

Spirituality and Health-Enhancing Factors as Drivers of Community Development

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Abstract

Spirituality and Health-Enhancing factors are stimulus that motivates people to participate in Community building activities with a view for enhanced quality of life. Modern societies are confronted with increasing crises of community fragmentation, erosion of moral values, health challenges and weakness of community unity. In Nigeria, these crises are manifested insecurity, Youth cynicism, apathy towards community engagement. Spirituality factors are things that innately motivate on individual to the disposition of righteous attitudes to self and others in his environment. These are charitableness, compassionateness, hospitality, forgiveness and reconciliation and tolerance and acceptance. Health-enhancing factor are conditions in society that influence wellbeing, choices and work performance. They are Education, employment, income, community safety, Family and Social Support, and recreation. This paper examines that when these factors are synergized in to community building programmes, will foster social relationship, emotional wellbeing and positive healthy lifestyles, ultimately becoming a panacea for community building.

Keywords: Community building, Spirituality factors, Health-Enhancing factors

Introduction

Community building refers to connection and building relationships among people in the community for participation toward initiation and execution of projects and programmes for the improvement of their wellbeing and that of their community with the ultimate aim of binding the community together. Community building is the glue that binds the community together until another execution of the next programme in the community. Globally, societies breakdown manifested in rising health

disorders, social violence, substance abuse, corruption and the wearing away of community values. In Nigeria, these challenges are escalated by insecurity, unemployment, illiteracy, poverty, stress, ethno-religious tensions, lack or inadequate social support and weakening trust in public institutions. Despite technological advancements and infrastructure, community unity appears weak. Thus the problem with community building is the inability of people to build relationship among themselves and inabilities to work together

towards the development of their communities. This incapability to form connections has led to apathy among the people toward developmental efforts and activities in the communities. This manifested in the belief and thought of the people in the words of Adeyemi and Fawole (2016) that a large percentage of community people in local communities believed that government functionaries are solely responsible to self-help projects in their localities.

Community building according to Abiona (2009), cited in Akande (2025) is any particular set of undertakings which are introduced and followed by a community in order to grow the community's social capacity with a view to developing the community. These activities and events according to Armstrong (2015) range from simple events like potlucks, festivals, carnivals, recreation activities, education, healthcare, business, sports, spiritual celebration to construction of projects. However, the network of relationships aims toward people's participation during initiation and execution of projects which would have ultimately united and bind the community together after their execution were no longer available and noticeable. Similarly, this tells on the community and community members. However, there is low level or limited development. This leads to non-availability and inaccessibility to social services, social and family support system which adversely affects the living standard and value of life in the communities. There is also no thorough connection among the community members. This leads to weak community building among communities, which has its impact on the livelihood of the people and the communities in general. According to the Center for Corporate and Professional Development (2017), what people tend to notice when a team fails is the negative, antagonistic and painful atmosphere. It follows that this weak community building has led to low level of development, poor social relationship and lack of trust among the community people. It has given opportunity for crime, animosity, social inequality and disparity between the citizens.

Since time memorial, community building had been in existence among people in the community. Igboeli (1992) cited in Akande (2025) observed that one of the most momentous events that took place in foremost communities in Nigeria has been the citizens participation in the physical, societal and political development of their areas; a practice which actually started from time age-old. Before the advent of modern civilization, communities were closely knit together coupled with cultural homogeneity and the spirit of communalism, and were all involved in one particular activity or the other. Participatory activities that existed include construction of markets, roads, culverts, town squares or meeting halls, wells, farms, among others. According to Akande (2025), people from different ethnic groups, religious affiliations and backgrounds are residents in Oke-Ogun region which has led to multi-religiosity, ethnic diversity, tribal identity, ethno-religious crises and acrimonies. However, communities with ethnic, tribal, cultural, religious diversities and backgrounds may experience ethno-religious and social disturbances and disputes with stiff competitions on properties, positions and power sharing or tussle. This has become sources of conflicts and competitions, ethno-tribal rivalry, rather than being an advantage of unity and harmony. There is religious intolerance and religious discrimination among the people. Adherents of one religion refused to be involved in community building activities with other adherents of another religion. These different religious beliefs and practices have led to religious rivalry, discrimination, repression, persistent hatred among the residents. This intolerance gives rise to lack of thorough connectivity, interaction and inter-relationship among the people which led to discrimination, rejection, accusations, favouritism, nepotism, disharmony, diversity, mistrust, suspicion, as well as unconcern/unsympathetic and unfriendly attitude toward fellow community members. This is adversely affecting the

people's participation in community building process. All these manifest and reflect in the livelihood of the indigenes especially in the appointment of persons into political, civil/teaching services and community leadership positions. At some Community Development Association (CDA) meetings, some religious adherents are seen as second-class members, thus they are being discriminated against. This discourages some members from participating and contributing to community building activities. Thus, on the whole, Cook and Paser (2019) state that these highlight how religious prejudice negatively affect people's harmonious living and interpersonal relationships. This resulted in the problem of apathy among the community people in toward community building and development efforts and activities.

