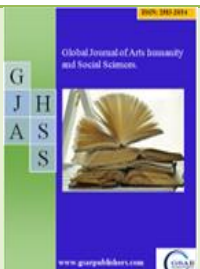


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Innovations and Creativities of Neo- Pentecostal Churches and Religious Consumerism: An Ethical Exploration

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Abstract

Almost every aspect of life is interpreted through a religious framework, and religion has long been regarded as an integral part of human society. J. S. Mbiti's notion that Africans are "notoriously religious" reflects the state of religious consciousness in African societies. Religion therefore has a significant influence on human existence, shaping the social, cultural, political, and economic dimensions of life across civilizations. In Nigerian society, Christianity, particularly Neo-Pentecostalism, has taken centre stage, influencing institutional practices, attitudes, and lifestyles. Scholarly studies on religion, particularly Christianity in human society, have largely focused on theological and doctrinal concerns, ecclesiastical missions and visions, psychological dimensions of faith, leadership styles, and church succession conflicts. However, despite the contributions of these studies to the understanding of Christianity and its institutional dynamics, limited scholarly attention has been given to the ethical implications of the innovations and creative practices of Neo-Pentecostal churches in Nigeria. These churches have gradually distinguished themselves through the use of modern technologies, entrepreneurial models, media engagement, branding strategies, and distinctive worship practices to attract and retain adherents within an increasingly competitive religious landscape. By critically examining the ethical dimensions of the innovations and creative practices of Neo-Pentecostal churches in Nigeria, this study seeks to address this scholarly gap.

The study adopts qualitative content analysis of relevant literature to examine the ethical dimensions of the innovations and creative practices of Neo-Pentecostal churches in Nigeria. The findings reveal that these churches have introduced notable innovations in areas such as media evangelism, Pentecopreneurship and the prosperity gospel, contemporary worship styles, investment in social infrastructure, deliverance and spiritual warfare ministries, indigenous church leadership, poverty alleviation programmes, and other forms of social intervention. Through humanitarian assistance, empowerment programmes, educational initiatives, and healthcare interventions, Neo-Pentecostal churches have often responded to social needs that successive governments have not adequately addressed. These interventions have contributed to social welfare and national development while also raising important ethical questions concerning accountability, responsibility, sustainability, and the commercialization of religious practices. The study therefore recommends the strengthening of relevant ethical frameworks, accountability mechanisms, and sustainable strategies to ensure that the positive contributions of Neo-Pentecostal churches are sustained and responsibly directed towards the well-being of society and future generations.

Keywords: Innovation, Creativity, Neo-Pentecostal churches, Nigeria.



Introduction

Despite the opposition it initially faced, Christianity in Nigeria has a long and complex history that is closely connected to its eventual widespread acceptance across the country. Much of the early resistance came from adherents of African Traditional Religion, who viewed Christianity as a foreign religion intended to replace existing religious beliefs, cultural values, and indigenous rituals.¹ As a result, early Christian missionaries in Nigeria encountered several challenges, including hostility, distrust, cultural barriers, and political opposition from some local communities and traditional authorities. Despite these difficulties, the missionaries' perseverance, resilience, and commitment to establishing Christianity in Nigeria contributed to the eventual success of the missionary enterprise. Historical records indicate that Samuel Ajayi Crowther played a significant role in expanding missionary activities in Nigeria, particularly after several unsuccessful attempts by earlier European missionaries. Through his diplomatic relationships, fluency in local languages, and extensive knowledge of indigenous cultures, Crowther was able to establish cordial relationships with local leaders and communities. These efforts contributed to the spread and acceptance of Christianity in several parts of Nigeria, including some areas in the northern region.²

Crowther's encounter with King Sumo Zaki was one notable example of his diplomatic approach and further demonstrated his ability to foster peaceful relations between Christianity and indigenous political authorities. His interactions with the kings reflected an approach based on communication, mutual respect, and gradual persuasion, which contributed significantly to the missionary successes recorded during that period.³

*"We paid an official visit to King Sumo Zaki, a person of about sixty years of age, who received us very cordially. I introduced myself to him as a Mallam sent by the great Mallams from the white man's country, to see the state of the heathen population, and to know the mind of the rulers, whether we might teach the people the religion of the Anasara, and at the same time introduce trade among them. To this he at once gave a full consent, saying that it was all one; we might teach them, and that he would give us a place for a station at Rabba on our return after the rain.----- Tonight, we slept in our tent, which was pitched on the mission ground, near the walls of the huts. -----This is the Lord's Day: this is my first Sunday at Rabba on the mission ground. At half past ten o'clock, I conducted a service in English among ourselves."*⁴

¹ O.U. Kalu, (1978). *Christian Mission in Nigeria 1841-1891: The making of a new elites*. London: Longman.

² R. Michael, (1982). *The Slave boy who became the first African Bishop: Samuel Ajayi Crowther*. Ibadan: Daystar Press.

³ K.Bediako, (1995). *African Christianity: An African story*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

⁴ O.U. Kalu, (1978). *Christian Mission in Nigeria 1841-1891: The making of a new elites*. London: Longman.

This story highlights the tactical, cultural, and diplomatic methods used by early missionaries, which helped Christianity gradually gain traction in Nigeria in spite of early opposition. The statement attributed to Samuel Ajayi Crowther reflects his determined efforts to plant Christianity in Central Nigeria through dialogue and peaceful engagement with local communities and traditional authorities. To further illuminate the nature and scope of early missionary activities, the writings of James Thomas, one of Crowther's pioneering Church Missionary Society (CMS) Niger Mission agents stationed in Gbebe, provide valuable historical insight⁵. Thomas painstakingly recorded his missionary experiences in diaries and journals, which were routinely sent to the CMS headquarters at Salisbury Square, just like many other missionaries of his age throughout Africa. In several of his reports, Thomas described the peoples of the Niger-Benue Confluence and Lower Niger regions whom he sought to evangelise as ardent idol worshippers who were "still worshipping the gods of wood and stones, and the work of men's hands." He further characterised their religious condition as "benighted," a situation which, in his estimation, required urgent Christian conversion⁶.

