Religions and Development
Research Programme

Religions and Development in Nigeria: A Preliminary Literature Review

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Working Paper 31- 2009

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Religions and Development

Research Programme

The Religions and Development Research Programme Consortium is an international research partnership that is exploring the relationships between several major world religions, development in low-income countries and poverty reduction. The programme is comprised of a series of comparative research projects that are addressing the following questions:

- How do religious values and beliefs drive the actions and interactions of individuals and faith-based organisations?
- How do religious values and beliefs and religious organisations influence the relationships between states and societies?
- In what ways do faith communities interact with development actors and what are the outcomes with respect to the achievement of development goals?

The research aims to provide knowledge and tools to enable dialogue between development partners and contribute to the achievement of development goals. We believe that our role as researchers is not to make judgements about the truth or desirability of particular values or beliefs, nor is it to urge a greater or lesser role for religion in achieving development objectives. Instead, our aim is to produce systematic and reliable knowledge and better understanding of the social world.

The research focuses on four countries (India, Pakistan, Nigeria and Tanzania), enabling the research team to study most of the major world religions: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and African traditional belief systems. The research projects will compare two or more of the focus countries, regions within the countries, different religious traditions and selected development activities and policies.

The consortium consists of six research partner organisations, each of which is working with other researchers in the four focus countries:

- University of Birmingham, UK: International Development Department, Department of Theology and Religion, Centre for West African Studies, Centre for the Study of Global Ethics.
- University of Bath, UK: Centre for Development Studies.
- Indian Institute of Dalit Studies, New Delhi.
- Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, Ibadan.
- University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
- Lahore University of Management Sciences, Pakistan.

In addition to the research partners, links have been forged with non-academic and non-government bodies, including Islamic Relief.

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Preface

As part of the initial work of the Religions and Development Research Programme, a number of reviews of the literature emerging from various disciplines were undertaken, as one part of an attempt to identify work relevant to the research programme and assist in the clarification of key concepts, contribute to conceptual thinking and inform the design of new empirical research (see back cover). A second component of the preparatory work was comprised of reviews of the available literature in the focus countries of the programme: India, Nigeria, Tanzania and Pakistan. Some initial members of the research teams in these countries had participated in the design of the programme and were entrusted with commissioning these literature reviews. Each approached the work somewhat differently, depending in part on the nature of the materials available to them. In the Indian case, decades of academic endeavour and a large publishing industry meant that there was a great deal of published literature on which to draw. This was less so in the other countries, where the intention was to identify the secondary material available as well as the published literature, with a particular focus on literature produced and published within the country. Relatively short-term and constrained exercises, these reviews were seen as preliminary and it was anticipated that they would be incomplete. Each of the specific research components being undertaken between 2006 and 2010 has drawn on and added to the disciplinary and country literature reviews of the literature relevant to their research questions, as a preliminary to carrying out new empirical work.

In the Nigerian case, the work was undertaken by a team based in Ibadan, at the Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research and the University of Ibadan. The individual papers commissioned have been combined into a single report. Turnover in team membership and the other demands of the programme have held up finalization of the paper for publication. The lead editorial role has been taken by Professor Olakunle Odumosu of NISER, the country coordinator for the Religions and Development Programme.

Carole Rakodi
Director, Religions and Development Research Programme

Summary

This preliminary literature review identifies and summarizes analyses of the relationships between religions and development in Nigeria, with an emphasis on those published locally. It is intended as an initial resource upon which a series of individual research projects would build through further literature review and empirical research. It is concerned with how religious values and beliefs interact with development ideas and practices; the relationships between religious groups, other social organizations and the Nigerian state; and the ways in which faith communities interact with other development actors, with what effects. The paper provides a brief overview of the religious demography of Nigeria and outlines the relevant values and beliefs of the three main religious traditions. Many of the available studies, it is noted, focus on the potentially positive role of religion with respect to morality, social harmony, sustainable development, social justice and the achievement of certain development objectives. The important role of religious organizations in the provision of education and health services is discussed, as well as their economic thinking and their roles in the economy, for example as employers and property owners. It is noted that many of the available studies focus on the relationships between religion and politics. They generally link religion to ethnicity and examine the relationships between religion and conflict, especially over access to state power and the introduction of Shari'a law in the northern States. In addition, the review notes that a number of writers consider how religious values relate to questions of citizenship, political participation and leadership. Particular attention is paid to gender issues, examining relevant teachings of the faith traditions and the implications of their application for the wellbeing of women. Finally, a small number of studies that consider the historical and contemporary manifestations and roles of religious transnationalism are identified. The review concludes that relatively few of the sources identified are directly concerned with the relationships between religion and development. Most discuss the tenets and teachings of the main faith traditions (particularly Islam and Christianity), focusing on the integrating function of religion, which is said to (potentially) play a positive role in creating harmony and wellbeing, and suggesting that better observance of ethical teaching would have a positive developmental effect. This emphasis is counterbalanced to some extent by the studies of religion in Nigeria's political economy, which foreground its contribution to conflict and the obstacles it sometimes poses to the achievement of development objectives. However, the reviewers also note that many of the studies identified lack a strong empirical base.

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Glossary

Ayatollah	senior cleric, teacher, expert in jurisprudence etc.
Hijab	head cover and modest dress for women
Imam	mosque or community leader, in Shi'ite Islam believed to be divinely inspired
Mallam	scholar
Nizamiyya	Muslim institution of higher education
Sadaqa	voluntary almsgiving
Shari'a	a code of civil and criminal law based solely on the Qur'an.
Synod	council of a church; in Catholicism comprised of bishops, regarded as the successors to the apostles of Jesus
Talakawa	people
Ummah	worldwide community of Muslims, brotherhood of believers
Waqaf	a religious endowment, typically land or a building
Zakat	Sunni annual tax on wealth

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

In 2002, the Nigeria office of the French Institute for Research in Africa (IFRA), which is located in Ibadan, commissioned twelve research projects on the theme "Transnational networks and new religious actors in West Africa". The studies covered ten countries, including Nigeria, and multiple religious movements in the selected countries, including Muslim reformist movements and brotherhood networks, Pentecostal and prophetic movements, as well as neo-traditionalist churches. The studies were approached from a diversity of disciplinary orientations including religion, ethnology, history and political science (Fourchard et al, 2005).[1] The French initiative was partly a response to the reality that until recently, not much academic effort has been channelled into systematically exploring the relationship between faiths and development. Like the IFRA initiative, this apparent neglect has spurred other recent attempts to broach the subject from diverse angles. In fact, as Akama (1998a, p. 4) reports, "some have seen religion as the answer to a comprehensive analysis of the economic, psychological, socio-political circumstances of the society and social justice."

The lack of academic attention to systematically exploring the role of faiths in development in the Nigerian context is surprising considering, firstly, the saliency and centrality of religion both in Nigerian society and in the Nigerian state (Usman, 1987; Takaya, 1992; Kilani, 1998; Akama, 2001); secondly, the long history of studies on the phenomenon of religion since the foundation of Nigeria's first university in the late 1940s (Ade Ajayi, 1965; Parrinder,1981; Anyanwu, 1985; Asaju, 2005); and thirdly, the very vibrant academic debate on development in Nigeria, particularly from a radical perspective (cf. Oyovbaire, 1984: Abba et al, 1985; Tobi et al, 1987). However, there has always been tacit acknowledgment of the functionality of religion in relation to matters which today are identifiable in the mainstream development dialogue – including issues of morality, leadership and concerns about forging 'peaceful unity' and 'progress'[2] (Balogun, 1981; Enweremadu, 1991). In particular, many of the studies attempt to find a connection between religion or religiosity and outcomes in terms of individual attitudes and behaviour, which in turn have implications for 'development'.

Recent studies have shown a more direct concern for the relationships between religion and various facets of development. Some of the studies address the potency and force of religion, which results in it affecting and influencing virtually all aspects of human life – economic, social and political (Akama, 1998b; Odemuyiwa, 2005). Some explore aspects of the political economy of religion (*cf.* Roberts and

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Benjamin, 2005; Azubuike, 2005; Roberts, 2005) and the challenges posed by religious revivalism in the context of state failure (ICG, 2006). Others seek to contextualize religion in Nigeria, or Africa, by a deliberate redirection of religious thinking and teaching to focus on the need and potential for a more prophetic and process-oriented mission for religious agents and institutions beyond the 'witness of the word' (Akah, 2000). It is from this perspective that Iroegbu (1996), for example, responding to synodal apostolic exhortation that African Christian theologians should work out an 'appropriate ecclesiology', sets about developing *Ecclesia in Africa.* This considers the image of the church as God's family as the most appropriate to express its church's nature to Africans given, according to him, the importance of the family in African society.[3]

At a general level, some of these studies contend, among other things, that religion 'integrates' all aspects of Nigerian society; provides a basis for the interaction of different units; introduces order, harmony and discipline into social relations; serves as a mechanism that makes society productive; and thus has a role in nation building. Yet the studies also acknowledge that, even though it may be regarded as the bulwark of society, religion also has a negative dimension, potentially being both the most vulnerable point of society and its most divisive phenomenon. They argue that when the binding force in religion is lacking, the result is a breakdown of unity, law and order. In explaining its potentially negative role, it is contended that religion sometimes tends to be a rigid force for conservatism and reaction that tends to stifle progress and creativity. It is against this background that we review the available literature that attempts to explain the place of religion in development in Nigeria.

1.2   The religious identity and demography of Nigeria

Religion has been defined, in a comprehensive sense, as "the relation of man to that which man regards as holy…the system by which man recognizes the existence of a super-human controller of the universe, the recognition of God as the object of worship, love and obedience which ultimately leads to practical piety and morality" (Kilani, 1998, p. 16). Identity is defined by Osaghae and Suberu (2004, p. 3) as "any group attribute that provides recognition or definition, reference, affinity, coherence and meaning for individual members of the group acting individually or collectively". Different identities generate different levels of response from people, with some identities being more active and politically salient than others. Nigeria is characterized by a complex of individual as well as criss-crossing and recursive group identities, of which religious identity is among the most salient, from the

point of view both of the identities most commonly assumed by citizens, especially for political purposes, and those often implicated in day-to-day contestations over citizenship, as well as competition and conflict over resources and privileges. [4]

Religious identities in Nigeria are usually classified into three – Christian, Muslim and 'Traditional,' reflecting the three dominant religious groups in the country. It is generally believed, but not proven for sure, that approximately half of Nigeria's estimated population of about 120 million spread over a land area of 356,700 square miles, practise Islam. Over 40 per cent practise Christianity, while the remainder practise indigenous or traditional religion or no religion.[5] It is not uncommon, however, to find adherents of Christianity or Islam combining their faith with the practice of traditional religion (US State Department, 2003). The US State Department (2003) also observes, and we agree, that there is a strong correlation between religious differences and ethnic and regional diversity. The north, peopled mainly by the Hausa and Fulani ethnic groups, is predominantly Muslim; but there are significant numbers of Christians in the urban centres. Both Muslims and Christians are found in the Middle Belt. There is hardly a dominant religion *per se* in the Yoruba-dominated south-west. The population in this region is fairly evenly divided between Islam and Christianity, while some are practitioners of traditional African religions. The Igbo ethnic group is dominant in the eastern part of the country. There, Christianity is the dominant religion, with Catholics and Methodists in the majority. But even in eastern Nigeria, many of the people continue to observe rites and ceremonies rooted in traditional religion.

The three broad faith traditions can be divided into sub-categories, denominations or sects. The Christian population includes Roman Catholics, who constitute the largest denomination of Christians in the country (about 28 per cent), Protestants (Anglicans, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, totalling 31 per cent), a growing number of Evangelical and Pentecostal Christian ministries, Seventh Day Adventist, Jehovah's Witnesses and a host of 'home-grown' 'white garment' churches (e.g. Aladura and Celestial) (Pew Forum, 2006). By some accounts (cf. Udoidem, 1997), Pentecostal churches represent the fundamentalist segment of Christianity, and have witnessed 'astonishing' growth in the recent past with many adherents, especially youths, crossing over from the older churches (Corten and Marshall-Fratani, 2001).[6] The Christian groups have apex bodies like the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) and the Catholic Bishops Conference.

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Nigerian Islam is predominantly Sunni, but Nigerian Muslims also belong to different sects, the most prominent being Ahmadiyya, Sanusiyya and Quadriyya. There are a number of umbrella organizations that aim to propagate Islam, one of which is the Jamaatu Nasril Islam (JNI), and also the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (SCIA) which is the overall umbrella body. Since the Iranian Islamic revolution of the 1970s, radical Islam sects have emerged to demand, amongst other things, purist Islam based on Shari'a law and the eradication of 'heretical innovations'. Such sects include Maitatsine, Izala and, most recently, Taliban (Osaghae and Suberu, 2004).

Traditional religious practices are differentiated between ethnic groups: conventionally it is estimated that there are more than 250 groups. Sub-groups often worship different gods and goddesses.

The many salient religious and other identities in Nigeria are interconnected and mutually reinforcing, leading to a tendency for them to be compounded or hyphenated, for example 'ethno-religious' or 'ethno-regional'. They also have historical significance. Osaghae and Suberu (2004), for example, argue that the category of 'ethno-religious identity' initially owed its origin to regional formations - it was useful for differentiating the predominantly Muslim north from the predominantly Christian south. It also helped to differentiate the dominant Muslim group in the north from the non-Muslim minorities in that region. Since the early 1980s, when the Maitatsine riots in Kano ushered in a regime of religious fundamentalism in the northern parts of the country, the ethno-regional identity category has been even more frequently used to describe conflicts involving an intersection of ethnic and religious identities.

Nigeria's complex of crisscrossing identities qualifies it as a 'deeply divided society', in which major national development issues are contested along complex lines of ethnic, regional and religious division, with the result that there are few points of convergence and consensus. Religious identity is one of the factors that is often mobilized and politicized to the level of overt conflict (Smyth and Robinson, 2001; Osaghae and Suberu, 2004).

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1.3   Purpose of the review

This working paper critically reviews the immediately available and accessible literature on religions in development in Nigeria. The general purpose of the review is to identify and review recent work in Nigeria relating to understanding the dynamics of social change, the main value and belief systems and forms of religious organization, and the adoption, implementation and outcomes of specific development policies and practices, especially the relationships between these and values/beliefs and/or faith-based organization.

In specific terms, the review is presented under some of the broad headings envisaged for the research being undertaken during the Religions and Development programme, namely (i) the relationships between religious values and development concepts and practices; (ii) faiths, governance and development; (iii) faith-based organizations, religious identity and service delivery; and (iv) religious transnationalism and development. However, the uneven distribution of accessible literature means that the themes do not receive equal attention in the sections that follow. An example of this unevenness is the significant attention in the literature to women in Islam compared to women in Christianity or traditional religion.

1.4   Structure of the report

The working paper is structured into sections and sub-sections as follows. Following Section 1 that introduces the paper, the second section reviews literature on the relationships between religious values and development concepts and practices. Among other things, we assess the impact of religious teaching and its theological bases on the formulation and implementation of key development concepts and practices. In Section 3 we discuss views on faiths, governance and development. The concerns in this section span such issues as the relationships between religion and politics, citizenship and religious freedom, leadership and governance, the influence of participation on governance and development, the role of women, conflict and conflict resolution through inter-faith dialogue. Section 4 considers the role of faith-based organizations (FBOs) in service delivery, while Section 5 discusses some facets and implications of religious transnationalism. The sixth and final section concludes the paper.

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2   The relationships between religious values and development concepts and practices

In this section, we review literature that makes a contribution to the examination of religious values and beliefs and religious teachings and their connections with development concepts and practices. The language of values lends itself easily to use by social and political actors in persuading their audiences of the correctness of their proposed course of action. Moreover, for many actors, it is their religious beliefs and ideals which motivate them. An understanding of how values and religious beliefs relate to each other, in particular when they are challenged to deal with practical issues of social and economic development will, therefore, be useful to all partners in development, including religious and faith-based organizations (FBOs).[7] It is, therefore, important to assess the theological basis of religious teaching and its impact on the formulation and implementation of key development concepts and practices, within the context in which the religious teaching is being offered.

In respect of Nigeria, an overview of studies related to this theme shows that some studies focus on elaborating the values and beliefs of the dominant religions in Nigeria, while others have extended their concern to development concepts and practices. In the latter, some recurrent themes are peace, harmony, unity and progress, morality and ethics, healing, social justice, education, ecology and environment, and the economy. It is within these themes that concerns about poverty/wealth and well-being are addressed. First, the values and beliefs of Nigeria's three major religions – Christianity, Islam and traditional religion - are briefly discussed. In Section 2.2 morality, ethics and the healing of society are discussed, followed by writings on peace, harmony, unity and progress. Section 2.4 focuses on education, Section 2.5 on social justice, Section 2.6 on ecology and the environment and Section 2.7 on the economy and well-being.

2.1   The values and beliefs of Nigeria's main religions

Since its inception, each of Nigeria's three main religions has had its own ethical codes and storehouse of spiritual values that it guards and defends jealously, as well as values it shares with other religions.

Christianity is regarded as a religion that seeks to ensure that people are ruled according to the will of Almighty God (Anyanwu, 1996). Reviewing relevant sections of the *Encyclopedia of Religion* (Hastings, 1987, pp. 411-418), it is possible to identify 'several spectra' of contestation in Christian theology, including the teaching authority of the church, the autonomy of belief of the individual, and a

focus on the spiritual versus the material. Of particular importance to the values promoted by Christianity as they relate to development is the conundrum of the existence of human suffering and its place in the divine design - what Michael Taylor has termed 'the theology of suffering' (Taylor, 2000). It is in relation to the latter that contemporary Christian thinkers have discussed the role of human experience in the framing of religious ideas, a phenomenon reinforced by the growth of new traditions of theology.

