



## RELIGION ESCALATES SOCIAL AND ETHICAL DIVERSITY IN KENYA

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### **Abstract:**

The world perceives religion as the maxim that can define human destiny in terms of eternal bliss. However, in Kenya, it is obvious that religion is expressed through many denominations and religious beliefs. The implication is that religion has influenced social and ethical diversity either positively or negatively such that the outcome has configured or disfigured the existential destiny of individuals in Kenya. As a result, philosophical questions arise as an attempt to understand why erroneous interpretations of religion and religious beliefs negatively influence social and ethical outlook in Kenya. An existential slant portrays how different forms of religion and religious perspectives have facilitated even extreme notions such as militia activities. In addition, reasonable progress towards a solution requires an appropriate existential basis of what can be done to control unnecessary influence of religion in social and ethical diversities that can exploit the society, instill negative interpretation of reality, and culminates at distorting the society.

**Keywords:** religion, social, ethics, diversity, religious beliefs

### **1. Introduction**

Religion has been a part of humanity since antiquity, and as such, it emanates from elaborate stories that define reality as reflected in the universe (Okon, 2013:98). Here, religion is a natural inclination of human beings towards the deity, religious beliefs, faith, and worship. As a human activity, religion made its way into the human minds as human beings attempt to understand the reality in axiological terms whereby ethics questions the issues of morality, duality of good and evil, existence of devils and demons and so on. These concerns have enchanted and burdened humanity and exposed individuals to endeavor in defining the world with the information available to situate meaning to the questions perplexing human history (Curren, 2006:412)

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However, as the world continues to change, faith, beliefs, and mythology which used to guide the universe is no longer adequate and replacement is fittingly inevitable (Ekanem, 2012:57). This is because religion which was used to describe transcendental realities tends to be overtaken by events. Therefore, what was once indescribable in the world is now easily explained by philosophy, science and technology such that efforts are directed towards refining human perception and understanding. It is obvious that religion that gave adequate points of departure about the world functions are not the same anymore and thus no longer providing any significant solution in that process (Okon, 2013:99). This explains why religion and religious beliefs have become partisans in political groups and lost the moral authority to advise erring politicians. The fact is that religion and religious beliefs pose a trail of destruction in the course of historic path.

In addition, there is statistical evidence that religious organizations are excruciatingly increasing in the entire world, especially in the developing nations such as Kenya. The increase of religion and religious beliefs is accompanied by a proclivity of having the ability to control and manage the exponents who happen to be susceptible contrary to the actual essence of religion (Nolan, 2008:57). As individuals, human beings tend to lose the connection of being part of religion and religious beliefs together with an understanding of its internal operations. In this regard, the plausible upshot is to alienate and indoctrinate the believers to shut out history.

## **2. Objectives**

1. To identify the litigious interpretations of religion and religious beliefs;
2. To explore religion and its influence in intensifying social diversity;
3. To assess how religion escalates ethical diversity;
4. To propose some approaches to minimize social and ethical diversity in Kenya.

## **3. Litigious Interpretations of Religion and Religious Beliefs**

The aspect of assumption of truth is central in religion and religious beliefs. The power of religion is established on its ability to convince the followers about its significance in their lives. This aspect of conviction is highly vested on the assumption that a particular religion is the only custodian of truth (Abu & Adewale, 2013:344). There is an inherent conviction in every religion that it is only its particular beliefs and it alone that consists of the 'absolute truth' (Ruhmkorff, 2013:8). This treatise considers this perception as the primary cause of religious fanaticism is the concrete destruction of human coexistence (Abu & Adewale, 2013:343). This fallacy translates to total denial and refusal that any other religion has some sense of truth. Instead, they discover ways to force conflicting information to adapt to their own doctrine, irrespective of effective evidence that can rationally disprove a particular religion.

Further, many religious exponents do not inquire about the aspect of irrationality depicted in the religious beliefs, but only perceived as a source of connection (Nwanaju, 2016:109). It is eccentric that syllogisms that fail to apply deductively to standardize religious convictions, central doctrines, and dogmas are not universally applicable (Makolkin, 2015:73). An ethical equilibrium subject to every religion is ignored. Instead, efforts are gathered to justify why it is this particular religion that is void of any flaws. However, if the particular religious faith is scrutinized using a standard canon, it will be adequate to concur that religious texts were written by human beings, not divinities (Nwanaju, 2016:109). This indicates that religious convictions comprise of deep and purposeful meanings, meanings that cannot be rationally understood, or correctly interpreted for beneficial use to justify the assumed truth attributed to them (Nwanaju, 2016:109).

It is a critical problem to assume that the content of faith developed or fabricated to serve a certain group is catalogued and classified as the absolute truth, and the prospect of attaining the actual truth is disregarded or purposively moderated such that a prospect of reaching the actual truth is greatly diminished. This ensue a situation whereby the subjectivity replaces objectivity, while reality translates to be transcendental existence beyond human reach and intellectual capability. When objectivity is replaced by subjectivity, a deluded society is established whose religious qualms are passed on from generation to the next generations (Nwanaju, 2016:109). The final situation is the propagation of fallacious outset about the significance of religion.

Another critical facet of litigious belief of religion is the promise of reward. It is not difficult to understand why this is necessary for the ongoing functioning of a religion. Human beings are rarely motivated to commit to anything without an incentive and a recompense for such commitment. It is true that human beings remain focused at specific aspects to realize gratification in terms of living a purposeful, meaningful, and accomplished life (Koskela & Siljander, 2014:72). Thus, a human being tries to do everything to reap the rewards of doing that thing. In a similar vein, meticulous efforts are directed towards religion, religious beliefs and activities.