These situations affect community building activities in many ways. At tribal level, only indigenes would attend CDA meetings, while other tribes would not see themselves as stakeholders in community building activities in the communities. Multi-tribal and ethnic communities may be besieged with crimes, vices, kidnapping, armed banditry, raping, armed robbery and insecurity perpetrated by non-indigenes is likely to discourage members of the communities from participating and contributing to the CB activities. Thus, Akande (2025) states that this hindered participation in decision making, non-effective, community mobilization for participation, lack of financial resources. This situation leads to low/bad community building efforts with its adverse effects on the socio-economic enlargement of the communities. This manifest in weak social support networks, prejudice/discrimination, internal displacement/communal instability and insecurity resulting to unemployment and poverty. Economic and human developments are undermined by scarce, unreliable or unaffordable supplies of vital resources, neglect of dwellers in rural areas in the communities' area in terms of food, roads, portable water, power supply, goods

and services. As noted by Popoola (2016) that the roads in many of the areas are unmotorable, while most of the villages are cut-off due to bad state of the roads.

Spirituality is a term that can vary in its definition according to the user (Rose, 2001). There exist numerous definitions of the term spirituality, but the context in which it is used in this study is found in the definitions given below. Against this background, spirituality according to Kinjersk and Skrypneck (2004) is meaningful work, connectivity, shared goal. Sheldrake (2007) 'deepest values and meanings by which people live', and Young and Koopsen (2011) human qualities, cultures, quest for meaning, purpose, morality, wellbeing, relationship with humans and higher forces. Spirituality factors are also known as spiritual qualities or spiritual assets; as well as spirituality variables which are according to Armstrong (2015) qualities that inspire us to do what is right and good for ourselves and for others. These spirituality factors are being charitable towards others, sharing hospitality, forgiveness and reconciliation, tolerance and acceptance (Armstrong 2015). These factors relate with community building in that being compassionate is readiness to help one in need, this leads to being charitable which is generous giving. If a member in a community shows compassion to another person, the recipient too does likewise to another, having felt the outcome; this manifest in contribution toward community building. For hospitality, when a new member moves in to the community, well received and entertained, he is being tolerated (tolerance) and accepted into the community (acceptance), he in turn accepts the hospitality. In this case, community members would tend to share their resources willingly toward community building, accept whatever the government offers. For forgiveness and reconciliation, one who has forgiven another of harm done to him and reconciliation ensured would do same to another, thus promoting relationship toward decision making and

community building. All this multiplies over time among community members and in the community as a whole.

Health-Enhancing Factors (HEFs) are quality education, employment opportunities, income, community safety, family and social support and recreation activities. Health-Enhancing Factors (HEFs) are any programme designed to improve the efficiency and value of life of an individual. These HEFs are also referred to as determinants of health or factors that influence health; they could have positive or negative effect on health of an individual. HEFs according to the Winipeg Regional Health Authority (2014) are conditions and the factors that enable and support people to make healthy choices or the services that promote and maintain health. This means HEFs are factors, conditions and services outside the health sector which empower individuals to take cogent decisions. Therefore, it could be deduced from the foregoing that these HEFs are services or conditions which determine, foster or hinder the health, decisions and choices and level of participation and performance of individuals in community activities. Hence from definition of health given by the World Health Organisation (1994) means health is not only being free from sickness and disease but has to do with complete general wellbeing of an individual concerning every aspect of his life. Many studies have been carried out by several authors, but have not been focusing on these spirituality and health-enhancing factors and how they can enhance community building. This study is out to examine spirituality and health-enhancing factors as panacea for community building.

The Concept of Community Building

Community building is any recognizable set of actions which are originated and followed by a community in order to upsurge the community's social capability with a view to developing the community (Abiona 2009 cited in Akande 2025). This follows that community building is activities that are planned and organized by

