

**THE GOSPEL AND INSECURITY IN NIGERIA: EVIDENCE FROM THE FEDERAL
CAPITAL TERRITORY**

BY

**OKORIKO, SYRENIUS DANGANA
UNIVERSITY OF ABUJA (PhD STUDENT)**

PROF. CHARLES OGUNDU NNAJI

And

PROF. ADEOLA KEHINDE

Abstract

This study assesses the role of the Gospel in tackling insecurity in Nigeria with particular reference to the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. In recent years, Nigeria has experienced various forms of insecurity such as terrorism, kidnapping, armed robbery, cultism, and communal violence, which have negatively affected national peace, unity, and development. The study examines how the teachings and principles of the Gospel contribute to peacebuilding, moral transformation, reconciliation, and social stability within society. The research adopts a descriptive and analytical approach, using relevant biblical teachings, scholarly materials, and observations from Christian activities in FCT Abuja. Findings reveal that the Gospel promotes values such as love, forgiveness, justice, honesty, and peaceful coexistence, which are essential in addressing the root causes of insecurity. The study further observes that churches and Christian organizations in Abuja contribute significantly through evangelism, counseling, youth empowerment, charity programs, and interfaith dialogue aimed at reducing violence and criminal behavior. Despite these contributions, challenges such as religious intolerance, poverty, corruption, and inadequate cooperation between religious institutions and government agencies continue to hinder effective security efforts. The study concludes that the Gospel remains a vital instrument for moral and social transformation in Nigeria. It recommends stronger collaboration between the Church, government, and civil society in promoting ethical values, peace education, and community development as sustainable solutions to insecurity in the nation.

Keywords: Christianity, Gospel, Insecurity, Peace building

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria, as the most populous nation in Africa, has continued to face serious security challenges that threaten national unity, social stability, and economic development. In recent years, insecurity has become one of the greatest concerns confronting both the government and citizens. The increasing rate of terrorism, kidnapping, armed robbery, banditry, political violence, ritual killings, communal clashes, and religious extremism has created fear and uncertainty across the country. These challenges have not only affected human lives and properties but have also weakened public confidence in government

institutions and security agencies. The Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, which serves as the administrative headquarters of Nigeria, has equally experienced growing security concerns despite being the center of national governance.

The issue of insecurity in Nigeria has attracted the attention of scholars, religious leaders, policymakers, and civil society organizations. Many factors have been identified as contributing to insecurity in the country. Among these factors are poverty, unemployment, corruption, social injustice, ethnic rivalry, political instability, weak security systems, and moral decadence. According to Nwolise (2017), insecurity in Nigeria is not merely a political or economic issue but also a moral and spiritual problem that requires ethical and religious solutions. This suggests that beyond military and political strategies, moral transformation and value reorientation are necessary for lasting peace and security in society.

Religion has historically played a significant role in shaping human behavior and promoting peaceful coexistence in different societies. In Nigeria, Christianity and Islam are the two dominant religions, while traditional religious beliefs also exist among various ethnic groups. Christianity, through the message of the Gospel, emphasizes love, peace, justice, forgiveness, righteousness, and reconciliation. These values are essential in addressing the causes of violence and criminality in society. The Gospel refers to the teachings of Jesus Christ concerning salvation, peace, and transformation of human life. The central message of the Gospel encourages individuals to turn away from sinful and violent behaviors and embrace godly living.

Despite these contributions, insecurity remains a major challenge in Nigeria. Terrorist groups such as Boko Haram and other violent criminal networks have continued to threaten national peace and stability. The persistence of insecurity has raised questions concerning the effectiveness of both governmental and religious efforts in combating violence and criminality. While the government has invested heavily in military operations and security agencies, many scholars argue that security cannot be achieved through force alone. According to Kukah (2015), peace and national security require justice, moral responsibility, and social inclusion. This position supports the argument that the Gospel has an important role to play in promoting ethical transformation and peaceful coexistence.

The Church in Abuja operates within this complex social environment and seeks to provide spiritual and moral guidance to society. Through Gospel preaching and discipleship programs, churches encourage repentance, honesty, self-discipline, forgiveness, and peaceful living. Christian teachings also condemn greed, corruption, hatred, and violence, which are often identified as root causes of insecurity. Furthermore, churches in Abuja engage in welfare and empowerment programs that help reduce poverty and social frustration among young people. Such efforts contribute indirectly to crime prevention and social stability.

