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**COURSE:COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH{GST 122**

***TOPIC:***

***AN ESSAY ON CULTISM***

***Cultism may be viewed as a system of beliefs binding together people of the same and skills for life… outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to interest for the purpose of promoting and defending the common pursuit. The 1999Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, in Section 318 (4), bans a secret societydefined as a society or an association not being solely, a cultural or religious body that uses secret signs, oaths, rites or symbols. Whose meeting or other activities are held in secret; and ii. Whose members are under oath, obligation or other threat to promote the interest of its members or to aid one another under all circumstances without due regard***

***to merit, fair play or justice, to the detriment of the legitimate expectation of those who***

***are not members.***

***X-raying the concept of education, Ukeje (1979) conceives education as a***

***process, a product and a discipline. Meanwhile, Whitehead (1932) and Akinpelu (1981)***

***maintain that education goes beyond knowledge acquisition to the application of such.***

***According to Moore (1978), the concept may be seen as a process involving activities***

***such as teaching, persuading, motivating, learning, and examining programmes in schools***

***The Failure of Proper Socialization as Root Causes of Cultism in Nigerian Schools***

***Students are attracted to cultist groups for a variety of reasons. One of the causes and reasons***

***for the existence of the secret cults in our educational institutions could be associated with***

***economic situations of students. It is important to add that, in modern Nigeria, the influence***

***of the family has greatly receded. Increasingly and as a result, the average family fails in its***

***function to provide a solid moral foundation for children. Children are thus weakly prepared***

***to resist negative peer group influences which they encounter on a daily basis. Commenting***

***on the activities of "area" boys and girls - a sub-cultural deviant group of young boys and***

***girls in urban centres in Nigeria (Epkenyong, 2010). Rafiu (1993) highlights the inability of***

***the modern family to equip children with effective socialization needed to conform to***

***acceptable cultural norms.***

***The menace of cultism in Nigerian schools has certainly emerged as one of the***

***main social problems in contemporary Nigeria, with obvious psychological consequences.***

***This paper therefore examines the impact of religion in combating the demented acts of***

***cultism in Nigerian schools, using Islam and Christianity as the basis. Religion dictates to its***

***followers basic values intended to guide people towards living an ideal life-style. In Nigeria,***

***there are two dominant religions: Islam and Christianity. To these writers’ minds the two***

***religions do not condone cultism. The core values of these religions are purity, chastity,***

***honesty, integrity, quality of moderation and humility. After the analysis of the causes and***

***psychological impact of cultism, it then concludes with the submission that the menace of***

***cultism in Nigerian schools can be drastically reduced or eliminated through the***

***internalization and inculcation of the fear of God in the minds of students.***

***Effects of Cultism***

***1. Untimely Death***

***One of the pathetic effects of cultism is the loss of lives prematurely. The government through its law enforcement agencies on a constant effort, fights crime such as armed robbery, kidnapping, drug abuse, murder etc. carried out by the cult members.***

***The outcome of such operations often results in exchange of fire, arrest, detention, imprisonment and death. Many young people who indulge in these heinous acts have lost their lives either in the course of a shootout confrontation or through inter-cult clashes.***

***In most cases, the death rate is higher on account of cult rivalry. In universities, the cult students are usually attacked during their degree examination in final year.***

***This does not just create a loss of potential human resources to the society but also a loss of economic resources spent by the families in funding their children to higher education.***

***2. Loss of Moral Values***

***Cultism leads to loss of values in young people. This is because the belief system and ideologies of most of these cult groups are against the objective morality of life.***

***The practice of vengeance and violence which they promote by their actions negates objective moral values of life. Individuals who had values from home upbringing tend to lose them through the negative influence of the system of cultism.***

***Such negative values have no regard for the sanctity of human life, orderliness and peace.***

***CONCLUSION***

***This paper has examined the cultism in Nigerian schools and its psychological impact.***

***Without doubt, the menace of cultism is one of the social vices affecting educational***

***development in Nigeria. Thus, towards combating this problem, this study posits that the fear***

***of God should be inculcated in the minds of students, the majority of whom are Muslims and***

***Christians. Towards this end, Nigerian Christians and Muslims must not relent in their efforts***

***in supporting anti-cultism crusade. They must continue in their preaching and admonition***

***against the violent acts of cultism among youths are directly or indirectly influenced by cultism.***