community members in order to enhance the community's ability to work together to organize relationships toward the development of the community. It should therefore be noted that community building can be viewed as going beyond geographical locations or physical spaces into digital platforms that enable people from different geographic and cultural backgrounds to come together under common causes with one voice, fostering collaboration toward active involvement and participation in developmental activities that will engender their condition of living in the community. Orgo Informatics (2026) states that community building is the process of creating, nurturing and sustaining relationships among individuals who share common goals, values or interests. This means that the process in question here is a structured one for building relationships fostering trust and bringing about a sense of belonging among individuals. In the same vein Rivers (2025) also view community building as centering on forming, developing and nurturing purposeful relationships among individuals who share common interests, goals or values. This can be explained in such a way that it fosters a safe and trustworthy environment in which members of the community can be involved in productive dialogues and sustained collaboration. Therefore, community building is getting the people involved in identifying their needs, decision-making, planning, organisation and execution of their affairs and how such affect their lives, which make them to be committed to the course of their affairs and improvement of their lives and sustainability of their projects and programmes because they would see such projects or activities as their own and safeguard them jealously. However, every programme or project that leads to the improvement of the general living conditions of the community that is founded or based on relationships among the community people is referred to as community building. One could be safe enough to say that community building is connection and building relationships among

people in the community for participation toward initiation and execution of programmes for the improvement of their wellbeing with the ultimate aim of binding the community together.

The Concept of Spirituality Factors

Spirituality has existed for centuries and has been an important part of society and influence in individual lives. The term Spirituality is complex and diverse in description and definition, only the perspective or angle through which one looks at it matters. To this end, through history, Spirituality as a term has experienced changes in definition quite a lot of times. These reflected the political, social, philosophical, and religious facets of precise epochs in time and the development of humanity. Austin (2021) states that spirituality is the aspect of humanity that refers to the way individual seek and express meaning and purpose and the way they experience their connectedness to the significant or sacred. Scott (2024) views spirituality as connecting with something outside of yourself that brings meaning and connection to your life, which also focus on religious practices like breath work, service to others and spending time in nature. Spirituality could also be viewed as one's inner meaning and purpose of one's existence, ultimately expressing and pursuing all of them. One could therefore safely conclude that spirituality is the deep consciousness and urge within man that makes him to seek connection, interaction and relationship to self, fellow humans, higher forces and service to humanity.

Spirituality variables, would be examined to buttress the above view. They are qualities in man that motivate him into positive attitude; and these qualities include being charitable toward others, being compassionate, forgiveness and reconciliation, sharing hospitality, and showing tolerance and acceptance (Community Tool Box, 2018). Being charitable towards others, according to Community Tool Box (2018) a service of the Centre for Community Health and Development

at the University of Kansas, states that being charitable might mean serving meals in that shelter, helping out during disasters, volunteering to drive seniors to appointment, baking dinner for a sick neighbor, or any number of activities that help you get to know those you are serving. Being charitable could mean the voluntary giving and sharing of help to those in need as a humanitarian act. This could be in the form of money, food, job security, to the poor and needy, homeless, orphans, widows, migrants, refugees, prisoners, the sick, by individuals, philanthropists, religious bodies, and voluntary organisations. Being compassionate, Howard (2019) states, that in terms of human relationships, many have defined compassion as a connector between people. He goes further to state that compassion serves as a force that connects others on a deeply human level. Being compassionate towards others could therefore be the expression or manifestation of an inner force within man that enables or makes him to feel, notice, react, and feel compelled to act to alleviate their suffering' hence, being compassionate allows one to connect with others. Furthermore, on ways to show more compassionate to others, the 2009-2015 Power of Positivity states among others, demonstrate acceptance, practice acts of kindness, and commit to a morning ritual of gratitude. Therefore, being compassionate towards others encompasses three spiritual qualities of acceptance, kindness and gratitude.

Forgiveness is pardoning one who had offended or harmed you. It also means to let go resentment or vengeance toward a person or group that had harmed you. Reconciliation is the process of restoring social cohesion in the community or society where conflict and wrong doing had taken place. In community where hurts, harms and offences against each other had taken place, it is important to establish forgiveness and reconcile cohesion and right relationships which will help in building community. Johannes (2016) states that, social cohesion and reconciliation have important roles to play in the development and trajectory of conflict transformation in countries marked by

past conflict. This follows that in a community that is crisis and conflict-ridden, it would be difficult to building such community or for community building activities to take place successfully, but if steps are taken toward forgiveness, and reconciliation follows, it would give rise to improved levels of community cohesion, relationships, interaction and stability in the community. Therefore, forgiveness, which is the basis for reconciliation, and reconciliation are very important in the overall life of a community. Sharing Hospitality, it is giving out or distributing gifts or entertaining (target) guests especially in one's home or a designated place. Duesterhoft (2014), states among other benefits to being hospitable. It's foundational in building relationships, and builds a supportive network for yourself. The explanation here is that as a spirituality factor, sharing hospitality is founded in building relationships which is a focal point in spirituality, this in turn makes the community people have similar feeling about you and ultimately give you wider network of support.

