

SANDWICH PROGRAMME
A BLESING OR A CURSE IN THE BAPTIST SETUP

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ABSTRACT

This research is the first of its kind that attempted very seriously to elicit facts of the importance of sandwich programme and its profitability in the growth of evangelism. The research was carried out among student pastors, pastor in service and retired ministers including church members. The questionnaire produced were distributed for individuals to fill, within a period of one month. The sample was random, since the research could cover all the respondents required in totality. The population of study was two hundred and fifty. The instrument used for the study is a five Likert scale.

Sandwich programme was introduced into the Nigerian Baptist Seminary Ogbomoso to train interested laymen called by the spirit to serve as full time or parttime ministers after training.

It is necessary to find out through investigative exercise what could be regarded as the opinion of those who may or may not be interested in the programme.

The study is very significant in view of the mounting pressure by those who feel that the sandwich graduates will soon flood the already saturated field for the full time graduates that have not been called to pulpit.

Samuel Escobar wrote on the challenge for global seminary to train and become pastors or preachers. Rev. Jerry Akinsola says "The Baptist believes in education because education enlightens one for better knowledge of evangelism.

The Baptist convention engages in foreign mission work and this calls for increase in the training of more evangelists and ministers either sandwich or full-time sandwich programme is not the monopoly of the Baptist alone but that of other denominations like the deeper life, redeemed Christian ministry.

Adult education or sandwich is an avenue for laymen to learn and be more useful in the ministry; many youths that are fully employed also join in the sandwich to improve their knowledge of the scripture.

But the fear of the increase number of the trainees is giving some full-time pastors grave concern for fear of being kept out of job. But the great commission does not limit the number of those to go and teach all nations. To allay the fear of the unemployed pastors this research was conducted to sample the opinions of student pastors, church leaders, church members of any denomination.

The research focused on whether sandwich is a blessing or a curse.

Questionnaire was prepared and distributed among student pastors in the seminaries and Bible colleges. Other respondents are pastors that serve in churches, those that have no churches yet and church members. The result of the study was that sandwich is not a curse but a blessing.

CONCLUSION

A. Need for more trained Pastors for fieldwork

Fieldwork is an essential infridience for evangelization. Evangelism commences from ones locality and it extends beyond our local or national bound vies. Evangelism does not and at the local level; it extends to foreign Countries. Because there is no limit to spread of workers that should be trained.

Presently, numerous numbers of denominations are coming up into the scene. The Baptist denomination has also increased because there are presently.

Gospel Baptist; Independent Baptist; African Baptist Charismatic Baptist and many more. As it is in the Baptist set up so it is in other denominations. This is an indication that very many denominations like the Churches can be put at about eight thousand [8,000] plus or minus in population.

Call of Pastors:

The fact that Churches multiply in the Country is an indication that more workers are needed. Presently illiterates do engage in evangelical work

as it was in the early church and even among the disciples of Jesus Christ. Because churches increase in number there has to be leaders and workers in those churches no matter the population of the members.

Preaching stations like the developed churches require spiritual leaders who must have been trained one way or the other in either a Bible College, Pastor's School or Theological Seminary. In the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary Ogbomoso the population of the students may be a little above both full and part-time [sandwich] But report has it that the number of church is 8000 in number; this means the pastors must be over 50,000 because many have not been called to pulpits and many are still in School.

From time to time more structures spring up as Church buildings with leaders to load the churches. In the Federal capital [Abuja] alone there are over three thousand churches either built with blocks or wood. Many hotel halls in Abuja have been turned the service halls for those who are not able to secure land space for erecting structures.

More pastors are needed to meet with the demands of the millions who itch to be Christ followers. There set of youths or adults deserves the services of big churches.

Pastors are not just trained if they are not called. Anyone who wants to be a pastor must be called. No uncalled persons opt for pastoral training. If any one does that, he/she will not enjoy long service span. The rate of springing churches is so alarming to the extent of being citizen even by some Christians who feel that it is early. But the more the critics, the more the number of

churches. Research has it that youths are more involved in the establishment of new church buildings, including worship centers in hotels.

b. Need for more Seminaries and Pastors Schools

This research has it that more schools and Colleges are necessary for training the teeming number of youths and adults aspiring to be missionaries and church pastors.

The three institutions teach the scripture at different levels.

Bible school' Pastors' College and Theological Seminaries. The levels of trainings are different.

The Bible School teaches those who wants to be Evangelists or Bible teachers while the Pastors' College is to train future pastors with Diploma Certificate. The Theological Seminary is to train senior pastoral levels with certificates of Bachelor degree or post graduate or third degree [PhD] Many of the schools established are not accredited but it does not stop the proprietors from advancing because the certificates are mainly to win souls for Christ. But the theological seminary like we have at Ogbomoso, Kaduna. There are other pastoral seminaries in Ibadan and other cities and towns.

It is obvious that many pastors only had their call without detailed knowledge of the scripture. At Ogbomoso very few candidates can only be trained but if there are many other colleges, there would be enough opportunities for those who are thirsty for the training.

If there are too few colleges, there will be tendency for such needy people to teach the followers with their shallow knowledge thereby teaching them the wrong thing. The blind continue to train the blind.

c. The Churches require orientation for calling Pastors

Churches have one-way or the other been misled on whether there is need to call pastor or not to the Church.

There are series of factors militating against churches trying to call a pastor to the pulpit in the church.

1. The Church thinks of the capability to find the call in terms of the salaries, housing and children education.
2. Some churches are led by old hands [the old goggle] who do not want to change hands.
3. Some churches are made up of semi –faithful youths who do not want to be educated contrary to their earlier education.
4. Some churches base the hindrance on the complain that the church is embarking on new building.

There are still more remote causes that lead to abstaining from calling pastors to the pulpit.

There is need for the Convention through its arms educate the Churches of the need to call pastors to the pulpit.

The Association Conference and Convention bodies should be in the position to educate the churches to understand the rationale behind the calling. In Churches if not educated, it may not take it serious to call pastors. Any