The name Islam is specifically given in the Qur'an (Q. 5:3) to the religion which was brought to mankind through the Prophet Mohammed. It means peace and absolute submission to the will of God (Allah). In Islam, Allah is absolute and no being, animate or inanimate, has identical attributes to Allah. The unity of Allah is thus paramount (Kilani, 1998). The often-identified core sources of Islamic thought are the scriptures, that is, the Qur'an and the Sunnah – the model behaviour and sayings of the Prophet Mohammed. However, it is recognized that the community of believers and human intellectual endeavour are also valid sources. It is in this context that the belief of Shi'ite Muslims that Allah continues to guide his community through divinely inspired leaders, *imams* and their intermediaries on earth, such as *ayatollahs,* can be appreciated. For much traditional Muslim thought, fulfilment and welfare are to be found by following these sources of Islamic knowledge and model behaviour, the essentially contested values of which include a focus on the world to come as against this world, concern with the spiritual as against the material, and concern with the political status of Islam – the religion having always being highly political.

According to Akama (1998a), the essential doctrines of Islam include worship of Allah, kindness to relative strangers and the needy, and humility. Okunnu (2001) stresses the fact that, according to the teachings of Islam, the web of social relationships consists of the individual, Allah and society. Religion is thus considered to be at the core of relationships, whether within the family unit or at the national or global levels. The mission of Muslims, as adherents of Allah, is to spread such values as purification of the soul and the improvement and rebuilding of society. Islamic values include service to humanity, selfless sacrifice, generosity, justice, honesty, humility and a high sense of morality. These, it is suggested, are the values lacking in contemporary Nigeria, where the nation, like other modern nations guided by man-made ideologies is, at its peril, giving prominence to materialism and neglecting the spiritual dimensions of life.

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In relation to the primary concern of this review, it is clear that the alleviation of poverty is conceptually a major focus in Islamic belief and practice, and this is symbolized in the expectation of almsgiving (*zakah*) as a central idea of Islamic social justice, regardless of the debates as to the role of the state in the administration of *zakah*. In recent centuries, traditional Islamic thought has had to cope with the challenges posed by pressures from liberal Western politico-religious thought, including thinking about development

As noted above, a third grouping in Nigeria is comprised of those that are associated with or traditional to indigenous communities. The appropriate nomenclature for this grouping is contested. Many scholars use the term African Traditional Religion (ATR), while the expression African Indigenous Religion (AIR) has also been proposed (Idowu, 1973; Opoku, 1978; Awolalu and Dopamu, 1979; Erivwo, 1982), and yet others simply prefer 'African Religion' (Kilani, 1998). There is also controversy over whether local religious beliefs have enough in common to be considered one religion, or whether the terms should be used in the plural. For the sake of brevity, this review will refer to 'traditional' or 'indigenous' religion. If religions in Nigeria are traditional or indigenous, then they are African, and refer to "the indigenous religion of the Africans handed down from generation to generation by the forbears of the present generation of Africans" (Kilani, 1998, p.16). Thus, while Christianity and Islam are often referred to as 'received religions' (Balogun, 1981), 'traditional' religion is considered to be indigenous.

Traditional religion has hardly any written scriptures. Kilani (1998, p.16-17) nevertheless contends that it is 'written' in all aspects of African life and that the sources of its concepts are myths, folktales, proverbs, liturgy, songs and 'ejaculatory statements'. In traditional religion, God is believed to be One, who is 'high' but can be reached through intermediaries. In other words, there is a belief in a supreme deity and the worship of lesser deities that serve as agents of the supreme deity. The sociological explanation for the idea of an indirect approach to God through intermediaries, according to Kilani (1998), derives from the fact that in traditional society, hierarchical patterns are very pronounced in government, families and the age grade system. Akama (1998a, p. 4) suggests that the cardinal tenets of indigenous religion are devotion, peace and love. Thus in some cases, 'a week of peace' is observed before any annual festival is celebrated.

The available studies show that, although the number of those who identify themselves solely as practitioners of African traditional religion has greatly declined over the last fifty years, the tradition is alive and continues to have an impact on Nigerian society, to the extent that African civilization is defined as a 'spiritual civilization' (Balogun, 1981). Widespread interest in traditional religion has spurred a burgeoning literature that deals with a range of issues, including the ontology of life and the universe in specific tribal settings (Nabofa, 2005); reincarnation and doctrines of heredity and hope; oath taking as a mechanism for enforcing the accountability of those who govern (Anyanwu, 1986); indigenous charismatic movements and attempts by some ethnic groups in Nigeria to venture into monotheism; and discussions of concepts of divinities, beliefs in witches etc. The ways in which these affect people's lifestyles and moral values and their role in enabling communities to enjoy peace and prosperity are also highlighted, the point being that the well-being of a physical community is believed to depend upon the goodwill of the spiritual beings associated with it (Ekeh, 2005). Among other things, these studies point to how a people's worldview, shaped by their religion, in turn influences their attitudes to growth and development. There has also been concern with 'dialogue' between traditional religion and Christianity (Erhueh, 2005) and between traditional religion and Islam (Kirby, 1993).

The foregoing indicates that there are similarities and differences between the concepts and values of the three dominant religions in Nigeria. The existence of God is paramount in all three. The basic tenets recognize the existence of a supreme being under whose control is the manipulation of the heavens and the earth. The three religions recognize God as the object of worship, love and obedience, which leads practically to morality and piety, notwithstanding that the way each religion makes supplications to God may differ. The proofs of God in all the religions are intuitive, scriptural or revelatory, contained in written or oral works attributed to God or the reasoning of man (Kilani, 1998). Religion is identified as a permanent dimension of reality. In trying to make sense of the complex and changing reality of society, however, it is acknowledged that religious ideas may change their cosmologies and thus change the manner in which they act in society (Kilani, 1998). Thus, although it may change as society changes, it is suggested that religion can never disappear (Manus, 1992). Manus (1992), furthermore, contends that religion ensures the internalization of such values as discipline, moral rectitude, solidarity and mutual cooperation, and sensitizes both senior and junior citizens to abide by moral principles, although he does not present evidence to support these contentions.

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Balogun's (1981) extensive discussion of Christianity, Islam and traditional religion, including their beliefs and practices, deals with concepts of God, the development of the world leading to the appearance of man on earth, and how man developed religious consciousness, among other issues. In the book *God and Caesar*, Akpenpuun (2002) discusses sociological concepts and theories of religion, including integration (inter-religious cohabitation) and conflicts amongst religious groups, with an emphasis on how religion has been used to influence human values and its contribution to the growth and development of nations, with special reference to Nigeria. He draws on the multiple perspectives of religious studies, sociology, economics, political science and psychology.

More specifically, Chris Manus considers the place of religious values which, borrowing from Gail Inlow, he considers to be the determinant in humans that influences their choices in life and thus decides their behaviour. His discussion is conducted in relation to the quest for social justice and peace in Nigeria. According to him, values are stratified and organized into a fixed hierarchy. Idealists agree that a division is made between material and spiritual values. At the first level are values relating to the natural order of things and at the second are those concerned with the supernatural order. In classifying values, the idealist's primary concern is the degree to which each set of values will help man [sic] attain his ultimate end in creation. Manus believes that since humanity's ultimate goal is unity with the spiritual order of reality, religious values must be considered superior to 'natural' values (Manus, 1992).

Balogun's (1981) analysis of the situation of the three religions practised in Nigeria leads him to a conviction that the basic aim of all their adherents is toward an 'ultimate reality', although the different religions have different perspectives on what this is. A practical import of this conviction is that none of the religious groups can have ultimate reality exclusively to itself, which generates a constant struggle – competition and rivalry for space which, in Takaya's (1992) view, manifests itself as 'competition for political supremacy' in the national system, undermining the supposed 'common goal' of maintaining peaceful national unity, stability and continued progress towards Nigeria's common good.

In an article entitled "Religious groups and the politics of national development in Nigeria", Williams (1992) argues that religion and development can and do go together, and in particular that Nigeria's development has had the assistance of religion and still does. Without the close collaboration of

religion and development in the past, Nigeria, she suggests, would have charted a different course, and maybe had a slower rate of development. Her thesis is that religion, through the instrumentality of religious groups, has played a vital role in Nigeria's national development. The article is based on library and archival findings, as well as responses to unstructured interviews, and focuses on the post-colonial period. Williams' focus is on religious groups rather than religion per se, because it is through the former that the politics of national development can be better demonstrated and understood. The contribution considers those events which either enhanced or were detrimental to national development, hence it analyses the interplay of politics and religion and the consequences for national development. In her cursory survey of three areas, education, health and social welfare services, in the period prior to colonial rule, and through the colonial and post-colonial periods, Williams (1992) highlights the involvement in and contributions of each religion to national development through its religious groups. This involvement and contribution are discussed in later sections.

The status of the available literature with respect to the specific development concepts and practices mentioned above will now be highlighted.

2.2   Morality, ethics and the healing of society

Enweremadu (1991) examines the role of the church in the moral transformation of contemporary Nigerian society. This study was conducted against the background of the problems of instability and corruption that have faced Nigeria since the Second Republic (1979-1983) and the challenges these have posed for the churches in fashioning appropriate responses to changing people's values and beliefs. Utilizing secondary information as a basis for analysis, the study, among other things, highlights the duties of respective members of the church – the laity and sacred ministers, as documented in the Catholic liturgy. The study asserts some critical missionary roles of the church in relation to the promotion of justice, fair play and the moral transformation of contemporary Nigerian society. In relation to this, the conclusion is drawn that the church as an instrument or agent of transformation has not been indifferent in searching for solutions to the array of problems. Moreover, in the author's view, the contemporary church has now developed into a community of faith and dynamism, which has the potential to change people's values and perceptions about life through its teachings.

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From the specific viewpoint of the relationship between faith and development, Enweremadu's (1991) study asserts the importance of Christian doctrines in achieving value re-orientation in Nigerian society. However, he does not demonstrate whether and how the 'potential' to entrench moral uprightness amongst church members based on the doctrines that are laid down and which form the nucleus of the teachings has been or is to be realized. The study's main assertion with respect to the potential positive role of Christian doctrines in the Nigerian situation thus lacks an empirical foundation.

In a "Conceptual overview of ethics and Christian leadership in the 21st century", Igboin (2004) examines the relevance of Christian ethics and values to the Christian and secular leadership in contemporary Nigerian society. The author provides a critical review of the nature of ethics and the relationship between religion and ethics, with a particular emphasis on Nigerian Christian leadership. From a systematic analysis, emanating from secondary data and archival materials, the study highlights the discrepancies between what Christian ethics and values prescribe and leadership style in both the Christian and the secular communities in Nigeria.

A related theme to those of morality and ethics is that of healing, taken in a very specific sense. Two categories of studies deal with issues of 'healing'. The first deals with the concept of healing more or less as moral regeneration, for instance, 'healing the ills of society'. The second category deals with healing in its specific connotation for human health and well-being. It is in the latter context that we talk about 'faith healing'. We return to the latter concern in our review of studies that address the activities of FBOs.

From the viewpoint of healing as moral rectitude, Adukus (1991) studied the role of the sacrament of penance in the Catholic Church in healing the ills of society. His thesis seeks to identify the shattered world and its causes, so as to discover ways and means of effecting healing. The main objective of the study was to examine the role of the "sacrament of penance" and its liturgical aspects in achieving psychological healing for members of the Catholic Christian faith. Adukus (1991) suggests, but does not provide evidence, that the embodiment, adherence to and observation of the sacrament of penance by church members aids the return of humanity to solidarity in reconciliation and salvation through the effects of the "paschal" mystery of Christ as the wounded healer. In furtherance of this theme, Adukus (1991) also considered the attitude of present day Catholics to sin in relation to the

sacrament of penance or reconciliation. He suggests a possibility of using the teachings embodied in the "sacrament of penance" to achieve a "sin free" or "corruption free" society. This argument is based on the normative belief that the teaching is capable of touching and affecting people's lives, and changing their world views from the negative to the positive, which should in turn, he suggests, inspire development in the society. This study did not systematically collect and analyse data to demonstrate the role and function of the sacrament of penance and its liturgical implications for behavioural change and value re-orientation. Accordingly, the author's attempt to argue that there is or could be a direct relationship between penance-based liturgies and development is less than successful. Studies on this theme in respect of Islam and African Traditional Religion were not available at the time of this review.

2.3   Conflict, peace, harmony and progress

The theme of conflict, peace, harmony and progress has attracted significant attention from various contributors (Takaya, 1992; Ikenga-Mentuh, 1992; Daudu, 2001; Jenkins, 2002).

Takaya (1992) introduces the 'Nigerian dilemma' with respect to religion and peace with a catalogue of gruesome horrors arising from atrocities committed against humans in God's name, in his view arising from inter-religious or even inter-faith competition for national political supremacy. The paper builds its case on the basis of historical data, including those that show religious affiliation by region. Seven methods for resolving the dilemma of religion, politics and peace in Nigeria are recommended.

Using secondary data and content analysis of archival materials, Ikenga-Mentuh (1992) demonstrates the link between religion and peace, and the association between these and development. The paper notes that the religious disturbances that have occurred in Nigeria have posed great threats to peace and development. With eclectic analyses that do not necessarily specify the causes and extent of religious disturbances or their consequences for development in precise terms, these studies nevertheless explain the phenomena in terms of mutual suspicion and rivalry both between Christians and Muslims and between different sects and denominations within Islam and Christianity. These conflicts, which abound in the country and in which religion has become politicized, have led to the deaths of thousands of people (Usman, 1987). As Ikenga-Mentuh (1992, p. 17) puts it: "Religious bigotry and fanaticism are usually due to pathological conditions, but could also be reactions to intolerance or persecution."

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Daudu (2001) also holds the view that religion has played a negative role in Nigeria's national life. It has divided Nigeria along religious lines in its internal and international politics, evidence for which can be seen in the individual positions taken by key state officials on pertinent matters in Nigeria's international relations. Daudu concludes that religion has created tensions and led the nation into bloody and destructive crises, which threaten its unity and survival.

Jenkins (2002) also points to the 'dangerous polarization' of the country in religious terms, such that the north is chiefly Muslim, while the East is largely Christian. Moreover, the author observes, religious allegiances coincide with ethnic, tribal and geographical loyalties. He records how Muslim-Christian rivalries have often led to violence. Of particular note was the 1966 violence, when tens of thousands of Christian Igbos were massacred in the north, forcing survivors to flee to safe areas, and in his view leading eventually to a civil war between 1967 and 1970 that claimed perhaps a million lives. He also notes how, in the 1990s, Muslims began imposing Shari'a religious law in entire states. The word Sharia means "the path to a watering hole." It offers guidelines for everyday life, including prayers and donations to the poor. As addressed in the Qur'an, Shari'a prescribes modest dress for both men and women and has been interpreted to imply single-sex schools and segregated transport. Islamic law is derived from the Qur'an (the holy text), the Sunna (the prophet Mohammed's teachings) and Muslim scholars' legal rulings. The laws contain violations known as *Hadd* offences, which include sexual intercourse outside marriage, alcohol consumption, highway robbery, theft and murder. With the proper evidence, sexual offences can carry a sentence of stoning to death or flogging. Theft can be punished by the loss of a hand. However, Shari'a is interpreted and practised in different forms around the world, depending on each country's religious and legal leaders, and not all predominantly Islamic societies implement such penalties for committing a *Hadd* offence (an offence according to Shari'a law). For example, like several Middle Eastern countries, Egypt recognizes Shari'a as part of its jurisprudence but chooses not to enforce severe *Hadd* penalties (penalties specified in Shari'a law) as part of state law. Instead, adultery is often punished with a short prison sentence. In contrast, parts of Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Iran have adopted the Shari'a punishment code and enforce its harshest penalties with varying levels of consistency. Iran is one of the few countries known to have carried out sentences of death by stoning. In other countries, these sentences are often commuted to lashing or a prison term.

In 2000, several predominantly Muslim states in northern Nigeria formally adopted Islamic law as part of their legal system, despite concerns from the largely Christian population in the south and words of caution from former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo. By the time they did so, the precedent for using the system had already been set. In the area that later became northern Nigeria, the Islamic code had been practised for centuries, until the region came under British rule in the early 1900s. As a colonial power, the British allowed the use of Shari'a, but did not permit the enforcement of amputations or executions as punishments. After Nigeria gained independence, Nigerian leaders suppressed the use of Shari'a penalties, fearing that they would inflame tensions between Muslims in the north and Christians in the south. For the most part, Nigerian military leaders relied on establishing secular courts that utilized British common law as a foundation for the legal system. Nigerian attorney Muzzammil Sani Hanga told the programme Frontline in 2001 that, in his view, corruption and crime contributed strongly to the re-emergence of the Shari'a penal code in certain states: "Armed robbery was always increasing in this country, the disparity between the rich and poor is always there," he said. "I believe the clamour for the implementation of Shari'a is like an open show of defiance against the government, which is perceived by the Muslims as the sole agent of corruption in this country."

