

Interrogating the Emergence of Pentecostalism and its Impact on Christian-Muslim Relationship in Gombe State

Dr. Joshua Aondoawase Ajim

Department of Religious Studies
Federal University of Kashere, Gombe State
ajimjoshuaa@gmail.com; 07035849406

and

Akwaki Numgba Akwaki

Department of Religious Studies
Federal University of Kashere, Gombe State
akwaki2016@gmail.com; 09032191444, 08022055252

Abstract

Religion, especially the Abraham-type, has grown or spread by way of the propagation of the word through evangelism and teachings. But it has become difficult, if not dangerous, to spread religious ideals and practices in Nigeria generally and Gombe State in particular. This present religious conflict found globally has become a thing of concern to all and sundry. Everywhere, the question is being asked: Is religion not meant to bring about peace, harmony and good relationship, in spite of our existential differences? Using the historical and analytical approach, this paper examined the issues and perspectives of Pentecostalism and its impact on Christian-Muslim relationship in Gombe State. The work used primary and secondary sources of data collection, where some respondents were selected through a simple random sampling for questionnaire administration and other key stakeholders were identified for an in-depth interview. The secondary source involved documents such as books, journals, and internet sources. The data obtained were presented and analyzed using statistical tools such as tables and charts, where applicable. The paper concluded that the relationship between Christian (Pentecostals) and Muslims has not reached the desired level. This is because the rate of enmity, lack of tolerance, lack of local harmony and cohesion is still on the rise, even when attempts are being made to settle the differences in Gombe State.

Keywords: Pentecostalism, Christians, Muslims, Relationship and Impact.

Introduction

The prevalence of religious conflicts in the world, especially in Nigeria, has become a serious concern to all and sundry. The question that is often asked by people everywhere is whether religion is not meant to bring about peace and good relationship among the diverse groups in the society. This paper interrogates the emergence of Pentecostalism in Northern Nigeria, with special reference to Gombe State, with emphasis on its impact on Christian-Muslim relationship.

An understanding of the true history of Northern Nigeria's religious heritage does not only correct the wrong impression that the region has always been involved in violent religious conflicts, but also provides resources for those involved in dialogue towards religious freedom and tolerance in the twenty-first century Nigeria. This research, therefore, examines the nature of the relationship between Christians and Muslims at the advent of Pentecostalism in Northern Nigeria, with special reference to Gombe State from 1986 to 2020. This is with a view to encouraging a harmonious and mutual Christian-Muslims relationship in the state.

Theoretical Framework: Theory of Minority Groups

Nwabueze, N., in a book titled *Race Ethnicity and National Building in Africa: Studies in Inter-Group Relations* edited by Akinyele, R.T., theorized conflict under the "theory of Minority Groups". According to Nwabueze, the term "minority" is not simply a question of numbers or of law. Sometimes, some majorities are treated as minorities (as between Hutus who are more in number than the Tutsis in Rwanda). In most other places, owing to the spread of democracy, it is the many that dominate the few. Experience has shown that minority versus majority relationships is a question of feeling and of attitude, that is, the feeling of being in a dominant position by the "majority" (which may in fact be a numerical minority over a "minority" which may be more in number than the former. This feeling is at the root of many inter-group conflicts in the world. The feeling of domination by a group encourages prejudice and antagonism and retards assimilation and readjustment to the dominant culture (10).

Very specifically and in relation to our research, we explore inter-faith relations as inter-group relations. Here, Nwabueze (14) lays emphasis on the fact that relations between holders of different religious beliefs and the values differences between the conflicting doctrines is another important source of inter-group conflict. Religious clashes between Christians and Muslims in the northern part of Nigeria such as that involving Maitatsine in Kano, Bulunkutu and Jimeta-Yola are good examples. This theory is capable of explaining the situation in Gombe State because of the persistent conflicts between Christians and Muslims that have perpetually denied these groups lasting peace, harmony and social cohesion, despite the several discussions on resolutions. For us in this paper, the transcendent and compromised ways of negating conflict are held uppermost in line with the submissions of social scientists like John Galtung. This will eradicate conflict because the goals define what is acceptable to the actors; the compatibility function what is attainable.