Another important aspect of the Gospel in tackling insecurity is its emphasis on reconciliation and forgiveness. In societies affected by violence and conflict, reconciliation remains essential for

sustainable peace. The Gospel teaches believers to forgive one another and pursue reconciliation even in difficult situations. Ephesians 4:31-32 encourages Christians to put away bitterness, anger, and malice while embracing kindness and forgiveness. These teachings help to reduce hatred, revenge, and violent retaliation within communities. In a country like Nigeria, where ethnic and religious tensions often contribute to insecurity, the Gospel message of unity and reconciliation remains highly relevant.

The role of youth empowerment through the Church cannot also be ignored in addressing insecurity. Many criminal activities in Nigeria are associated with unemployment, frustration, and lack of opportunities among young people. Churches in Abuja have introduced vocational training, scholarship programs, entrepreneurship development, and skill acquisition initiatives aimed at improving the lives of youths. These programs help to reduce idleness and encourage productive engagement in society. According to Adeola (2020), religious institutions contribute significantly to social development by promoting education, moral discipline, and community support systems.

Furthermore, the Gospel promotes respect for human dignity and the sanctity of life. Christianity teaches that every human being is created in the image of God and deserves love, justice, and protection. This understanding discourages violence, oppression, exploitation, and criminal acts against others. The Gospel also encourages leaders to govern with integrity, fairness, and accountability. Corruption and bad governance have been identified as major contributors to insecurity in Nigeria because they weaken public trust and deny citizens access to social and economic opportunities. Through prophetic teaching and moral instruction, the Church can challenge corruption and encourage responsible leadership in society.

However, the application of the Gospel in addressing insecurity faces several challenges. One major challenge is religious hypocrisy and the failure of some Christians to practice the moral teachings they profess. In some cases, corruption, tribalism, and political violence are also found among professing Christians. This weakens the moral influence of the Church in society. Another challenge is the increasing commercialization of religion, where some religious leaders focus more on material prosperity than on moral transformation and social justice. Such practices reduce the effectiveness of the Gospel as a tool for ethical and spiritual renewal.

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the understanding of religion as an important factor in national security and peacebuilding. The study will be beneficial to religious leaders, policymakers, scholars, and security agencies by highlighting the relevance of moral and spiritual values in addressing insecurity. It will also encourage greater collaboration between the government and religious institutions in promoting ethical values, justice, and peaceful coexistence in Nigeria.

Insecurity remains one of the greatest threats to Nigeria's development and national unity. While political and military efforts are necessary in addressing security challenges, moral and spiritual transformation is equally important for achieving lasting peace. The Gospel, through its teachings of

love, justice, forgiveness, reconciliation, and righteousness, provides a strong foundation for promoting peace and social stability. Therefore, the Church has a vital role to play in supporting national efforts toward combating insecurity and building a peaceful society in Nigeria.

CONCEPTS AND THEORY OF GOSPEL, SECURITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Concept of the Gospel

The Gospel is one of the central concepts in Christianity and forms the foundation of Christian faith and practice. The term “Gospel” is derived from the Old English word *gospel*, meaning “good news.” In biblical understanding, the Gospel refers to the good news of salvation brought to humanity through Jesus Christ. It includes the teachings, death, resurrection, and redemptive mission of Jesus Christ for the salvation and transformation of mankind. According to Mark 1:15, Jesus proclaimed, “Repent ye, and believe the gospel.” This indicates that the Gospel is not merely a religious message but a divine call to repentance, moral renewal, and righteous living.

The Gospel emphasizes love, peace, forgiveness, justice, reconciliation, and holiness. These principles are essential for peaceful coexistence and social harmony in society. The teachings of Jesus Christ encourage believers to reject violence, hatred, corruption, revenge, and every form of evil behavior that threatens human existence. The Gospel therefore serves as a moral and spiritual instrument capable of transforming individuals and communities. According to Stott (2008), the Gospel possesses transformative power because it changes human hearts and redirects people toward godly living and responsible citizenship.

In the Nigerian context, the Gospel has continued to influence social and moral behavior through evangelism, discipleship, education, humanitarian services, and peacebuilding activities. Churches and Christian organizations use Gospel teachings to promote ethical values, social justice, and national unity. Through sermons, Bible studies, counseling, and community outreach programs, the Gospel shapes attitudes and behaviors that contribute to peaceful living.