Nigerian leaders have drawn a distinction between those who use Shari'a for political gain and those who want to observe Islamic law solely for religious reasons: "The genuine Shari'a, Islamic Shari'a, is part of the religion and is part of the way of life of a Muslim and part of the way of life of Nigerians. We have existed in that way from the time that Islamic religion arrived in our land," President Obasanjo told the news service allAfrica.com in 2001. "It is what I call political Shari'a that is new and that will come and go, because if you want to use Shari'a to achieve political ends it will not hold. It may stick for a while, but it will not hold," he said. Although Christians are not subject to Shari'a law, its use in the predominantly Muslim northern states has created an atmosphere of unease and intimidation between religious groups, causing tensions that have often led to violence. Shari'a implementation continues to raise difficult questions in Nigeria and around the Muslim world with respect to how to separate the secular and religious systems. "Nigeria is the largest concentration of Muslims on the African continent," African studies scholar Dr. Ali Mazrui told a conference sponsored by the Nigeria Muslim Forum in 2001, "The population of Nigeria, as we indicated, encompasses more Muslims than the population of any Arab country, including Egypt. But can the Shari'a be implemented at the state level without compromising secularism at the federal level?"

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By 2001, nine of Nigeria's 36 states had imposed Shari'a in whole or in part – and others were discussing the idea (Jenkins, 2002). Today, Shari'a has prevailed in all the states along the nation's northern border: Zamfara, Sokoto, Kebbi, Niger, Kano, Katsina, Kaduna, Jigawa, Yobe, Bauchi, Borno, and Gombe. As noted above, Shari'a implementation usually means punishments that seem unusually harsh to non-Muslims (and even some Muslims), such as the amputation of one's hand as a penalty for theft (Herman, 2001). Daudu concludes that Nigerian Christians' fear of the prospect of living under Shari'a is understandable, because its introduction has many practical consequences for minorities. In extreme cases, non-Muslims may be subjected to the whole battery of Islamic civil, criminal and family law. Christians may suffer any of the physical punishments, flogging and mutilations ordained by the tradition. In addition, the author concludes that the effects of Shari'a on gender relations are far-reaching, since women may face restrictions on their ability to move and work freely. He recommends that, in view of the post-September 11 global tensions between Muslims and the West, the world should watch developments in Nigeria closely.

Herman (2001) believes that the roots of Nigeria's conflicts can be traced back to pre-colonial times. However, he argues that they were institutionalized and aggravated, to the seeming benefit of the colonial administration. The dynamics of religious conflicts and political stability in Nigeria, he suggests, have not moved one way only, with religion standing as a barrier to political unity: rather, in Nigeria's history, religion and politics have long been complexly interrelated, with each greatly affecting the other. He suggests that the colonial legacy of a century ago helps to explain recurrent religious conflicts and their detrimental effects on democracy. Based on key informant interviews, Herman's study (2001) examines the sources of escalating conflicts between Muslims and Christians, as well as the effects of religious conflicts on the polity and the economy of the nation. The paper traces the causes of the religious strife that occurred between 1999 and 2001 in reaction to the introduction of Shari'a law. He notes that supporters of Shari'a claim not only its necessity for their theology but also its practicality. Their hope is that the introduction of Shari'a will reduce the corruption and immorality that are rampant in Nigeria. Shari'a supporters claim that it will make northern Nigeria safer, wealthier and godlier. The major finding of the paper is that, despite the claims of Shari'a supporters, and whether state law is Shari'a-compliant or not, crime is still rising, state corruption continues, and so does grinding poverty for most of the *talakawa* (people). In addition, he notes, the introduction of Shari'a has forced thousands of non-Muslims to relocate.

In a radical treatment of the subject, Bako (1992) argues that there is a dialectical correlation between, on the one hand, the biting economic crisis and the accompanying political repression and, on the other, the mounting wave of religious intolerance. In conclusion, the author observes that religious followers do not fight each other because they belong to different faiths or sects. Instead, he argues that religious fanaticism and intolerance are fundamentally fostered by the socio-economic and political conditions.

Despite the links between religion and conflict, most of the authors also consider that religion holds the seeds of peace and harmony. According to Akama (1998a, p. 4-5): "The subject of peace is cardinal in the teaching of every religion for a wholesome existence and development in society." In all three dominant religions, peace is advocated as a necessary condition for nation building. Manus (1992) also maintains that all the religions in Nigeria proclaim peace as an essential ingredient in their dogma. For example, traditional religionists cherish the values of fair play, justice and peace as eternal values while, throughout the Qur'an, the understanding that peace is the will of Allah is clearly stated. From this platform, the author believes that all three major religions in Nigeria could and should address themselves to the urgent need to unite all the Nigerian peoples into a peace-loving community governed in justice and peace under God. Other authors also advocate greater inter-religious understanding and harmony as a pre-requisite for the survival of the Nigerian 'nation' (see, for example, Manus, 1992; Daudu, 2001). Although religion is the basis for conflict, many of these authors argue that it can also provide the moral basis for greater tolerance and peaceful co-existence. We will return to this theme later.

2.4   Education

Using library materials, Lemu (2002) gives a brief overview of religious education in Nigerian public schools, with an emphasis on Islamic education. The writer asserts that Islamic schooling was the formal educational system in Northern Nigeria up to the colonial period and maintains that the pattern of education in the south was different because Christian missionaries confined their educational and evangelical activities to the remote, rural and predominantly pagan areas to avoid confrontation with the Emirs. He further shows that the teaching of current syllabi in government schools in no way contributes to religious friction. On the contrary, he asserts, it helps, in however small a way, to enlighten Christians and Muslims about the true teachings of their own religions, thereby protecting

them from false information. Syllabi for Islamic and Christian Religious Knowledge have been drawn up by State and Federal Ministries of Education since the 1950s, preparing students for the subject in the West African School Certificate Examinations. In the case of Islamic Religious Knowledge there were no textbooks in English until about 1968 – 1970. The teachers, mostly traditional *mallams* (scholars) who had attended Arabic Teachers' Colleges, used books written in Arabic, from which they translated for the students. With the production of books in English written to the syllabus, Islamic Religious Knowledge was reported to have become much easier to teach. The Government-run post-secondary Advanced Teachers Colleges and Colleges of Education ran three year courses in Islamic Studies as well as Christian Religious Knowledge and the subject became widely available in the universities. Gradually the Arabic-speaking *mallams* were replaced at secondary level by young English-speaking teachers, who were products of the mainstream educational system. Around 1984, Nigeria changed to the 6-3-3-4 system (6 years primary, 3 years junior secondary, 3 years senior secondary and 4+ years university) and at the same time all syllabi were reviewed by subject panels set up by the Nigerian Educational Research Council, affiliated to the Ministry of Education. Religious frictions are, Lemu (2002) suggests, generated by adult chauvinists and bigots on both sides, who are generally not a part of the school system. He concludes that, while there are ways to build bridges to foster tolerance and pluralism through the schools, there is also a great need for a serious campaign among adults by respected and responsible religious figures, through effective use of the media.

In her study of religious groups and the politics of national development in Nigeria, Pat Williams (1992) examines, among other things, the politics of education in national development during the pre-colonial period. She establishes that politics and education relate to each other in a "circular fashion" (Adegbesan, 1987, p. 801) and that religious groups are active participants in education. Prior to the advent of Christianity and Islam, African Traditional Religion related to virtually every aspect of communal living - economic, political and social. Socio-political structures and religious belief systems were intertwined (Rodney, 1974, p. 9). Practitioners of traditional religion ensured the transmission of their religious tenets and traditions through informal education of their members from one generation to the other. Similarly, Islam has a strong influence on its adherents and controls their way of life by imparting Islamic education and culture. The *ummah* (Islamic community), particularly if it is *Bilad al – Islam* (Land of Islam i.e. in the north of the country), is believed to be required to base its social structures and practices strictly on the Qura'n, Hadith and Shari'a, so that Islamic education is regarded as essential.

This *Gemeinschaft*[8] situation observed in the case of traditional religion and Islam was not absolutely the case with Christianity. When a Christian school was established, it was made open to everyone within its catchment area, regardless of their faith. Hence there was a rapid transformation from a *Gemeinschaft* situation to a *Gesellschaft*[9] one. Rudimentary or narrow education was no longer regarded as adequate. To meet the needs of modern development, teacher training colleges and secondary schools were established as far back as 1853. The existence of these educational institutions guaranteed a steady supply of personnel for the various European/government concerns that were established, mainly in the southern part of Nigeria. In this way, Christian educational institutions served as pivotal points in which nationalistic tendencies developed.

Unlike the situation during pre-colonial times, when Christian religious groups were the major providers of education, in the 1950s, during the colonial period, Islamic religious groups joined in this effort by securing permission to build schools in Western Nigeria. Some of the Muslim organizations that took advantage of this dispensation and competed successfully with the Christian initiatives were the Ahmadiyya Movement, the Ansar-Ud-Deen and the Isabatudeen Society. The involvement of religious groups alongside the government lasted throughout the colonial period, although there were some problems, especially in Eastern Nigeria (Abernethy, 1967; Cooke, 1978). Christian missionaries limited their provision of education amongst Muslims, based on an understanding and agreement that they would not attempt to convert Muslim children, leading to some disparity in educational levels between the north and both the west and east of Nigeria, with the standard of education lower in the north than in the west and east. As a result, because of the relationship between western education and development, patterns of national development were uneven (Williams, 1992).

At the time of independence (1960), the religious organizations were still establishing and managing schools side by side with the government. Some years after independence, however, the Federal Military Government started viewing these organizations in new ways, especially the Catholic mission that had supported the Biafran rebellion both materially and emotionally.[10] The government's interpretation of this support was that they opposed a unified Nigeria.[11] This, alongside the observed disparity between the Muslim north and the Christian south in terms of education and development, led in the 1970s to the government taking over all the mission schools. Subsequently, the participation of

the missions and various religious groups in education declined. Government at various levels initially showed an ability to manage these schools, but in more recent times, it has become obvious that the schools are not well managed, which has had other consequences.

Due to the active involvement of Christian missions in the southern part of Nigeria, more southerners were in a position to step into the sensitive posts vacated by the colonialists. This was resented by non-Christians and northerners. Hence, when the northerners gained political power, they were determined to reverse the situation, whether this was in the interest of the nation or not. In practice, in Williams' view, it brought about underdevelopment rather than development. As long as religious groups are satisfied, she concludes, they have a positive impact on the Nigerian body politic, but when other factors creep in, such as favouritism, partiality or bigotry, their impact is negative (Williams, 2002).

The educational disparity between the Muslim north and the Christian south needs further explanation, given that Islam is a religion that has traditionally encouraged knowledge-seeking and that the first of many education-related revelations to the prophet was to 'read'. Picthal (1981) points out that, in order to stress the importance of non-Islamic knowledge, the Prophet enjoined his followers to seek for knowledge as far as China. He also elevated the status of knowledge above that of religious worship: "an hour's contemplation and study of God's creation is better than a year of adoration" (Picthal, 1981). Moreover, he called on Muslims to acquire education regardless of their sex: for example, "to seek for knowledge is a religious duty for every male and female Muslim" (Picthal, 1981).

In practice, all the Muslim-dominated states in the north of Nigeria have relatively low school enrolment rates, especially for girls. Thus at the beginning of the 1990s, 82 and 81 per cent respectively of boys and girls aged 6-11 in the south-west zone were enrolled in primary school, compared to 32 per cent of boys and 24 per cent of girls in the north-west zone (FOS, 1992). More recent data from the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey confirm the disadvantaged position of girl-children in terms of education. In 2003, more girls than boys have never attended school in the north (72 per cent and 68 per cent of girls in the North-West and North-East zones respectively, compared to 50 per cent of boys in both zones) (NPC, 2003). In the South-East and South-West, in contrast, just 17 per cent and 23 per cent of girls had never attended school. The geographical and gender disparities do not change

at higher levels of the educational ladder, with just 1.5 per cent of girls in the North-West having more than secondary school education, compared with 7.1 per cent of girls in the South-West. In addition, the drop-out rate at Grade Six was higher in the North-West than the South-West (26.8 per cent and 3.4 per cent respectively). In the Muslim north, research in the 1980s showed that education beyond primary school was restricted to the daughters of the business and professional elites, and in almost all cases, courses and professions were chosen by the family, not the women themselves (Adamu, 2003a).

Despite various efforts by state governments in the north, such as free tuition and public enlightenment campaigns, these already low enrolment rates have been falling. Many reasons have been given by scholars to explain the trend. It is noted, for instance, that the practice of seclusion is a barrier to girls' education (Adamu, 2002; UNICEF/FGN, 2001). There is also a conflict of interest between secluded women and the schooling of their daughters, who are needed around the home to offer support. A secluded woman is reported to have noted in this respect that: "there is too much suffering in meeting the demands of educating girls, because if a girl is schooling one cannot engage in any serious occupation" (in Adamu, 2002, p. 6). Thus, lack of support from mothers, which is associated with poverty and the need to engage in income generating activities, helps to explain low female school enrolment (UNICEF/FGN, 2001). Another factor perceived to be related to Islam is girl child marriage. A high value is attached to marrying off girls at the very young age of between ten and thirteen years, an age at which they are still expected to be in school. It is reported that this practice is in decline in Sokoto City[12] , but it is still widely practised in the rural areas of the north. Parents are often reluctant to delay the marriage of their daughters until they have completed their education, in part because of a fear that, once an unmarried girl reaches puberty, she will not secure a husband and will become a social misfit. In addition, there is a moral dimension: it is thought that schools do not offer moral training (a misconception, according to UNICEF) and feared that a girl attending school is more likely to be exposed to immorality in or on her way to school (UNICEF/FGN, 2001).

A related explanation is the alleged incompatibility between Islamic values and western education, which is also cited as the reason for low enrolment by Muslims, particularly girls. In response, many states in the north have adopted an 'integration' policy. The idea is to harmonize the two educational traditions, with the aim of both providing sound knowledge and meeting parents' aspirations for the

religious and moral education of their children (UNICEF/FGN, 2001). The first *Nizamiyya* primary school was established in Sokoto in 1955, with a view to winning the confidence of parents (Muhammad, 1999). According to UNICEF/ FGN (2001), the integration policy has yielded fruits with respect to enrolment, retention and graduation to secondary and tertiary levels, especially in the rural areas. The *Nizamiyya* school system used to be limited to Sokoto City; however, the current administration of Alhaji Attahiru Bafarawa has expanded the scheme beyond the state capital to all the LGAs (Local Government Areas) in Sokoto state. However, today integration is viewed as a process not a programme. Consequently, Qur'anic nursery schools are being established in all the primary schools in the state. The intention is that children attending these schools, the majority of whom are girls, will gradually be integrated into mainstream formal education. Associated initiatives include integration of the syllabus and training of teachers (Adamu, 2006).

2.5 Social justice

One study was identified that broached one aspect of the issue of social justice as a developmental imperative. Focusing on Catholic social teaching, Arowojolu's (1996) study examined the developmental issues of a just wage and good working conditions. He examined, first, the extent to which Catholic social teaching on the issue of a just wage has, in practice, influenced individual church members in their dealings with their employees and second, evaluated labour relations involving Christians employers and employees. The study utilized both primary and secondary data, the former derived mainly from interviews, and also observation. The study population was Catholic families, organizations owned by members of the Catholic Church and Catholic church organizations. The reference point for the analysis was the re-statement by Pope Leo (*(Leo xiii, Rerum Novarum no. 63)* of Catholic social teaching on a just wage. The study revealed that, in spite of the teachings, most individual members of the church and the church organization itself do not operate on the basis of this doctrine and teaching. In-depth observation indicated that what employees were paid was less than a living wage. The study specifically found that church institutions themselves have, at times, been notorious for both paying low wages and arbitrary practices in labour matters, such as making workers who had given most of their lives to an institution redundant. The investigation revealed that most Catholic employers, whether church members or the church itself, do not have a formal employment agreement with their low income employees.

2.6 Ecology and the environment

According to Umeagudosu (1997, p.10), a human being is essentially a natural, biological creature who has a unique relation to nature. In his opinion, the attitudes of human beings to nature have religious roots, which can be a basis for ethical sensitivity. For example, Olayiwola (2003) examines the inter-relationship between religion and the environment in Nigeria from the perspective of the African Independent Churches (*Aladura*). The major objective of his study is to elucidate how these churches negotiate between the Yoruba world-view and that of Western Christianity with respect to recognition of nature and its implications for the well-being of their members. The study explores this through examining the ethos and worldview of members of the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC), Cherubim and Seraphim (C&S) and Celestial Church of Christ (CCC). Using both participant and non-participant observation, it was discovered that members of these churches make pilgrimages to natural sites, using mountains, hills and forests as prayer houses. The flat tops of such mountains are levelled and surfaced as sanctuaries, in a way similar to traditional shrines and groves. The analysis established that the preferred spiritual environment of the *Aladura* movement of Western Nigeria has been influenced by their appreciation of nature. The article also submits that what is supposedly ignored by Western Christianity has been incorporated into the worldview of the *Aladura* churches to make the Christian faith more relevant to their environment. The article concludes that *Aladura* Christianity has re-introduced an appreciation of nature into the faith tradition of its adherents. However, the study does not provide evidence that worship at natural sites has a broader impact on people's interaction with the environment on a day-to-day basis.

The place of ecology in traditional religion derives from its concept of life. According to Umeagudosu (1997), Africans have a cyclical view of life, embodying a belief in reincarnation. There is recognition of a dual mode of existence, namely visible and invisible worlds. God is regarded as the ultimate power and authority behind the world and all life. In addition, he suggests, Africans tend to 'sacralize' nature by imbuing it with God. It follows that nature has to be 'hedged around' to avoid pollution and misuse. However, it is noted that in practice God has also often been tribalized (Umeagudosu, 1997).