There are many religious devotees who hold that there is some reward for devotion to their deity. It is observable that some of the rewards are irrational, irrelevant, erroneous, and out-rightly unnecessary. However, it is also decisive to note that many human beings subscribe to religion based on the expected outcome, or out of probable fear of destruction, but not for the love of the deity. It is therefore evident that the concept of faith in religion cannot control the exponents but the intrinsic myths in religion (Chang'ach, 2013:46). An absolute myth becomes the driving force to bring the beliefs to its alleged conclusion. Thus, one of the reasons why human beings cannot doubt about religion and religious beliefs is the envisaged reward irrespective of its truth or falsity (Pratt, 2006:8). It is blatant that the concept of reward in religion bonds human beings, and thus negation of reward plunges religion to the state of futility.

The aspect of superiority complex is central in religion and religious beliefs. In this case, religion enables human beings to act callously and inflict mental punishment on those they label 'evil' without consequence to their hatred; and then permits them to

honestly believe that their hatred is defensible as 'good moral conduct'. There is a paradoxical assumption that those who do not belong to certain faith are either rebels or apostates (Makolkin, 2015:77). A solution to that condition labeled as 'rebel or apostate' is prayers and this is judiciously erroneous.

A conflict of thought in terms of religion and faith cannot formulate sufficient reasons to justify the nature of judgment to be applied (Curren, 2006:288). This is escalated by the aspect of eternal reward reserved for few and penalty allotted for everyone who contradicts the religion and its beliefs. This form of superiority factor is an egotistic attitude to control exponents in terms of comfort and terror (Abu & Adewale, 2013:343). It saturates their relationships, and if anyone contradicts the teachings and religious interpretations is denounced. In religion, there is also the element of complex authority endowed to some exponents. This authority is envisioned to exercise absolute and conclusive control of the others in the name of the deity. Makolkin (2015:78) concur that religion has been the permanent instrument of control right from the start. In such situation, reason is isolated and religion is erroneously perceived to respond to any form of reservation based on the decision behind the complex authority.

Another glaring problem in religion and religious beliefs is the expediency of control. In this case, it is obvious that religion and religious beliefs tend to instill fear as an effective means of controlling and managing the exponents (Gearon, 2014:54). As such, fear is perceived as an apt tool to augment obedience and many religious exponents do not mind about such fear. A significant character of such fear is that it is a type of subtle timidity that excels undetected, it is so deeply embedded that it is not even recognized as fear, but as truth; when in reality, it is a most destructive form of control (Pratt, 2006:2). The fear is closely connected with the origin of the common themes and religious beliefs according to the underlying causes why a religion began.

Sometimes, this crucial tiding may be critical, be reserved, furtive and either prevented from or dejected from learning the truth about how their religious system was established (Gearon, 2014:69). However, the setback occurs when the freedom to search for answers outside religion tends to be curtailed. Such preventive measures align with restrictions from viewing numerous sources that would offer the information that would reveal the truth about the origin of their religion (Audi, 2006:699).

It is the inquiring that apt answers free human beings and lead to an understanding of the whole concept of religion and religious beliefs, whilst parochialism is trounced. However, refusal to inquire sustains a solitary acuity among the exponents (Gearon, 2014:70). Once the art of asking questions is withheld, the persistence of disciples is guaranteed. The main approach of controlling exponents in religion is to assert that everything else evil, such that everything is scary and frightful (Audi, 2006:699). This state of the mind is envisaged to ensure that the exponents remain following the indoctrinated line of teaching as the true path. This explains why some exponents of religion refuse to study ancient form of religion, cultures, science, and philosophy (Audi, 2006:699). The mindsets also define why exponents tend to be scornful and focus on hatred of conflicting ideas.

A philosophical definition of truth is a logical conformity between what is in the mind and that which subsists in reality and as such, anything that fervidly opposes that conformity together with diligent inquiry does not divulge the truth (Audi, 2006:929). However, religion attempts to ruse coherent conformity and replaces it with apprehension, the fear of the deity, family or peers, religious leaders, and internal self-judgment (Goldstein, 2005:512). Here, inquiry is forbidden since any form of knowledge is reserved. The cogent and coherent judgment is subjected to disapproval under the pressure of indiscreet curiosity.

In this case, imposed fear is that the adversary introduces wrong ideas that conflict with the intrinsic truth ascribed to religion and religious beliefs (Shouler, 2008:273). In the contrary, it is rational that knowledge of truth does not necessitate restrictions, unless the truth is being concealed in order to perpetuate the fallacy and delusion. This is devastatingly obvious to recognize how hidden truth is envisaged to benefit a clique among the followers of distinct religious faith.

#### **4. The Cause of Social and Ethical Diversity**

##### **4.1 Sanction of Concord**

When the truth is shrouded from the religious exponents, then control is protracted (Shouler, 2008:274). It is equally applicable that once devout faction discards a religion there is probable medley of apprehension that persists for definite interlude. It is palpable that political wing, rulers, religious leaders and the wise are aware that truth leads to freedom and the contrary leads to control. A critical means of constricting the truth is through spuriousness and fallacy. A fundamental procedure of enhancing concord is propaganda (Gutek, 2009:260). In this case, the term 'propaganda' refers to proliferation of cant or humbug. As part of propaganda, there is seclusion from probable individuals who can think clearly and logically advice otherwise. Therefore, religion thrives best on confines of the human herd mentality to safeguard its threshold to monopoly.