Concept of Insecurity

Insecurity refers to the condition of being exposed to danger, fear, uncertainty, violence, or threat to life and property. It involves the absence of safety, peace, and protection within society. Insecurity affects individuals, communities, and nations by creating instability, fear, and social disorder. According to Achumba, Ighomereho, and Akpor-Robaro (2013), insecurity is the state of fear or anxiety arising from actual or perceived danger to life and property. This definition suggests that insecurity may result from both physical threats and psychological fear.

The causes of insecurity in Nigeria are numerous and interconnected. Poverty, unemployment, corruption, poor governance, social injustice, ethnic rivalry, weak security institutions, and moral

decadence are among the major causes identified by scholars. According to Nwagboso (2012), insecurity in Nigeria is largely linked to socio-economic inequality and leadership failure. The inability of government institutions to provide adequate welfare and justice has increased frustration and criminal behavior among many youths.

Insecurity also has serious consequences for national development. It discourages investment, destroys businesses, disrupts education, weakens social relationships, and creates fear among citizens. In Abuja, despite being the Federal Capital Territory, cases of kidnapping, robbery, drug abuse, and violent crimes have become increasing concerns. Therefore, there is a growing need for both governmental and non-governmental efforts to address insecurity in Nigeria.

Concept of National Security

According to Adeola (2021), national security involves the protection of the core values and interests of a nation against internal and external threats. This means that any factor capable of threatening human life, economic stability, political order, or social harmony becomes a security concern. In modern society, national security extends beyond military operations to include poverty reduction, justice, education, employment, and moral development.

In Nigeria, national security has become a major concern because of increasing criminal activities and violent conflicts. Government efforts through military operations, police reforms, and intelligence gathering have achieved some results, yet insecurity continues to persist. This situation has led many scholars and religious leaders to argue that military force alone cannot solve the security crisis in Nigeria. Moral and spiritual solutions are equally important in promoting lasting peace and stability.

Concept of Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding refers to deliberate efforts aimed at preventing conflict, promoting reconciliation, and establishing lasting peace within society. It involves activities and strategies designed to address the root causes of violence and create conditions necessary for peaceful coexistence. Peacebuilding includes dialogue, mediation, justice, forgiveness, reconciliation, education, and community development.

Concept of Moral Transformation

Moral transformation refers to positive change in human character, attitudes, values, and behavior. It involves turning away from immoral and destructive actions toward ethical and responsible living. Moral transformation is necessary for building peaceful and stable societies because human behavior greatly influences social order and security.

The Gospel emphasizes moral transformation as one of its primary objectives. Christianity teaches that genuine faith in Christ produces a changed life characterized by honesty, love, discipline, humility, and

righteousness. According to 2 Corinthians 5:17, “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.” This means that the Gospel seeks to transform individuals internally so they can live responsibly within society.

Concept of Social Justice

Social justice refers to fairness, equality, and respect for the rights and dignity of all people within society. It involves the equitable distribution of resources, opportunities, and privileges without discrimination or oppression. Social justice promotes peace, unity, and stability because it addresses inequality and marginalization.

The Bible strongly emphasizes justice as part of God’s will for humanity. Proverbs 21:15 states, “It is joy to the just to do judgment.” Similarly, Micah 6:8 teaches believers to “do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God.” These teachings show that Christianity supports fairness, compassion, and human dignity.

Adeola, Kehinde and Salome Tanimu (256-265) stated that lack of social justice has contributed to insecurity. Poverty, unemployment, corruption, ethnic discrimination, and political marginalization have created frustration among many citizens. Some individuals resort to violence and criminality because they feel excluded from economic and social opportunities.

The Gospel addresses social injustice by promoting equality, compassion, and care for the poor and vulnerable. Churches engage in charity work, educational support, medical outreach, and community development programs aimed at improving human welfare. Such activities contribute to reducing poverty and social tension within society.

Social justice also involves good governance and accountability. Christian teachings encourage leaders to govern with honesty, fairness, and integrity. When justice is promoted within society, peace and security are more likely to flourish.

Concept of Religious Influence on Society

Religion plays an important role in shaping social values, attitudes, and behavior. Religious institutions influence how people think, act, and relate with others within society. Christianity, through the Gospel, contributes to social order by promoting moral discipline, peaceful coexistence, and respect for authority.