2.7 Economy and well-being

This review of studies of religious values and development concepts and practices in Nigeria would be incomplete without reference to studies that more directly address economic issues and issues of

well-being. For one thing, there is a need to understand the social and cultural construction of wellbeing in specific developing societies. The focus on wellbeing is an invitation to give greater significance to aspects of people's lives that are quite often overlooked in research on poverty reduction, despite these life dimensions being intimately and complexly tied up with the lived experience of poverty and its reproduction over time. As we demonstrate below, especially through a review of the literature on Islamic thought on the subject, the realm of religious values and practice is an example of one such area,

Adogame (1999) asserts that studies have revealed a manifold and complex interplay between religion and the economy. He maintains that, since religion is indisputably a social phenomenon, it affects the social structure of which the economy is a part, and sets out to examine the intricate connections between religion and the economy in Nigeria. The basic assumption of the paper is that religion is one of many factors influencing economic patterns. The first task attempted is to establish the ways in which religion forms a part of the economic system in Nigerian society.

The paper adopts two methodological and theoretical principles: first, the historical method and second, a sociology of religion approach, which explains religion as a human and cultural phenomenon in the life of a given people. A functionalist approach, which stresses the interdependence between each part of society and the whole, and the contributions of each part to the whole, is adopted. The author asserts that, although very often religion is legitimately seen as a semi-autonomous social field paralleling others, it is also, in a myriad of ways, part of the economic system of a society. The paper then examines the way religion has influenced economic relationships and assesses how and to what extent religion has impacted on the Nigerian economy and vice versa. The author provides examples of the economic roles that organized religion plays in Nigeria, such as an employer of labour; provider of services, especially in health and education; investor in real estate; and manager of properties. He then identifies ways in which, to varying degrees of intensity and significance, religion can affect economic attitudes and behaviour. First, he suggests that, as such personal and business virtues as honesty, fair play and honouring one's commitments are essential in economic life, to the extent that religion is successful in inculcating such virtues in adherents, it has an impact on the economy. Moreover, religion also on occasion stimulates consumption and therefore economic growth. Finally, religion may influence economic development by explicitly endorsing certain

economic or business activities. For example, various religious bodies have either supported or rejected certain stands of the government. Religious issues that have generated much controversy in religiously plural Nigeria include the country's membership of the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) and the adoption of a Shari'a legal system by some state governments. In addition, as a way of facilitating the growth of Islam in Nigeria, some external religious bodies and governments have injected or plan large investments in the Nigerian economy, for example Islamic banks are being proposed and initiated in some Shari'a-oriented states.

Adogame (1999) also examines some issues related to the impact of religion on wellbeing. He notes that organized religion has striven to alleviate some of Nigeria's socio-economic problems – though this is not their primary responsibility. Provision of educational facilities by religious bodies is a good example. Religious institutions also provide medical services to cater for children, nursing mothers, accident victims and others. Added to this, some religious organizations provide social services, such as boreholes, entertainment halls and recreational facilities. As mentioned earlier, these organizations provide employment for a great number of Nigerians - both skilled and unskilled. Furthermore, religious organizations are continuously involved in raising funds for the needy. Religious bodies play an important role in the absence of a social security system to cater for the aged, infirm and disabled.

2.7.1   Christian views on the economy

In his study on "Christian appraisal of economic stewardship in a capitalist society," Anyanwu (1996) synthesizes different interpretations of how Christians should live their economic lives in a capitalist society, spelling out exactly what is expected of them according to Christian teaching. The study is part of an appraisal of economic stewardship. Other efforts have recently been directed at understanding the construction of the 'religious economy' in West Africa. Based on specific cases, two of the studies, for instance, identify and evaluate various forms of a 'religious economy' (tithes, offerings, etc.), the governance superstructure within which this economy operates, and the consequences for church and society (Azubuike, 2005; Roberts, 2005).

From the premise that poverty is one of the most serious challenges facing the church in all parts of the world, and using critical historical materials to analyse the issues at stake, Oguntoyinbo-Atere (2005) articulates the interest in the material needs of the poor found in St Luke's Gospel as a basis

for critically evaluating the programmes designed by the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) to help those living in poverty. Notwithstanding the shortcomings identified, the study identifies a need for the churches to complement government efforts by initiating programmes for the development of human capital, giving priority to the provision of sound education, health care delivery, good water supplies, and rural and urban development. Authors detect a growing sentiment that the churches must not feign ignorance of or be indifferent to the needs of the poor and hungry within or outside the churches, leading to advocacy that they should support the state's social development programmes (Iroegbu, 1996; Akama, 2001). According to Roberts (2005), recognition of these needs has led to the rampant solicitation of 'giving' in many churches in Nigeria today.

On this issue, Solaru (2000) argues that the recent growth of Pentecostal churches, with their tithe doctrines, is responsible for the apparent worsening of poverty among many adherents of Pentecostalism. He is of the view that historically, the churches did not apply the tithe doctrine, nevertheless achieving much by sacrificing their time, energy and members' lives to educate or proselytize. Instead of following a path similar to the colonial and early post-colonial orthodox churches (Catholic, Anglican, Methodist and Baptist), the new churches, he suggests, have become 'adulterous' in search of money and wealth. However, rather than raising funds for the benefit of the poor and wider society, he alleges that the funds benefit newly emergent religious elites. Solaru advances a methodically argued case based on textual analysis of the scriptures, especially the Mosaic laws and their New Testament equivalent, the doctrine of grace, rather than on empirical evidence, providing possible hypotheses that can be tested rather than findings. It would appear that not much attention has been given to what Michael Taylor terms 'the theology of suffering' (Taylor, 2000) and its impact on Christian approaches to the economy.

2.7.2   *Islam and the economy*

Muslim thinking about economic development is to be found mainly within the boundaries of Islamic economics. Classic Islamic thought starts from two basic principles, namely, the Qur'anic prohibitions of interest (*riba*) and gambling (*maysar*), and builds up a complex of ideas and rules governing commerce and ownership of property that is characterized by a concern for fair trade and a dislike of the accumulation of excessive wealth. Historically, ways were found to avoid such rules. Nevertheless, modern Islamic economics has been founded on rethinking the implications of these

basic principles. Two general approaches to the subject can be identified, one rooted in the tradition of the discipline of Shari'a jurisprudence and the other in modern economics. Herman (2001) reports, with respect to the former, that the adoption of Shari'a in many states in northern Nigeria has forced thousands of non-Muslims to relocate because the code forbids certain business practices (such as the sale of alcohol). With their livelihoods threatened, non-Muslims have moved to the middle belt states and other parts of the country.

In Islam, poverty is measured both quantitatively and qualitatively. Qualitatively, poverty is the inability of human beings to sustain themselves and their absolute need for Allah (*al-fukara ilallah*). Poor people are classified by classical Islamic Jurists into *al-fuqurah* (those whose income is inadequate to satisfy immediate basic needs) and the *almasakin,* (those who cannot meet their needs for one year). Poverty is viewed not only as a social problem that pushes a person to indignity and crime, but also as a religious problem. As a religious problem, poverty is considered a test of man's allegiance to God, through the prism of charity and the quest for blessings accruing from charitable actions, *sadaqa*. Thus poverty is thought to afford an opportunity for a donor to fulfil a religious obligation, to give what is due, and to receive a corresponding spiritual reward (Adamu, 2005a). The Prophet of Islam linked poverty to unbelief. He said "poverty is like unbelief in God" - it makes one commit sin. The prophet also said that poverty is a curse from which Muslims are to seek refuge. Since poverty is viewed as a problem, Islam has prescribed an institution to redistribute wealth and alleviate it, the institution of *zakat*, meaning purity, implying purifying one's wealth, soul and ego against greediness and selfishness. It is compulsory for well-to-do Muslims to pay *zakat* and less fortunate members of society have a right to benefit from it. There are at least 27 passages in the Holy Qur'an enjoining believers to give *zakat*. It is one of the five compulsory acts of worship, occupying the same or an even higher status than prayer and fasting. It is also a transaction a Muslim makes with Allah, from which the profit is regarded as endless. In the Holy Qur'an Allah says "who shall lend Allah a loan for good reward? Surely, Allah will multiply it manifold" (2:245). Economically, *zakat* means redistribution of the surplus wealth of the few in favour of the many, in order to solve the problem of poverty and insecurity. From the foregoing, it is clear that *zakat*, in Nigeria, is not a substitute for tax - it is a personal, religious and communal obligation meant to mitigate the sufferings of the needy and poor members of society. This is demonstrated by those classified in the Holy Qur'an to be the recipients of *zakat*, who include poor and indebted Muslims and new converts to Islam.

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Little research is available on practice with respect to *zakat* in Nigeria. It appears to have been part of the Islamic pre-colonial order, for example under the Sokoto caliphate, but was abolished as a tax by the colonial government. Since then, Muslim welfare activities do not appear to have been centrally coordinated. Although provisions for the collection of *zakat* have been introduced alongside the introduction of Shari'a law in some northern states, and there is debate amongst Muslim scholars, little systematic information on its collection or impact seems to be available (Weiss, 2002). A case study in Yobe State notes that a Zakkah and Waqaf Committee was established under the Ministry of Religious Affairs in the early 2000s, although by 2004 it was operating in fewer than half the emirates in the state.[13] A case study in Damaturu, the capital (population 276,000), found that eligible beneficiaries are identified by village committees, but restricted to those with severe physical disabilities or orphans without support because of the limited funds collected. About 500 people received food or cash annually. In Tikau Emirate, ward heads collect *zakat* in cash and kind and the proceeds are distributed in public annually to a limited number of recipients, W*aqaf* donations are also collected and used for educational purposes, including the establishment of Islamic schools (Kolo, 2004).

2.7.3   Traditional religion and the economy

In an essay that examines development ideas common to adherents of the three main religions practised in Nigeria, Anyanwu (1996) opines that traditional religion, in particular, provides the religious and moral structures needed for the construction of a solid national edifice. Islam he regards as a religion that aspires to build an ideal society in which people are governed according to Islamic laws, while Christianity is a religion that aims to ensure that people are ruled according to the will of God. Traditional religion, however, in his view, holds firmly that after death man [sic] is rewarded according to his deeds while here on earth.

2.7.4   Women, religion and the economy

With respect to the values advanced by the dominant religions in Nigeria, one area that has attracted significant scholarly attention is the place of women in economic development, particularly Muslim women. Generally, Nigerian development planning refers to 'adult males', 'households' or 'families'. Women are included in such units but almost always defined as someone's daughter, wife, mother, or widow, rather than considered in their own right.

In the south of the country, women traditionally had economically important positions in inter-regional trade and markets, worked on farms as major labour providers, and had influential positions in traditional systems of local organization. The south, like the north, has traditionally been polygynous and still is for many households, including many of those that profess Christianity. However, women in the south, especially in the south-west, have been able to obtain Western-style education since the 19th Century, so they are able to occupy positions in the professions and even in politics. In addition, increasingly, especially in the south, some women are heads of households, something that is yet to be seriously considered in Nigeria's development planning. In the north, a few women are beginning to occupy jobs in the modern sector, in government offices, banks, social services, nursing, radio, television, and the professions. This trend is a direct result of increasing access to secondary and higher education by girls. By the 1980s, approximately one-fifth of university students were women, double the proportion in the 1970s.

Islam is very clear about the status of women as economically independent human beings, such that there is hardly any dispute about the economic rights of women among Islamic scholars and jurists. Thus, according to Muslim jurists, a woman has the right to own and have control over her wealth as well as enter into economic ventures independently of her husband. A husband's use or control of his wife's wealth or resources without her expressed consent is discouraged and considered legally invalid in Islam (Abdul al'Ati, 1982). Nevertheless, in the Muslim north, as noted above, research in the 1980s showed that education beyond primary school was restricted to the daughters of the business and professional elites, and in almost all cases, courses and professions were chosen by their families, not women themselves. Available literature on the participation of Muslim women in the economy can be divided into two. The first looks at the role of Muslim women within household economy and the second at their roles within the Nigerian economy more generally. Explanations in both are intricately linked to Islamic views of marital relations and the practice of seclusion.

Discussion on women's access to productive resources is closely related to Islamic views on marriage, which is considered to be a sacred and contractual relationship. Consequently, almost every discussion on marriage and relationships between husbands and wives is treated as contractual in nature (Imam, 1993; Adamu, 2004; Callaway and Creevey, 1994; Pittin, 1987). For instance, marital practices, like provision of maintenance and seclusion (or *purdah*), are perceived and analysed as part

of the contractual nature of marriage in Northern Nigeria. As part of the marriage contract, a man is obliged to provide things like food, clothes, shelter and medicine, while a woman is expected to be obedient and faithful. This makes family division of responsibilities clearly defined, with men providing for the material needs of the household and women secluded within the home. This division of responsibly is reinforced by the fact that it is considered socially appropriate for wives to seek divorce on the grounds of non-support by their husbands. In such instances, money spent on household provisions has to be repaid by a husband and failure to do so on his part can justify separation until he pays. For instance, data from Area Courts (which deal with civil cases) in Sokoto city from 1988 to 1998 show that out of divorce and non-divorce reasons why women go to the courts, 53 per cent were maintenance-related (Adamu, 2002).

Marital relationships based on the above reciprocal relationship, rather than joint action, affect the nature of ownership and allocation of resources between husbands and wives. Consequently, there is clear demarcation of a wife and husband's resources within the household. Pittin (1987) notes that there is no joint or collective household resource shared by husbands and wives. A wife cannot make a direct claim on the income or assets of her husband and, in the same way, a husband cannot make a claim on those of his wife (Callaway and Creevey, 1994). Hill (1972) observes that the personal relationship between a husband and his wife plays very little part in their economic transactions. Hill (1972, p. 29) writes that in Hausa society "cash is a positive good, and there is no reason why a personal relationship should create any inhibitions about giving or receiving it. A woman who makes groundnut oil for sale is in business on her own account and there is nothing immodest about buying groundnuts from her husband at the market price, or buying oil from herself with her 'housekeeping' money". According to Longhurst (1982, p.103), for "virtually all of the days (68 out of 71) worked by all women on their husband's farms, they received payment just as if they were hired labor". Similarly, Schildkrout (1983, p. 114-115) writes, "when women cook food for sale rather than for domestic consumption, or when they engage in other income-producing activities, all their income is their own. The entire activity is distinct from their obligation to prepare food for their families...Some women, in other words, as wives, buy food from themselves, as food-sellers, to feed their families". Furthermore, Adamu (1992) reports that many secluded women were paid allowances for managing the groundnut threshing machines of their husbands within the home. Muslim and non-Muslim scholars have celebrated the economic rights of Muslim women in Northern Nigeria. The 'superiority' of Islam in

recognizing the right of women to own and control economic resources is noted across the Islamic literature (Lemu, 1992, p. 44-45).

2.7.5   The impact of religion on the Nigerian economy

This section will consider the impact of organized religion on the Nigerian economy. Religious organizations have attempted to alleviate some of Nigeria's socio-economic problems – although this is generally not their primary responsibility. Provision of educational and health facilities by religious bodies are good examples. Added to this, some religious organizations have tried to provide social services, such as improved water supply and recreational facilities. As said earlier, these organizations provide employment for a great number of Nigerians – both skilled and unskilled.

Beyond their service delivery contribution, religious institutions contribute in no small measure to the gross national product (GNP) of the country, especially when cognizance is taken of the amount spent annually on all goods and services connected with them. One obvious economic role that organized religion plays in Nigeria and most other societies is as an employer, in particular providing livelihoods for religious professionals, their families and dependants. Thus, members of the clergy are in most cases employed and paid by their respective religious organizations. Also, church scribes, janitors and sextons, employees of religious publishing companies, clerical and secretarial staff of various denominations and ecumenical organizations, as well as social workers, are employed by religious organizations and welfare agencies.

Another way in which religious bodies can be considered to play a role in the nation's economy is as owners of property and facilities. The value of church and mosque property and other endowments in Nigeria is enormous. For example, many churches have renowned bookshops with headquarters in state capitals and branches spread all over the country e.g. the CSS, Baptist, and Methodist Bookshops. There are also Islamic bookshops, e.g. the Ahmadiyya Bookshop. The missionaries also built hospitals, clinics and maternity facilities in different parts of Nigeria, and religious organizations own schools, colleges and even public libraries in different parts of the country. In addition, almost all the religious bodies have buildings for worship or other purposes. Religious bodies also engage in a variety of activities and enterprises that are not purely religious. They are explicitly and implicitly involved in banking, insurance and publishing. They own and derive income from apartment and office

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buildings, factories, shopping centres, food canteens and so on. Religious organizations have unquantified but significant amounts invested in real estate and the management of property.

It could be said, therefore, that religion has affected economic attitudes and behaviour in Nigeria in a number of ways. Firstly, religion on occasion stimulates consumption and therefore economic growth. The Christmas and Easter seasons are very important in the life of Nigerian Christians, just as the Id el Kabir, Id el Fitri etc. are to Muslims. Festivals like the 'New Yam', masquerade, initiation, marriage and funeral ceremonies are held dear by adherents of traditional religion. Religious holidays encourage consumption through heavy feasting by adherents (Fadipe, 1970). Secondly, with their emphasis on work as a calling, religions regard work, however menial it may be, as a means of glorifying God. Religions thus exert moral persuasion on workers, encouraging them to do a good day's work and what the boss tells them supposedly positively affecting their productivity. In addition, it is suggested, a religion may influence the economy by explicitly endorsing certain economic or business activities. Furthermore, religious organizations are involved in raising funds for the needy.