The History of the Emergence of Pentecostal Movement in Northern Nigeria and its Characteristics

Pentecostal Christianity had already earlier taken off in the southern part of Nigeria. Kitause and Achunike, in Adeyanju (37), have explained that the emergence of Pentecostalism in the geographical entity now regarded as northern Nigeria had external connections namely, the Pentecostal phenomenon that ensured growth in the United States of America through the revivals of Charles Parham and Seymour William and his wife at the turn of the 20th century. In the country, the phenomenon tagged as the third wave of Nigeria's contact with Christianity, such as the Catholics who had arrived the present-day Nigeria in the 1400s and 1500s, was followed by the Protestant Mission around the 18th century. So the initial missionary activities alternating in the planting of viable denominations provided a fertile ground for the Pentecostal phenomenon to take off and flourish in the country.

According Burgess, in Ukachi (201), Pentecostal and Charismatic renewal started in northern Nigeria at different times and through various sources. The Assemblies of God (AOG)

Church was among the earliest Pentecostal churches to arrive in northern Nigeria. Again, the Church of Jesus Christ(CJC), which was affiliated with AOG in 1939, had by 1938/39 before the affiliation established branches in the northern cities of Kafanchan, Kaduna, Zaria and Kano. Further, it is stated that businessmen from the east who had embraced Pentecostalism carried the Gospel as they went along the railway lines from the East to the North. At Rahama(now Saminaka),they met the Faith Tabernacle congregation which was already in Rahama before 1930s (Tutu, cited in Ukachi 202).

In addition to the above, Ukachi (202) mentions that prior to 1960, missionary activities in northern Nigeria were lively carried out byfaith-based mission organizations with a strong Evangelical tradition and only a few Pentecostal Churches like the Assemblies of God and the Christ Apostolic Church existed in northern Nigeria. However, the influence of the Pentecostal denomination on the wider society did not seem to be much before the 1970s because their programmes were among the lower levels of the society and largely because the evangelical church viewed Pentecostals with suspicion regarding their teachings (202).

Both Ukachi(204) and Ojo (64) have shown that an important instrument of the spread of the charismatic and pentecostal movements was the Fellowship of Christian Students(FCS) that started around 1970s among Evangelical students. Ojo reported that despite the many internal disagreements at the initial stage, the Charismatic renewal gradually spread over the country, and by 1973, it had already gone to educational institutions in northern Nigeria, with the Fellowship of Christian Students (FCS) in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and in the University of Jos (then a campus of the University of Ibadan), being the main centers. Ukachi (207), without stating the details, however mentions that the Fellowship of Christian Students(FCS) is another body that helped to midwife the Charismatic revival in northern Nigeria.

Gaiya, in Crampton (250), says that the contributions of Independent Mission Agencies(IMA) are worth mentioning. These have helped the Pentecostal movement because of their forceful propagation attitude of the Word. The Nigerian Evangelical Missionary Association (NEMA) established in 1982 in Ilorin coordinated its forty-five affiliatedMissionary bodies such as the African Evangelical Outreach, all Christian Fellowship Mission, Gospel Faith Mission International and His Grace Evangelical Movement. NEMA has a missionary training institute, the Nigerian Evangelical Missionary Institute (NEMI,) located at Jos for the training ofmissionaries from these missionary bodies. Humphrey, in Crampton (142), mentionsthat apart that from the mission-founded churches in northern Nigeria, there are some culturally based churches, the Aladura Churches being the most prominent. It must be underscored that at the beginning, they provided the take-offground to what looks like Pentecostal or Neo-Pentecostal movement today in Nigeria. They have a few adherents from the people in northern Nigeria because they appear as ethnic churches.However, the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC),a more evangelical member of this group, has made inroads among the Challa in Plateau State. So also is the Assemblies of God Church, whose beginnings are similar to those of the Christ Apostolic Church. The church spread to Kaduna and Zaria among the Kurama. The Assemblies of God Church has spread and entered Plateau and has been founded among the Berom since 1943.