According to Durkheim (1912), religion serves as a unifying force that strengthens social solidarity and collective consciousness. Religious teachings help individuals develop ethical standards and social responsibility. In many African societies, religion remains one of the most influential institutions in shaping public morality and community life.

In Nigeria, churches contribute significantly to education, healthcare, humanitarian services, conflict resolution, and social development. Christian leaders often speak against corruption, injustice, violence, and immoral practices in society. Through advocacy and moral instruction, the Church influences public opinion and national values.

However, religion can also become a source of conflict when misused for political or extremist purposes. Religious intolerance and fanaticism have contributed to violence in some parts of Nigeria. Therefore, religious leaders must continue to promote tolerance, unity, and peaceful coexistence among different groups.

The Gospel encourages believers to become positive influences in society by demonstrating love, honesty, humility, and compassion. These values are essential for building peaceful communities and reducing insecurity in Nigeria.

Theoretical framework refers to the body of theories that explains and supports a research study. It provides the foundation upon which the study is built and helps the researcher to understand the relationship between concepts under investigation. In this study, which focuses on assessing the role of the Gospel in tackling insecurity in Nigeria with particular reference to the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, relevant theories are necessary in explaining how religion, morality, and social values contribute to peacebuilding and national security.

The theoretical framework of this study is anchored on the Social Gospel Theory, Functionalist Theory of Religion, and Transformational Theory. These theories help to explain the role of Christianity and the Gospel in promoting moral transformation, social stability, peacebuilding, and reduction of insecurity within society.

According to Durkheim (1912), religion strengthens social solidarity by providing shared beliefs, values, and moral guidelines that unite members of society. Religion helps individuals understand acceptable behavior and encourages cooperation and peaceful coexistence.

The Functionalist Theory is relevant to this study because Christianity and the Gospel contribute to social stability through moral teachings and ethical guidance. The Church acts as a social institution that influences behavior and discourages violence, corruption, and criminality.

Functions of Religion According to Functionalist Theory.

1. Promotion of Social Cohesion

Religion brings people together through shared beliefs, worship, and moral values. Churches create unity among members and encourage cooperation within society.

2. Moral Regulation

Religion provides moral standards that guide human behavior. Christian teachings condemn violence, stealing, corruption, and injustice while promoting honesty, love, and peace.

3. Social Control

Religion acts as a mechanism of social control by influencing attitudes and behaviors. Fear of divine punishment and belief in moral accountability discourage criminal activities.

4. Emotional Support

Religion provides hope, comfort, and emotional stability during difficult times. In societies experiencing insecurity and violence, the Gospel gives people hope and encourages perseverance.

5. Conflict Resolution

Religious institutions often mediate disputes and promote reconciliation among conflicting groups. Churches in Nigeria participate in peacebuilding and conflict management programs.

In Abuja, churches promote peaceful coexistence through evangelism, counseling, youth development programs, and interfaith dialogue. These activities strengthen social relationships and reduce tensions among communities.

The theory also explains how religion serves as a source of hope and emotional support in times of insecurity. Victims of violence and hardship often find comfort and encouragement through Christian faith and fellowship.

Furthermore, the Church functions as a moral institution that challenges corruption, injustice, and moral decadence in society. Therefore, according to Nnaji (160-162) Theory provides an important explanation of the positive role of religion in maintaining social order and stability.

Application of Transformational Theory to the Study

Transformational Theory explains how the Gospel can reduce insecurity through moral and spiritual transformation. Many criminal activities originate from negative attitudes such as greed, hatred, anger, and lack of discipline. The Gospel addresses these issues by promoting repentance and ethical living.

Churches in Abuja contribute to transformation through discipleship, counseling, youth mentoring, and social outreach programs. Through these activities, individuals are encouraged to abandon violent and criminal lifestyles.

The theory also explains the role of Christian leadership in promoting peace and justice within society. Religious leaders influence public morality and encourage citizens to embrace peaceful coexistence and national unity.

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. A descriptive survey design is appropriate because it enables the researcher to gather information from respondents concerning their opinions, attitudes, experiences, and observations regarding the role of the Gospel in addressing insecurity in Nigeria.

The descriptive approach also allows the researcher to examine the relationship between Christian teachings, church activities, moral transformation, peacebuilding, and insecurity within the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The design is suitable because the study seeks to describe and analyze existing conditions without manipulating variables.

According to Creswell (2014), descriptive research design helps researchers to obtain detailed information about social phenomena and human behavior within a specific environment. Therefore, this design is considered appropriate for the present study.