Another important way in which religion has indirectly influenced the economy in Nigeria relates to the various methods religious organizations have employed to draw the attention of government officials and politicians to economic, social and political problems and to suggest solutions. Moreover, increasing social and economic demands lead men and women to seek supernatural aid in business, employment, politics and other spheres of human activity. Religious institutions may serve as 'consulting clinics' for businessmen, politicians, travellers, civil servants etc. (Adogame, 1999), who believe that prayers and rituals from prophets, herbalists and priests can enhance their economic status and assist their businesses to achieve economic prosperity (*The Guardian* Lagos, July 22, 1997, p. 13; *The Punch*, Lagos, January 12, 1997; *Vanguard*, Lagos, June 29, 1997).

Arguably religion has had some positive influences on the Nigerian economy. However, it has also had disastrous effects. Religion in Nigeria today has become a useful tool for manipulation for economic as well as political ends. It has also become a rallying symbol by which the underprivileged manifest their opposition to the political order and perceived socio-economic decadence. Religious disturbances, especially in the northern part of Nigeria by Muslim fundamentalists, are a case in point. The resurgence of the Shari'a question in some of the northern states, such as Zamfara, Kaduna,

Kano, and Katsina, has left in its wake unprecedented violence, wanton destruction of lives and property, and a smoke of uncertainty (*Newswatch*, March 6, 2000, *The Punch*, April 9, 2000, *The Punch*, April 8, 2000, *The Punch*, April 1, 2000). Furthermore, some religious leaders have intermittently attempted to influence activities on moral grounds, with economic impacts e.g. religious organizations have attempted to ban the sale of certain books regarded as 'immoral'; curtail the distribution of pornographic films and magazines; and legislate against the sale and consumption of liquor, especially by their adherents.

We referred above to Bako's (1992) argument that there is a dialectical correlation between, on the one hand, the economic crisis and political repression and, on the other, the mounting wave of religious intolerance and revolts in Nigeria. The writer identified the Nigerian economic crisis in 1977/78 as the starting point of the national religious crisis in the form of the Shari'a campaign. He further argues that, as the world recession deepened, the economic crisis and intolerant religious behaviour both grew. He distinguished between the pre-crisis era (1970-77), the initial period of crisis (1977-78), and a period of deepening crisis (1979-89). Substantiated by research conducted in Kano and Lagos, he linked the proliferation of new religious movements, churches, mosques, sects and denominations to the economic crisis. Thus, the main root of religious intolerance, he suggests, is located within the structures and relations of society which generate social injustice, economic exploitation, inequality, political oppression and domination. These problems, he contends, escalate in an ailing economy, because economic crisis further intensifies problems of class inequalities, poverty, intra-class conflicts, ethnic and religious oppression and rivalry, as is the case in Nigeria.

In a nutshell, religion can be viewed, among other things, as an economic institution, in the sense that religious organizations participate in the economy as buyers and sellers of goods and services, as employers and as property owners. Religion also influences the work and buying habits of believers. Thus religion, while not overtly interested in playing a significant role in the economy, is nevertheless a powerful force in Nigeria's economic development. Its impact is, however, mostly indirect and takes effect as a supportive, reinforcing ingredient in concert with others in a complex causal chain.

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3 Faiths, governance and development

The last two decades have witnessed the 'return of religion' to public life in both developed and developing countries. This resurgence was dramatically highlighted by the terrorist attack on the United States on September 11, 2001, but has a much broader resonance, especially in developing societies, in the rise of religious nationalism, ethno-religious conflicts, and religious movements against the post-colonial secular state, which seriously call into question the legitimacy of the state and, in consequence, pose a basic challenge for governance and development. These developments underline the clear need for an assessment of the relationship between faiths and organized religions and contemporary governance and development.

Studies of the relationships between faith communities and governance and development issues in Nigeria have focused on the involvement or otherwise of religious groups in politics and the implications for political stability, the associated politicization of religion and religious movements, issues of leadership both within and outside the church, participation, and the role of women. Only more recently has direct attention been focused on governance (Azubuike, 2005; Roberts, 2005). This section of the review will be subdivided into six. First, some work which examines general relationships between religion and politics in Nigeria will be summarized. In Section 3.2 the specific issues of citizenship and religious freedom will be considered, followed by issues of leadership and governance (Section 3.3), political participation (Section 3.4), women, religion and development (3.5) and religious conflict and inter-faith dialogue (3.6).

3.1 Religion and politics

The issue of religion and politics has been a matter of utmost concern in Nigeria since it attained political independence in 1960, and in fact even before then (Kastfelt, 1994; 2003). Herman (2001) observes that the relationship between religion and politics is not unidirectional; rather in Nigeria's history, religion and politics have long been complexly interrelated, with each greatly affecting the other.

Osaghae and Suberu (2004) report that, through umbrella bodies such as the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), the Pentecostal Federation of Nigeria (PFN) and the Catholic Bishops Conference, churches have played important roles as an integral part of civil society in anti-military struggles and democratization. The Catholic Church, which has wings of the Justice and Development Commission all over the country, in addition to the politically active Catholic Bishops Conference, has been very

active in this regard. However, arguably the politicization of Christianity has largely been a reaction to 'moves' made by Muslims and interventions by the Nigerian state in the arena of religion.

Pat Williams' (1992) analysis of the impact of religion on Nigeria's development, referred to earlier, highlights the politico-religious involvement of religious groups, with particular emphasis on the functional as well as the dysfunctional aspects of this interaction. This is done within a theoretical framework that embraces power, interest groups and pluralism. In her discussion of the role of religion in the democratization process in Nigeria, based on theoretical and descriptive analysis of library materials, Marshall (1993) portrays religions as the ideological machines of today's societies, which may assume the function of being vanguards of public order and platforms for political conscience. However, for Marshall, "Churches are expected to take a role similar to that of human rights groups and little attention is paid to the huge body of believers in popular forms of Christian belief and practice" (pp. 240). Marshall's thesis is that democracy can and does exist outside the West because democracy is a universal value. However, "its institutionalization elsewhere requires that we focus on the representations, narratives, [and] symbolic forms of the politically articulate outside the narrow elite's sphere of institutional politics and state rhetoric. Democracy does not come into being 'from the top,' nor can it be analyzed in that way" (pp. 242-243). Religion, she believes, should be at the forefront of promoting and protecting the principles of democracy in Nigeria, helping to make democratic principles better understood and practised according to the culture of the people.

Islam has played a complex role in the evolution of Nigerian societies over a considerable period. The British policy of indirect rule facilitated the further spread and consolidation of Islamic power in Nigeria during the colonial era. This Islamic power has continued to spread. A field of growing interest in matters of the relationship between faith, politics and development is the phenomenon of 'political Islam'. Attempts to create Islamic states throughout the Muslim world have been characterized as 'political Islam' and distinguished from fundamentalist movements that seek the implementation of Shari'a law by a secular state (Roy, 1994). In Nigeria, as well as the fact that Islam is a central component in the politics of Nigeria, both in the states that have adopted Shari'a law and more widely, some recent riots and reactions to Shari'a adultery cases have highlighted the tension which exists between Christians and Muslims (Loimeier, 1997; Nyang, 2000).

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Islam has played a complex role in the evolution of Nigerian societies over a considerable period. The British policy of indirect rule facilitated the further spread and consolidation of Islamic power in Nigeria during the colonial era. This Islamic power continued to spread after the colonial era up till now. Because of religion and/or disappointment with the Nigerian state, the majority of Muslims in the North have, whenever there is a review of the constitution, demanded the restoration of Shari'a. Shari'a is viewed as a way out of corruption, poverty, moral decay, crimes and other vices, as a recent report shows (Singer, 2001). There is little doubt that the restoration of Shari'a in several states was a response to popular demand from the masses, based on a belief that Shari'a could be a cure for the insecurity, poverty and injustice that characterize people's experiences. Last (2000), for example, describes the astonishment of the Sokoto elite at the popular acclaim for the introduction of the Shari'a penal code by the Zamfara State Government in 1999. He argues that the public demand for the introduction of Shari'a penal codes throughout northern Nigeria marked a turning point: "…for the first time, Nigeria's political leadership found itself not leading, but being led by, public opinion" (Last, 2000).

Three years into its implementation, however, some have started having doubts about the states' sincerity in the implementation process, because the Shari'a states are felt to have little to show in terms of improved governance. Instead, it is business as usual, with corruption, squandering of public funds and lack of viable policies and programmes.

Important aspects of the implementation of Shari'a law relate to its class, political and gender dimensions. Kukah (1993) argues that the national debates on how Shari'a courts should be integrated with the national/federal structures is an important arena of political competition, one that is dominated by the political and economic interests of the elite. In practice, Shari'a is turning out to have different implications for the poor and the wealthy. Most of those people convicted and sentenced are poor people from the rural areas. For example, the hand amputation of a Mr Jangebe for stealing a cow was done with no regard to the compassion demanded of a leader under Islamic law. In a society where poverty is widespread, amputation following conviction is not justified under many Islamic rulings. Under the Shari'a, a rich person is compelled to give a portion of his/her wealth to the poor, but this requirement is not enforced. For instance, two years after its inauguration in Sokoto state, the Zakkah and Waqaf Committee was yet to receive any contribution beyond what the governor gave during the inauguration ceremony (Adamu, 2003b). Instead, the rich continue to enjoy government patronage

through inflated contracts, kickbacks and 'fronts' (government officials using family and friends to obtain government contracts), as do so-called pen thieves, who are officials of the government.

In addition to these class dimensions, Shari'a implementation has resulted in the marginalization and victimization of minority religious groups and, because of the association of Islam with the Hausa/ Fulani, other ethnic groups. Relying on in-depth interviews, library and archival documents, Kukah (1993) highlights the hegemony of the Hausa/Fulani that has been reinforced by Islam in both northern Nigeria and Nigeria as a whole. Islam, he suggests, has become a determining factor for political inclusion and control. Kukah concludes that the consolidation of Islam in northern Nigeria has led to the marginalization of non-Muslim groups, leading to a tense relationship between the dominant Muslim Hausa and minority groups, which manifests itself in an ethno-religious crisis in that region.

There is also a strong gender dimension in the implementation of Shari'a. Most of the issues picked out are those that concern women, such as (i) restrictions on their mobility; (ii) state government imposition of *hijab*; (iii) exclusion of women from decision-making positions or restricting them to state women's ministries; and (iv) intensified pressure on women, but not men, to marry. In a few states, it is reported that the government has asked unmarried women civil servants to marry or quit government employment (Adamu, 2003a). The gender dimension of the implementation of Shari'a is evident in the case of Bariya, a teenage single mother who was given 100 lashes for fornication because she became pregnant. Three issues emerged out of this case: (i) pregnancy is taken as evidence of fornication, without consideration to the circumstance of rape; (ii) in a society where, because of poverty, prostitution is common and therefore, girls are often in contact with mature men who exploit the girls' abject poverty and immaturity to lure them into sex, it is unjust to punish such immature and deprived girls, ignoring the role of the men; and, related to the above, (iii) that by taking pregnancy as evidence of fornication, it is only women who can be convicted .

Despite the class, ethno-religious and gender biases in the implementation of Shari'a, there are some positive developments in these states. The law has the potential to limit the excessive drinking of alcohol, particularly by men, with its adverse consequences for domestic violence and family incomes (Singer, 2001). Furthermore, women are demanding a right to be educated and challenging the states to introduce compulsory education for women, as required under the Shari'a (DFID, 2004). Equally

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important is that the *Alkalis* (Islamic judges), who judge on civil matters such as marriage, divorce, child custody and inheritance, used to operate with little control from the government and in the process exploit women. The recent reform in the legal system may provide opportunities for some supervision of the courts, since there is now a right of appeal (Lawan, 2004).

It is evident that the increasing popularity of Islamic movements has provided their leaders with the authority to enter the political arena and opportunities for wealthy patrons to achieve Islamic legitimacy by their association with different movements. Loimeier (1997) describes how Islamic movements facilitated an expansion of the elite in the 1970s: "Today, social and political influence is no longer a prerogative of the aristocracy, but is also exercised by an oligarchy of religious scholars, traders and aristocrats". Loimeier (1997) attributes considerable social change to the competition between different Islamic movements for the patronage of the masses. Both Loimeier (1997) and Last (2000) identify a process of social change characterized by an expansion in Islamic education and a movement away from traditional customs towards the practice of a purer Islam. Despite this expansion, there are growing numbers of young men who the state has been unable to educate and/or employ, whose sisters are married to their fathers' patrons and who, like their brothers across the Islamic world, have little prospect of social mobility. Ironically, while failures in the provision of services, in particular state education, contribute to the dismal prospects of the young, it is young unskilled men who provide many of the services that are available to the poor in northern Nigeria, e.g. water sellers, black market petrol sellers, or motorbike taxi drivers. Trade associations of these workers have developed independently of government and/or emirate and religious organizations and may represent a potential force in advocating for more pro-poor governance. Nevertheless, the large numbers of unemployed young men in Nigeria's Muslim-dominated cities are an increasing cause of concern to the elite in the northern part of the country. Despite this threat or possibly because of it, politicians frequently seek to make political capital from anti-neighbour sentiment stirred up by groups of young men. Their ability to do this reflects the persistence of vertical patron-client networks, which emphasize religious and/or ethnic ties between a patron and his clients while simultaneously inhibiting the development of common interests between dispossessed youths. Through their increasing politicization and mass mobilization efforts, Islamic movements have succeeded in engaging more of the poor in the political process. They have not yet, however, empowered the poor to promote their own interests.

3.2 Citizenship and religious freedom

The current (1999) *Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria* provides for freedom of religion. This provision recognizes the freedom to change one's religion or belief, and to manifest and propagate one's religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance. The constitution also prohibits the government from officially adopting a state religion, but provides that State governments may elect to use Islamic (Shari'a) customary law and courts. According to Section 10: "The Government of the Federation or of a State shall not adopt any religion as state religion". According to Kilani (1998), this section implies that Nigeria is a multi-religious not a secular state, because the same constitution proclaimed the country a 'Sovereign Nation under God' (Nigeria, 1999).

The Federal Government generally respects freedom of religion, but there are instances of infraction for security and public safety reasons. Some state governments also, at times, restrict religious freedoms in practice. Some Christians allege that, with their introduction of the Shari'a and continued use of state resources to construct mosques and sponsor pilgrimages to Mecca (*Hajj*), some northern states have adopted Islam as the state religion. However some states, particularly in the south, also use state resources to sponsor pilgrimages to Jerusalem. States tend to favour the majority faith in their domain. The Nigerian government remains a member of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and sends representatives to its annual meetings, despite concerns by Christian groups that this violates the secularity of the Nigerian state (US State Department, 2003). Both the federal and state governments are involved in religious matters. For example, they regulate mandatory religious instruction in public schools; religious groups, Christian and Muslim alike, that are planning to build new churches or mosques are required to register with the Corporate Affairs Commission; and organizers of outdoor religious functions are required to apply for permits, though this is not always strictly enforced, the clear exception being in times of religious violence in parts of the country (US State Department, 2003).

The multiplicity of faiths and ethnicities, together with what some regard as ambiguities in the provisions of the 1999 constitution (which are too numerous to mention here) have continued to pose significant challenges with respect to Nigerian citizenship. Blanco-Manicilla (2003) addresses the significance of religion in citizenship, underlining the issue of identity in contemporary theories on citizenship, in contrast to traditional theories that, he contends, are not suitable for understanding

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citizenship in the context of developing countries. He shows why religion is a key factor in determining identity, defining politics and understanding conceptions of citizenship. Focusing on Kaduna State, he uses comparative analysis of Christian and Muslim perspectives to show the extent to which religion influences citizenship issues. The study demonstrates that respondents express their identity in terms of different cultural factors, such as religion, language and ethnicity. Both Muslims and Christians believe that it is through the practice of their religious beliefs that they can impact on social change, but significant differences between their perceptions of specific issues also emerged, showing how religion influences people's understanding of their rights and how to choose their leaders. The differences in attitude as a result of religion are, Blanco-Manicilla (2003) concludes, making it more difficult to build a strong and united Nigeria.

3.3 From leadership to governance

Reference has already been made to the paper by Igboin (2004), which examines the extent to which Christian ethics and values influence the Christian and secular leadership in contemporary Nigerian society, highlighting discrepancies between what Christian ethics and values prescribe and prevailing leadership styles in the Christian and secular communities. Igboin opines that leadership in Nigerian society has been characterized by hypocrisy, materialism and dictatorial tendencies that, in his view, are unchristian. He alleges that, far from the Bible and Christian religious teachings, which should be the only basis of Christian responses to leadership and governance, abuse of power and corruption persist in every part of the fabric of the society, including the church. He suggests that the leadership has become increasingly irresponsible and unresponsive to the people, resulting in a near total disregard for Christian moral virtues, even in positions held by professing Christians. According to the author, this situation is a result of the pursuit of individualist values in modern times, which has ignited much conflict in Nigerian society. Other explanations include his belief that people regard leadership positions as 'comfort zones', the prevalence of corruption, and the abuse of power, all of which are pervasive in both the church and society, although because he does not undertake any empirical investigation, these allegations remain hypotheses. Nevertheless, it is Igboin's belief that the assimilation of Christian ethics and eventual exemplary behaviour of Christians in leadership positions could be a catalyst for positive development in Nigerian society.

Abioje (2004) also examines the influence of Christian leaders in Nigeria. This paper primarily examines the potential for Christian leadership to become a factor in social, cultural and value change in Nigerian society. The author's basic assumption is that Christianity can engender the progressive attitudes, dispositions and virtues that he regards as necessary for transforming Nigeria into an egalitarian society in which propriety, justice and fraternity reign. He conducted a textual analysis of the Old Testament and the teachings of Jesus Christ on the subject, as a basis for an analysis of leadership in the church and its influence on contemporary Nigerian society. Evaluating contemporary church leadership from the benchmark of the gospel and teachings of Jesus Christ, the study argues that many Christian leaders do not have a positive image and influence in Nigeria.