Tolerance and Acceptance, tolerance is to allow something or people that one dislikes without interference. It is also being patience and endures behavior that one dislikes Acceptance is to receive or to take something offered or people/strangers that come into one's community. It is also to embrace something or people without any resistance; it is also not seeing the negative in people.

The Concepts of Health-Enhancing Factors

Before discussing Health-enhancing Factors, the meaning of the concept of health is very important especially within the context of this research work. Apart from the Popular 1948 World Health Organisation's definition of health, various fields of knowledge within and outside the health sector have defined and viewed it in different ways. This implies that health is the ability and capacity of an individual living a life convenient to him and others, to be able to cope with daily needs and challenges of life to be functional in every area of his life determined by his environment and

inherited characteristics. Health-enhancing Factors (HEFs) according to Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) (2014) states that these factors are social, economic, personal and environmental determinants of health, and they are living and working conditions that affect individual's health and that enable and support them to make healthy choices in the community for their general wellbeing. In my own opinion, Health-enhancing factors are services/factors outside the health sector that promote and maintain the ability and capacity of an individual to meet the needs and challenges of life, to be functional and fulfill his goals in the community in particular and life in general. Ashby and Pharr (2012) cited in Akande (2025), Physiopedia (2025) and World Health Organization (2025) highlighted health-enhancing factors as: quality education, employment opportunities, income, community safety, family and social support and access to recreation activities. In view and consideration of the highlight of the aforementioned health-enhancing factors, the World Health Organisation (2017) however, asserts that whereas the more commonly considered factors such as access and use of health care services often have less of an impact. The World Health Organization (2025) states that, Social Determinants of Health are non-medical factors that influence health outcomes. They are the conditions in which people are born grow, work, live and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life.

Education according to Osokoya (2003), cited in Akande (2025) is the tapping of the qualities and potentialities of an individual in the society and the acquisition of skills, attitudes and competencies necessary for self-actualization and for coping with day-to-day challenges. It therefore follows that education is the acquisition of what has to do with the sum total of man's activities on earth for the benefits of the individual concerned in particular, and the society in general to cope with daily challenges. Employment opportunities are a strong factor that determine or influence individual choices and performance

activities. Employment is work in return for regular payment. It is also situation where those who are able and eligible to work and can find jobs. Income is a potent factor in development efforts in communities. Income has to do with wages and salaries (in monetary terms) received by individual and also the two (wages and salaries) are synonymous in economics. Income is money received as payment for work, thus it is price for labour. Community safety and security has been an important issue of public concern to communities and community people. Community building involves the general wellness and wellbeing of people and how safe they feel and protected from crime and societal vices in their communities at both individual and community levels. It is also the situation where people in the community are able to pursue and benefit from their domestic social and economic activities peacefully without any hindrance or fear of crime or disorder. Community safety furthermore is concerned with how communities and community people acquire and use their skills, knowledge and technologies to prevent, fight against crime and disorder with the ultimate goal of reducing crime and building a safer community. Therefore, with reference to security networks and operations, to ensure community safety and security.

Family and social support, is rendering help or giving help in time of need, giving assistance to someone or provide comfort or encouragement in time of crisis. Listening to a friend in need or lending money to a sibling is a sort of support; hence family support involves a situation whereby your family is passing through hard time and crisis; you are not even capable to provide for the basic and financial necessities of the family or the loss of a loved one or job. To get out of this situation, the individual or family needs a sort of support. To corroborate this, and as summed up from the Family Support of Network of North Carolina (2021), family support is helps rendered to parents in families with vulnerable children in time of need and for such children to achieve their full potential. It also increases social workers'

capability to serve families and children. Family support is the improvement of the quality of life of families when passing through different serious situations; thus Saxena (2021) affirms that when family life seems unbalance either due to relationship issues, practical problems, or financial difficulties, you can get the help you need and even improve your family's quality of life. Social support is defined by the Canadian Mental Health Association (2019) as the physical and emotional comfort given to you by your family, friends co-workers and others. The Earl E Bakken Center for Spirituality and Healing (2016) states that social support means having friends and other people, including family to turn to in times of need or crisis to give you a broader focus and positive self-image. This follows that social support is support or comfort to someone in time of difficulty and need not only by his family members but also other people in the community; thus, making him feeling not abandoned and not left alone but feels connected and community belongingness. Recreation is any activities engaged in during leisure, primarily motivated by the satisfaction or pleasure derived from them (Edegbai, Ekeledo and Adewale, 2012). This means activities/social activities people perform at their leisure, free time and when not at work and is voluntary for their satisfaction. Leisure is a state of being or existence in which one engages in activities for one's own sake (Edegbai et al. 2012). Leisure therefore is the time that one is free from work, and the activity involved is voluntary. It therefore follows that recreation has to do with entertainment, leisure, Art and cultural activities. Flournoy and Yen (2004) observed that a resort destination where visitors are welcome, reinforced with suitable facilities, and provided with a selection of cultural and recreational prospects. These cultural opportunities could be local festivals, carnivals, traditional ceremonies, and others, while recreational opportunities include watching television, playing draught, cards, ludo, the "Ayo" game, poetry. Other recreational activities include dancing, cycling, jogging, drama, camping, singing, playing tennis

games, football game. The venues for these activities include Stadium, Church, Mosque, and Television viewing centre, Club house, social gatherings.