These accounts show how many early missionaries believed that African traditional religion posed a serious threat to the successful spread of Christianity in Nigeria. As a result, followers of indigenous religious traditions in different regions of the nation frequently met missionary attempts with mistrust, skepticism, and resistance. While Christianity gained rapid acceptance in some communities, in others its spread was slow and contested due to deep-rooted attachment to traditional religious beliefs and cultural practices⁷. Despite these early challenges, Christianity eventually made a lasting impact on Nigerian society through the establishment of churches, schools, hospitals, and other social institutions that contributed significantly to human development and social transformation. In several parts of Nigeria, missionary activities played an important role in the development of Western education, literacy, healthcare, and social welfare programmes.⁸ It may therefore be argued that the advent of Christian missionaries in Nigeria was, in many respects, a blessing in disguise, considering the enduring contributions they made to education, healthcare, social development, and nation-building⁹.

⁵ J.F.A.Ajayi, (1975). *Christian Missions in Nigeria 1841-1891. The Making of a new Elite*. London. Longman.

⁶ F.J. Kolapo (2000). *The 1858-1859 Gbebe Journal of CMS Missionary James Thomas. History in Africa*. 27.157.

⁷ D.T.Adam, (2011). *Christianity and the African Traditional Religion(s): The postcolonial round of engagement*. Verbum ET Ecclesia. Vol.32 NO. 1.

⁸ G.Asadu (2021). *Christianity and National Development: The Nigeria Experience*. HTS Theologies Studies/ Theologies Studies.

⁹ A.D. Ilesanmi (2024). *Christianity and Educational Development: The Nigerian Experience*. Mature Journal of International Institute of Christian Theologians, Scholars and Professionals.

Furthermore, it is impossible to properly comprehend the Neo-Pentecostal churches' current growth and expansion in Nigeria without taking into account the mainline churches' foundational efforts. Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal Christianity later developed and flourished on the religious, educational, and institutional foundation that was largely established by mainline church operations. The mainline churches may therefore be likened to John the Baptist, whose role as a forerunner prepared the way for subsequent developments within Christianity in Nigeria. Through missionary activities, evangelism, church planting, educational advancement, and Bible translation, the mainline churches laid the groundwork that facilitated the later rise of Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal churches across the country¹⁰. The well-known tale of six blind men who were asked to describe an elephant after touching various portions of its body can also be used to compare neo-Pentecostalism in Nigeria. The elephant was described as powerful and sturdy by the person who felt its leg, as soft and flexible by the person who touched its trunk, and as having rough or harsh skin by others. Even though all of the descriptions were accurate, none of them fully conveyed the elephant since each viewpoint only represented a portion of reality. Similarly, depending on the scholarly, theological, sociological, or cultural lens used to study it, Neo-Pentecostalism in Nigeria has been described, interpreted, and analyzed in a variety of ways.¹¹.

As a result, academics have examined Neo-Pentecostalism from a variety of angles. Some see it mainly as a spiritual revival movement that emphasizes speaking in tongues, healing, prophecy, miracles, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Others see it as a socioeconomic phenomena influenced by media-driven evangelism, entrepreneurial orientation, and prosperity preaching. Others study it as a cultural and political force that has profoundly impacted youth culture, public morality, government, and social interactions in modern-day Nigeria¹². These differing interpretations demonstrate the complexity and multidimensional nature of Neo-Pentecostalism, making it difficult to arrive at a single universally accepted definition or characterisation of the movement. Neo-Pentecostalism in Nigeria, often described as a hybrid development emerging from earlier Neo-Pentecostal churches, has attracted diverse scholarly definitions concerning its origin, character, and expansion. Neo-Pentecostalism can be broadly defined as the "third wave" of Christianity, which is made up of believers who believe that they may experience the gifts and manifestations of the Holy Spirit in a way that is comparable to

that of the early Christians on the Day of Pentecost.¹³. It is also sometimes described as a branch of Christianity that emphasizes the active presence, power, and function of the Holy Spirit in believers' lives through miracles, speaking in tongues, prophecy, divine healing, and spiritual deliverance. The astonishing rise of Neo-Pentecostalism, a movement characterized by its strong missionary focus, evangelistic fervor, and adaptability to modern social circumstances, has coincided with the shift in the center of gravity of global Christianity from the Western world to the Global South.¹⁴. Neo-Pentecostal churches, with their diverse and complex forms, have emerged as one of the fastest-growing expressions of Christianity in the contemporary world. Across Africa, particularly in Nigeria, these churches have experienced rapid growth, driven by their dynamic worship styles, youth-oriented programmes, entrepreneurial approaches to leadership, and extensive use of mass media.¹⁵.

Physiognomies of Neo-Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria

At this point, it is crucial to recognize that Neo-Pentecostal churches in Nigerian society have a few unique characteristics that set them apart from mainstream Christian traditions. However, many of their distinctive characteristics in Nigeria developed as a result of processes of adaptation, assimilation, and modification of the doctrines, practices, and beliefs of both the African Independent Churches and the mainline churches.¹⁶. Although, a considerable number of Neo-Pentecostal teachings and practices were inherited from these earlier Christian traditions, Neo-Pentecostalism in Nigeria has evolved unique identities and expressions that distinguish it within the broader Christian landscape. This paper therefore seeks to highlight and discuss some of these distinctive features in order to provide a clearer understanding of the nature and dynamics of Neo-Pentecostalism in Nigeria¹⁷. Strong emphasis on redemption is one of the key characteristics that set Nigerian Neo-Pentecostal congregations apart. Salvation in Neo-Pentecostal theology and practice goes beyond the traditional notion of spiritual redemption from sin to

¹⁰ B. Diara and N. Onah (2014). *The Phenomenal Growth of Pentecostalism in the Contemporary Nigerian Society: A Challenge to Mainline Churches*. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*. Vol. 5 No. 6.

¹¹.Blind men and an Elephant. *Wikipedia.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blind_men_and_an_elephant* . Assessed 26/05/2026.

¹². O. Olufunke ,(2004). *Pentecostal Challenges in Africa and Latin America: A Comparative Focus on Nigeria and Brazil*. CODESRA. *African Zamani*. No11 &12.

¹³. M.Nel and M.Solomon (2024) *Syncretism and Pentecostalism in the Global South*. *Religion*. (MDPI) Vol.15. Issue.636.

¹⁴. O.P.Oke, (2025). *Exploring the Emergence and Impact of Pentecostal Movements in Nigeria*. Eds. Benjamin Olumuyiwa Popoola and Israel Ayinla Fadipe. In *Political Economy, New Media, and Nigeria Popular Cultures*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

¹⁵. A.J. Soneye and M.A. Ogunewu, (2025). *The Rise "Home-Grown" Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria. A Prophetic Fulfillment and Social Impact*. (GASJAHSS). Vol.3 Issue.12.