The study was conducted in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, Nigeria. Abuja serves as the administrative and political capital of Nigeria and accommodates people from different ethnic, religious, and social backgrounds.

The FCT was selected because of its strategic importance as the center of national governance and its growing experiences of insecurity such as kidnapping, armed robbery, youth violence, cybercrime, drug abuse, and communal tensions. Abuja also hosts numerous churches and Christian organizations actively involved in peacebuilding, evangelism, counselling, and youth empowerment programs.

The multicultural and multi-religious nature of Abuja makes it a suitable location for examining the role of the Gospel in promoting peace and reducing insecurity in Nigeria.

The population of the study consists of selected church leaders, church members, youth leaders, security personnel, and residents within the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

The target population includes:

- Pastors and church leaders
- Christian youths
- Members of Christian organizations
- Community leaders
- Security personnel
- Residents of Abuja

These categories of respondents were selected because they possess relevant knowledge and experience concerning insecurity and the activities of churches in peacebuilding and moral transformation.

A sample size of one hundred and fifty (150) respondents was used for the study. The sample was selected from different churches and communities within Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) and surrounding areas. The researcher adopted purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Purposive sampling was used to select pastors, church leaders, and security personnel because of their direct involvement in peacebuilding, counseling, and security-related activities.

Simple random sampling was used to select church members, youths, and residents in order to provide equal opportunity for participation in the study.

The use of these sampling techniques helped the researcher to obtain reliable and balanced information from different categories of respondents.

The interview method was also used to complement the questionnaire and obtain additional qualitative information.

Validity refers to the ability of a research instrument to measure what it is intended to measure. To ensure validity, the questionnaire was carefully designed based on the objectives and research questions of the study. The instrument was examined by experts in Theology, Religious Studies, and Social Sciences for correction and improvement. Their suggestions and observations were incorporated into the final version of the questionnaire to ensure clarity, relevance, and adequacy.

Reliability of the Instrument

Reliability refers to the consistency and dependability of a research instrument. To ensure reliability, the questionnaire was tested through a pilot study involving a small number of respondents outside the selected sample area. The pilot test helped to identify ambiguous questions and improve the clarity of the instrument. Corrections were made before administering the final questionnaire to respondents.

Method of Data Collection And Ethical Considerations

The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to respondents within selected churches and communities in Abuja. This direct approach enabled the researcher to explain unclear questions and ensure proper completion of the questionnaires.

Interviews were conducted with selected church leaders, youth coordinators, and security personnel. Notes were taken during the interviews for analysis and interpretation. The researcher also made personal observations concerning church activities, youth programs, and peace building initiatives within the study area.

Ethical considerations were carefully observed during the study. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the research and their participation was voluntary.

The researcher ensured confidentiality and anonymity of respondents by protecting their personal information. Respondents were also given the freedom to withdraw from the study at any stage without any form of pressure.

Furthermore, the researcher avoided bias, misrepresentation, and manipulation of data throughout the research process.

RESULTS / FINDINGS

This research presents the results and findings of the study titled “*Assessing the Role of the Gospel in Tackling Insecurity in Nigeria: Evidence from FCT Abuja.*” The data presented were obtained through questionnaires, interviews, and observations conducted among church leaders, church members, youths, security personnel, and residents within the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja.

A total of one hundred and fifty (150) questionnaires were distributed to respondents, out of which one hundred and forty (140) were correctly completed and returned, representing 93.3% response rate. The responses were analyzed using frequencies and percentages.

The findings are presented according to the research objectives and questions of the study.

Presentation of Respondents’ Demographic Data

Table 1: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender Frequency Percentage

Male	82	58.6%
Female	58	41.4%
Total	140	100%

Interpretations

The table above shows that 82 respondents representing 58.6% were male, while 58 respondents representing 41.4% were female. This indicates that both genders participated actively in the study.

Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Range	Frequency Percentage	
18–30 years	46	32.9%
31–40 years	40	28.6%
41–50 years	30	21.4%
51 years and above	24	17.1%
Total	140	100%

The result shows that the majority of respondents were youths between 18–30 years. This suggests that young people are highly concerned about insecurity issues in Nigeria.