A religion tends to proliferate and persevere once its ideas are perceived to be absolute and anything else held by others is recognized as immoral such that protracting control of hatred towards others is effortless (Pratt, 2006:8). An ideal means to propagate this teaching to the exponents is reinforced throughout lifetime. The implication is that religion isolates and sets up clusters of religious exponents and non-exponents, making human unity and peace nearly impossible (Ysseldyk, Talebib, Mathesona, Bloemraad, & Anismand, 2014:365). It teaches people that those who disagree with a specified religion on certain social and moral issues are naturally malevolence and contemptible of amity or even perceived as less humanity. Thus, the upshot is the propensity to diversity in terms of social, moral and ethical objectivity (Gathogo, n.d.:167).

An implication of this peril is that it perpetuates a sequence of social and ethical solitude in societies (Gutek, 2009:186). In this view, social and ethical diversity causes obstinate disarray that culminates at internal perplexity that ravages nations. This

follows necessarily that religious executive are aware that a divided community cannot withstand tyranny and obliteration (Jonkers, 2017:419). On the other hand, unified society is not destroyed by religion or religious beliefs. The result of social and ethical diversity is to disrupt the unity and peace of humanity. It is therefore necessary to stipulate that religious beliefs define the principle cause of division by placing humanity below religious contentions.

#### **4.2 The Issue of Theocracy**

In religion, theocracy is a concept used to explain that religious leadership of humanity is directly under the power of the deity, but indirectly managed by religious executive who tend to execute both religious and political tasks (Audi, 2006:910). Conversely, the impact of theocracy is to restrain the basis of rationality and free will in making decisions pertinent to humanity (Audi, 2006:911). In addition, divine leadership sanctions that what is socially and ethically acceptable must be derived from the religion and sanctioned religious beliefs (Ysseldyk, et al., 2014:362). The critical facet is that exponents tend to follow certain religious leaders whose real agenda is to exasperate social and ethical diffusion in country and among the people. However, religious leaders tend to divulge repressive character in the case of theocratic leadership (Audi, 2006:910). This questionable character is evenly germane where religious exponents exert public leadership according to their social and ethical convictions which can descend to be fallaciously flawed.

There are potential situations where societies crumble beneath the stranglehold of religious oppression. Sometimes religious beliefs approve atrocities such as disparaging the vulnerable and mutilating religious opponents. History has it that religion has prompted and aggravated wars, massacres, bombings, inquisitions, witch hunts, crusades, bigotry, deliberate censorship of knowledge and despotic and atrocious policies (Wiredu, 2004:212). There are palpable incidents when religion fails to castigate evil because it is part of the evil wing. Therefore, ostensible 'divine leadership' has horrific implications to human life since it has does not endorse the relevance of rationality and the rule of reason.

#### **4.3 The Elusive and Illusive Fraternity**

In religion, religious beliefs and practices, there are myriad texts that draw attention to the concept of fraternity. However, such fraternity is substantially slanted within the interface of the proponents of such a religion (Pratt, 2006:12). There are contentious religious texts where the deity is perceived to direct proponents to abduct, enslave, torture, mistreat and even exterminate those who are not exponents of the religion. In this case, the non-exponents are perceived to be defiant, insubordinate, rebellious, and noncompliant (Goldstein, 2005:513). Thus, persecution, injury, and death inflicted are to safeguard religious beliefs in the name of the deity.

It follows necessarily that all these destructive atrocities are either directives of or in the name of the deity, but hence affect the social and ethical stability (Wiredu, 2004:249). What is critical is that the text is written, but more horrific is that religious

exponents endorse the behavior because it is sanctioned by the venerable and adulated deity! In this case, an assumption is that the superior deity approves it to punish 'rebellious'. Sometimes, some religious leaders and religious exponents may opt to change some text from original meaning to be analogous to erroneous convictions in order to justify inhumane actions as opposed to the reality (Ysseldyk, et al., 2014:349). Therefore, religion takes the task of being the canon to measure morality and approve punishment (Nwanaju, 2016:109). The upshot is to escalate social and moral diversity.

It is contradictory that atrocious exponents of religion justify the anti-social, unethical, immoral, and evil actions in the name of their deity, whilst if other human beings commit such offences, they are perceived to be insane and are sentenced to death. However, for the religious exponents, such horrific, antisocial and unethical crimes are rationalized and dismissed when it applies to a deity (Hellstrom, 2007:51). It is extraneous that religious leaders and their exponents discount the serious argument about the negative facets of their text. Once an attempt is posed, then it is glossed over and never given full thought as to the magnitude of what is being described. Instead, the most horrific part of religion is to ignore the controversial text and make an illusion of 'fraternal love' of the deity (Kalthoff, 2015:4). However, an illusion of love skews interpretations to enclose dreadful, sadistic and violent acts as instructions sanctioned by the deity.

A scenario to consider is the state of creating structures that display a consistent and a forced to endure mental intrusions (Ysseldyk, et al., 2014:365). It is argued that disobeying a religious deity culminates in permanent torture and the implication is imposition of fear and anguish for eternity. Deuteronomy 22:28-29 posits antisocial and unethical ideas that provoke a religious debate. It is inapt to explain or justify a horrible atrocity committed on behalf of a worshipped deity against the alleged fraternity assumed by the religion, religious beliefs, and religious activities (Ysseldyk, et al., 2014:358). According to Ysseldyk et al. (2014:356), the concept of fraternity align with religious bigotry, while religious identification was associated with both in-group and spiritual engagement, but not with civic involvement or any other social or ethical participation. The implication is that the idea of fraternity is distorted and the upshot is to augment social and ethical diversity.