¹⁶. B.A.Adedibu and B.O.Igboin (2018). *The Changing Faces of African Pentecostalism*, Ondo. Adekunle Ajasin University Press.

¹⁷. T.R.Oyetoro (2025). *History of Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria: Impact and Challenges in the 21st Century*. Jalingo Historical Review.

include material well-being, physical healing, protection from evil forces, deliverance from demonic oppression, and the restoration of harmonious relationships within the social and spiritual order. In this sense, the Pentecostal conception of salvation can be seen as a synthesis and adaptation of doctrinal components from both African indigenous religions and mainline denominations¹⁸.

As a result, Neo-Pentecostal churches in Nigeria place a great emphasis on spiritual warfare, healing, deliverance, and exorcism. They also emphasize the necessity of being "born again" in line with biblical teachings, especially the scriptural mandate that one must undergo spiritual rebirth in order to have a true relationship with God. People who experience this spiritual metamorphosis are frequently referred to as the "children of God," marked by a revitalized way of life and a dedication to Christian values.¹⁹. In addition, they strongly emphasize speaking in tongues as a visible manifestation of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. Glossolalia, as it is often described, is widely regarded within Neo-Pentecostal circles as evidence of Spirit baptism and spiritual empowerment. In this sense, it has been noted that a large number of Neo-Pentecostal churches purposefully teach and support its members to develop the practice of speaking in tongues through spiritual exercises, prayer sessions, and revival gatherings. The customs of many mainline churches, where speaking in tongues is either nonexistent, undervalued, or interpreted differently, stand in stark contrast to this practice.²⁰. Another major feature of the Neo-Pentecostal churches in Nigeria is their strong emphasis on prosperity and material success. Indeed, prosperity theology has become one of the defining characteristics of contemporary Nigerian Pentecostalism. Many Neo-Pentecostal leaders maintain that financial prosperity, good health, and material abundance are visible indicators of divine favour and faithfulness. Consequently, wealth creation, entrepreneurship, and economic advancement are frequently presented as part of God's covenant blessings for believers²¹.

With regards to this, material prosperity is frequently celebrated and publicly displayed through ornate clothing, owning expensive cars, living in large houses, and other symbols of wealth that are seen as evidence of God's favor and faithfulness. For many followers, these displays are motivational symbols meant to bolster faith and confidence in divine providence in addition to being expressions of thankfulness to God. However, some academics and religious observers have criticized Nigerian Neo-Pentecostals for

placing too much emphasis on material wealth, claiming that this could lead to the commercialization of religion, encourage consumerist spirituality, and obscure the moral and selfless aspects of Christian discipleship. However, one of the most powerful and alluring aspects of Neo-Pentecostalism in modern Nigerian society is still the gospel of affluence.²².

Central to this prosperity-oriented outlook is the widely held belief within Neo-Pentecostal circles that God does not intend poverty for His followers. As a result, adherents are consistently and continuously encouraged to pray fervently for prosperity, financial breakthrough, and material advancement as part of their covenant rights as believers. Neo-Pentecostal churches have transformed contemporary Christian practice through innovative ritual expressions, strategic mobilization of the laity, and a reconfiguration of churchmanship that has shifted their orientation from pietistic spirituality to prosperity-centered theology²³. Church leaders frequently encourage members to "dare God" by offering sacrifices, tithes, offerings, and seed sowing—sometimes beyond their immediate financial means—with the promise that such acts of faith and generosity will draw supernatural growth and abundant divine rewards in return. In Nigerian Neo-Pentecostal churches, this doctrine has greatly increased the popularity of prosperity theology, especially among those looking for social mobility and economic advancement in the face of ongoing socioeconomic difficulties.²⁴. Since their emergence in Nigeria, Neo-Pentecostal churches have also placed strong emphasis on evangelism and missionary activities as central components of their religious identity. However, the traditional understanding and practice of evangelism have undergone considerable transformation and repackaging among the Neo-Pentecostal churches²⁵. While the mainline churches historically relied heavily on open-air crusades, revival meetings, and evangelistic gatherings held in football fields, town squares, and public halls for the proclamation of the gospel message, Neo-Pentecostal churches have increasingly embraced modern communication technologies to expand their outreach efforts. In particular, the use of electronic and digital media has become one of the defining innovations of

¹⁸. J. O. Ekechi (2025). *Pentecostal Conceptions of Evil forces: An Exposition on Warfare Prayer and imprecation in Modern Nigeria*. Noyam. E-Journal of Religious and Theological Studies. (ERATS). Vol 11. Issue 7.

¹⁹. F.M.Mbong (1986). *The Social impact of Nigeria's New Religious Movements*. New Movements and Social Change.

²⁰. M.Nel (2023). *Glossolalia, Spirit Baptism and Pentecostals: Revisiting the book of Acts*. Vol 47, No 1.

²¹. M.A.Ogunewu (2022). 'Reflecting on tendencies in Nigeria Pentecostalism. *African Theological Journal for Church and Society*. Vol.3, No.1

²². M.N.Edigbo and S.N.Nwube(2025). *An Assessment of Prosperity Gospel in some Selected Churches and its Effects in Abakaliki Urban, Ebonyi State*.

²³. U.W.Dodeye (2022). *Posperity Theology: Poverty and implications for social-economy Development in Africa*. HTS Theological Studies/Theological Studies.

²⁴.B.A.Adedibu (2018). *Corruption conundrum: A call for Awakening of the Prophetic voice of Nigerian Pentecostal Church leadership*. Ed. Benson Ohihon Igboin in *Corruption: A New Thinking in the Reverse order*. Ajayi Crowther University Press.

²⁵.O.A.Harmona and T.R. Oyetoro (2025). *History OF Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria: Impact and Challenges in the 21st Century*. *Journal of Histology*. Jalingo Historical Review.

