of this is that while the capitalist is growing in more profit, the human capital of the organization depreciates the more. But the truth as argued in Person (2009) is that while the workers stop to grow in personal value, it in return impacts on the production desk of the organization. Therefore, in such societies like Nigeria we often witness a sort of structural unemployment (Lester, 2016).

On Weber's Protestant ethics

It is argued that the human nature if left untamed is capable of embracing absurdity over virtue. This perhaps was the basis of praetorian teleological position about the need to train the human mind beginning from tender age. Plato opined that perhaps it is more on the human nature to understand vices over virtue. This claim has lingered on that even the enlightened period in England saw its relevance when adverse moral decay plagued the country.

So also was the Protestant period when the church taught it wise to build for them a new world. While many of them feared that their faith was exceedingly under threat, there was the moral demand, as pilgrims they claimed, to build themselves newer communities. But these communities are not to live without economic activities. They were to be structured to help grow their internally generated economy, but they were not to be run the way they saw it in their native country (Admibi,v2000;vBass,v1990).

In many ways, these economic activities with strict teleological approach were later to be considered by Weber as Protestant ethics. As said, they were principle of economic activities guarded by trust, honesty, worker-commitment to labor and strict moral spirituality. Weber claims that so 'much is in connection between organizational and spiritual well-being. In many ways then, it is not possible to have both organizational and national development without giving recourse to the humanity of the people (Ivancevich et al,2002).

In other words, as avowed in Nnamdi (2010), the development or growth of any society begins by first seeing to the internal consciousness of the people. Development then

he defined is about the people, for the people and of the people. The implication of this to organization work life is that the employees are not capable of churning out their best except they are first morally groomed in holding unto strict ethical practices in the workplace.

Weber's protestant ethics then implies that except the man is first reformed; his work life and work place cannot grow higher than his ethical spirit.

Methodology

Given the literature review, a survey design was adopted. A survey study is one in which a group of respondents or data are studied by generating and analyzing items from a few individuals or items considered to be a representative or an extraction of the entire group.

Six churches on the basis of result were used for the research. These were randomly selected namely; three from the Pentecostals, and three from the orthodox.

These include: Deeper life, The Redeemed Christian church, Winners Chapel (Pentecostals) and then the Catholic, the Methodists and the Anglican. The research concentrated on the administrative nature of the churches and the result of the work life, such as staff and management relationship, personal discipline of the staff, workers' welfare, spiritual and emotional health of the workers. A total of one hundred and twenty respondents were drawn from these churches at twenty respondents per church. Copies of questionnaire were distributed among the staff of the churches. However, eighty copies were accurately filled and returned.

The data were analyzed and interpreted using the Z-test of means using the likert scale of strongly agreed (SA), Agreed (A), undecided (UD), strongly disagreed (SD), and Disagreed (D) respectively.

$$\text{Formula} = \frac{\sum \text{Rank} \times \text{Frequency}}{\text{Total Responses (n)}}$$

Data Analysis

The data for the research was analyzed and interpreted arising from on what took place in the field.

RQ1 To what extent is Weber's protestant ethics in practice in Nigeria organization setting of the church?

S/ N	Items	SA	A	UD	SD	D	Total
		5	4	3	2	1	
1.	Employees are mindful of ethical behaviour in the growth of the organization.	40	20	10	5	5	80
2.	Employees follow strict ethical behaviour as designed for the organization.	30	30	-	10	-	80
3.	The result of productivity is informed by the ethical knowledge of the staff.						
Frequency		110	80	20	20	10	240
Rank x Frequency		550	320	60	40	10	980

Source: Fieldwork 2017

$$\frac{\sum \text{Rank} \times \text{Frequency}}{\text{Total Responses (n)}} = \frac{980}{240} = 4.08$$

Decision:

Accept the hypothesis, if the computed value is greater than the table value, otherwise reject it. Arising on the above, the researcher refutes the hypothesis. This implies there is a significant relationship between Weber's protestant

ethics being in practice and organizational growth in these churches.

RQ2 To what extent is Weber's protestant ethics adding to the work life practice in Nigeria's organization setting of the churches afore?

S / N	Items	SA	A	UD	SD	D	Total
		5	4	3	2	1	
4	A strict practice of Weber's protestant ethics can check the ills in the industrial desk.	40	20	10	5	5	80
5	Adherence to Weber's protestant ethics can still be embraced in Nigeria's industrial life.	30	30	-	10	10	80
6	Weber's protestant ethics is not yet in practice in Nigeria's industrial life.	40	30	-	10	-	80
Frequency		110	80	20	20	10	240
Rank x Frequency		550	320	60	40	10	980

Source: Fieldwork 2017

$$\frac{\sum \text{Rank} \times \text{Frequency}}{\text{Total Responses (n)}} = \frac{980}{240} = 4.08$$

Decision:

Adopt the hypothesis, if the computed value is greater than the table value, otherwise refute it. Arising from the above, we reject the hypothesis. This implies that staff in these churches believes that Weber's protestant ethics can check on the ills in the industrial desk

industrial workers can be checked. Weber's protestant made a huge economic success in the early 16th century based on spiritual well-being of the workers. And so, the churches surveyed in Nigeria have attained a huge economic success and industrial life by first giving records to the internal condition and the spirituality of their staff.

Conclusion

The study examines the importance of Weber's protestant ethics in the growth of the organization. In many ways, the paper argues that based on the fact that human nature is the same all the world over. It probably implies that Nigeria

and survival is dependent on the workers personal life of honesty, commitment, effective communication, spirituality and trust etc. It then follows that ethical work life is part of the individuals is one way to

grow the organization. The survival of the protestant communities in early 16th century in Europe has proven this. Hence the collapse in Nigeria's industrial perhaps stems from the general life of the staff; as there is strict relationship between the staff ethical code of conduct, especially emotional and spiritual wellbeing of the workers as it ensures standards of compliance and increase in the employees' productivity.

Recommendations

The study then made the following recommendations.

1. Workers should learn to practice personal meditation and Yoga practice as these activities enhance inner cleansing of the worker.
2. Leadership trained academies and emerging schools should concentrate more on the personal lives of their staff as this can impact on productivity.
3. Leadership *training* on ethical matters should be included in early childhood education as this is where the being of the workers starts from.

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