Moreover, according to Gaiya, in Crampton (262),the most popular of the Pentecostal churches that have made so much impact or growth in the northern part of Nigeria is Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC), led by Pastor W.F Kumuyi, which started as Deeper Christian Life Ministry in 1973. Deeper Life Bible Churches are found not only in cities but also in rural areas, which makes them even more popular with local people. Others are the late Archbishop Benson Idahosa`a Church of God Mission and Bishop David O. Oyedepo`s Living Faith Church

(Winners' Chapel). These last two are regarded as the "Fathers of the Prosperity Gospel" in Nigeria. Gaiya, in Crampton, has further shown that the most proliferated in Nigerian cities is the Redeemed Christian Church (RCCG) headed by Pastor E.A. Adeboye. The church has "Parishes" in almost all streets in the major cities in Nigeria. These churches are growing so rapidly with the increases in urbanization that it is difficult to keep count of them (262).

Characteristically speaking, it is difficult to make a list that is typical of the Pentecostals in Nigeria and abroad. That is to say, it is not easy distinguishing between the numerous Charismatic and Pentecostal churches. The reason is that these churches are woven between mainline or orthodox doctrines and distinctive characteristics such as "prosperity" practices and emphasis on the activity of the Holy Spirit. The general awareness of all these and the differences in their names does not however stop us from mentioning their characteristics. Adeyanju says that Pentecostals emphasize on the authority of the Holy Spirit as it was from the beginning. Pentecostal Christians have always aligned themselves with the Book of Acts when the descent of the Holy Spirit took place in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. From this core focus or values, some of the features which form their core teachings are: A strong belief in the person, power and influence of the Holy Spirit; emphasis on Spiritual Baptism, believed to be the second work of grace, resulting in the possession of spiritual gifts, evidenced in speaking in tongues, among others; strong prayer life, employed for spiritual growth and as a panacea for all existing problems; loving personal enthusiasm and commitment to Jesus Christ the Savior and Lord; joyous public worship; study, meditation, and frequent quotation from the Scriptures cum reference to the scriptures as "Word of faith", "Word of life", "Word of fulfillment", etc.; mutual loving relationship among members of the congregation; strong emphasis on the payment of the tithes and offerings as well as freewill donations; respect for and belief in the authority of spiritual leaders; and most adhere to Arminian theological position which states that it is possible for the believers to fall from grace (32).

Pentecostalism in Gombe State

Pentecostalism in Gombe State can actually be attributed to the growth of the Pentecostal movement and the upsurge generally from the foregoing historical analysis of the Pentecostal movement in Nigeria. It has reached every nook and cranny of Nigeria, even in the farthest areas in the core northern regions of Nigeria. But it must be spelt out at the outset that the coming of Christianity, and by extension that of Pentecostalism, is that of rivalry and contestation for the public space with the Muslims. Akintunde (117) has stated the obvious that, "The interaction between the two Abrahamic faiths has gone through several historical incarnations. It has taken the shape of... open exchanges, religious conflicts and violence".

One of the most important submissions to the spread of Pentecostalism to Gombe State is the fact that traders and businessmen had traveled from other parts of Nigeria, particularly the south, to do business and they met with the indigenes of the state where conversion took place. All these factors were present in Gombe State which was under old Northeastern state, with headquarters at Maiduguri created in 1967 by Gen. Yakubu Gowon. When Gen. Murtala Muhammed took over, he created Bauchi State from formernorth-eastern state in February, 1967, and Gen. Sani Abacha created Gombe State out of Bauchi State, with so many higher institutions of learning. In the higher institutions, the Fellowship of Christian Students (FCS) and the other students' Christian religious associations may have been responsible for the growth of Christianity. The Pentecostals also had arrived in the same manner.

According to a former chairman of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) Gombe State Chapter, Pastor Thomas Ejinyi, the Gombe State Chapter of PFN was officially inaugurated in July, 2003, but the story began as far back as October, 1987, when Gombe was under Bauchi State. Rt. Rev. C.T Okonkwo, Bishop of Revival Powers Assembly (*aka* Apostolic Revival Crusaders) was the pioneer leader. The Gombe Chapter then had only eight (8) members from five (5) churches. These include: Deeper Life Bible Church (DLBC), Voice of the Lord Mission, Victory Gospel Mission, Gospel Faith Mission and A.R.C Ministry. The fellowship that started with five churches in 1988 has grown to over 70 churches with close to 600 pastors as at today.

