

A Survey of Pentecostal Churches in Nigeria

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Dr. K. A. Korb
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Executive Summary

The Nigerian Pentecostal and Charismatic Research Centre collected information from Pentecostal Churches across Nigeria with the intent of developing a better understanding of the Pentecostal movement. Analysis of the church-level questionnaire completed by pastors found the following:

- **Age of Pentecostal church branch and denomination:** The average Pentecostal church branch has been in existence for 11.80 years. 28% of the churches have been in existence 5 years or less. The average Pentecostal denominations has been in existence for 21.41 years. 46% of the churches reported the same year of inception for both the local branch and the denomination.
- **Participation in Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN):** 79% reported being a member of CAN.
- **Language of Pentecostal church services:** 56% of the Pentecostal churches have services both in English and a local language, 41% had services only in English, and 3% have services in only a local language.
- **Educational qualifications of Pentecostal pastors:** 33% of the pastors have completed a degree or HND, and 15% have completed post-graduate education (24% of the pastors did not report their educational qualifications). 55% of the pastors have some tertiary training in a theology-related field.
- **Church media:** 8% of the Pentecostal churches have a church website. 31% of the Pentecostal churches have produced books, 8% have television programmes, and 15% have produced CDs or DVDs.
- **Church ministries:** 25% of the Pentecostal churches sponsor a school. 4% of the Pentecostal churches did not offer any of the ministries listed on the questionnaire to church members and 19% did not offer any of the ministries listed to community members. 36% of Pentecostal churches offered five or more ministries to church members, whereas only 15% of the churches offered five or more ministries to community members.

Introduction

The Nigerian Pentecostal and Charismatic Research Centre collected information from Pentecostal Churches across Nigeria with the intent of developing a better understanding of the Pentecostal movement. The research questions comprising of the following variables were adapted into a questionnaire that was administered to Pentecostal pastors.

Research Questions. What are the characteristics of Pentecostal churches according to the following variables?

- Age of Pentecostal church branch and denomination
- Participation in Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN)
- Language of Pentecostal church services
- Educational qualifications of Pentecostal pastors
- Church media produced by the Pentecostal church, including website, books, CD/DVDs, and television programme
- Church ministries offered to both church members and community members

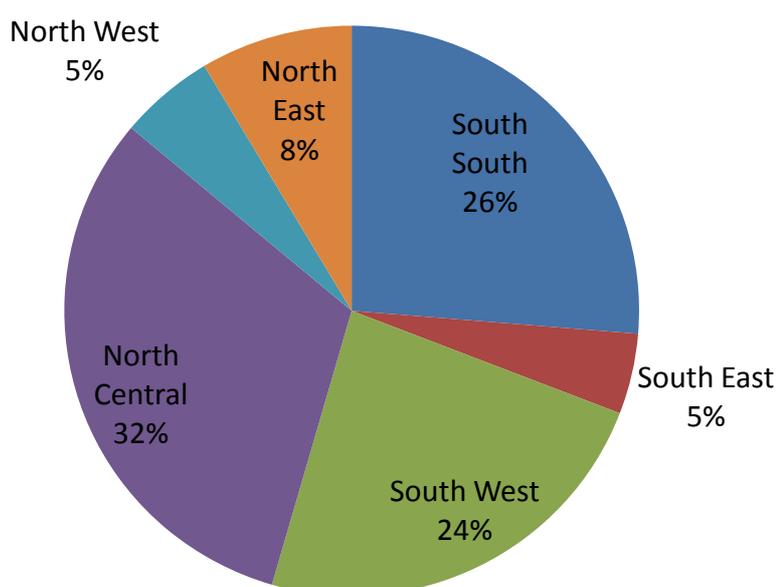
Methods

Participants

To collect information about Pentecostal churches throughout Nigeria, Pentecostal pastors were sampled at the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) Biennial Conference. All Pentecostals across Nigeria were invited to the PFN Biennial Conference. However, about 80% of those in attendance were Pentecostal pastors or other Pentecostal leaders. (Only Pentecostal pastors were invited to complete the questionnaire.) The Pentecostal pastors who attended the conference are a good representation of Pentecostal pastors throughout Nigeria. A total of 535 completed questionnaires were returned.

The geographical distribution of churches can be found in Figure 1. Keep in mind that the conference was held in Abuja, in the North Central geopolitical zone.

Figure 1. Geopolitical Zone of Sampled Churches



Instrument

The questionnaire was designed to collect information about Pentecostal churches across Nigeria, primarily using open-ended items. First, basic background and contact information for the Pentecostal church was asked. Then items solicited basic information about the church: what year it was founded, pastors educational background, and languages of churches. Next, items requested information about media that the church has produced. Finally, a list of various church ministries was presented and pastors were asked to indicate which ministries the church offered and to provide details about that ministry.

Procedure

NPCRC researchers distributed a questionnaire to every pastor at the PFN Biennial Meeting. The PFN General Secretary announced the purpose of the questionnaire during the conference to assure Pentecostal pastors of its legitimacy and to encourage pastors to complete the questionnaire. Some pastors completed the questionnaire on the spot and immediately returned it to the researcher, whereas other pastors took the questionnaire with them overnight, and returned the completed form the next day.

Results

First, we were interested in how long the Pentecostal church had been in existence. The sampled pastors reported both the year that their local church branch was founded and the year that the church denomination was founded. The sampled local church branches ranged in age from less than 1 year to 65 years with an average (mean) of 11.80 years (standard deviation = 8.99 years). The percentage of churches that have been in existence 5 years or less was 28%.