Spirituality Factors and Community Building

In the discussion of Spirituality factors and community building we shall be looking at these factors as motivational factors which arouse man's actions towards community work performance, their relevance and applications to facilitate community building. Being charitable toward others and community building, Maureen (nd) states that there are a number of honest impetuses for doing community services, and one of the primary drives that lead many college students to do services is the desire to help others in need. This implies that being charitable towards others is the act of concern and generous giving (money, food, help) to the poor and needy, which also is manifested in one's attitude and treatment of others. Applying this spiritual quality to community building follows that having concern and making generous giving to others, the needy and poor in the forms of money, food, help of one sort or the other, as well as volunteering services in the community, the giver in return gains appreciation and gratitude which are in themselves, spiritual qualities or spiritual assets, thus a sort of connectivity, interaction and relationship will ensure. This encourages and motivates members' charitable actions, thus motivating the community and members to give effectively helping to transform lives and communities. This encourages contributions to community building activities in the form of time, resources and moral support. Being compassionate is feeling or showing pity for the suffering of others, making one wants to help those in such condition and alleviation of their sufferings. It is a type of care that is all round and complete one that touches every aspect of the life of man. Mojinyinola (2014) observes that patients can

be given spiritual or compassionate care in order to help them find meaning in their sufferings, overcome their illness or spiritual distress and experience round recovery. This explains the fact when individuals in the Community are being compassionate, this multiplies over time by many people who can gradually affect all those living within the community, thus one that is being helped tends to follow suit to others as well. In this way, the community members would be compassionate to their community putting things that are wrong in the community in order by contributing to and involved in programs toward building a vibrant community.

Sharing hospitality has to do with friendly and generous treatment of community residents as well as strangers within the Community. Maureen (nd) noted that when we are talking about hospitality-open, warm, welcoming, space for those internal members of the community. Sometimes it is easier to welcome the stranger than the neighbor we know. Maureen (nd) went further to affirm that hospitality, not only welcoming those outsiders of the community, but also being very open to those within the community is an essential mark of a vibrant community. It therefore implies that hospitality also has to do with transparency, friendly and creating space for both residents within and strangers from outside the community. Here, a community makes it a point of practice to welcome all new members in to the community along with presentation of gifts to them. The communities members are putting it forth to the new neighbours that we tolerate, accept and appreciate strangers' presence in to our midst, and seek cooperation. The presentation of the gifts portrays kindness, generosity and charity, while the stranger too appreciates and responds by expressing gratitude. The offering of hospitality to a neighbor or stranger who is in distress or has an obvious need is also part of this sharing hospitality. The stranger or neighbour shown hospitality as well tends to follow suit to others,

this multiplies till members imbibe this quality. This in turn leads to peaceful co-existence among the residents making them to appreciate and manage whatever external resources that may be injected into the community effort and contribute individually for effective community building.

Forgiveness and reconciliation go together and are interwoven. This is because the former may be the function of the latter, and vice versa. These may be between two individuals or entities or more. Before forgiveness, an offence, disagreement, unwanted or unintentional action anger, blame, bitterness, quarrel or disagreement might have occurred. This leads to a process of settlement between the persons or entities involved, and this is reconciliation. It is therefore to stop being angry, bitter, blaming somebody or to stop wanting to punish somebody. However, Reconciliation is a process of consensus or settlement ensures either formally or informally whereby the persons or entities involved are made to reach agreement and become friends again after forgiveness has taken place. However, expressing the importance of forgiveness, Maureen (nd) asserts that often for hospitality to happen forgiveness is the door opener, especially when we are talking about hospitality. There is reciprocity in forgiving actions, as the person doing the forgiving tends to do so in the future based on its positive results, as well as the person forgiven seeing others forgiving their neighbours tends to do same. However, the expression of this spiritual quality multiplies among the people within the community with time. When the offender is forgiven, a burden of guilt as well as shame associated to it and negative emotional energy is lifted from him and replaced by more energy available for socially constructive activities. Therefore it heals relationships, promotes unity, encourages empathy, reduces conflicts and fosters growth towards collaborative programs. Acceptance is to take or receive something offered and agree to be suitable or right. As acceptance is shown among the people, it multiplies as well among them overtime. In

connection to this is showing tolerance which is a spiritual quality. Since the individual understands values of the people, thus tolerance is enduring something without complaining. He exhibits and imbibes this quality in them, they show it among themselves and it multiplies as well. The community people tolerate and accept whatever external aid from the government or non-governmental agents of development and use it judiciously towards building their community.