The past leaders of PFN in Gombe State are as follows: Bishop Charles I. Okonkwo, Rev. Abraham Akinmadu A., Pastor Amos Adeleke (two years in office), Rev. Levinus Dekkrol (completed the tenure of Rev. Amos Adeleke), Rev. Jehu P. Kawuwa (one year in office), Pastor Ejinyi E. Thomas, Rev. Dr. Florence Leke (current chairperson).

Pastor Thomas Ejinyi stated further that, as a measure of propagation of the gospel, the PFN had several major crusades which brought a lot of souls to the Lord. Six local government chapters of the PFN were established and series of internal programmes and revivals were held with great impact on the lives of the adherents.

The believers suffered a lot of persecution within this period. The PFN Gombe State Chapter was equal to the task in the meeting of the urgent needs of her members by providing relief materials and financial assistance to the victims. Ejinyi recalled that in 2011, most of the PFN churches were burnt down, some damaged. The national body responded at least twice to the plight of its people in Gombe by providing for and supporting victims who sustained injuries and those that lost their family members in the attack. Other churches were supported with cash donations.

PFN works hand in hand with the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) at both the national and state levels. Today, the Gombe State PFN occupies the office of the Vice Chairman both at the state and local government levels. Before now, the PFN enjoyed the privilege of occupying the position of the Secretary of CAN in the state, and the Public Relations Officer and Auditor at both the State and local levels. Pastor Thomas Ejinyi informs that after the attack in 2011, the relationship between the PFN members and Muslims have been safe. This has permitted the leadership of PFN in the state to mobilize funds for the construction of a befitting secretariat for PFN and the construction is ongoing.

Islam: Worldview and Religiosity

Islam literally means peace, submission and obedience to the will of God (Olagunju 45). Islamic worldview sees “Allah (S.A.W) as the Creator, Ruler and Lord of the universe. He created man and provided him a temporary abode on earth....” Oladosu (93), in addition to the above, states that socially, Islam emphasizes the inclusion of social values which promote peaceful coexistence, mutual understanding and respect for human integrity (Q.3:200; Q 5:58; Q9: 105; Q16:90, Q33:7; Q49:9 – 10; Q94: 5 – 8). He goes on to show that there is compulsion in religious matters (Q 2:256); and that if Allah had so wished, he could have compelled humankind to be one single entity. So these teachings are apt to impact positively on the socio-religious development of this country.

Morally, Islam upholds the principles of good conduct and abhors all forms of immorality. It rejects, in strong terms, paganism, robbery, falsehood, backbiting, gossiping, aggression, injustice, robbery, treachery, conspiracy, indiscipline, indecency, bloodshed,

deception, arrogance, extravagance, miserliness, infanticide, adultery, fornication, and all forms of malpractices (Q 16:90; Q 17:26 – 90) (Oladosu 93).

Oladosu (93) says that economically, Islam has a sound system of accountability and transparency which allows individuals to engage in legitimate business transactions, make legal gains and share such gains with the poor and needy, according to clearly spelt out principles. To eradicate human explanation, fraud, cheating and financial misappropriation, Islam prohibits usury, bribery, gambling and other illegal means of enriching oneself (Q2:275 - 179). Politically, Oladosu (94) points to the principle that Islam sensitizes office holders to the transient nature of their positions, whether they are presidents, heads of state, governors, ministers, commissioners, etc. They are alerted to the fact that sovereignty, power, authority and absolute control belong exclusively to Allah. It is he who grants authority and withdraws it (Q3:25). All the principles are subsumed under IMAN – which is an Arabic word meaning Faith or Belief. These theologically imply genuine faith: i) in the existence of God and Almighty Allah; ii) in his Angels; iii) in all the undistorted Holy Books indicating the Old Testament and New Testaments; iv) in his messengers, including Moses and Jesus Christ; v) in the last day, day of judgment, day of accountability (life after death) and vi) in predestination (Q 21:77; 285).

Challenges of Effective Christian and Muslim Relationship in Gombe State

Just like the history of the coming of both Christianity and Islam can be traced to historical roots, the challenges of effective Christian-Muslim relationship have historical bases. According to Falola, Mahadi, Uhomibhi and Anyawu (42), Nigeria is rooted in the unequal relationship developed between the northern and southern parts of the country via unevenness in the size of the country created by colonialism, difference in educational development, unequal economic development, the roles of Nigerian politicians, the intellectuals and the military. Alubo shares the same view when he states that, “the contest of these benefits usually have one of the many layers of identity as the rallying point. There is always a distinction (sometimes language, but other times territory such as state or region) between “We” and “Them” (13).