If this finding appears to contradict the World Values Survey, which shows that religious leaders enjoy greater trust and respect than political leaders, it is firstly because Abioje's study sets a very high methodological benchmark for its evaluation, and secondly, because, compared to secular leaders, religious leaders are considered to perform better with respect to some critical facets of governance such as accountability and transparency. Abioje (2004) is thus able to conclude that, although not every Christian leader in Nigeria is insensitive to the debilitating level of corruption in Nigerian public and private offices, very few show concern for and genuine commitment to fighting corruption. In reality, he concludes, most leaders show a disposition towards greed, selfishness and corruption which, he further alleges, they impart to their followers in the church and society. In a discussion paper on the subject, Odumuyiwa (2004) introduces a dialectical perspective to the discourse on leadership by considering leaders and followers from the perspective of different religions. While this is welcome, his discussion is intuitive and impressionistic rather than evidence-based.

The weakness of a leadership approach to understanding political processes has encouraged a move towards a governance approach (Alamu, 2005; Azubuike, 2005; Oke, 2005; Roberts, 2005). Alamu (2005) looks at God and governance by exploring what he regards as "the ethical synthesis of politico-Christian governance". He conducts a 'terse' appraisal of Christian governance, with a view to suggesting ways of resolving the problems of governance in the contemporary Nigerian political situation. The author's concept of governance refers to the manner in which power is exercised in the management of economic and social development. Alamu (2005) conceives governance from a Christian perspective as a God-given mandate, although he maintains that governance arrangements

in Nigeria are particularly poorly conceived, with stringent and dehumanizing rules undermining the inviolable right of the *civitas*.

Using the case of the Chapel of the Resurrection, University of Ibadan, Roberts (2005) focuses on economic governance. He identifies and evaluates the modalities for raising, keeping and spending money operative in a Nigerian church, the governance superstructure within which this religious economy operates and the consequences for church and society. Specifically, he investigates the logic of 'giving' and the problems associated with it. From content analysis of church records, in-depth interviews with church leaders and focus group discussions with lay members, the study observes that the Chapel is an 'old' church without branches, having a corporate governance structure rather than a single 'leader' and with marked prominence given to 'giving' as an essential modality for raising and spending economic resources, locally and internationally. 'Giving', the study concludes, is more or less institutionalized in the psyche of the members, so that only occasional prompting is needed from the clergy to maintain a steady stream of income, especially through tithing and other forms of collection. The governance of the Chapel is, he suggests, shaped by the social dominance of literate and educated members. Thus its religious economy is subject to strong pressures for accountability and equity from the highly educated membership. Such pressures notwithstanding, and in spite of elaborate procedures for political and economic resource governance, significant weaknesses and infractions remain. Partly this is because, until recently, Chapel resources were 'unearned' in an economic sense because, rather than resulting from productive investment, they were the result of righteous acts of *noblesse oblige*. One result, Roberts suggests, is that the overall pattern of resource flows has led to the emergence of gainers and losers. In turn, the prevailing problems associated with soliciting, giving and managing the economic resources of the church have impacted on individual and group attitudes, with implications both for the church and for the wider society.

3.4   Political participation

In the past, studies on Christianity and governance or politics rarely considered 'participation', meaning the democratic imperative to vote (*cf.* Azubuike, 2005). More often than not, Azubuike suggests, conceived from the reference point of Christians in Nigeria, participation was seen as more or less tantamount to influence peddling in matters of state policy. This, he suggests, has changed in recent times.

Akama (1998b) addresses what he regards as the 'fundamental issue' of the need for active Christian participation in politics and the democratic process in contemporary Nigeria for the purpose of national survival and development. Among other things, his exposition shows that politics as played in contemporary Nigeria is fraught with 'dangers' that have the potential effects of scaring away responsible and devout Christians, who would not like to be 'stained' by worldly affairs. Nevertheless, he concludes by arguing that the peculiar socio-economic and political situation in Nigeria today dictates the need for Christians to be very much aware of and feel concerned for the politics of the Nigerian nation. The logic is that by their active participation in the democratic process, Christians would have the opportunity to fight the vices of disunity, instability, violence and bloodshed. He therefore contends that Christians should not shun politics, since Nigeria's well-being lies in the hands of God. He argues that there is a need to bring religion into politics as a catalyst for national development.

In respect of a gender perspective on religion, participation and development, the Islamic literature is quite rich. Nevertheless, in particular in Hausa society, like other Muslim societies, women are segregated. Consequently, women are significantly under-represented in the public sphere. The literature on the political participation of Muslim women in Northern Nigeria reflects the diverse views of Muslim scholars on this issue, with each position citing Islamic sources to support its point of view. The argument of some scholars is that if Allah has asked men to look after the affairs of women, then women are not needed in the political arena. Related to this are the opinions of some scholars that the place of women is in the home and that men are to oversee the affairs of women, hence participation by the latter in partisan politics is not needed. Those scholars who are against women's participation in politics and their election into positions of leadership base their argument on a hadith of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) that reads "a nation which makes a woman to run its affairs never prospers". Another argument put forward is that during the lifetime of the prophet, no woman was ever appointed to a leadership position as a governor.

However, scholars who see little or nothing wrong with women's involvement in partisan politics and leadership argue that there is no single verse in the holy Qur'an that prohibits women's participation in politics. If anything, as Bugaje (1997) argues, there are many verses that encourage them to participate. The whole essence of politics in Islam is enjoining what is good and forbidding what is bad

in society and in several verses in the holy Qur'an, God has explicitly given such a responsibility to both men and women.[14] For these scholars, there is no better means for Muslim women to fulfil this responsibility at societal level than by participation in politics and governance. On the issue of men looking after the affairs of women (*qawwam*), the Muslim Brotherhood[15] (1995, pp. 85-86) states that "this should not be understood as an absolute and general attitude in all things and for all men over women....the verse determines that a directing role is confined to the family and to matters only concerning the husband and wife relationship". The organization or movement goes on to say that the *qawwam* role "is not one of repression, hegemony or tyranny, but one of kindness, love and gentleness".

The proponents of this view find the hadith quoted by opponents wanting, as it fails to pass the established Islamic tradition of scholarly scrutiny. In her examination of the hadith, Mernissi (1991) uses the two criteria for accepting or rejecting a hadith in Islam, that is, science or knowledge in society and the circumstance of the narration. She finds the character of the narrator wanting and notes that the hadith was not narrated until after the battle of Camel, the battle in which Aisha, the wife of prophet Muhammad, led a battle against the fourth companion of the prophet, Caliphate Ali. She also suggested that the motive behind the hadith is in question, considering the political situation at the time. That is, the narration may have been done to serve certain political interests. Furthermore, some scholars have faulted the hadith on the ground that it runs counter to the story of queen Bilqis in the Qur'an (see Bugaje, 1997). Moreover, they note that the prophet of Islam has said that, if any of his sayings contradicts the Qur'an, then it should be rejected. It appears, therefore, that the hadith has questionable status. Moreover, it refers to headship, not other aspects of partisan politics, like standing for election to a legislative body. On the argument about lack of evidence for women's leadership role as a governor, proponents argue that, while this is true, in the lifetime of the Prophet there were occasions when women played an important role in political decision-making and other leadership roles. Those scholars who place no restriction on the rights of women to stand for election argue that, since in Islam the criterion for leadership and holding a position is not sex but the qualities of an individual, there is nothing to stop a society from utilizing such qualities regardless of a person's sex. According to Bugaje (1997, p. 7), the wisdom of the silence of the Qur'an and hadith on the issue is clear: "Human society is ever developing and circumstances are ever changing and by not categorically excluding women, the Muslim community is neither denied whatever talent Allah may have placed in certain women nor bogged down to only what the men can offer".

In between the above opposite views are scholars who take a middle course. They contend that women should be allowed to engage in politics but with some restrictions, arguing that although Islam does not exclude women from politics, it does place some restrictions on their participation. Most of the supporters of this view see nothing wrong in women being elected into, for example, councils, or assemblies at either state or national level, but they believe that women should not be allowed to run for chairmanships, governorships or the office of president. In short, women should not run for the highest leadership posts. Others raise the issue of age, that is, they think that a woman who has reached the menopause and therefore has no childbearing responsibilities should face no inhibition in her quest for a political position.

The foregoing indicates that there is no single 'Islamic' position on the question of Muslim women's election to leadership positions. The silence of the holy Qur'an over the issue and the diverse opinions among Muslim scholars has enabled Muslim women to question the opposition to women's leadership in Muslim societies. Ahmed (1992), Al-Hibri (1982) and Mernissi (1987, 1991) argue that the Islamic stance on women's issues is both clouded by local traditions and male biases, and influenced by certain political and economic forces in Muslim societies. Drawing from the history of different Muslim societies, they are able to puncture the myth that there is one single Islamic position on women's issues, including leadership. According to Ahmed (1992) and Imam (1993), what is 'Islamic' is not only an issue of continually contested meanings and power relations, but also reflects the dominant Islamic discourse of the time.

From the above, it is evident that the issue of who has power and authority in the interpretation of the holy Qur'an and other Islamic sources and whose interpretation is considered valid and applied are crucial in understanding the 'Islamic' position on many gender issues. The fact that the debate is at the ideological level and the vast majority of Muslim women lack detailed knowledge of Islam means that most women cannot participate. Even where they have the benefit of Islamic knowledge, Bugaje (1997, p. 9) argues, "the kind of education they received, far from developing a critical faculty, tended to inculcate meekness and render them prisoners to interpretations which at the end of the day tend to serve the interest of their male teachers more than the collective interest of the ummah". The few women scholars who defy the hegemony of men over Islamic scholarship are vulnerable to being undermined - the case of a female Islamic preacher who was denied a licence to preach in Kebbi

State because she is a woman and her place is considered to be in the home readily comes to mind (Adamu, 2003c).

3.5   Women, religion and development

It is already evident from much of the above review that one development concept that has attracted wide attention in the faith literature is gender or, more usually, women (Callaway, 1987; Okunnu, 2001; Werthmann, n.d.). Many studies highlight the potential role women might play in the regeneration of society, but also the constraints on this role imposed by the values and practices of the various religions, particularly Islam (Tomalin, 2005).

Considering Christianity first, Umeagudosu (1997, p. 10) focuses on the place of women in God's commonwealth. With reference to the Holy Bible as the authority and core of Christian theology, the author contends that the ideas of male domination and the superiority of man over woman have been derived from this source. However, she also considers that there has been a whole gamut of misconceptions of womanhood in the churches and society, which has given rise to ambivalent attitudes towards women, reducing them to the level of 'weaker sex', second class citizens and a commodity that can be used anyhow. This, according to her, is because in many societies, including both Christian and Muslim societies, the earth is still 'sacralized', meaning that nature, instead of revealing God, is regarded as divine. She submits that it is the 'sacralization' of the earth that has given rise to a multitude of taboos, many of them inimical to women's wellbeing. For her, the problem then becomes how to desacralize the earth and strip it of many of its arbitrary, unpredictable and doubtless terrifying aspects. Her paper contains a critique of the Genesis account of creation and also analyses how some African conceptualizations of women have defended women's cause and projected them as active human beings.

With the roles of a priest and bishop in mind, Akama (1998d) critically reviews the 'heated debate' among Christians during the last two decades or so on the issue of whether women should or should not be ordained or consecrated into the church ministry. Based on textual analysis of scriptures, the review dwells on 'two schools of thought' – one approving the idea and the other disapproving. In exhorting the organizers and supporters of the Women Liberation Movement (WLM) and the Movement for the Ordination of Women (MOW), which have constituted themselves into pressure

groups, to "address themselves to more meaningful issues", Akama (1998d, p. 95) clearly takes sides with those who argue against the ordination and consecration of women. However, his arguments are not domesticated to reflect Nigerian circumstances, being chiefly based on views expressed in such sources as The Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith's 1997 *Declaration on the Ordination of Women to Ministerial Priesthood* and the Lambeth Conference's 1968 declaration on the issue.

The Christian churches also take positions on issues related to women's reproductive health, especially abortion. According to Aderibigbe (2006), on the only occasion in recent decades that the Health Minister advanced a medical case for abortion, the Catholic Bishops Conference strongly opposed him. Like other clerics who took the same position, their opposition was premised on interpretations of the religious teaching on abortion. Akama (1998e) reports that the church instructs people on three major points concerning abortion, namely that the unborn foetus is human at all stages, that it has a right to life, and that killing it is murder in the biblical sense. The author also contends that it is the general view of Christians that it will be difficult to exercise moral leadership in contemporary Nigeria if the country legalizes abortion. According to Aderibigbe (2006, p. 59), it is such views that have contributed to the failure by successive governments to develop a realistic policy on abortion.

The literature on Muslim women and development, in particular how Islamic values and beliefs impact on Muslim women's participation in the development process in Northern Nigeria, is multifaceted. This review is presented in two stages. The first presents a brief summary of the position of Islam on the issue, in order to provide a background for examining practice. We are aware of the fact that there is no single Islamic position on some issues related to women: issues are generally contested and therefore positions are evolving. The second stage presents and analyses literature on the effect of Islam on women's participation in development. Islam has always played an important role in the lives of women in Northern Nigeria. Through trade, Islam reached the area first during the Kanemi Borno Empire in the 7th century (Alkali, 1993) and later in Hausa society in the 11th century (Imam, 1991). Over the centuries, the religion was incorporated into the culture of many societies, in particular the Hausa, Fulani, Kanuri and Nupe, so that by the 19th century it had become part of the cultural identity of all these people. The *jihad* movement of the early 19th century in Northern Nigeria, which culminated in the establishment of an Islamic state, the Sokoto caliphate, had further far-reaching impacts on some

of the above mentioned people and societies, especially because the *jihad* was not aimed at conversion of non-Muslims, but at 'purifying' Islam in the face of its mixture with Hausa culture. Overall, the long-term impact of Islam on the people and their societies has been deep and widespread, to the extent that it is difficult to separate Islamic culture from the indigenous cultures of those people affected.

One of the major impacts of the *Jihad* was on the issue of 'women', whose role and position became an area of contest and concern among the *Jihadists*. Shehu Uthman Dan Fodio, the *Jihad* leader, wrote a lot about the position of women in pre-*Jihad* Hausa society and challenged the dominance men had over women (Kani, 1988). The impact of the *Jihad* at both individual and societal levels has remained substantial. At the level of the individual Muslim woman, Islam is regarded as not just a religion to which a woman claims allegiance through performing rituals. It is, instead, expected to be a total way of life, with women aspiring to conduct their lives according to its teachings. The impact of Islam on women with respect to development issues remains relevant, not only because of the Islamization process of the 1970s and 1980s, but also because of the contemporary issue of Shari'a implementation in the north (Adamu, 2005a).

The analysis and debates focus on issues of education and economic activity, family law and health, each of which will be considered in turn. Education and participation in income generating activities has been considered at the individual level, in terms of perceptions of the desirability of education for women (see also above) and the social outcomes of people's attitudes and practices. Werthmann (n.d.), in field research amongst Muslim women in Northern Nigeria, examines the influence of Islam on women's education and employment. The paper shows that in this predominantly Muslim region, women base their claims to education and employment on religious principles. Viewed through the prisms of Western thought, Islam appears to be a patriarchal, authoritarian system, which is endured by women but in which they have no say. This, she suggests, ignores the possibility that Muslim women may identify with their religion and regard it as being in line with their own ideas on how to live. The reality, however, remains that, at the start of the 21st century, a married woman in Kano is generally expected to remain in her husband's house and to leave only with his explicit permission. Callaway's (1987) research in northern Nigeria also sees Islam as a rigid set of rules and regulations controlling every aspect of women's lives. Nevertheless, she considers that the search for Western education and political commitment are two areas in which gradual change might be expected.

From the results of interviews with samples of educated and non-educated women, Werthmann (n.d.) observes that there is an on-going debate on how education and work can best be balanced with marriage and motherhood. To her, in this respect, the situation of Muslim women in northern Nigeria is not that different from non-Muslims. Her findings show that even educated Muslim women in the north believe that women should not work to earn their own living. Her respondents all stressed that it is the duty of a husband to provide for his wife. However, both educated and non-educated groups agreed that it is not men's obligation to make their entire incomes available to their families. Instead they agreed that, according to Islamic law, husbands are responsible for feeding, clothing and accommodating their wives and children. Neglect of these obligations is seen as a legitimate reason for divorce. Werthmann concludes that, in a society where religion pervades every aspect of life and religious conflict is frequent and violent, women need to develop specific strategies to make religious and cultural norms compatible with their individual needs.

In her study of the role of Islam and western education in Sokoto, Knipp (1987) also provides us with an insight into the effect and relevance of Islam for women. She classified Muslim women in Sokoto into three categories: non-western-educated women, young women, and professional women, most of whom she quotes copiously on the issue of religion as a way of life. For any development agenda related to Muslim women to succeed, she concludes, it must be compatible with (egalitarian interpretations of) Islamic beliefs and values.

At the level of society, the impact of Islam is often significant. For example, Islam was used to justify the exclusion of women from western education in the northern region of Nigeria during colonial rule. Consequently, Muslim women were left far behind their Christian sisters in terms of literacy and education. This trend continues, because many people still view western education as an instrument of westernization that is incompatible with Islamic values. Politically, women in the south, who gained the right to vote in 1952, were also ahead of northern Nigerian women, who did not have the vote prior to 1978 on the grounds that it was not permitted in Islam.