#### **4.4 Substantiation of Disparity and Diversity**

The extant and reality of religion and religious beliefs exhibit a definite measure of factions and extremism (Pratt, 2006:1). It is argued that religion posits the reason to discriminate in by facilitating erroneous rationalization of the attempts to remove basic rights from exponents and its rivals (Burrell, 2008:185). Thus, religion prevents people from living in peaceful spirit of coexistence as a community of exponents and non-exponents. It forces individuals to strive to create, realize, and preserve rights that ought to be available to them already (Makolkin, 2015:72). An obtrusive concern is that religion and religious beliefs support the issue of social and ethical disparity by perverting some individuals as subhuman, property, or even objects. As a result, such individuals are deprived some rights including an access to education, driving a car,

emerging in public, pursuing a profession, or articulating their wits besides a myriad of other confines (Makolkin, 2015:77). In every case where there is chauvinism, it is always aligned to a religion and religious-based system of beliefs (Burrell, 2008:187). The upshot is that religion provides the milieu of social and ethical diversity in the society.

It is probable that religion and respective religious beliefs do not endorse any form of digression or parenthesis (religious rigidity) from espoused doctrines, dogmas, and tradition even for non-exponents (Makolkin, 2015:73). Any opposing view is perceived with disdain, and some forms of religion prescribe extermination of anyone who deviates their teaching. The problem is that religion overlooks censures, reprimands and castigates any probable deviation, even reality itself, and as such nature ought to take precedence. A conflict occurs as to whether the deity outlaws grilling to verify the truth, or uses religious texts to tolerate diffidence by disdaining social and ethical solidity.

As stated earlier in this treatise, religious texts are used to discriminate individuals, tribes, minorities, and foreigners (Ysseldyk, et al., 2014:348). The people outside of religious belief structure or cultural scene are tormented, incarcerated, and stripped of human rights. These concerns arise in the name of deity and the religion that deity represents. It is obtrusive that religion substantiates exponents for treating others who are not like them in inhumane ways (Mckim, 2006:386). It perpetuates the cycles of revulsion towards others and justifies the efforts in restricting human beings.

#### **4.5 The Subjugation of Intrusion**

The society is currently moving from religion and religious beliefs to embrace reason and intellect in solving issues. This means that rationality or thinking is replacing mythology or mysticism such that an ability to elucidate the events tends to be obligatory (Amaechi, 2014:110). A surfeit of tidings that divulges towards the origins of religious denominations besides their functioning can narrow the escalating social and ethical diversity (Ysseldyk, et al., 2014:368). It is possible that human knowledge can explore economic patterns, biological ecosystems, space, interpret weather patterns, and also predict the future atmospheric disruptions. In the contrary, religion has ignored the significance of human knowledge and intrusion. This is evident as religious executive stifle access to knowledge and its progression. The implication is that religion uses this tactic to incarcerate exponents in an ignorance clause.

Therefore, religion and religious beliefs appeal to religious texts, doctrines, traditions, and dogmas to endorse that any pursuit of human knowledge is malevolent (Burdon, 2013:425). This is because the concepts that define the religious texts, doctrines, and dogmas spiral from the human authorship, and such endorses that knowledge and the pursuit of such knowledge is evil (Ruhmkorff, 2013:14). It follows necessarily that religion perpetuates ignorance in societies. Thus, religion and religious beliefs tend to hinder mental progression of humanity and, the quality of human lives and environs.



#### 4.6 An Apprehension of Eschatological Facet

In religion, the concept of eschatology is derived from Greek terms *eschatos* and *logia* which is equally fundamental and it refers to the 'end times'. The idea of end times posits fear of what will happen in the future and religion uses it as means to control the masses. What began as mythology that told gruesome stories of a horrific end has evolved into periodic religious mania over an impending doom lurking above the future of humanity. According to Makolkin (2015:73), there is not a single area of human activity, public or private that is not governed by the idea of predominant world view of dogmas, traditions, and doctrines grounding conceptual base.

The presage and augur about natural calamities, pandemics, and expulsion of redundant belief structures are effortless formulations when one comprehends that these occurrences have been and will remain a repetitive element of the human experience (Hellstrom, 2007:15). It is not difficult to predict the future when you understand how human beings think and how nature functions. This is because, history repeats itself, and nature replicates its cycle. This is the cyclic segment of life – and the impact is that once the cyclic pattern is understood, the upshot is not a surprise.

An absurdity is that human beings are surrounded by diverse theories and religious beliefs about *parousia*. It is patently eccentric that generations are engrossed into such situations and as a result, religion and religious exponents flout the rational eschatological implication in order to transposition it as horrid event to the future generation (Amaechi, 2014:114). This is because the concept always perpetuates itself so that it can survive. Evidently, if eschatology is fulfilled, the concept will wane, but persist proliferating among generations which assent to its existence in the minds of human beings. This is how religion and religious beliefs work, and its operational construct leads to an upshot that has a tendency of escalating social and ethical diversity.

In relation to religion, human beings are persuaded to accept an erroneous proposition as a fact and as the basis of upheld religious beliefs, whilst some of the religious executive possesses the power and investment towards personal gains (Chang'ach, 2013:48). However, such narratives do not substantiate the truth of the alleged and endorsed prediction, but protract a decisive exertion (Hellstrom, 2007:11). Therefore, it is a problematic delusion that religious executive do everything possible to sustain the proposed predictions as true, while the ignorant are persuaded to accept and believe the illusion as real (Hellstrom, 2007:12). This expose accentuate that human beings and religious executive possess the capacity to misuse religion to escalate social and ethical diversity. This critical obliteration culminates at destroying the world by instigating human revulsion, wrath, and affliction using religion and religious beliefs perceived as 'end times'.