Neo-Pentecostal evangelism in Nigeria²⁶. Through television broadcasts, radio programmes, live streamed worship services, websites, and social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and WhatsApp, Snapchat, X (twitter) by the Neo-Pentecostal churches now engage millions of people simultaneously across geographical boundaries. This media-driven approach has enabled them to reach a broader audience, particularly young people and urban populations, while also increasing the visibility and appeal of their ministries.²⁷

Additionally, the deliberate use of modern technologies has made Neo-Pentecostal evangelism a more organised and interactive activity that combines spirituality with contemporary communication methods. Through online counselling, digital prayer groups, virtual crusades, and inspirational content, Neo-Pentecostal churches have made religious engagement more accessible and adaptable to contemporary lifestyles. These developments have enhanced the effectiveness of their evangelistic activities and contributed significantly to the rapid growth and spread of Neo-Pentecostal churches in Nigeria and beyond.²⁸ Nigerian Neo-Pentecostal churches are known for their strong evangelistic zeal and extensive missionary activities both within Nigeria and beyond its borders. Many of their leaders are charismatic and well educated, and often claim to have received a divine calling to lead their congregations based on their spiritual gifts. As a result, several Neo-Pentecostal churches have established branches across different parts of Africa, Europe, North America, and other continents, contributing to the global spread of Nigerian Christianity.²⁹ Additionally, some of these churches have extended their activities into Nigerian higher institutions through student ministries and campus fellowships, which provide spaces for religious training and youth participation. Unlike the more bureaucratic and hierarchical structures commonly found in mainline churches, Neo-Pentecostal congregations generally operate with relatively simple, flexible, and centralized organizational structures. Leadership is often centred on the General Overseer (G.O.) or founding pastor, who exercises considerable administrative and spiritual authority over doctrine, programmes, and the overall direction of the church. This

centralized leadership structure enables churches to make decisions quickly and respond promptly to emerging organizational, social, and spiritual needs.³⁰

Neo-Pentecostal churches also often operate through cell groups or house fellowships, where members living within the same area meet regularly for Bible study, prayer, fellowship, and mutual support. These small-group structures not only encourage interpersonal relationships and spiritual growth but also contribute to church growth, membership recruitment, and member retention.³¹ Neo-Pentecostal churches in Nigeria have, over time, become actively involved in social welfare and community development initiatives, extending their activities beyond traditional pulpit ministry. One of the areas in which they have been involved is poverty alleviation.³² alleviation initiatives, educational support schemes, healthcare outreach, skills acquisition programmes, and humanitarian assistance targeted at both members and non-members of the church, particularly those in vulnerable conditions. Through such practical expressions of faith, Neo-Pentecostal churches have significantly enhanced their social relevance, public visibility, and numerical growth within Nigerian society³³.

The Innovative and Creative Gestures of Neo-Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria

In response to these socio-economic realities, Neo-Pentecostal churches have increasingly positioned themselves as key non-state actors in addressing social needs and providing relief to vulnerable populations. They have over the years employ various interventionist approaches to address the Nigerian state's socio-economic, developmental, educational, and infrastructural gaps³⁴. Many Neo-Pentecostal churches have worked to give people and communities impacted by poverty and adversity hope and useful support through a variety of interventions and activities. Neo-

²⁶. G. Ngbea, (2015). *Influences of Pentecostalism on the Mainline Churches in Nigeria*. *Archives of Business Research* .3(3).

²⁷. M.Y.Shok, and I.C.Isidieniu (2025). *Digital Evangelism and the Transformation of Christian Communication in the Contemporary African Church*. *IGIRIGI: A multi-Disciplinary Journal of African Studies*. Vol.5 No.5.

²⁸. L. Tsara and T. Mwapfaa (2025). *'Transforming Faith: The impact of Digital Media and Technology on Community Engagement in contemporary Pentecostalism in Southern Africa*. *Pharos Journal of Theology*. Vol.106 (4).

²⁹. M.A. Ojo (2018). *Pentecostalism and Charismatic Movements in Nigeria: Factors of growth and inherent Challenges*. *The WATS Journal: An online Journal from West Africa Theological Seminary*. Vol.3 No.1.

³⁰. B.A.Adedibu (2025). *Nigerian Pentecostal Megachurches, Prayer Cities and the Environment: Assessing the Ecological Footprints of the Redeemed Christian Church of God's Redemption City*. *Noyam E-Journal of Religious and Theological Studies (ERATS) Vol.11 Issue 12*.

³¹. V.Molobi (2014). *Living in the townships: An appraisal of Pentecostal Social Ministry in Tshwane*. *HTS Theologies Studies/ Theological Studies*. 70(3).

³². O.P.Oke, (2024). *Social Implications of Human Killings for Money Ritual among the Yoruba People of Southwestern Nigeria*. *Tropical Journal of Arts and Humanities*. Vol 6, No 2.

³³. S.O. Adekoya and A.O.Dairo (2025). *Pentecostalism and Charismatic Movement in Nigeria: Situating the place of Faith complementarity and Integration*. *International Journal of Faith Integration*. Vol 5. No.2.

³⁴. B.A.Adedibu (2025). *Nigerian Pentecostal Megachurches, Prayer Cities and the Environment: Assessing the Ecological Footprints of the Redeemed Christian Church of God's Redemption City*. *Noyam E-Journal of Religious and Theological Studies (ERATS) Vol.11 Issue 12*.

Pentecostal churches have improved the living conditions of many Nigerians, especially those who are economically disadvantaged, in a number of ways by participating in such activities. Their efforts are often framed as expressions of Christian compassion and practical demonstrations of faith, aimed at reflecting the teachings of Christ through social action³⁵. Neo-Pentecostal churches have thus taken on a complementary role to government initiatives, filling up gaps in social welfare services and making a small but significant contribution to Nigeria's larger objectives of national development and poverty alleviation. Bottom of the Form Insecurity has become a recurrent topic in Nigerian public discourse over the last ten years.³⁶ This is largely due to persistent incidents of violence, including attacks attributed to extremist groups such as Boko- Haram and recurring clashes involving armed herders often referred to as Fulani herdsmen. Initially, much of this violence was concentrated in the Northern region of the country; however, in recent years, it has increasingly spread to other parts of Nigeria, including areas previously regarded as relatively peaceful³⁷. The spread of insecurity has created a widespread sense of fear and uncertainty, as many communities now view it as a national problem rather than a local one. These violent incidents have resulted in the loss of innocent lives, displacement of people, and extensive destruction of property. Due to the scale and frequency of the attacks, it is often difficult to accurately determine the number of casualties, particularly among Christian communities. The regular reporting of murders, kidnappings, and the destruction of settlements in the media further reinforces the perception that insecurity has become a persistent national crisis.³⁸