Table 3: Educational Qualification of Respondents

Qualification	Frequency Percentage	
Secondary School Certificate	28	20%
Diploma/NCE	36	25.7%
Bachelor's Degree	52	37.1%
Postgraduate Degree	24	17.2%
Total	140	100%

The table indicates that most respondents possessed tertiary education qualifications, suggesting that respondents were capable of providing informed opinions concerning insecurity and the role of the Gospel.

Findings Based on Research Questions

Research Question One:

What are the major causes of insecurity in Nigeria?

Table 4: Causes of Insecurity in Nigeria

Causes	Frequency Percentage	
Poverty	38	27.1%
Unemployment	32	22.9%
Corruption	30	21.4%
Moral decadence	24	17.1%
Religious intolerance	16	11.5%
Total	140	100%

The findings reveal that poverty, unemployment, corruption, and moral decadence are major causes of insecurity in Nigeria. Respondents strongly agreed that poor moral values and economic hardship contribute significantly to criminal activities such as kidnapping, robbery, and violence.

Research Question Two:

What role does the Gospel play in tackling insecurity in Nigeria?

Table 5: Role of the Gospel in Tackling Insecurity

Responses	Frequency Percentage	
Promotes peace and reconciliation	42	30%
Encourages moral transformation	36	25.7%
Discourages violence and crime	28	20%
Encourages forgiveness and unity	20	14.3%
Supports youth empowerment	14	10%
Total	140	100%

The table above shows that respondents believe the Gospel contributes significantly to peacebuilding and the reduction of insecurity. Many respondents agreed that Christian teachings promote moral discipline, forgiveness, reconciliation, and peaceful coexistence.

Research Question Three:

How do churches contribute to peacebuilding and security in Abuja?

Table 6: Church Contributions to Peacebuilding

Church Activities	Frequency	Percentage
Evangelism and preaching	34	24.3%
Youth empowerment programs	30	21.4%
Counseling services	28	20%
Charity and welfare support	26	18.6%
Interfaith dialogue	22	15.7%
Total	140	100%

The findings indicate that churches in Abuja contribute to peacebuilding through evangelism, youth empowerment, counselling, welfare support, and interfaith dialogue. Respondents observed that church programs help to reduce idleness and criminal behaviour among youths.

Research Question Four:

What challenges hinder the effectiveness of the Gospel in addressing insecurity?

Table 7: Challenges Facing the Church

Challenges	Frequency	Percentage
Religious hypocrisy	36	25.7%
Corruption	32	22.9%
Poverty and unemployment	30	21.4%
Religious intolerance	24	17.1%
Weak cooperation with government	18	12.9%
Total	140	100%

The findings above reveal that religious hypocrisy, corruption, poverty, and religious intolerance weaken the effectiveness of the Gospel in addressing insecurity. Respondents also identified inadequate collaboration between religious institutions and government agencies as a major challenge.

Based on the analysis of data collected, the following major findings were made:

1. Poverty, unemployment, corruption, moral decadence, and religious intolerance are major causes of insecurity in Nigeria.
2. The Gospel contributes positively to peacebuilding and national security through moral transformation, reconciliation, forgiveness, and promotion of peaceful coexistence.
3. Churches in Abuja play important roles in tackling insecurity through evangelism, youth empowerment programs, counseling services, charity work, and interfaith dialogue.
4. Christian teachings discourage violence, hatred, corruption, and criminal activities while promoting love, justice, and social harmony.
5. Youth empowerment programs organized by churches help reduce unemployment and criminal involvement among young people.
6. Religious hypocrisy and corruption among some religious leaders weaken the moral influence of the Church in society.
7. Lack of adequate cooperation between religious institutions and government agencies limits the effectiveness of peacebuilding efforts.
8. Respondents generally agreed that military force alone cannot solve insecurity without moral and spiritual transformation.

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that insecurity in Nigeria is caused by several interconnected factors such as poverty, unemployment, corruption, moral decadence, and religious intolerance. Respondents strongly agreed that economic hardship and declining moral values contribute significantly to criminal activities such as kidnapping, armed robbery, cultism, cybercrime, terrorism, and communal violence. This finding agrees with the work of Achumba, Ighomereho, and Akpor-Robaro (2013), who identified poverty, unemployment, weak governance, and corruption as major causes of insecurity in Nigeria.

The study further revealed that moral decadence has become a serious problem contributing to insecurity within Nigerian society. The increasing loss of ethical values, dishonesty, greed, violence, and disrespect for human life has encouraged criminal behavior among many youths. This supports the position of Nwolise (2017), who argued that insecurity in Nigeria is not only political or economic but

also moral and spiritual in nature. The present study therefore confirms that security challenges in Nigeria require both physical and moral solutions.