These issues are the key factors in the Christian-Muslim relations in Billiri LGA of Gombe State over Chieftaincy affairs in 2021. In the contest, the Tangale nationalities turned to ethnicity as a means of attaining vantage position, while there is a long-standing struggle against the Hausa-Fulani domination in Billiri L.G.A and the state generally.

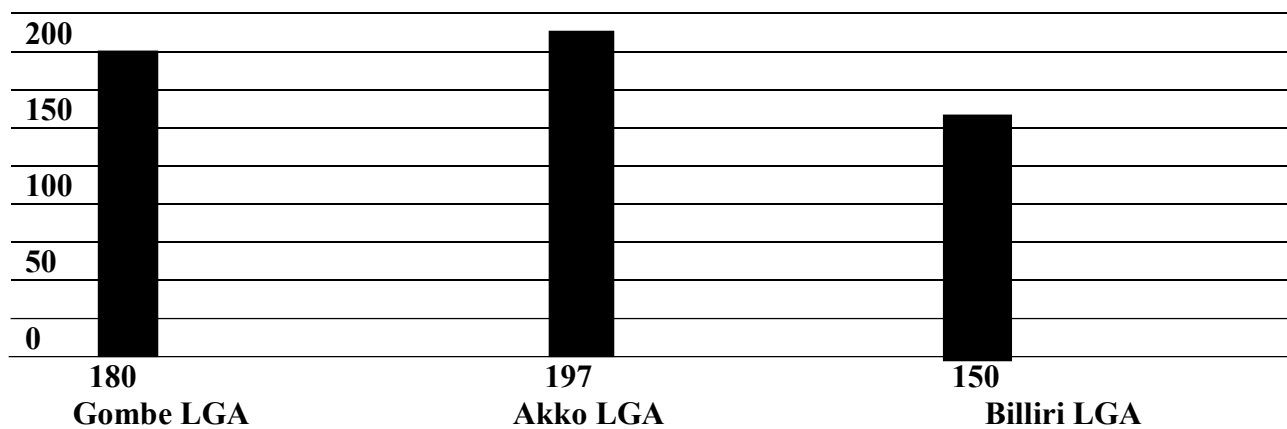
Additionally, ‘marginalization’ as claimed by both Christians and Muslims has brought heightened tension, lack of trust and cooperation, and hatred. In Gombe State, where political leadership is in the hands of the Muslims or Islamic leaders, the Christians have always decried their insufficient inclusion in the affairs of the state, especially in juicy appointments.

Table 1: Number of Respondents Selected from the Chosen Area of Study

S/NO.	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	NO. OF RESPONDENTS
1.	Gombe	200
2.	Akko	200
3.	Billiri	200
	Total	600

Questionnaire distribution of the Respondents**250***Source: Field study 2023*

However out of the total of 600 questionnaire distributed only 527 were returned as indicated in the Fig. 3 below namely Gombe 180, Akko 197 and Billiri 150.

**Fig. 3 Total Number of Returned Questionnaire***Source: Field Survey 2023***Table 2: Characteristics of the Respondents**

Personal information of the respondents				
Age distribution of the respondents				
18-30	31-45	46-55	56-64	65 above
223(42.32%)	141(26.76%)	71(13.47%)	62(11.96%)	30(5.69%)

Source: Field Survey 2023

From the above characteristics of the respondents, it can be inferred that majority of the respondents are youth, consisting of 232 (42.32%) on the age categories of 18-30, followed by the age category of 31-45 with 141(26.76%), the age category of 45-55 is 71(13.47%) and the category of 56-54 consists of 62 (11.76%) and 65 and above is 30(5.69%). This indicates that the population of the respondents is about 364((60.08%) in the age category of 18 to 45 only. This

does mean that the youth are more productive to conflict than the older population. This is replicated in the larger Nigerian population, according to these findings.

Table 3: Gender Distribution of the Respondents

Male	Female
328 (62.24%)	199 (37.76%)

Source: Field Survey 2023.