Despite the continued presence of security agencies across various regions, violent attacks have persisted, raising concerns about the effectiveness of existing security strategies. More troubling is the increasing incidence of attacks on places of worship. Churches, traditionally regarded as sanctuaries of peace, spiritual refuge, and safety for worshippers, have in some instances become targets of violent assaults. This development has significantly altered long-standing perceptions of religious spaces as secure environments. Consequently, many worshippers now experience heightened fear

and anxiety, even during religious gatherings³⁹. In addition to altering worship practices, the increasing vulnerability of churches and other places of worship has changed the religious consciousness of many believers, who now worry about their safety when engaging in group worship. In response to the growing security challenges in the country, Neo-Pentecostal churches in Nigeria have adopted various security measures aimed at safeguarding their members, clergy, and worship spaces. These initiatives and innovations reflect a growing awareness of the need to protect religious gatherings in an environment increasingly affected by insecurity and violent attacks. One of the most common security measures implemented is the installation of Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) surveillance systems within church premises⁴⁰. Many Neo-Pentecostal congregations now use CCTV cameras strategically positioned around auditoriums, entrances, parking areas, and other sensitive locations to monitor activities, deter suspicious behaviour, and provide recorded evidence in the event of security breaches. In addition to technological surveillance, religious leaders have also introduced human security structures to enhance protection during services and church events. This includes the deployment of trained security personnel, often physically fit and vigilant individuals, who are stationed at strategic points both inside and outside the church premises. Their responsibilities typically include crowd control, monitoring entry and exit points, and responding promptly to any perceived threats or unusual behaviour⁴¹.

Many churches have introduced controlled entry measures, such as barriers and checkpoints at their entrances, to regulate the movement of vehicles and people into church premises. These measures are intended to screen visitors, prevent unauthorized access, and identify suspicious or unknown individuals who may present security risks. In some cases, standard security procedures may also include the inspection of luggage and vehicles. Collectively, these strategies demonstrate how Neo-Pentecostal churches have adapted to contemporary security realities by integrating both technological and human security systems. While these measures were once uncommon in religious settings, they have now become an important aspect of church administration in Nigeria, reflecting the broader societal impact of insecurity on places of worship⁴². Education, which is considered a tool for the liberation of the mind, is very important to any society that desires growth. For the integration of individuals into society, education

³⁵. S.P.Essien and I.C.Edem (2024). *The Treatment of the Poor in the Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria in the light of Luke 16: 19-31*. Vol. 7 No.1.

³⁶. F.A.Oye-Oluwafemi (2024). *Need-Based Evangelism as a tool for Economic Empowerment and Poverty Alleviation in Nigeria Pentecostal Churches*. *British Journal of Multidisciplinary and Advanced Studies*. 5(5).

³⁷. O.P.Oke, (2026). *Ethical Issues in Japa syndrome in the Context of Migration Trajectory of Nigerian*. *International Journal of Innovative Sciences and Research Technology*. Vol 11, Issue 2.

³⁸. D.Babalola and E. Seiyefa (2025). *Organised Crime, Violent Conflict and the Movement towards a dual Policing System in Nigeria*. *The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs and Policy Studies*. Vol 114. Issue 4.

³⁹. F.E. Enecho and David Onuche (2026). *Insecurity and the Socio-Religious Impact on Church growth in Igalaland, Kogi State*. *UMA Journal of Religious Studies*. Vol 3, No 1.

⁴⁰. C. J.Wachukwu (2024). *Religion, Insecurity and Social Cohesion*. *Wukari International Studies Journal*. Vol 8(10).

⁴¹. *Security Measures for Church Events and Services*. Texas Defense Force Security. Assessed on 23rd May, 2026.

⁴². A.A.Koevoerts, (2018) *The Changing Faces of Pentecostalism*. (Ed.) B.A.Adedibu and B.O.Igboin. *The Changing of African Pentecostalism*. Ondo. Adekunle Ajasin University Press.

plays a major role. When the missionaries came to Nigeria, they introduced education as a means of liberation and enlightenment. Neo-Pentecostal churches, since their inception, have not lagged behind in the training and development of members of society. Today, it is on record that many tertiary institutions in Nigeria were established by Pentecostal, Neo-Pentecostal and other Christian denominations⁴³. They hold that a liberated mind is one that has been taught. Redeemer's University, Ede, founded by the Redeemed Christian Church of God; Mountain Top University, founded by the Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries; Bowen University, Iwo, founded by the Nigerian Baptist Convention; Covenant University; Babcock University; McPherson University, Cornerstone University, Wesley University, Dominion University, and so on are a few of these establishments. These faith-based institutions have intervened by establishing schools to reduce the pressure of admission seekers who cannot gain admission into federal or state universities due to limited facilities. Many of these schools also offer scholarships to brilliant but indigent students.⁴⁴ Neo-Pentecostal churches have become important religious movements in modern Christianity, developing from regional manifestations of charismatic spirituality to powerful international organizations. These churches present themselves as divine tools for both national revitalization and worldwide change, in addition to being spiritual institutions focused on individual salvation. They have become remarkably visible and influential throughout the world thanks to their vibrant worship methods, emphasis on spiritual empowerment, and active engagement with social and political realities⁴⁵. The rapid expansion of Neo-Pentecostalism is evident in the massive congregational followings, extensive media presence, and expansive international networks established by these churches. Neo-Pentecostal leaders are able to reach millions of followers across national boundaries through social media, online streaming platforms, television broadcasts, and large-scale evangelistic campaigns. Their teachings often resonate strongly with people seeking healing, social mobility, spiritual direction, and relief from various forms of hardship. As a result, Neo-Pentecostal churches have become important actors in shaping the moral values, political awareness, and spiritual aspirations of people in contemporary societies.⁴⁶

Many leaders within the Neo-Pentecostal churches interpret the remarkable growth and success of their ministries as the fulfillment of biblical prophecies concerning the outpouring of the Spirit of God upon all people. This understanding is frequently linked to scriptural passages such as Joel 2:28 and Acts 2:17, which emphasize the universal manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the last days. Consequently, Neo-Pentecostal leaders often present their ministries as evidence of divine intervention in human history and as signs of spiritual revival on a global scale. A defining feature of Neo-Pentecostal theology is the strong emphasis placed on deliverance theology. Deliverance theology focuses on liberation from spiritual oppression, demonic affliction, curses, witchcraft, and other supernatural forces believed to hinder human flourishing⁴⁷. According to this perspective, a lot of social and personal issues are seen through a spiritual prism and call for divine intervention through fasting, prayer, prophesy, and exorcism. As a result, many Neo-Pentecostal churches have institutionalized deliverance traditions as a fundamental part of the Christian experience. Neo-Pentecostal followers' worship styles, spiritual perspectives, and religious identities have all been significantly impacted by the institutionalization of deliverance ministry. Opportunities for spiritual purification, healing, restoration, and empowerment are frequently offered during deliverance services. In many cases, church members are encouraged to see spiritual warfare as an ongoing aspect of Christian life, requiring constant vigilance and dependence on divine power⁴⁸. This emphasis on spiritual victory and supernatural intervention contributes significantly to the appeal and continued growth of Neo-Pentecostalism in contemporary society. Neo-Pentecostal churches have become influential global religious movements that extend beyond traditional understandings of church and spirituality. These churches continue to have a significant impact on public life and religious experience by fusing charismatic worship, media involvement, worldwide networking, and deliverance theology. Their increasing relevance demonstrates the continuing importance of spirituality in resolving individual, societal, and global issues and reflects the shifting dynamics of Christianity in the contemporary world.⁴⁹