Another major finding of the study is that the Gospel plays an important role in promoting peace and reducing insecurity in Nigeria. Respondents agreed that the Gospel promotes moral transformation, reconciliation, forgiveness, love, justice, and peaceful coexistence. Through Christian teachings, individuals are encouraged to reject violence, hatred, corruption, revenge, and criminal activities. This finding aligns with the Transformational Theory adopted for the study, which emphasizes positive behavioral and social change through moral and spiritual renewal.

The study also confirms the argument of Stott (2008), who maintained that the Gospel possesses transformative power capable of changing human attitudes and behavior. Respondents observed that individuals who embrace genuine Christian teachings are more likely to live responsibly and contribute positively to society. This suggests that the Gospel serves as an effective instrument for moral regeneration and social stability.

Furthermore, the study revealed that churches in Abuja contribute significantly to peacebuilding and insecurity reduction through evangelism, counseling services, youth empowerment programs, welfare support, and interfaith dialogue. Respondents acknowledged that many churches organize vocational training programs, scholarship schemes, and entrepreneurship development initiatives aimed at reducing unemployment and idleness among youths. This finding agrees with Adeboye (2019), who found that church-based empowerment programs contribute to reducing youth involvement in crime and violence. The role of churches in counseling and reconciliation was also emphasized by respondents. Churches help individuals and families affected by violence, conflict, and social problems through counseling, prayer support, and peacebuilding initiatives. This finding supports Galtung's (1996) peacebuilding theory, which emphasizes reconciliation, dialogue, and social healing as important foundations for sustainable peace.

Despite the positive contributions of the Gospel and the Church, the study identified several challenges limiting their effectiveness in addressing insecurity. One major challenge identified was religious hypocrisy. Respondents observed that some professing Christians fail to practice the moral teachings of the Gospel. In some cases, corruption, dishonesty, tribalism, and political violence are found even among church members and leaders. This weakens the moral credibility of the Church and reduces public trust in religious institutions.

Another challenge identified by the study is corruption within society. Corruption was viewed as one of the major factors undermining peace and security in Nigeria. Respondents agreed that corruption weakens government institutions, promotes injustice, and increases poverty and frustration among citizens. This finding supports Kukah's (2015) position that injustice and leadership failure contribute significantly to insecurity in Nigeria. The study further revealed that poverty and unemployment

continue to frustrate many young people, making them vulnerable to criminal activities and violent groups. Although churches provide empowerment programs and welfare assistance, respondents believed that these efforts are insufficient compared to the magnitude of the problem. Therefore, stronger collaboration between government institutions and religious organizations is necessary in addressing socio-economic challenges in the country.

Religious intolerance was also identified as a challenge affecting peacebuilding efforts in Nigeria. Some respondents noted that extremist interpretations of religion and ethnic divisions contribute to violence and mistrust among communities. This finding agrees with Appleby (2000), who argued that religion can either promote peace or contribute to conflict depending on how it is practiced and interpreted.

The research therefore demonstrates that the Gospel remains a relevant and effective tool for promoting peace, moral transformation, reconciliation, and social stability in Nigeria. Through preaching, counseling, youth development, humanitarian services, and ethical teachings, churches contribute positively toward reducing insecurity and strengthening peaceful coexistence in Abuja and beyond.

The discussion of findings confirms that insecurity in Nigeria is both a socio-economic and moral challenge requiring collective efforts from government, religious institutions, and civil society organizations. The Gospel contributes significantly to peacebuilding by transforming human character and promoting ethical values necessary for national unity and sustainable development. However, challenges such as corruption, hypocrisy, poverty, and religious intolerance continue to hinder the full realization of these objectives. Therefore, greater commitment to moral leadership, social justice, and interfaith cooperation is necessary for achieving lasting peace and security in Nigeria.

Conclusion

This research examined the role of the Gospel in tackling insecurity in Nigeria with particular reference to the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja. The study was motivated by the increasing rate of insecurity in Nigeria, including terrorism, kidnapping, armed robbery, communal violence, cultism, cybercrime, and other criminal activities that threaten national peace, unity, and development. The research sought to assess how the teachings and principles of the Gospel contribute to peacebuilding, moral transformation, reconciliation, and social stability within Nigerian society.