At the legal level (see also above), *Shari'a* courts that practise Islamic personal law remain the most relevant legal system in Northern Nigeria and are widely utilized, despite the option of using civil courts. Matters concerning women in their role as wives and mothers - including inheritance,

marriage, divorce, and child custody - are therefore commonly conducted or resolved within the Islamic rather than the parallel Nigerian civil legal system. While there are no legal provisions barring women or other groups from testifying in the civil courts, or giving their testimony less weight, in Shari'a courts the testimony of women and non-Muslims is usually accorded less weight. For example, two women must testify to provide testimony that may be accepted as being equal to the testimony of one man (US State Department, 2003).

The situation of women in relation to health has received significant attention, especially in the development literature. In comparison to her sisters in the south, the health situation of Muslim women in the north is less impressive. Muslim women are reported (Ejembi, 1997; Kisseka et al, 1992; UNICEF/FGN, 2001; Adamu, 1996) to have low utilization rates of health and reproductive services. Some scholars have linked this problem to the division of responsibility between husbands and wives (Adamu, 1996). Wives' entitlement to maintenance implies that they are not responsible for their medical expenses and therefore, insist that their husbands bear the cost of drugs, laboratory investigations, and transportation to a health centre (Adamu, 1996; Ejembi, 1997). In her study of a Muslim Hausa city in Kebbi state, Adamu (1996) found that, although 59 per cent of the women respondents had means to generate an income, only 13 per cent paid for their own medical expenses, while a majority (65 per cent) relied on their husbands to cover all their medical expenses. Furthermore, health workers commonly report that it can be difficult to convince women to bear their own medical expenses when their husbands have failed to do so. A woman needing an urgent operation will, on admission, insist on waiting for her husband to pay the medical expenses, even if she has the means to do so.

Furthermore, because she needs her husband's permission to go out of the house, a woman needs his consent to seek medical care or, in his absence, that of his older male relation or mother. For instance, a study based in Zaria city in northern Nigeria found that husbands were the principal decision-makers for 71 per cent of the respondents who attended ante-natal clinics (Kisekka et al, 1992). The result, in a situation where the husband cannot afford the medical expenses, is that he may withhold his permission until he secures the means to pay. The treatment may be delayed or alternative form of treatment sought. Such delays in seeking treatment have contributed to the high maternal mortality and morbidity rates in Sokoto (Shehu, 1992) and the incidence of other

gynaecological problems in northern Nigeria. According to government statistics, in the mid-1990s, only 25 per cent of women in northern Nigeria gave birth in the presence of medically qualified personnel (Stolz and Faure, 1997). For example, the Zaria study previously cited showed that only 20 per cent of those who attended ante-natal clinics had their delivery in the presence of qualified medical personnel (Kisekka et al, 1992).

A more recent statistic from the National Demographic and Health Survey (NPC, 2003) indicates that more than half of mothers in the north do not receive ante-natal care (47 per cent of mothers in the Northeast zone and 59 per cent in the Northwest). This is indeed high compared to other regions across the country (less than one per cent in the Southeast and 2 per cent in the Southwest zones). A similar picture is observed with respect to deliveries. About 82 per cent and 89 per cent of women in the Northeast and Northwest respectively reported that they had had deliveries at home in the previous five years, compared with 13 per cent in the Southeast and 21 per cent in the Southwest. An associated health complication is Vesico-vaginal Fistula (VVF). In Nigeria, prolonged and obstructed labour are the main causes of this condition, in which a woman's vagina is so badly torn that she is subjected to continuous leaking of urine and, at times, faeces. The problem of VVF is made worse by the practice of early marriage and the custom of *Kunya* (expecting women to endure labour pain), which are linked to Islam (Ahmed, 1992). In Nigeria, there are 200,000 sufferers from VVF, of which 70 per cent are found in the north (Stolz and Faure, 1997). The literature has also reported more problems of anaemia among women in the north than in the south (Shehu, 1992; UNICEF/FGN, 2001; Ejembi, 1997). Shehu (1992, p. 212) observes that, although 60 per cent of husbands agreed that pregnant women should be treated differently, "the diet of a pregnant wife hardly changes - she partakes of the food provided by the husband for all. This may be inadequate for her needs". Furthermore, women tend to compete among themselves in the domain of reproduction, thereby putting their health at risk.

The power of elderly women over the health of reproductive women is also noted in the literature. According to Alti-Muazu (1992), only women who are post-menopausal can become traditional birth attendants (TBA). The accumulated experience of the elderly women and their knowledge of herbs and other medicinal plants generally lead them to be considered experts, not only on reproductive matters but also on other aspects of the health of women and children, regardless of the accuracy of

their knowledge. As primary care providers, elderly women give first aid, monitor pregnancies and oversee deliveries. They procure and provide herbs for some childhood ailments and for antenatal and postnatal medicinal needs. Research by Kisekka et al (1992) in Zaria shows that elderly women monitor 75 per cent of deliveries.

Considering women in traditional religion, Wotogbe-Weneka (1998) reports that in many African societies, such as the Ikwerre of the Upper Niger Delta, which he uses as a case study, women have traditionally played important roles, and that this is particularly the case in particular cults such as 'spirit mediumship'. For example, a recent study revealed that women and fair complexioned people are said to be more prone to aquatic spirit possession than other categories of human beings. Of all the votaries of aquatic spirits sampled in Ikwerre, 78 per cent were reported to be females, with over 56 per cent of the sample claiming to have been votaries since their youth, that is, before they got their physical husbands. The plausible explanation Wotogbe-Weneka (1998) advances for this female preponderance is that among the votaries themselves, the relationship between them and their aquatic spirits is conceived in terms of a human marital relationship. In other words, the male aquatic spirits are believed to have come on land from their hydrospheric habitats to 'marry' the females of their choice among humans. This explanation contrasts with two hitherto dominant explanations from the anthropological literature on spirit mediumship, namely, the psychiatrically-oriented, which claims that such a condition is evidence of psychiatric disturbance, and the quasi-political explanation, which claims that such behaviour is linked to powerlessness and is an attempt to gain otherwise unobtainable goods or attention. Wotogbe-Weneka (1998, p. 136) concludes that female votaries are "successfully contributing to the societal well being in the area of healthcare delivery of Nigeria, and hence their achievement should not be neglected in this era of women significance".

A variegated women's movement has emerged in Nigeria, but space and the limited availability of published material preclude detailed discussion of it here. In furtherance of the women's participation agenda, a national feminist movement was inaugurated in 1982 and a national conference held at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, in the north of the country. The conference reflected a growing awareness by Nigeria's educated women that improving the place of women in society required a concerted effort and a place on the national agenda. However, public perception remains far behind. For example, a feminist meeting in Ibadan came out against polygyny but was roundly criticized by

market women, who said that that they supported the practice because it allowed them to pursue their trading activities and have their households looked after at the same time.[16] Okunnu (2001) emphasizes the importance of women's organizations such as FOMWAN (The Federation of Muslim Women Associations in Nigeria) for the provision of useful forums for the exchange of ideas and much needed support for individual efforts.[17]

3.6   Religious conflict and inter-faith dialogue

We have already referred to the fact that a practical import of the presence of three main religions in Nigeria is that there are competing claims to the 'ultimate reality', which generate constant competition and rivalry for political supremacy. In particular, Christian and Muslim identities have been the main axes of religious differentiation and conflict. As noted above, not only is there a north-south cleavage in terms of religion, with the north being predominantly Muslim and the south predominantly Christian, but also this sharpens ethnic cleavages. Traditional religion is the least politically active, although in parts of Kogi, Kwara and Nassarawa States, masquerade activities associated with traditional religion have been a major source of conflicts (Osaghae and Suberu, 2004; Kastfelt, 2003).

Kastfelt (1994) discusses some of the roots of the contemporary radicalization and politicization of religion in Nigeria in the context of a historical study of the interplay of religion and politics in the Nigerian Middle Belt during the period of decolonization. Among other things, he establishes that the politicization of religion is 'nothing new'; it is historical, for since the birth of Nigeria's nationhood through the process of amalgamating southern and northern Nigeria since 1914, the different religious orientations in the regions have been inseparable from their political interests and strategies. What is new, according to Kastfelt (1994) is the "violent radicalization of religion".

In recent decades, Nigeria has witnessed a long series of violent and bloody confrontations, mainly between Muslims and Christians, which have resulted in an appreciable number of deaths and destruction of property. In particular, what Kastfelt (1994) calls the violent radicalization of religion has become prominent since the beginning of the 1980s, although its historical roots are traceable to the 1950s when constitutional regionalism and regionally-based political parties emerged. It is since then that religious loyalties, alongside ethnic and regional loyalties, have become formative and decisive variables in Nigerian politics. The outcomes have threatened the very fabric of Nigeria's nascent nationhood and the solidity of the Nigerian state.

RaD

The activities of radical Islamic sects are a major precipitant of the increasingly frequent religious conflicts that have characterized the northern political landscape since the 1980s. Most have involved Muslims and Christians, but some, especially the ones involving the Izala (an Islamic sect), have also entailed anti-state mobilization. The politicization of Muslim identities, according to Osaghae and Suberu (2004), has been accentuated by state policies and interventions that Christians allege are pro-Muslim, like government sponsorship of pilgrimages to Mecca, Nigeria's membership of the Organization for Islamic Conference, the adoption of Shari'a law by a number of states in the north and the attempt to extend it to the federal level. The politicization of Christianity has largely been a reaction to these moves made by Muslims and interventions by the Nigerian state in the arena of religion. The increased politicization of religion by the state, including the adoption of Shari'a law by several northern states during the Fourth Republic, has led to the generalization of ethno-religious conflicts all over the country (Osaghae and Suberu, 2004).

Akama (1998a, p. 6) suggests that religions practiced in Nigeria today, especially Islam and Christianity, are characterized by religious bigotry or intolerance. This, he suggests, poses a big threat to the wholesome existence of these religions and, most importantly, to their ability to contribute to nation-building, especially with respect to national integration, and socio-economic and political development. The explanatory factors Akama (1998a) mentions as 'causes' of this situation include differences in teaching and beliefs, misinterpretation of religious principles, "harboured prejudices", presence of ethnic hostility and ignorance on the part of some believers. These factors define what he regards as the "unfortunate truth" that, over the years, the original tenets of these religions have significantly diversified, in their goals and interpretation, as the religions have fragmented into denominations and sects. Further, Kilani (1998) argues that the presently tense religious climate in Nigeria is the result of the manipulation of religion by the privileged class within each religious group to maintain the status quo. According to him, the deliberate attempts by some people to exploit God's name to achieve selfish desires is largely responsible for the furore over the Shari'a, Organization of Islamic Countries, the Kafanchan riot[18] and the ineffectiveness of the National Religious Advisory Board which was established by the Federal Government in 1986.

Nevertheless, the founding and continued existence of the National Religious Advisory Board is indicative of efforts to mediate religious conflicts in Nigeria over the years. An important goal of such efforts has been to institute inter-religious dialogue to produce inter-religious harmony (Bidmos, 1993).

Oke (2003) focuses on the causes of religious tension in Nigeria, guidelines and the scope for inter-religious dialogue, its advantages, and national and international endeavours to achieve religious peace. The author argues that allegations of domination of one religious group by the other, sometimes arising out of prejudice or ignorance, can only be remedied by meaningful inter-religious dialogue. The book has an additional purpose: coming from a Muslim educationalist, it is also intended to 'disprove' what he considers the erroneous notion that Muslims are apathetic to inter-faith dialogue. However, the continuation of frequent inter- and intra-religious altercations, notwithstanding the establishment of a high-powered inter-religious council by the Federal Government, shows the depth of the problem.

4 Faith-based organizations, religious identity and service delivery

4.1 General studies

Since the early 1980s, when it was recognized that faith is potentially a significant driver of change, faith-based organizations (FBOs) have become important actors in efforts to fight global poverty (Clarke, 2005). Yet the nature, scale, activities and relationships of FBOs in developing countries remain poorly understood and documented. The closest we have come are a set of overviews of the non-profit sector in countries such as India (1993 and 2003) and Pakistan (2003) produced by the John Hopkins University Centre for Civil Society Studies. No similar studies exist for Nigeria.

Few significant publications on this theme were available for review. A DFID-sponsored study on the Drivers of Change (Heymans and Pycroft, n.d.) addresses the role of religion and FBOs in Nigerian public life (cf. Singh, 2006). The defining context/intervening variables are identified as, for example, the long periods of military rule, chronic poor governance, corruption and structural distortions created by oil. The authors generally recognize that the three-fold division of drivers of change – structural, institutional and agents - is compromised by institutional elements that act as 'quasi-structures' against change and pro-poor policies. Heymans and Pycroft's analysis indicates that, although transition to civilian government has been a significant improvement on military rule, it has not achieved the progress towards pro-poor change initially anticipated. Rigidities within the country's institutional framework, operating as structural constraints, are implicated in the resistance to change. The document concludes that prospects for pro-poor change are limited. Nevertheless, religion in general and FBOs in particular are recognized as having potential to play both negative and positive roles in overcoming the institutional barriers.

Singh's (2006) review of the DoC document suggests that FBOs can play a positive role in two possible contexts. First, the recognition that agent-driven change is likely to be limited unless there is institutional reform has shifted the emphasis to issue-based reform that is likely to have systemic consequences. In this context, it is suggested, FBOs have a crucial role to play, not only as components of civil society but perhaps more importantly as potential drivers and facilitators of coalition-building for issue-based reform, especially considering the extensive resources and networks they command. The 'strategic issues' identified by Heymans and Pycroft (n.d.) in order to mobilize coalitions for reform include: (i) democracy and accountability, especially with respect to service delivery and public service reform and (ii) engaging with Islamic groups and parties that have

increasingly come to represent radical groups, often by mobilizing urban and unemployed youths. However, there are lingering doubts about the extent to which 'radical Islam' can be regarded as a 'driver of change' as distinct from a mere route to political power (Sarch, 2004). The analysis of Islam's role in changing Nigeria does, nevertheless, point to entry points or agents with the capacity to influence change, and the processes through which such agents might achieve pro-poor change.

Some other available texts deal with the role of religious groups in healing and social work. A quite significant study on this theme is Pat Williams' study of religious groups and the politics of national development in Nigeria. In terms of the involvement of various religious groups in health and social welfare development, Williams (1992) stressed the relative importance of each group. In theory, Islam takes charge of the health and social welfare of its members in the *ummah*. With respect to social welfare services, Williams notes that Islam advocates that the community should take care of its less fortunate members through the system of *zakat*, *sadaqah* and the equitable sharing of inheritances. In addition, Muslims have established their own health institutions and social welfare centres for motherless babies and old people. In addition, some Muslims view the Qur'an as a kind of armour against all evil influences and sicknesses. However, in Nigeria, Williams notes, it has not been unusual for unscrupulous people to claim that certain passages of the Qur'an can be "written on scraps of paper and wrapped up in leather… [and] used as protective amulets".

Christianity, on the other hand, introduced western methods of health care in Nigeria. Early in the life of the various Christian missions, health care services were provided in cottage hospitals, maternity homes and dispensaries in very remote areas. Missionaries attempted to dispel superstitious beliefs that they considered were a result of ignorance and taught simple hygiene. They were also involved in leprosy relief work and built leprosaria, helping to curtail the disease. The collaboration between state and church in this area continued throughout the colonial period and well into the 1970s, when the government took control of health services. Even then, the government allowed mission workers to continue to give services in the health institutions.

Edenu (1994) studied the faith healing ministry by examining the fundamentals of the practice of healing in the contemporary Christian church in Nigeria. He exposed the factors behind the growth of the healing ministry in Nigerian churches, including socio-economic factors. The study evinced that healing practices are of some value to the churches, especially the sick poor. It went further to

evaluate how this notion affects individual church members as an instrument for the growth of their faith and wellbeing, noting that healing is supposed to be part and parcel of church activities. This study locates the church as an organization that is meant not only for teaching, but also for achieving the wellbeing of its members, implying both good health and material prosperity.

Ajala and Jegede (2004), in contrast, studied the scientific construction of *Ifa*[19] in the Yoruba healing system, given the inadequacy of the conventional health care system in solving socio-biological problems. The study is a situational analysis of the role of *Ifa* as a traditional religious practice among the Yoruba people of South West Nigeria in health provisioning for individual and community well-being. Going by the beliefs and practices of the Yoruba, divination, herbal cure and incantation are the media of healing in *Ifa*, underscoring the cultural construction of health and illness. The Yoruba hold the belief that ill-health may be caused by natural and preternatural factors, the latter being supernatural elements that, it is believed, have to be appeased to ward off illness and grant wellbeing (sound health). Based on the above notions, the study examined the *Ifa* healing system, with the purpose of revealing its practice and effects. Methodologically, the study relied heavily on ethnographic fieldwork conducted among *Ifa* practitioners selected from Ogun, Osun and Oyo States. The authors conclude that, as morbidity and mortality rates continue to increase, attempts to reduce them can only be successful with careful utilization of African indigenous ways, such as *Ifa*.

Finally, Obioha (2003) investigated the effectiveness of religion in the rehabilitation of drug addicts in faith-based centres. The study is premised on the fact that the problem of drug addiction in Nigeria has become worse, while government rehabilitation facilities are completely inadequate. The study focused on how religious practices have become instruments of drug addicts' re-socialization process. It also investigated the approaches adopted by the faith-based rehabilitation centres in managing addicts. It adopted an ethnographic methodology in two purposively selected faith-based rehabilitation centres in Lagos. The study concluded that 'religion' is an effective and cheap means of "correcting" drug users, who are regarded as "deviants". Correction and rehabilitation, the study indicated, is achieved through the grooming process of residents in the rehabilitation centres to equip them for various religious ministries and callings. The study concludes by recommending an enabling environment, backed by giving fully fledged authority to the religious organizations who are supporting the drug addicts.