Another notable innovation within Neo-Pentecostal churches is the emergence of social entrepreneurship as a central aspect of their ministry and mission. In this context, social entrepreneurship involves a holistic approach to the lives of members and the wider

⁴³. M.A.Ayeni (2012) *Education for Liberation: Nigerian Experience. Literacy Information and Computer Educational Journal (LICEJ), Special Issue. Vol 1, Issue 2.*

⁴⁴. B.A.Adedibu (2018). *Corruption conundrum: A call for Awakening of the Prophetic voice of Nigerian Pentecostal Church leadership.* Ed. Benson Ohion Igboin in *Corruption: A New Thinking in the Reverse order.* Ajayi Crowther University Press.

⁴⁵. A. Adesoji (2012). *The New Pentecostal Movement in Nigeria and the Politics of Belonging.* *Journal of Asian and African Studies.* 52(8).

⁴⁶. M.Nel and M.S.Kgatle (2026). *Syncretism in Neo-Pentecostalism: Description and Evaluation.* *AJOPS. African Journal of Pentecostal Studies.* Vol 3, No 1.

⁴⁷. Charles Amarkwe (2023). *The Church Prophetism and Ministry of the Prophets in Ghana.* Noyam. *Pentecostalism, Charismaticism and Neo-Prophetic Movements Journal.* Vol4. Issue 1.

⁴⁸. S.E.Zaluchu (2026). *The Unchanging gospel in a Changing world: A Theological framework for divine healing today.* *VERBUM ET ECCLESIA.* Vol 47, No 1.

⁴⁹. S.O. Adekoya and A.O.Dairo (2025). *Pentecostalism and Charismatic Movement in Nigeria: Situating the place of Faith complementarity and Integration.* *International Journal of Faith Integration.* Vol 5. No.2.

society, with emphasis on the interconnectedness of the spirit, soul, and body. Unlike traditional approaches that focus mainly on spiritual blessings and eternal salvation, Neo-Pentecostal churches increasingly recognise the importance of addressing the physical, emotional, and socioeconomic needs of individuals. This holistic orientation reflects their belief that genuine Christian ministry should encompass every dimension of human existence.⁵⁰ Consequently, many Neo-Pentecostal leaders encourage their followers to pursue economic productivity, self-reliance, and social responsibility as expressions of their faith. This approach has contributed to the growth of an entrepreneurial culture within many Neo-Pentecostal communities, where members are encouraged to improve their socioeconomic conditions while remaining committed to their spiritual values. Furthermore, Neo-Pentecostal churches increasingly view community engagement and social intervention as important expressions of Christian compassion and fellowship.

The emergence of social entrepreneurship as an important part of the ministry and mission of Neo-Pentecostal churches is another notable innovation. In this context, social entrepreneurship emphasises the interconnectedness of the spirit, soul, and body by addressing the needs of church members and the wider society. Unlike traditional approaches that place greater emphasis on spiritual blessings and eternal salvation, Neo-Pentecostal churches are increasingly recognising the importance of responding to people's physical, emotional, and socioeconomic needs. This holistic approach reflects the belief that genuine Christian service should address the different dimensions of human life.⁵¹ Therefore, Neo-Pentecostal churches place emphasis not only on spiritual development but also on human empowerment and well-being. Through various empowerment programmes, these churches seek to provide practical responses to the social and economic challenges affecting their members and surrounding communities. This emphasis on social entrepreneurship is closely connected to the broader theological outlook of Neo-Pentecostalism, which views divine blessings as extending to different areas of life, including relationships, health, wealth, and the well-being of society.⁵² Consequently, many Neo-Pentecostal leaders encourage their followers to pursue economic productivity, self-reliance, and social responsibility as expressions of faith. This approach has contributed to the rise of entrepreneurial culture within many Neo-Pentecostal communities, where members are motivated to improve their socio-economic conditions while remaining

committed to spiritual values. Furthermore, Neo-Pentecostal churches consider community engagement and social intervention as important expressions of Christian compassion and fellowship⁵³.

The emergence of social entrepreneurship in Neo-Pentecostal churches illustrates how modern Christianity is changing. Neo-Pentecostal churches continue to reshape the place of religion in contemporary culture by fusing spiritual ministry with social engagement and economic development. Their all-encompassing approach to human development demonstrates a dedication to both the practical enhancement of individual lives and societal circumstances as well as spiritual transformation. Neo-Pentecostal churches have increasingly distinguished themselves through the integration of social intervention with religious teaching, creating a holistic approach to ministry that addresses both spiritual and socio-economic realities⁵⁴. Unlike traditional religious models that focus primarily on spiritual matters, Neo-Pentecostal churches often combine faith-based teachings with practical initiatives aimed at improving the living conditions of individuals and communities. This integration reflects a broader understanding of religion as an instrument not only for spiritual transformation but also for social and economic empowerment. A major feature of this approach is the alignment of church initiatives with the objective of supporting marginalized and vulnerable communities. Many Neo-Pentecostal churches engage in activities such as poverty alleviation programs, educational sponsorships, healthcare outreach, vocational training, and financial empowerment schemes⁵⁵. These initiatives are designed to respond to the immediate needs of disadvantaged individuals while also creating opportunities for long-term development and stability. Through such interventions, the churches seek to demonstrate practical expressions of faith and compassion within society. The combination of social and religious teachings has significantly contributed to the promotion of self-reliance among church members and the wider community. Neo-Pentecostal teachings often emphasize hard work, discipline, entrepreneurship, and positive thinking as important virtues for achieving personal and economic progress. Followers are encouraged to develop their skills, pursue economic opportunities, and cultivate resilience in the face of social and financial challenges. As a result, many adherents view economic empowerment as part of their spiritual journey and an expression of divine blessing⁵⁶.