#### 4.7 The Primacy of Terror

It is glaring that in the past, present, and probably the future, religion and religious beliefs entreat to violence and acts of violence as means to promulgate the religion or prohibit and proscribe the spread of other religious belief and other forms of religion

(Jonkers, 2017:420). The terror factor dominates every religion (Jonkers, 2017:423). This explains why many denominations of religion and religious beliefs were propagated through force and violence in the past, but today, terror and fear are allied to propaganda as crucial tenets of spreading religion.

It is glaring that purposive violence in the society persists as the most ferocious object of caustic ends of humanity. However, as such, this destructive end is bound for certain achievements. In such vein, religion and religious beliefs are carried out in the name of the deity whilst, nobody is allowed to question and investigate (Nwanaju, 2016:112). History has it that this human dilemma regarding religion and religious beliefs pervades religious texts. The truth is that religion and religious executive tend to deny plausible atrocities instead of facing the reality (Jonkers, 2017:426). This may occur when such atrocities are initiated by the same religion to safeguard the same religious beliefs.

It is critical that religion endorses terror and oppression inflicted upon other human beings as 'nominal actions', and thus, there are two implications; that religion and religious beliefs are not exceptional from political forces and secondly, religion and religious beliefs are not free from promulgating social and ethical diversity (Nwanaju, 2016:108). This behavior is absolutely a form of irrational thinking based upon archaic concepts that neither serves the progress of humanity, nor protract peaceful coexistence for the future. In this regard, it is essential to articulate that unexamined knowledge is not worthy living, and as such unexamined religion and religious beliefs will instigate ignorance and thus prolong the peril of escalating social and ethical diversity.

## **5. The Concept of Religion and Religious Beliefs in Kenya**

In the entire world, religion and religious beliefs tend to assume that it is in its faith alone that 'absolute truth' reside and refuse to admit the possibility that such convictions are erroneous (Goldstein, 2005:530). Instead, they tend to force conflicting information to be adapted to the doctrines and dogmas irrespective of effective evidence that disproves the rationality of a religion and religious beliefs (Burdon, 2013:425). In this case, many religious executive and proponents have no quandary grasping the irrationality of other forms of religion and religious beliefs, but do not protract similar logic to evaluate their dogmas and doctrines.

A society that has scores of religion, religious beliefs, religious cultures, and traditions is a pluralistic society (Ruhmkorff, 2013:7). In the contemporary society, pluralism is manifest through cultural traditions which is defined by attachment to certain roots and traditions depicted in operating social institutions such as schools, religious denominations, and religious beliefs. It is also reflected in different characteristics and behavior in the society. There is also the feature of religion, religious beliefs, and denominations sharing common religious practices (Ruhmkorff, 2013:5).

The purpose of religion and religious beliefs is to keep human beings bonded to the deity however, there are certain situations when such objective tends to hinder human progress rather than helping procure human growth (Miklian & Birkvad,

2016:67). When religion and religious beliefs pose hindrance, the progress of human beings cannot transcend the antiquated and thinking is skewed below progress.

In Kenya, religion and religious beliefs are envisaged to teach the imperishable lesson about the touchstone of all human activities. It is alleged that any human activity that does not stand the test of religion and religious beliefs is evil (Ruhmkorff, 2013:4). As such, religion is perceived to teach peace, tolerance and consideration for others, justice, kinship of human beings, understanding, unity in one deity and other virtues. Nevertheless, these facets of religion and religious beliefs are often limited on religious executive, exponents and probable proponents. In this case, religion and religious beliefs fail the capacity to serve humanity as envisaged to be (Miklian & Birkvad, 2016:70).

The situation in Kenya and many other developing countries is that there is a converse correlation between religion, religious beliefs, and human progress. A comparison between religion and development divulges that the most religious nations are the poorest (Miklian & Birkvad, 2016:63). In 2007, thousands of religious denominations had been registered at the office of attorney general and seven thousand new ones were in the waiting list. This is the time when the government suspended the process of registering new religious denominations.

It is blatant that Finland has the best stable economy in world, but the country has less than twenty churches. In a similar vein, Switzerland is second and yet it has less than thirty churches, while Denmark is third, and has got only twenty three churches. In the contrary, the record of registered churches in Kenya is more than three hundred thousand! These are more than the number of schools and hospitals together. The implication is that the pastors in Kenya are more than total number of both teachers and doctors. On the other hand, Kenya is among the poorest in Africa; it has huge financial debts, questionable politics, diseases, and belated development as observed in religious denominations. In an equal measure, religion in Kenya tend to borrow, dissipate, and larceny. The implication emanating from religion and religious denominations is to accelerate social and ethical diversity.

It is easily deducible that Kenya has got an outstanding record of corruption, greed, tribal, deceitful, hypocrisy, hatred, yet the country is notoriously religious but such is not reflected in morals in Kenyan society (Nwanaju, 2016:109). The implication is that religion and religious beliefs tend to engender destruction, antagonism and thus escalate social and ethical diversity in Kenya. Therefore, there is need of isolating religiosity and futility, mysticism and customs (Hellstrom, 2007:13).

### **5.1 Religion and Social Diversity in Kenya**

A pluralistic society comprises of a medley of characteristics including:

- the concept of diversity which is reflected in sundry or different world views is enclosed by reservations. In this case, it forms an enterprise of yanking everyone to one religion for acquisitive gain than faith and religion itself (McCormick, 2006:145).

- it is also notable that the element of tolerance portrayed through harmonious coexistence among different religious denominations exist, but such 'artificial ecumenism' is delimited by suspicion, negative notions, reservations, and hesitation (Pratt, 2006:12).
- every religion and religious beliefs strives to enhance commitment which is depicted in revivalism of universal truths in religion, but with fear of being overtaken by the opposing religion (Makolkin, 2015:75).
- an aspect of communication, or dialogue, is alleged in form of ecumenism. In this case, religion attempts to promote religious dialogue drawing attention to the aspects of agreement customized on some level of unity, cooperation and understanding between religion and denominations (Burrell, 2008:180). However, this ecumenism facet fails to respond to the critical issues in favour of the basics that form what is agreeable.