Health-Enhancing Factors and Community Building

Health-Enhancing factors have impacts on the health and general wellbeing of the community members. These factors affect healthy choices of individuals which ultimately determine the level of participation between and among the community members and development agencies for generation and management of resources for community change and sustainable community building programs. To this end, education therefore whether formal or non-formal and at any level is to develop the potentials in man, and his wholeness to be able to positively change and develop his community by utilizing the available scarce resources towards such development. However, where it is available and accessible, Ashby and Pharr (2012), research shows that people with a college education have a higher quality of life through access to higher paying jobs, longer life expectancy and less tobacco, alcohol, and drug use. This implies that people with quality education especially with higher education level are gainfully employed with good and high paying jobs and high income, have high socioeconomic status (SES) live longer than those with low SES (Low Mortality rate) and are responsible people in the community. However, the implication of this is that education has a role in the level of citizen participation in community building. The level of education acquired by the community members enable them to understand and feel confident of themselves and therefore put in their best in participating in any community building program. Also, the educated members because of their exposure and knowledge chip in

information that could assist in developing and building their communities. Analytically, it could be observed and derived from the assertion of Osuji (1988) above that education develops man mentally, emotionally, socially and in other aspects of life, thus it can be used as an instrument of development, that is to say that appreciation of government development programs is achievable when members of the community are literate. Thus, this category of people living happy and satisfying life, well to do on the average with resources at their disposal with their level of exposure and knowledge will show enthusiasm and use their resources to support community building programs and activities. One could deduce from this that the educated members of the community have access to information on community building and development, have the time, ability and capability and in the best position to impart this knowledge in the community members.

On availability of quality education but no access to it by community members, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) (2009) states that, access to quality educational programs is often lacking in poorer communities due to weaker tax base. Also, Ashby and Pharr (2012) assert that children who struggle in school or perform below their grade level are at an increased risk of dropping out of high school. They also have a higher probability of becoming unhealthy adults. It therefore follows that in terms of availability of and inaccessibility to quality education, it does not mean that when available members do not have total access, but experience poor performance and eventually drop out, this leads to unhealthy living and personality and low SES; and consequently, when compared with the educated members Ashby and Pharr (2012) assert, a disparity of resources based on socioeconomic status. On the other hand, the not educated ones or members and unhealthy adults would not be able to participate fully, and show lukewarm attitude and record low patronage to community building programs. The interpersonal relationships exist within and between the family, school and community, thus

creating channels of information for action and community building activities. More so, the teaching of cultural norms and values to students promote their efforts towards leadership roles and respect for others. In schools, children learn cooperation, friendship through small group activities. Also, they as well as adults often work on problems solving together. This experience and knowledge are carried over to outside the school in later years and applied in their community. This also manifest in the various Parents Teachers Association Projects and Programs, which is part of community building. However, this cannot be overemphasized because the number of not educated members that attend CDA meetings and that participate fully and actively in community building programs may be higher than that of the educated members.

Employment is occupation or job in exchange for payment. The Positive Psychology (2016) states the place of connections among individuals in the labour industry. This explains that harmonious living and togetherness play important role among the employed and living in the community. Just as people make up and at the centre of activities in the labour market, so they are in the community. Likewise, workers view their relationships as an impetus for their high performance at work, and organisations and employers depend on interpersonal connections to achieve their goals. Therefore, for successful community building, connections and relationships among the people are imminent; for the experience of mutual relationship at their place of work that increased their performance and achievement of goals made possible, this manifests in their livelihood in their community which aids easy mobilization, participation and contribution toward community building programs. Therefore, the RWJF (2009) states that the effect of high SES includes that in communities where the residents are employed or gainfully employed with higher income and SES, stand a high chance to be free from chronic diseases and be healthy, strong, agile and record longevity of

life to participate, be involved in and contribute to community building activities and programs financially, physically and mentally.