⁵⁰ M.S Kgatele and S.J. Manjaka-Boshielo (2023). *Social entrepreneurship in the Selected Neo-Pentecostal Churches: a Holistic Salvation*. VERBUM ET ECCLESIA. Vol 44, No 1.

⁵¹ M.S. Kgatele and S.J. Manjaka –Boshielo (2023). *Social entrepreneurship in the Selected Neo- Pentecostal Churches: A holistic Salvation*. VERBUM ET ECCLESIA. Vol 44, No 1.

⁵² D. S. Parsitau (2019). *Women without Limits and Limited Women: Pentecostal Women Navigating between Empowerment and Disempowerment in Kenya*. *Journal for the study of Religions of Africa and its Diaspora*. Vol 5(1).

⁵³ M.M. Matshobanke (2024). *Development cooperation and Neo –Pentecostal Churches- A decolonial Perspective*. VERBUM ET ECCLESIA. 45(1).

⁵⁴ M.S. Kgatele and S.J. Manjaka –Boshielo (2023). *Social entrepreneurship in the Selected Neo- Pentecostal Churches: A holistic Salvation*. VERBUM ET ECCLESIA. Vol 44, No 1.

⁵⁵ D.O. Orogun (2023). *Hybrid Leadership in African Neo-Pentecostal*. *Religions*. Vol 14, Issue 5.

⁵⁶ A.E.Umanah et.al. (2025) . *From Charity to Sustainable Development: Evolving Role of the church in Nigeria Poverty Alleviation Agenda*. *Mangrove Journal*.

Furthermore, the support systems created by Neo-Pentecostal churches help to strengthen resilience among individuals and communities. Through counseling services, mentorship programs, cooperative societies, and social networks within the church, members receive emotional, spiritual, and material support during difficult times. These structures create a sense of belonging and solidarity, enabling individuals to cope more effectively with economic hardships and social uncertainties. The impact of these initiatives extends beyond individual empowerment to broader socio-economic development. By encouraging financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and community participation, Neo-Pentecostal churches contribute to local economic growth and social stability⁵⁷. Their efforts often fill gaps left by insufficient governmental social welfare systems, especially in developing societies where poverty and unemployment remain pressing concerns. Neo-Pentecostal churches have emerged as important agents of social and economic transformation through the integration of social initiatives with religious teachings. Their commitment to supporting marginalized communities, promoting self-reliance, and fostering resilience demonstrates the evolving role of religion in contemporary society. By addressing both

spiritual and material needs, Neo-Pentecostal churches continue to shape the lives of individuals and contribute meaningfully to community and national development⁵⁸.

One of the tools that the Neo-Pentecostal churches have deployed in recent times to recruit new members to their folds is the copious use of the social media. They do not only see the internet and other social media platform as one of the gifts to human development, but, also a tool designed to help in the spread of the gospel. One major benefit of the social media, is its fastness to reach larger number of audience, reliability and less expensiveness. In fact, many Neo-Pentecostal churches establish strong tie between their religious leaders and members. This is because of its ability to engage various categories of people at once. The psychological connection between churches and members is more strengthened, which the physical church has not been able to address. The impact of internet on religious organisations cannot be over-emphasised⁵⁹. Even while using the internet for religious purposes has many advantages for religious organizations, many other religious organizations have not yet embraced this innovation. This could be due to a lack of funding or the attitude of those in charge of these groups, who believe that internet usage signals the arrival of the anti-Christ. In the meantime, churches have greatly benefited from

using social media for evangelism in order to expand their membership across national borders.. Religious organisations are increasingly embracing technological innovations as a means of advancing their evangelical missions and reaching wider audiences across the globe. In recent years, digital communication platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, WhatsApp, and X (formerly Twitter) have become important tools for preaching, teaching, and spiritual engagement⁶⁰.

Sermons, prayer sessions, worship services, counseling, and inspirational lessons are just a few of the religious programs that both members and non-members can tune in to via the web radio and online television channels that many Neo-Pentecostal religious organizations currently run. By enabling believers to engage in religious activities regardless of their physical location, these digital platforms improve the relationship between churches and their adherents⁶¹.

The commercialization of religion through the purchase and sale of spiritual goods and services to bolster the financial foundation of religious institutions is known as religious consumerism. This practice is especially noticeable in many Neo-Pentecostal churches in modern-day Nigeria, where religion has grown more and more entwined with branding, marketing tactics, and business endeavors. This trend appears contrary to the teaching of Jesus Christ in Matthew 21:13, where He declared, *"My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of robbers."* Jesus condemned the transformation of the sacred place of worship into a center for commercial activities and criticized the hypocrisy associated with exploiting worshippers for financial gain⁶². Nigerian Neo-Pentecostal churches have maintained their prosperity by using marketing and economic tactics to draw in new members and keep existing ones. Over time, houses of worship have developed into vibrant spiritual marketplaces where religious experiences are competitively packaged, marketed, and sold. Many churches rely heavily on how well they package and sell their religious programs and activities to determine their size and level of popularity. Through aggressive advertisements and strategic promotions, these churches constantly seek to gain the attention of both existing members and the wider public⁶³.

⁵⁷. C.D.Phiri, (2025). *The Effectiveness of Pentecostal Church –based Welfare Programmes in Kanyama Township in Lisaka District, Zambia. International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Sciences. (IJRISS). Vol IX, Issue XVI.*

⁵⁸. E.K.Anim (2020). *An Evaluation of Pentecostal Churches as agents of Sustainable Development in Africa. African initiated Christianity and the Decolonisation of Development.*

⁵⁹. LN. Hesse (2019). *The Effect of Social Media on Church Management. Texila International Journal of Academic Research. Special Edition.*

⁶⁰. Y.DING et.al. (2024). *Internet use and Religious Practice. The Intermediary Role of Relative Deprivation and Social Trust. Religion. Vol.15, Issue 7.*

⁶¹. N.U.Magwas et.al. (2025). *Digital Christianity: Evaluating Exposure, Knowledge, and use of Faith –Based Social Media Handles by Christians in Southeast Nigeria. International Journal of Research and Scientific Innovation (IJRSI). Vol XII, Issue VI.*

⁶². O.P.Jegede (2025). *Commodification and Commercialisation of the Gospel in the 21st Century Church: The Nigerian Experience. International Journal of Religions and Peace Building. Vol 3(1).*

⁶³. N.N.Iheanacho and C.A.Ughaerumba, (2016). *The Rising Paradigm of Pentecostalpreneurship in Nigeria. Impacts on National Development. Open Journal of Philosophy. Vol 6, No*

Spiritual items are commonly marketed and sold to members under the guise of divine assistance or supernatural intervention. Such items include miracle handkerchiefs, mantles, anointing oil, and other symbolic objects believed to possess spiritual powers. These products are often targeted at vulnerable individuals such as admission seekers, the unemployed, barren women, visa applicants, and others facing life challenges. Instead of emphasizing genuine soul winning and evangelism, many churches now focus on attracting members from other denominations, a practice that can be described as “member hijacking” rather than true evangelism⁶⁴.