4.2 The Islamic women's movement and service delivery

In the past two decades, Nigeria has witnessed the emergence and development of Islamic women's movements. Some of these movements are all-female groups like the Muslim Sister's Organization (MSO). Others are made up of both males and females, like the Muslim Student Society (MSS). During some of the conferences organized by the former type of group, the need for Muslim women to come together under one single umbrella was recognized. Consequently, the Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN) was established in 1985. Since then, the Muslim women's movements have had to contend with struggles between so-called 'orthodox' and 'modernist' Islam for authority and legitimacy in Hausa society (Adamu, 2003c; Imam, 1993; Callaway and Creevey, 1994). Consequently, the movements have had to collaborate with the two orientations of Islam to gain legitimacy and acceptance, both necessary if the Muslim women's movement is to impact on the living conditions of Muslim women.

Because of its identification with Islam, FOMWAN has been able to gain the endorsement of Islamic scholars and use that legitimacy to support a liberal interpretation of the Islamic position on women and the delivery of services to women and children. Areas of service delivery engaged in by these Islamic women's movements have included the establishment of hospitals in Kaduna, schools in many states and local government areas of the Federation, and orphanage homes in Ibadan (FOMWAN **www.fomwan.org**). More importantly, the movement seeks the redefinition of gender relations and the gender discourse in Islam as practised in Nigeria. Other areas of concern to FOMWAN are marriage, inheritance and divorce. FOMWAN's campaigns on women's education and the right to work are important developments in an area known for its strong resistance to the education of women using the excuse of Islam. These campaigns also amount to challenges to the dominant Islamic practice of seclusion and the claim that the place of women is in the home. Furthermore, FOMWAN was also able to use its legitimacy to lobby the government for support and services for women. However, in view of the nature of the relationship between religion and politics in Northern Nigeria, it is possible that although members of FOMWAN may use their position to improve the status of women they may at the same time be used by both the religious and political classes. As Imam (1993) observes, FOMWAN uses Islamic scholars to gain legitimacy, but Islamic scholars equally use the organization to mobilize women to vote Muslim men into power. Similarly the government might go through the movement to solicit the support of Muslims for some controversial programmes.

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Another development that has affected the performance of Muslim women's movements in the country is the expansion of Shari'a. The sudden declaration of expanded Shari'a caught Muslim women unaware and unprepared, and their response was therefore uncoordinated. Moreover, their response has heightened existing divisions between Islamist and secularist Muslim women (Adamu, 2004), with the Islamic women's movement supporting anything put forward as Shari'a and secularist Muslim women attacking and condemning much that is done in the name of Shari'a. Because of these internal divisions, it is suggested that Islamic women became blind to the male biases in the Shari'a document adopted in some states, but that Muslim women secularists were equally blind to the rights and protections that Shari'a could potentially provide to women (Adamu, 2004). These divisions have impacted negatively on the ability of Muslim women academics and activists to respond strategically to the issue of Shari'a. First, they did not allow an objective examination of the legal documents put in place as Shari'a. For example, within one year, between 1999 and 2000, about five laws were passed without any input from women, although not because they were prevented from doing so. A similar problem has arisen with respect to monitoring of Shari'a implementation. Except in the celebrated cases of Safiya, Amima and Bariya[20], little is known about how the expanded Shari'a is affecting, either positively or negatively, ordinary Muslim women. Muslim women have not been able to collaborate and develop a strategy to deal with gender biases that may be arising in the course of Shari'a implementation.

The foregoing discussions attest to the crucial role Islam plays in the living conditions of Muslim women and the need to recognize the relevance of religion to development practice. Acceptance or rejection of development projects and programmes in many parts of Northern Nigeria, with their high proportion of Muslims, is very dependent on people's assessment of such programmes as being compatible with Islamic beliefs and values. However, this does not mean that Islamic values are static and unchanging. Many, even amongst Muslims, acknowledge the need for change in areas considered Islamic, such as seclusion, early marriage and education for girls. While effort is being intensified with respect to the latter, the first two practices have long been accepted as part of Islamic Hausa identity and they are little challenged despite their implications for the wellbeing of Muslim women in the region.

5 Religious transnationalism and development

5.1 Historical roots

Akama (1998a, p. 5) reports that the early missionaries who came to Nigeria did, in their own ways, contribute to national development by way of introducing education, health care and other programmes that, he contends, brought enlightenment and improved wellbeing to the citizenry. Christian missionaries, including Jesuits, Dominicans, and members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), the Church of Christ, and the Society for International Missions, still operate in the country. Rough estimates put the number of foreign Christian missionaries at more than 1,000, with many residing in the area around Jos, in the Middle Belt's Plateau State. Many have resided in the country for a decade or longer. Islamic missionaries have made similar contributions. However, there are reportedly fewer foreign Muslim missionaries, and they stay in the country for shorter periods than their Christian counterparts. Foreign Muslim organizations often focus on training citizens in traditional centres (US State Department, 2003). According to Akama (1998a), both religions took into account not only the spiritual but also the material needs of converts and so directly or indirectly contributed to nation-building.

The main objective of Ade Ajayi's (1965) work on the Christian missions in Nigeria was to show how missionary incursion into Nigeria during the period of his study created a new elite class. Through their significant influence on linguistic, educational and economic policies, the early missionaries of the Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian and Catholic churches were, he suggests, able to establish an elite class: "…in their linguistic and educational work, in their economic policies and above all, in the class of western-educated elites they were seeking to create, their influence covered the whole country" (p. xv). This study relied heavily on library research, as well as government and missionary archives in Nigeria, Rome and the United States in what might be regarded as class analysis, which also needs to be done for the contemporary church.

5.2 Contemporary studies

A focus on the transnational nature of religion has gained new currency in recent years. It is considered to be important to better understand the role of new religious transnational movements and their potential and actual contribution to development in developing countries.[21] Corten and Marshall-Fratani (2001, p.1), for instance, point to the similarity of Pentecostal manifestations across international boundaries and diverse cultures. As a *bricolage* of extremely heterogeneous elements,

contemporary Pentecostalism provides, according to them, a striking example of the paradox of difference and uniformity, of flow and closure, that seems to be at the heart of processes of transnationalism and globalization. In problematizing contemporary religious transnationalism, using the Protestant movement as a reference point, Corten and Marshall-Fratani (2001) wonder whether this "movement" is an expression of a new form of Protestant ethic or a new "*imaginaire*". They also ponder the relationship between this new 'ethic' and the 'spirit of globalization'. In particular, they ask:

> "How do local processes of identification which imply fix and closure, find their articulation in a global context marked by an open-ended and unbounded flux of people, objects, money, ideas and images? How can we make the link among our case studies of Pentecostalism in Brazil, Malawi, Nigeria or Jamaica and relate them to the idea of a transnational Pentecostal identity, reconciling local appropriations, with their rich and unique historical and cultural particularities, with the overarching representations of similitude that the idea of a transnational identity implies?" (Corten and Marshall-Fratani, 2001, p. 2).

They also suggest that:

> "Presenting itself as a kind on New Reformism of the twentieth century, particularly in the developing world, Pentecostalism projects a new vision of the world, responding in particular to processes and promises of 'modernity' and 'modernisation'. The 1980s and '90s have seen the development of an increasingly complex web of transnational Pentecostal networks, where flows of people, money, ideas and images circulate with growing speed and intensity, defying all attempts to pin them down to any particular source or destination. Modes of identification have become transnationalised, and converts place the representation of a global movement with a historical mission to accomplish at the heart of their new faith" (Corten and Marshall-Fratani, 2001, p. 1).

In the specific case of Nigeria, Marshall-Fratani (2001) studies the everyday reality of Pentecostal transnationalism by analyzing it as a way of reinventing daily life through the influence of new socio-temporal frameworks introduced, at least in part, by globalized relations of exchange and communication. For her, it is as "delocalised subjects" that individual Nigerian converts re-imagine their lives, a process which involves the converts' participation in a transnational network of images, personalities, discourses and ideas. Her analysis of the construction of new transnational identities makes links between everyday practices and the imaginations of individuals, and the political consequences of such a process at the collective level. She also shows that the reinvention of everyday life expresses a new political imagery.

She submits that the transnational character of contemporary Pentecostalism takes on a new significance in the context of what is called 'globalization', referring to recent and profound changes in the structure of the international scene. Her study focuses, inter alia, on the importance of global media, with respect to the technological possibilities they offer for the production and dissemination of ideas, images, and narratives and the implications of these for the formation of identity; the "de-territorialisation" of culture via mediation and migration; and the way Pentecostalism positions itself vis-à-vis the Nigerian nation-state. With respect to the latter, Marshall-Fratani (2001, p. 84) argues that the failure of nationalism and the "developmentalist state" in post-colonial Nigeria to provide a stable reference for the construction of identity has opened the ground for an explosion of "important and powerful" multiple identities. She submits that Pentecostalism is attempting to colonize the national public space and to thus reconceptualize the structure and normative basis of the nation, suggesting that this is occurring not through the institutionalization of churches, but through the production and dissemination of a multitude of discourses via the media.

6 Conclusion

This literature review has been based on immediately available and accessible literature and is by no means exhaustive. It suggests that few direct connections have been made between religious values and mainstream development theory and practice, although some studies make rather trite connections with various facets of development. With respect to moral issues, there is unanimity of sorts that there is a connection between the religious ideas possessed by members of Nigerian society and social changes that are taking place. The exact impacts are not only variable in relation to the tenets and teachings of the three major religions (Christianity, Islam and traditional religion) and their interaction with the geography of Nigerian ethnicity, but also the uses to which such tenets and teachings are put; thus the reality is that in Nigerian society, religion functions as a double-edged sword, making a contribution to nation-building but at the same time with a strong potential for imparting negative and disintegrative values.

The literature is mostly characterized by normative and prescriptive discourses that at times border on advocacy, and most of the discussion is theoretical. Rarely are there 'findings' based on empirical research and a significant proportion of the sources reviewed lack an empirical core; yet this is not to say that there are no rigorous studies of a highly abstract nature. What is clear is that most studies with a bearing on religion and development identify crucial questions that need to be explored more rigorously, logically and systematically. The prevailing weaknesses in the Nigerian literature present a strong argument for the launching of empirical research on the very rich and dynamic field of religions and development in Nigeria.

Notes

1   The research projects on Transnational Networks and New Agents of Religion in West Africa were conducted in two phases between 2002 and 2005. See also Azubuike (2005), Roberts (2005), Roberts and Benjamin (2005).

2   The relevance of these concerns as a focus for Nigerian development is evident in their centrality in the values projected by Nigeria's national motto, namely, 'Unity and Faith, Peace and Progress'.

3   This image stresses love, care, concern for others, solidarity, warmth in relationships, acceptance, dialogue, trust and outreach. It is the author's vision that a new evangelization of the continent would aim at building up the church as a family, projecting these values and excluding such vices as tribalism, sectarianism, hatred, indifference and irresponsibility (Iroegbu, 1996).

4   A Pew Forum survey in May-June 2006 found that 76 per cent of Christians and 91 per cent of Muslims say that religion is more important to them than their identity as Africans, Nigerians or members of an ethnic group (Ruby and Shah, 2007). Other equally salient identities in Nigeria identified by Osaghae and Suberu (2004) are ethnic, regional and communal identities.

5   There is no reliable figure for Nigeria's population and no question on religious affiliation has been included in the census since 1963. The 2003 Demographic and Health survey of a nationally representative sample of women aged 14-49 and men 15-59 found that 48.2 per cent of respondents claimed to be Christian, 50.5 per cent Muslim, 1.4 other and none non-religious. In 1953, 45 per cent of the population was Muslim, 21 per cent Christian and 33 per cent belonged to other religions. "By 1963, the proportion of the population that belonged to other religions had declined by 15 percentage points, nearly matching the 13.1 point increase for Christians; during this same time period, the percentage of Muslims increased by less than 2 percentage points. The number of Christians increased by another 13.1 percentage points from 1963 to 1990. This growth trend flattened out by 1990, with the Christian share of the Nigerian population growing by less than 1 percentage point from 1990 to 2003. The Muslim population, however, increased by 3 percentage points during that same time period" (Grim, 2007, p. 10).

6   The 2006 Pew Forum national probability sample survey of Nigeria's population of approximately 130 million (adults 19+) found that 16 per cent of the population consider themselves renewalists – including charismatics (8 per cent) and Pentecostals (18 per cent). 30 per cent of Catholics consider themselves charismatics. 54 per cent of Protestants (excluding the African Independent Churches) consider themselves Pentecostal and a further 8 per cent charismatics (Pew Forum, 2006, p. 83).

7   A broad distinction is made between religious organizations, the organizational expressions of the faith traditions at both local (congregational, community) and higher levels (dioceses, schools of thought, brotherhoods etc), and faith-based organizations (FBOs), not-for-profit organizations with varying degrees of autonomy from religious groups, which are distinguished from NGOs by their explicit faith motivation.

8   Gemeinschaft (often translated as community) is an association in which individuals are oriented to the larger association as much if not more than to their own self interest. Furthermore, individuals in a Gemeinschaft are regulated by common mores, or beliefs about appropriate behaviour and the responsibilities of members of the association to each other and to the association as a whole: associations marked by "unity of will" (Tönnies, 2001, p. 22).

9   Gesellschaft (often translated as society, civil society or 'association') describes associations in which, for the individual, the larger association never takes on more importance than individual self interest, and lacks the same level of shared mores. Gesellschaft is maintained through individuals acting in their own self interest.

10 The Republic of Biafra was a secessionist state in south-eastern Nigeria. Biafra was inhabited mostly by the Igbo people and existed from 30 May 1967, to 15 January 1970. In response to economic, ethnic, cultural and religious tensions, secession was led by the Igbo. The creation of

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the new country, named after the Bight of Biafra (the Atlantic bay to its south), was among the complex causes of the Nigerian civil war, also known as the Nigerian-Biafran war.

11 While most nations did not officially recognize Biafra, most of whose indigenes are Catholic, the Vatican City was one of the few to provide assistance.

12 Sokoto is a city located in the extreme northwest of Nigeria, near to where the Sokoto River and Rima River meet. It is the current capital of Sokoto State and was also the capital of its predecessor, Northwestern State.

13 Formerly part of Borno State, Yobe State is part of the area rules by the emirs of the former Kanem-Bornu Empire. Successive reforms have removed power from the emirs of the former dynasty and by the time of Nigeria's return to civilian rule in 1979, the emirs' jurisdiction was restricted solely to cultural and traditional affairs. Today, although the emirs still exist, they are merely advisers to local government.

14 See for example the following verses: "The believers, men and women, are protectors, one of another: they enjoin what is just, and forbid what is evil: they observe regular prayers, practise regular charity, and obey Allah and His Messenger. On them will Allah pour His mercy: for Allah is exalted in power, wise" Chapter 9 verse 71. "Let there arise out of you a band of people Inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong: they are the ones to attain felicity" Chapter 3, verse 104.

15 The Muslim Brotherhood is an Islamic movement based in Egypt but with branches all over the Muslim world, for example in Syria, Pakistan and Tunisia.

16 Information provided by Professor Olakunle Odumosu, July 2006.

17 FOMWAN aims at promoting the understanding and practice of the teaching of the Qur'an and Sunnah through: (a) education of women in the teaching of Islam; (b) encouraging Muslim women to establish groups throughout the country for education and Da'wah purposes; (c) establishing a framework for national cooperation and unity among Islamic women's associations; and (d) providing a forum for Muslim women's views to be expressed at national and state levels.

18 The Kafanchan riot arose out of deep-seated suspicion between the adherents of Christian and Muslim religions. This suspicion, which had been present for a very long time, was waiting to explode. The riot occurred on March 7, 1987 at the College of Education Kafanchan. Muslims felt aggrieved over the way some portions of the Koran were being interpreted by members of the College Christian Fellowship Conference (CFC). The anger of the Muslims led to an attack on the CFC members. During this attack, dangerous weapons were used by both groups, resulting in the destruction of much property.

19 In traditional Yoruba culture, Ifá refers to a system of divination and the verses of the literary corpus known as the Odú Ifá presented in the course of divination. Orunmila is the deity associated with Ifa divination. In some instances, the name Orunmila is used interchangeably with the word Ifa. Orunmila brought Ifa divination to the world.

20 Safiya Hussaini, 35, was sentenced to death by stoning in October for allegedly having a child with a married neighbour. Although she had the child after her divorce, she maintained that the father was her former husband and that they were married when the child was conceived. The court convicted her, but Hussaini won an appeal, this time alleging that she had sex out of wedlock before Shari'a law took effect. Amina Lawal put forward a similar argument during her trial, but it was rejected by the courts. A teenage single mother, Bariya Ibrahim Magazu, was given 100 lashes for adultery, even though she argued that she had been raped by three men. The court said that Bariya could not prove that the men had forced her to have sex.

21 As noted at the beginning of this review, in 2002, the French Institute for Research in Africa commissioned twelve research projects on the theme "Transnational Networks and New Religious Actors in West Africa", in ten countries, including Nigeria, and multiple religious movements (Fourchard et al, 2005).

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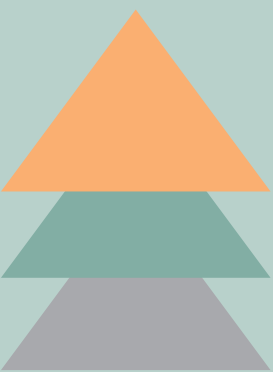
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