It is glaring that religion and religious beliefs insists that commitment to serving the deity culminates at some reward under the precincts of the precise dogmas, doctrines, and traditions (Goldstein, 2005:532). In this regard, Kenya's exponents of religion and religious beliefs can easily become fanatics in support of radicalism. Therefore, in Kenya, non-exponents to religion and religious beliefs are categorized as rebels and the implication is to reinforce social diversity.

In religion and religious beliefs, there is an inherent sentiment of superiority complex (Mackim, 2008:381). The upshot is that religion induces its exponents to act callously and to inflict psychological penalty to those they label as 'rebels' exclusive of passable basis for the abhorrence. In this context, repugnance is alleged as 'good moral conduct'. The situation in Kenya is that the exponents of religion and religious beliefs erroneously hold their religion to be superior to all others (Wiredu, 2005:369). This flawed conviction is sufficient to spiral social diversity.

Religion and religious beliefs thrive best on the threat of theocracy (Burrell, 2006:185). In the case of theocracy, exponents ignore that theocratic mindset deter autonomy towards rational choices that can avert social diversity. As such, religion and religious beliefs espouse the centrality of theocratic leadership (Panchenko, 2016:196). This is observable in Kenya whereby, exponents tend to follow the religious leaders and trust that they have revelation from the deity, but, in reality, the agenda is to exploit, corrupt, and oppress them.

The aspect of disparity is glaring in religion and religious beliefs and in this case poverty is a sanctioned clause in theocratic atmosphere (Jonkers, 2017:422). Further, social disparity is endorsed through discriminative actions and conduct towards non-exponents of such religion and religious beliefs. This is a common feature in Kenya and its upshot is to aggravate social and ethical diversity. This explains why this treatise endorse that religion and religious beliefs can facilitate fallacious validation of withdrawing the rights and enhancing only religious obligations (Makolkin, 2015:72). Once the rights and obligations are withheld, then social diversity is inevitable. The corollary is the prospect of forestalling peaceful coexistence among human beings.

The question about eschatological factor, parousia, or the idea of 'end times' sturdily permeates religion and religious beliefs (Hellstrom, 2007:10). All the noted aspects including fear, inequality, fraternity, control, superiority complex, just to mention a few, are meant to endorse the eschatological factor. In Kenya, different religious denominations and creeds tend to endorse control using the factor of eschatology (Hellstrom, 2007:23). In this case, eschatological factor sets the borders of religion and religious beliefs. The upshot is that exponents strive to live the prophecies of parousia at the expense of free will. This ensues as exponents are convinced about lurking fate above the future of humanity based on how human beings think and how nature functions. The implication is to amplify social diversity which is rife in Kenya under the influence of religion and religious beliefs.

## **5.2 Religion and Ethical Diversity in Kenya**

In a pluralistic society such as Kenya, the study of religious education comprises of learning religion as an integral part of education theory and practice. In this case, religious education is the most obvious answer that a philosophical analysis of religion can appeal to as a rational enterprise applied on religion (Tobia, 2015:9). However, there are various questions to be answered including the meaning of religion and how it should be studied. In addition, it is necessary to examine who should study religion, and how the study should be controlled.

In Kenya, religion and religious beliefs can be accountable for escalating social and ethical diversity. A critical cause of social and ethical diversity involving religion and religious beliefs ensues from coarse language of persecution, discrimination, or abuse (Ysseldyk, et al., 2014:362). This perilous language tends to condense the value of harmony in the name of the deity. Secondly, exponents of religion and religious beliefs tend to pose a precarious comparison of dogmas, creeds, doctrines, traditions, and religious positions concerning the minority (Panchenko, 2016:197). This comparison is harmful because it culminates at social and ethical diversity. In the third place, proponents of religion and religious beliefs in Kenya do not learn from the cases of antiquity that were supported by persecutions, evil and cultural disservice. Instead, these exponents tend to perpetuate terror, fear, and propaganda (Kalthoff, 2015:23).

It is rife that the exponents of religion and religious beliefs endorse inaccurate descriptions about the unity of the society and often elude castigating tribulations committed by religion in the name of the deity (Hellstrom, 2007:19). In this case, religion and nation must be different entities; otherwise, the so called theocracy is a reflection of misplaced faith and allegiance. Finally, exponents of religion and religious beliefs should emphasize on pursuing creative work for the sake of others, irrespective of being within the acceptable streams or at the margins of the society or not.

The significance of control in religion and religious beliefs is generated on panic imbued among the proponents. This fear is subtle and as such remains undetected. In Kenya, such fear is deeply embedded and it is not regarded as fear but a reflection of truth (Kalthoff, 2015:21). However, the reality is that it is a control mechanism which is naturally destructive, and as such negates ethical stability.

The distraction of separation culminates at making exponents to become fanatics. In this case, propaganda is used to mar coherent and unequivocal thinking in order to approve erroneous dogmas and doctrines as the basis of 'truth' (Chang'ach, 2013:48). Thus, in Kenya, the stronghold of religion and religious beliefs depends on a collective mentality of human beings aligned as its exponents which leads to ethical diversity.

Another cause is that religion and religious beliefs tend to prosper on delusive fraternity (Abu & Adewale, 2013:346). However, such fraternity is often skewed towards a deceptive relationship amid the proponents of such religion. In Kenya, delusive fraternity is a common trend whereby exponents of religion and religious beliefs castigate each other as unauthentic and irrelevant to the 'standards' of the deity. This situation has culminated in exacerbating ethical diversity.