Marmot (2006) cited in Ashby and Pharr (2012) assert that people who are unemployed tend to have higher levels of impaired mental health including depression, anxiety, and stress as well as higher levels of mental health, hospital admissions, chronic diseases (cardiovascular disease, hypertension, musculoskeletal disorders) and premature mortality. The explanation of this is that peoples in this category (unemployed) are prone to chronic diseases and terminal sickness and in the list of high rates of hospital admissions and with physical and mental infirmity, and are short-lived. They do not have stamina and intelligence to think, collect and pass information or be involved in the decision-making process that affect community building programs. Also, Ashby and Pharr (2012) state that additionally, unemployment is associated with unhealthy behaviour such as increased alcohol and tobacco activity. Alaniz and Wilkes (1998) assert that lower SES communities are more likely to have a higher concentration of liquor and tobacco stores as well as advertisements and marketing of these products. Policy link (2004) affirms that in return these communities also have higher rates of tobacco uses and alcohol dependency. It follows that where people in community are not employed, they tend to be involved in unhealthy behaviour as well as wandering. So, people who live this type of life cannot take decision or be involved in the decision-making process affecting community building and are in the group of irresponsible people in the community. However, one could be safe enough to say that it is not only lower SES communities and unemployment that make people to be involved in unhealthy behaviour but personal choice and decision as well as social, economic and environmental pressures. As a result, Ashby and Pharr (2012) state that although the decision to engage in unhealthy behaviour (smoking, alcohol consumption, illegal drugs use) is a personal choice, there are social, economic and

environmental pressures that influence a person's decision.

Income is money in the form of wages or salary received for work done. However, having considered employment, both employment and income are closely related. The types of employment determine income. The Americans' Association of Closest Relationship by financial wellbeing status (2015) state, WASHINGTON D.C – Americans financial wellbeing is closely linked to their perceptions of their social relationships. It states further that the link between financial well-being and social relationships holds across income levels. This explains that their financial prosperity is influenced and determined by their social relationships, while these relationships in turn increase their financial prosperity. This link is not one-sided but applies to both high- and low-income earners. Therefore, it follows that in any form, or in any way, there is always interpersonal relationships among community members either low- or high-income earners whether resident in same community or separately. So, this would be a helping factor in the building and development of such communities, for as both groups of income earners relates, both are encouraged to participate and contribute money and other resources toward community building activities especially, in the low-income earning group, even if there is no financial power to contribute, they contribute and make themselves available in other ways. Income level has to do with salary level. However, for both employment and income levels, Anyanwuocha (2010) asserts that when the wage rate is increased, there is tendency for labour to increase its efforts, up to a point (this means an increase in the supply of labour. If the wage rate is low labour is discouraged and relaxes its effort and so the supply of labour becomes low). Anyanwuocha (2010) further states that, various salary grade levels are fixed for different categories of labour in the civil service. Furthermore, increase in income level will lead to increase in the effort that worker put in their work, thus if there is increase in the level of income of the people then they could put

in more efforts in carrying out community building work by the use of their money and resources and participation in the community building activities, thus they would have more enthusiasm in community building activities.

Community safety, it is easy to keep projects in separate silos, today we work on our economic development project, and tomorrow we work on public safety. Ryan says “but it is much more powerful if public safety is part of all the work” (Vogel, 2021). This explains that we pay much attention to the safety and security of our different projects and produce/products than community safety, which should be integrated in to and along with our project works and very potent weapon for survival. To corroborate this, Samah (2011) in Sulaiman, A, Othman, J, Hamsan, H.H, Samah, B.A and D'Silva, J.F, (2012) assert that community development can be measured using indicators in the model of quality-of-life elements that include social, economic, political, educational, safety and security with the ultimate aim to bring harmony to human. This shows or indicates the important and powerful role that community safety and security play in community development and community building activities and programs. The Community Watch Paper (2021) highlights the benefits of being in a safe community as it gives rise to reduction of violence and injury, invariably adequate health security, peace, happiness, safety of life. This eventually led to the community people begin to have focus/insights motivated to perform, to make impact, identify problems that affect life of the community, think and feel that the community can succeed in any task desirable leading to interaction among the community towards decision making for participation and contribution to community building activities and programs. On the whole, community safety benefits every sector of a community as individuals, communities, enterprises. It fosters productivity among employees, which leads to increase in their income, to stable quality of life to positive mindset to transforming the life and image of the community for building a strong and vibrant community.