In the gender distribution of the respondents, the male has 328(62.24%), while the female gender has 199(37.76%). By interpretation, this distribution does not indicate that the male gender is higher than female in the area of study. It simply shows the nature of the society of the area of study where women are still confined in homes and not coming out for daily activities like their male counterparts, and since the sampling is a random one, the male gender got a chance of being selected.

Table 4: Educational Qualification of the Respondents

FSLC	SSCE (WASSCE)	NCE/OND	HND/Degree	MA/MSC	PHD	Others
189(35.86%)	176(33.40%)	19(3.61%)	6(1.14%)	0(0.00%)	0(0.00%)	137(26.0%)

Source: Field Survey 2023.

The educational qualifications of the respondents show the following: those with Primary School Leaving Certificate 189(35.86%), SSCE or WASSCE 176(33.40%), Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) and Ordinary Diploma (OND) 19(3.61%), Higher National Diploma/University Degree 6(1.14%), Master's Degree 0(0.00%), PHD 0(0.00%) and others 137(26.0%). The educational qualifications indicate that majority of the respondents in the area of study do not possess higher qualifications, since most of them fall within the categories of primary school leavers, secondary school certificate holders, NCE/Diploma and others, where the majority are specified as Quranic school and Arabic education not formally awarded certificates.

Table 5: Occupational Distribution of Respondents

Students	Business	Civil Servants	Artisans	Others
109(20.68%)	93(17.65%)	38(7.21%)	119(22.58%)	168(31.88%)

Source: Field Survey 2023.

The occupational distribution of the respondents indicates that those who are students are 109 (20.68%), business 93(17.65%), civil servant 38(7.21%), artisans 119(22.58%) and others 168(31.88%). This distribution can be translated as showing that most of the respondents are engaged in learning business, artisanship and others. Few are civil servants.

The primary source is the interview with some key stakeholders among the clerical population in both Christianity and Islam. Students were equally interviewed, since they are closer to themselves where conflicts can erupt or be witnessed.. The secondary source consists of the documents that were consulted on the existing literature such as books, journals articles and internet sources. The data obtained from the field were distributed and discussed using the simple statistical techniques such as tables and charts, where necessary.

Data Presentation and Discussion

A number of views on Pentecostalism and its impact on Christian-Muslims relationship in Gombe State have been stated. The responses from the various questions that were asked are summarized and presented in tabular forms below.

Table 6. Summary of the relationship and the Impact of Pentecostalism on Christian-Muslim Relationship in Gombe State

S/N	Causes Of Conflicts	Agreed	Disagreed
1.	Ruggedness in theological matters	512(97.34%)	14(2.66%)
2.	Lack of appointments of Christians into exalted positionsgovernment.	427(81.2%)	100(18.98%)
3.	Conversion of Muslims by Pentecostals.	491(94.31%)	30(5.69%)
4.	Islam is inherently against any form of friendless with Those who do not ascribe to the faith.	511(96.96%)	16(3.04%)
5.	Muslims tend to rub every other religion the wrong way	467(88.61%)	60(11.39%)
6.	Pentecostals and Muslims are fanatical in dealing with Other religious	439(83.30%)	88(16.70%)
7.	Lack of religious tolerance breed fends or animosity	439(83.30%)	88(16.70%)
8.	Pentecostal Christian propagate beliefs that are contrary To Islamic ideals.	487(92.41%)	40(7.59%)
9.	Ethnic rivalries translate into religious crises	514(97.53%)	13(2.47%)

Sources: Field Survey 2023

The informants that were interviewed also supported the above views of the respondents in their different submissions which are summarized as follows. They narrated that religious conflicts in Gombe State are caused by multiple factors which include religious and ethnic marginalization in the struggle for power, post-independence crises, religious crises after the war, the sharia crises, burning of churches and Obasanjo regime. The informants showed that all the above are applied in nature. That is to say these triggered reactions all over the country, including in the Gombe axis. The informants also disclosed that lack of concerted policies to curb conflicts and non-application of penalties on culprits of religious offences have not helped matters. This relationship that has violent conflicts, however, has some dialogues or brotherhood discussions and settlement of conflicts.