In Kenya, religion and religious beliefs have restrained progress (Jonkers, 2017:427). When thinking and rational abstraction fails, some religious Kenyans refocus their imagination into the realm of mysteries and faith. However, it is decisive to slant towards rationalism and empiricism to explain reality as opposed to faith, mysticism, and mythology. An outlook towards mysticism has stalled and mired progress and thus amplifying ethical diversity (Kazanjan, 2005:3).

It is palpable that religion and religious beliefs are instituted on subjugation and terror factor (McCormick, 2006:144). There are notable facets of aggression and intimidation in religion and religious beliefs whose ability to prosper spirals from propaganda. As a result, religion and religious beliefs are inclining to force and violence in order to spread their impact. This is conspicuous in Kenya and the upshot is to augment ethical diversity.

## **6. Approaches of Solving Social and Ethical Diversity in Kenya**

As a concept, religion is a paradoxical reality because it comprises of the most sublime moral and spiritual teachings of humanity, besides the intolerance facets of remnants who adopt abhorrence and horror (Nwanaju, 2016:109). The study of religion and religious beliefs can itself be considered from a number of different points of view whereby, each perspective entails forming a series of philosophical and didactic issues.

There are diverse approaches of studying religion and religious beliefs including historical, sociological, psychological, anthropological, philosophical etc. (Audi, 2006:696). In connection to its ambiguity in human affairs and world history, religion and religious beliefs has been a controversial topic for generations or the so called religious trauma syndrome (Jonkers, 2017:425). This is because; the subject of religion can induce a range of responses from love, compassion and goodwill, to fear, loathing, and xenophobia. Therefore, this treatise proposes three approaches to facilitate in solving the issue of social and ethical diversity caused by religion.

A pluralistic approach in studying religion and religious beliefs identifies a problem about the control of religion and the embraced doctrines, dogmas, traditions, and faiths (Kazanjan, 2005:6). However, when the model of religious education is functional the question of control is implicit. In this case, the issue of control and

protection of social and ethical stability is unfeasible. A philosophical study of religious education as learning religion would be transmittal. As a result of diversity in religious denominations, doctrines, dogmas, traditions, faith, and religious beliefs tend to spar (Panchenko, 2016:189). It is therefore palpable that there is no agreed basis that can safeguard social and ethical diversity.

### **6.1 The Scheme of Pluralism**

An important approach to minimize the peril of escalating social and ethical diversity is by an espousal of pluralism. The concept of religion, religious beliefs and social diversity gyrates around the reality of religious pluralism (Abu & Adewale, 2013:344). It is germane to note that the term pluralism is a rational construct of 'unity in diversity besides continuity in variety' (Mwinzi, 2016:381). The word pluralism is literary perceived as a doctrine of multiplicity, because as such it denotes a diversity of views and stands rather than a single approach or method of interpreting reality. As such, pluralism is a social system founded on respect for the culture of others in the larger society.

In relation to pluralism, a nub response to diversity of religion and religious beliefs is to deny or minimize the doctrinal conflicts (Goldstein, 2005:502). Thus, the focal point is that the religious beliefs or the doctrine itself is not as important for religion as religious experience and as such religion, religious beliefs, and the great religious traditions are simple human responses to deity or the Ultimate Reality. In this regard, religion and religious beliefs must not be perceived as the means of determining the authenticity, but must be a reflection of diverse responses to the deity.

As such, every religious denomination and religious beliefs have inherent aspects of hypocrisy and this is because, there are strong traces of radicalism, corruption, racialism, tribalism, terrorism, ranging from the past to the present whose implication is to deter human progress (Goldstein, 2005:507). It is equally apt to note that religion and religious beliefs conjure the theology of evangelism which poses a supplant subterfuge (Goldstein, 2005:506). In this case, it endorses the view that evangelism consists in seeking to replace the 'accepted religion' and beliefs (Hellstrom, 2007:15).

In the contemporary society, pluralism in religion and religious beliefs is envisaged to set an objective strategy to the issues beyond religion such as political, professionalism, and the general welfare because such are necessary to sustain social and ethical stability instead of religion (Jonkers, 2017:420). Thus, the focus is directed not only to the religion and religious beliefs, but also towards non-religious issues such as work, health, and ethics. The role of pluralism is to pose a reasonable critique on religion and religious beliefs (Ruhmkorff, 2013:510). It is exact to divulge that religion and religious beliefs are highly ambiguous issues. Similarly, religion and religious beliefs has changed over time stretching from medieval period and the modern times. The issue of religion and religious beliefs can be perpetuated by a believer or a non-believer. Thus, religion and religious beliefs can be proliferated at home, school, church and prisons.

## 6.2 The Technique of Religious Education

A philosophical analysis of the concept of religion and religious beliefs falls under the philosophy of religious education. A philosophical discourse of religion and religious beliefs is regarded as religious education (Kazanjian, 2005:4). This academic discipline is concerned with the theoretical and rational approach to the analysis of religion and its implications in relation to other value-systems in the society such as science and ethics. As an academic discipline, philosophy of religious education embodies a logical analysis that probes the objectivity of religion and religious beliefs in order to establish a rational balance.