Family support refers to a set of strategies directed to help the family unit ultimately benefitting the family member with intellectual and developmental disabilities (Family Support Programme, 2015). This means a type of help, support and assistance directed to family members who play very important role supporting and guiding another member in the family with intellectual disability and developmental disability (ID/DD). Acoba (2024) states that, social support encompasses being loved valued and part of a network that offers mutual assistance. This follows that social support is about being loved, valued, and connected to others who offer help and care about your wellbeing. It is having a network of people who have got you covered. Having discussed so far on both family and social support as both are interconnected and interrelated, it is pertinent to look at the benefits of family and social support to community building. The Family Support Network of North Carolina (2021) highlights the outcomes of family support as increased knowledge and understanding about the disability, reduced parental stress, informed consumers, improved outcomes for children. Child Welfare Information Gateway (2021) opines family support services promote parental competency and healthy child development by helping parents enhance their strengths and resolve problems that can lead to child maltreatment, developmental delays and family disruption. This follows that family support provides increased knowledge and understanding to parents which helps them to be able to cope with the challenges of raising children with disability. Family support helps in reduced parental stress as it provides solution to the experience of families with series of challenges such as child maltreatment. It also provides parents/consumers information, emotional support and social relationships which helps them to cater for their children. It helps in informed outcomes for children such that it helps them to achieve their full potential. As

parents are provided with needed information on how to have access to getting support for the upbringing of their children with disability, their emotional burden is lifted and stress reduced. It makes the parents to understand the outcome of the support on the lives of the children. This makes community members in this category to have peace of mind and time to participate and contribute to community building activities in their community.

County Health Rankings and Roadmaps (2021) states that people with social support, less isolation, and greater interpersonal trust live longer and healthier live than those who are socially isolated. This follows that where there is social support, the people are connected and related and therefore recipients/beneficiaries feel not abandoned and have community belongingness give rise to longevity of life and good health. People in this category feel part of the community and encouraged and motivated in terms of mobilization, participation and contribution to community building programs in their own way. The Earl E. Bakken Center for Spirituality and Healing (2016) states that the term social support often appears as discussions of relationships. Thus, County Health Rankings (2021) affirms that social support stems from relationships with family members, friends, colleagues and acquaintances. This follows that social support is based or founded on relationships and connectedness. The County Health Rankings (2021) states that, where this relationship and connections exist with family and social support, it helps to protect physical and mental health facilitate behaviour and choices. Mayor Foundation for Medical Education and Research (1998-2021) highlights the benefits of family and social support as managing and sustaining stress, good mental health and lifestyle, longevity of life, personality improvement, heart-related diseases, taking to medical advice, and lifting emotional burden. In this way, the physical, mental, social, economic and emotional lives of the support recipients in the community is guaranteed; this would in turn

encourage them to provide support to others around them that are in need and invariably support community building activities as well any time they are invited. Thus, the Home Base Veteran and Family Care (2020) affirm that mindfully recognizing the support you have will not only be beneficial to you but you also may find that it helps you offer support, to someone else. Recipients of family and social support are also motivated and their interest sustained to participate and contribute to community building programs. This is corroborated by the observation of the Home Base Veteran and Family Care (2020) that highlighting when you receive this type of support, and recognizing our accomplishments as well as complimenting others is crucial to keep up our motivation.

Recreation is activities involved in for relaxation, enjoyment and leisure. Examples are sports, dance, music, painting, games and others. Also, to look at the impact of recreation activities on community building, Edegba, Ekeledo and Adewale (2012) state the benefits of recreation activities as that recreational and cultural activities help in the development and improvement of skills in the individual for efficient performance, collective and collaborative pursuance of goals, and involvement in developmental programs. This will however encourage community members to transfer these benefits and spend their spare time toward successful community building programs. There is also the reduction of stress and depression and improvement of individuals' health which results to social, mental and physical ability and capability toward community building activities. In connection to this, one who is free from health problems would have the ability to participate in developmental programs. It could be inferred here that these recreational and cultural activities teach community members the qualities of leadership and followership, encourage cooperation and prepare them to be able to face challenges of life and how to tolerate one another. All this helps in no small measure when it comes to participation in community building programs.

Conclusion and Implications

In conclusion, this paper examined the role of spirituality and health-enhancing variables as powerful and critical instruments toward sustainable community building. Spirituality variables foster sense of belonging, promote pro-social behaviours and embracing overall well-being. Health-enhancing variables strengthen resilience and collaborative effort. When these variables are integrated, they can serve as a panacea for community building thus promoting resilience and general wellbeing in contemporary societies. Therefore, sustainable communities cannot be achieved without combining spirituality and health-enhancing variables to development policies.

Based on this review, it seems clearly that a relationship exists between spirituality, variables, health-enhancing variables and community building. Spirituality-informed moral education need be incorporated into educational curriculum in schools and universities. There should be collaboration between community and religious leaders in peace building and social welfare programs. There should be leadership development through leadership training programs where ethical and spiritually informed leadership would be emphasized. Community leaders and policy makers can make use of these variables (factors) to design programs that promote general wellbeing, social connections and community participatory activities. By doing so, communities can foster a sense of belonging, improve health outcomes and build stronger, more supportive environments. Further empirical expansion is needed for research expansion which can be used to measure the impact of spirituality and health-enhancing driven programs on community building.

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