The ruggedness in theological matters simply means that both Pentecostals and Muslims are rude and forceful without being considerate in their teachings, preaching and evangelistic approaches. They both are determined to succeed in a difficult situation even if it means using force or upsetting other people. The respondents also in their submission interpreted the lack of appointment of Christians into exalted positions as a declaration of 'war'. Governor Yahaya refused to swear in Justice Beatrice Iliya from Billiri LGA, a Christian, but instead made Justice Pindiga Ma'azu Abdulkadri, who is junior to Justice Iliya, the State Chief Judge. . To many, this can be seen as corruption by the government. This is a common feature of Governor Yahaya Inuwa Muhammad that has brought disharmony between Christians and Muslims. However, Governor Yahaya called a meeting of all Christians in the state and blamed himself for such errors and the relationship became cordial.

The conversion of Muslims by Pentecostals is against Islamic laws. The Pentecostals convert Muslims and hide them away from their fellow Muslims, to be followed up by some of

the Hausa/Fulani who had already been converted. When the families find out they would attack the Christians with the intention to kill both the converter and the Christians. Some Pentecostals have claimed that Muslims are inherently against any other religious groups and therefore any person who does not belong to their faith. The Chairperson of Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) in Gombe State, Rev.(Dr.) Florance Leke, attested to this in an interview where she said that each time members of her church are in fellowship and Bible study at Federal Low Cost Quarters, Muslims would come and hang around, watching what is happening, in case they hear anything against Islamic religion so that they can attack. But when they hear nothing against Islam, they would quietly leave. This can also be seen as religious intolerance in Gombe State. However, the same Christians (Pentecostals) and Muslims on this street have cooperated to build a culvert and the road leading to their places of worship and houses in the area.

Ethnic rivalry has also been seen in Gombe State translating to religious rivalry. In 2021, Christians in Billiri town and by extension Billiri LGA resisted the installation of a Hausa/Fulani man who was to become the Mai of Billiri. The feud degenerated into destruction of lives and property from both the camps of the Christians and Muslims, including churches and mosques. However, the Christian/Pentecostals preached peace and harmony and in the end the situation was brought under control. A visit to the area reveals that both Christians and Muslims buy from themselves, attend wedding feasts (*Aure*) and play football together.

Yet, religious groups' differences can be tackled when the brotherhood dialogue mentioned in the framework for analysis is brought to bear on such conflicts. That is talking about the transcendent and compromise ways of resolving conflicts.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It can be deduced from the research conducted here that the effective relationship between Christians (Pentecostals) and Muslims has not reached the desired level. This is because enmity, lack of tolerance and social cohesion are arising by the day, even when attempts are made to pacify the offended or resolve conflictual issues in the state. The most frustrating issue is that there has been a long-time discrimination between Christians and Muslims, not just in Gombe State but in the whole of Nigeria. The paper recommends the following, if effective impact on Christian-Muslim relationship is to be achieved which will certainly translate into positive development in Gombe State.

1. There is need for a proper re-orientation among the Christians that trying to convert Muslims is against their law, where one may be punished by imprisonment or death. Pentecostals have a wide and ample room elsewhere to win converts, not necessarily Muslims. For a sincere religious attitude, the guiding principle is love of neighbours, not minding who the other human beings are.
2. The Christians must make every effort to manifest a spirit of offering peace, but not asking for peace. The same applies to the Muslims, after all it is stated in the Quran that the Prophet (SAW) is the best role model for Muslims (Quran 33:21), and it is stated that the Prophet (SAW) loved his Uncle, though a polytheist (Mushrik), and trusted Christians and others (Quran 28:56).
3. Besides, in order to curb the rising soured relationship between Christians and Muslims, there is need for the tackling of political issues such as appointing the best qualified to handle different offices, and not based on religious sentiments. Efforts should be made to appoint or elect credible leaders to manage our democracy.

Another recommendation is that Christian-Muslim relations in Gombe State is to develop the capacity for building fraternal dialogue that can mobilize Christians and Muslims to see beyond the manipulations of the state and the vicious agenda of some self-proclaimed religious demagogues. Both Christianity and Islam contain value systems that can make meaningful inter-religious dialogue within a pluralistic state like Gombe where there are seventeen (17) ethnic groups or languages. Dialogue can only be meaningful when the whole range of the human experiences, contexts and circumstances are taken into consideration. One of the primary objectives of dialogue is the common search for building a human community that safeguards religious freedom and respects differences and particularities.

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