As such, philosophical analysis founded on religious education poses a secular evaluation on issues such as morality, values, character and spirituality (Kalthoff, 2015:11). It also examines empathy, strengths and weaknesses of faith, it heightens human dignity and offers a general outlook towards religion and religious beliefs envisaged to enhance general education for human progress. The usage of religious education in an attempt to minimize social and ethical diversity is proliferated with respect to the authentically pluralistic nature of the society (Ruhmkorff, 2013:511). In order to situate social and ethical stability, religious education should not impose doctrinal, dogmatic, contentious, or sectarian teachings of religion and religious beliefs (Goldstein, 2005:498). It is therefore, fundamental that an effective facet of religious education is to transcend the realm of indoctrination, to excel the guise of ecumenical tolerance, to surpass religious chauvinism, and to augment private or public interest (Amaechi, 2012:59). In this case, religious education supports a meaningful pluralism which does not interfere with moral and religious views, human rights and human dignity (Curren, 2006:327). Thus, the chore of religious education is to eradicate social and ethical diversity by ebbing religious parochialism.

This treatise upholds that religion and religious beliefs promotes both individualism and directed communalism towards the exponents of the religion and religious beliefs (Curren, 2006:68). In essence, religious education promotes rationality in religion and religious beliefs (Abu & Adewale, 2013:348). This is emphasized by refusing to cooperate in teaching of offensive doctrines and dogmas that can escalate social and ethical diversity (Abu & Adewale, 2013:344). An enterprise of realizing this end must appeal to the teaching and learning religious beliefs within the context of a multi-religion and multi-religious society.

As a critique of religion and religious beliefs, the precincts of the problem of religious education as the study of religion resides in the ambiguity of the trends of religion and religious beliefs (Mckim, 2008:381). The subject that ensues is to scrutinize religion and religious beliefs within its unique place in the ideology of a culture. In this functional context, it is decisive to note that religion and religious beliefs has the power and an ambiguity either to transform or to deceive, either to build up or to destroy (Makolkin, 2015:78). This explains why the role of philosophical approach to religious education is necessary to obliterate what collapses religion and religious beliefs in order to expose the true meaning.



A philosophical approach of religious education should respond to the needs of inter-religious and intercultural education. Thus, a religious education should incorporate minority views and surpass chauvinism facets in learning (Burrell, 2008:180). The philosophical stance of religious education is to snub instituting of denominational policy (Ysseldyk, et al., 2014:349) to education for an exclusive purpose of proliferating religion and religious beliefs, since religion and religious beliefs are aptly supported by families. Therefore, there is no need of proliferating some religious denominations if such will lead to social and ethical diversity. A rational abstraction of religious education assents to this perspective in good faith in order to enhance true dialogue.

### **6.3 The Format of Philosophy**

It is obtrusive that religion and philosophy meet at copious realms including the study of axiology specially ethics, and metaphysics particularly cosmology (Amaechi, 2012:60). An exact perspective is that religious beliefs fall under the category of morality in ethics and religious idealism which entails metaphysics. As such, religion comprises of metaphysical questions and probable answers about the nature of being, of the universe, humanity, and the divine.

As a result of contentment for modernity, consumerism, over-consumption, violence and anomie, religious exponents have developed a medley of religious orientations that are founded on distinctive religious world views (Abiogu, Ezegebe, Eskay, & Anyanwu, 2014:35). The implication is an increase of religious pluralism, reflected in a myriad of new religious movements, which gain adherents all the time. As suggested above, religion, religious beliefs, and religious systems are increasing influence due to the perceived failure of modern or secular ideologies.

In this context, philosophy is not perceived as an intellectual pursuit or attempt to understand, interpret, and unify reality, but a conglomeration of theory or practice or both (Mwinzi, 2017:49084). It can also be defined as the investigation and scrutiny of everything. Technically, philosophy is the study of reality; corporeal and incorporeal. A philosophy endeavors to understand all that comes within the bound of human experience. It attempts to understand humanity in relation to the universe – nature and deity. Here, philosophy seeks to understand whether human being is free or within bondage and either way, human being can change the course of history (Mwinzi, 2017:49086).

It should be noted that no religion or religious beliefs has a claim that is universally agreed to nor dogmas or doctrines that are publically tested and endorsed (Anghel, n.d:76). Thus, personal experience and philosophical reflections provide both reasons and favour for and against religion and religious beliefs. As such, religion and religious beliefs remain as issues of debate. A philosophical review of religion and religious beliefs should be evaluated, even though faith and reason are not reflections of each other, but reason can enlighten faith (Okon, 2013:98). In this regard, philosophical abstraction draws attention to the rational facets of religion and religious beliefs. Therefore, the concept of rationality or logical reasoning does not endorse the facet of

miracles, or the aspects of religion and religious beliefs that escalate social and ethical diversity.

## 6. Conclusion

It necessary to articulate that social and ethical consistency transcends the precincts of every religion and religious beliefs (Wiredu, 2005:369). Thus, if religion and religious beliefs must not be used to define the future of humanity objectively, then the task of religion and religious beliefs is obsolete. This is because any societal institution that can cause conflict disconcerting social and ethical concord in the society is detrimental. This discourse avers that religion and religious beliefs have escalated social and ethical diversity, and therefore are inadequate facets for interpreting reality not only in Kenya, but also in the entire world.

In this context, religion and religious beliefs transcend self-proliferation to win more exponents if the methods used culminate in undermining social and ethical accord. It is necessary that religion and religious beliefs should derive meaning from conservation of truth in terms of moral goodness, social and ethical equilibrium (Wiredu, 2005:3). A philosophical inquiry into religion and religious beliefs should be used to examine and define religious doctrines, dogmas, and creeds based on logical arguments.

Therefore, the contemporary world needs religion and religious beliefs to enhance social and ethical stability either directly or indirectly in the morality of human action (Wiredu, 2005:278). The meaning and purpose of religion and religious beliefs is to construct a better world but not to destroy the extant one.

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