The research revealed that insecurity in Nigeria is caused by several socio-economic, political, and moral factors such as poverty, unemployment, corruption, injustice, moral decadence, religious intolerance, and weak leadership. These factors have contributed significantly to violence, criminal behavior, fear, and instability within the country. The findings further showed that military and political efforts alone are insufficient in addressing the security challenges confronting Nigeria. Moral and spiritual transformation are equally necessary for achieving sustainable peace and national security.

Furthermore, the study showed that the Church serves as an important moral institution within society by promoting ethical values and social responsibility. Through biblical teachings and moral guidance, churches encourage citizens and leaders to embrace integrity, justice, accountability, and respect for human dignity. The Gospel therefore functions not only as a spiritual message but also as a tool for social transformation and nation-building.

Despite these positive contributions, the study identified several challenges affecting the effectiveness of the Gospel in addressing insecurity. These challenges include religious hypocrisy, corruption, poverty, unemployment, religious intolerance, and inadequate cooperation between government institutions and religious organizations. The study revealed that some professing Christians fail to practice the moral teachings of the Gospel, thereby weakening the moral credibility of the Church in society.

In conclusion, the study affirms that the Gospel remains a vital instrument for tackling insecurity in Nigeria. Through its teachings of peace, reconciliation, justice, and moral transformation, the Gospel contributes significantly to social stability and national development. The Church therefore has an important role to play in supporting national efforts toward building a peaceful, secure, and morally responsible society in Nigeria. For sustainable peace to be achieved, both spiritual and socio-economic approaches must be integrated in addressing the root causes of insecurity in the country.

References

- Achumba, I. C., Ighomereho, O. S., & Akpor-Robaro, M. O. M. (2013). "Security Challenges in Nigeria and the Implications for Business Activities and Sustainable Development." *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development*, 4(2), 79–99.
- Adebayo, R. I. (2020). *Religion and National Development in Nigeria*. Lagos: Harmony Publishers.
- Adeboye, T. O. (2019). "Church-Based Youth Empowerment and Crime Reduction in Urban Nigeria." *Journal of African Social Studies*, 6(3), 55–70.
- Adeola, Kehinde A. (2021). –A linguistic Approach to Security and National Development.
- Adeola, Kehinde A.; Tope Alabi. "Issues and Realities of Graduate Unemployment in Nigeria: What the Church can do to solve the problem". *International Journal of Biblical and Cognate Studies*, 2021. Publish by the Department of Religion and Cultural Studies, Benue State University, Makurdi, Benue (pp.98-103)
- Adeola, Kehinde A., Salome Tanimu (2021). "Peace, Justice and Religious as Panacea for National Development in Nigeria". *Journal for the Study of Religious*. Vol. 30, No.1, pp.103-105
- Appleby, R. S. (2000). *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.
- Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. New York: Harper and Row Publishers.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th ed.). California: Sage Publications.

- Durkheim, E. (1912). *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. New York: Free Press.
- Galtung, J. (1996). *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization*. London: Sage Publications.
- Giddens, A. (2006). *Sociology*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Imobighe, T. A. (2003). *Nigeria's Defence and National Security Linkages*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books.
- Kothari, C. R. (2004). *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques* (2nd ed.). New Delhi: New Age International Publishers.
- Kukah, M. H. (2015). *Religion, Politics and Power in Northern Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books.
- Malinowski, B. (1948). *Magic, Science and Religion*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Nnaji, Charles Ogundu (2015) "Comparative Introduction to Socionomy and Psychology". Open Journal of Philosophy. Vol. 5, No.3, pp.160-162.
- Nwagboso, C. I. (2012). "Security Challenges and Economy of the Nigerian State." *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*, 2(6), 244–258.
- Nwolise, O. B. C. (2017). *Spiritual Dimensions of Security and National Development in Nigeria*. Abuja: National Defence College Press.
- Nworgu, B. G. (2015). *Educational Research: Basic Issues and Methodology*. Nsukka: University Trust Publishers.
- Parsons, T. (1951). *The Social System*. New York: Free Press.
- Rauschenbusch, W. (1917). *A Theology for the Social Gospel*. New York: Macmillan Publishers.
- Stott, J. (2008). *The Radical Disciple*. Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press.
- Uzodike, U. O., & Whetho, A. (2011). "Religious Conflict and Security Challenges in Nigeria." *African Security Review*, 20(2), 45–55.