Another dimension of religious consumerism is the organization of special prayer and deliverance programmes at various Prayer Mountains and spiritual centers. Examples include places such as *Ori-Oke Iselogo*, *Ori-Oke Atunyan*, *Ori-Oke Tude*, *Ori-Oke Aseyori*, and *Ori-Oke Ibukun* and so on. These centres are often promoted as possessing superior spiritual powers capable of solving personal and spiritual problems. The aim is frequently to attract members from other churches and religions by presenting these programmes as more effective than those offered elsewhere. In addition, the architectural designs of many Neo-Pentecostal churches are intentionally made attractive and magnificent in order to appeal to prospective worshippers. In some cases, founders of such churches obtain bank loans to finance the construction of impressive church auditoriums and worship centres⁶⁵. These modern religious innovations and creative approaches have also encouraged the commercialization and packaging of religious symbols and materials such as books, compact discs (CDs), DVDs, audio tapes, and other spiritual wares. These items are often sold at exorbitant prices using marketing techniques borrowed from the secular business world. Furthermore, some church leaders encourage members to patronize businesses owned by their wives or family members, especially shops located beside church premises that sell spiritual materials. This practice is particularly common among churches that organize mountain prayer programmes and deliverance services⁶⁶.

Many Neo-Pentecostal churches have also implemented a variety of offerings and monetary contributions that are frequently not required by the Bible in order to increase revenue. These consist of deliverance offerings, individual offerings, peace offerings, welfare offerings, faith offerings, and seed offerings. These financial tactics are often portrayed as spiritual duties required for miracles, breakthroughs, and blessings from God. Critics counter that these

actions frequently lead to the financial and psychological exploitation of gullible and needy worshippers⁶⁷.

Religious consumerism has become a significant feature of Neo-Pentecostal Christianity in Nigeria. While some churches argue that these innovations are necessary for church growth and sustainability, others view them as a departure from the original purpose of Christianity⁶⁸. The commercialization of religion raises serious ethical and theological questions about the role of the church in society and the extent to which spiritual activities should be transformed into profit-making enterprises⁶⁹.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The aim of this paper has been achieved through a critical examination of the emergence and development of Christianity in Nigeria and the role played by early Christian missionaries, particularly Samuel Ajayi Crowther, in spreading the gospel across different parts of the country despite the initial resistance from adherents of Traditional Religion. The paper also examined the distinctive features of Neo-Pentecostal churches in Nigeria, including their strong emphasis on salvation, prosperity, divine healing, fervent prayer, evangelism and revival, as well as the attention given to women and youths. In addition, Neo-Pentecostal churches were observed to operate with relatively flexible administrative structures, which has contributed to their rapid growth and adaptability within contemporary Nigerian society. Furthermore, the paper explored the social relevance of Neo-Pentecostal churches by highlighting their innovative and creative interventions in addressing societal challenges. These churches have increasingly filled the vacuum created by the inability of the government to adequately meet the socio-economic needs of the people. Their contributions can be seen in areas such as healthcare delivery, economic empowerment, media evangelism, entrepreneurship and prosperity initiatives, innovations in worship, social infrastructure development, deliverance ministries, spiritual warfare, and creative forms of indigenous leadership. Through these efforts, Neo-Pentecostal churches have become important contributors to social transformation and community development in Nigeria. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made for the church, government, and society at large:

1. Neo-Pentecostal churches should continue to uphold sound biblical teachings and ensure that the pursuit of

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⁶⁴. N.G.Okechukwu and O.N. Uchechukwu (2026). *Commercialisation of Religious objects Among Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria: A Critique*. Vol2, Issue 3.

⁶⁵. New man (2026) Full List of Prayer Mountains or Ori- Oke in Nigeria. *Thenewsman.org.ng*. Assessed on 29/5/2026.

⁶⁶. N.G.Okechukwu and O.N. Uchechukwu (2026). *Commercialisation of Religious objects Among Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria: A Critique*. Vol2, Issue 3.

⁶⁷. E.Adedayo and D.C. Onyejinma (2024). *Seed Sowing and its Social-Economic impact on Nigeria*. *GVU: Journal of Research and Development*. Vol 1, No 2.

⁶⁸. Afolabi and S. A. Ojo (2023). *Commoditization of God in Religion: Marketing ‘Pentecostalism’ in the Nigerian space*. *Journal of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity*. Vol 44(1).

⁶⁹. B. Adedibu and O.P.Oke (2026). *An Ethical Response to Matchmaking and Dating in the Yoruba Traditional Society and the Digital World*. *Noyam. E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (EHASS)*. Vol 7, Issue 4.



prosperity does not overshadow the central message of salvation and Christian morality.

2. Church leaders should strengthen efforts towards transparency, accountability, and ethical leadership in order to sustain public trust and credibility.
3. The government should collaborate with religious organisations, particularly Neo-Pentecostal churches, in areas such as education, healthcare, poverty alleviation, and youth empowerment to support national development.
4. Neo-Pentecostal churches should invest more in skill acquisition programmes, entrepreneurship training, and employment opportunities for young people as a way of reducing unemployment and social vices.
5. Society should recognise and support the positive contributions of Neo-Pentecostal churches to national development while also promoting religious tolerance and peaceful coexistence among different faiths.
6. Religious organisations should continue to promote peace, unity, moral discipline, and social justice as part of their responsibilities towards nation-building.

In conclusion, Neo-Pentecostal churches have had a significant influence on the religious, social, and economic landscape of Nigeria. Despite the criticisms and challenges associated with some of their practices, their contributions to spiritual renewal and societal development remain substantial and should not be overlooked.

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