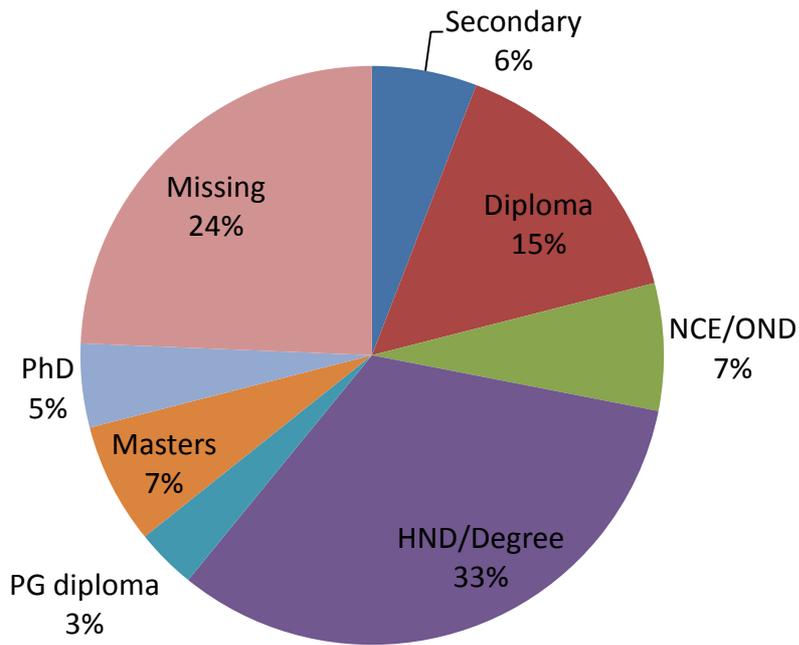
In terms of Pentecostal denominations, the sampled Pentecostal denominations ranged in age from less than 1 year to 124 years with an average of 21.41 years (standard deviation = 20.96 years). Forty-six percent of the churches reported the same year of inception for both the local branch and the denomination. This likely means that about 46% of the sampled Pentecostal churches were started as an independent denomination.

Of the pastors sampled at the PFN meeting, 79% reported being a member of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN).

Pastors reported the language that their services were conducted in. Most of the Pentecostal churches reported having services both in English and a local language (56%), whereas 41% of the churches had services only in English. The remaining 3% have services in only a local language.

The branch pastor's educational qualifications were reported. Pastors were asked to report both the level of educational qualifications and the field of study that the qualification was in. The level of education is presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Level of Pentecostal Pastor Educational Qualifications



Of the 323 questionnaires where the field of study was listed, the field was coded to determine whether the field of study was related to theology (including anything associated with the church, religious studies, Christian Religious Education, etc.) The theological training could be at any tertiary level. We were also interested in how many pastors had educational qualifications in business, accounting, or finance. The results are presented in Figures 3 and 4.

Figure 3. Pastor with Qualification in Theology-Related Field.

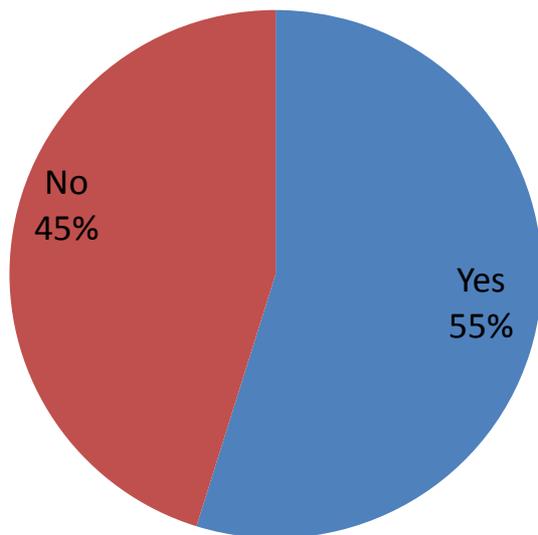
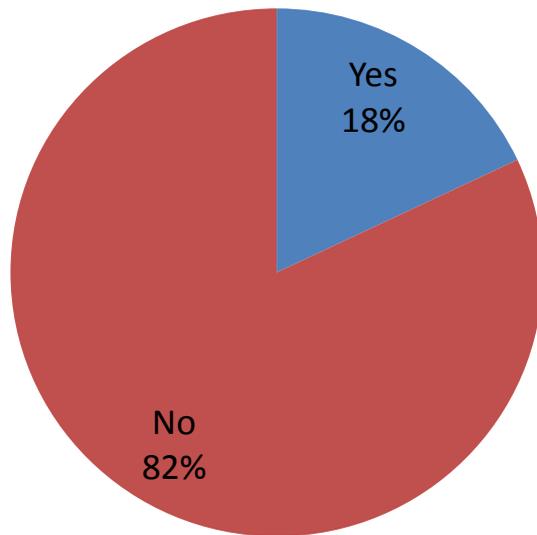


Figure 4. Pastor with Qualification in Business/Accounting Field.



Note that these figures exclude a large proportion of pastors who either did not report educational qualifications or did not report the field of study for their educational qualifications (40%).

Church Media

Only 8% of the pastors reported having a church website. Pastors were also asked to list books written by church pastors, church television programmes, and CDs or DVDs produced by the church. Forty-one percent of the churches listed that their church had produced at least one of these forms of media, while only 2% had produced all three forms of media. Thirty-one percent listed that their Pentecostal church has produced books, 8% listed television programmes, and 15% reported CDs or DVDs.

In a separate study of Pentecostal churchgoers (Korb, 2012), considerably more Pentecostal churchgoers reported watching Pentecostal television (47% reported watching weekly), compared to watching Pentecostal CDs/DVDs or reading Pentecostal literature (10% and 7% weekly, respectively). Thus, whereas more Pentecostal churches have produced books, this is the media used least frequently by Pentecostal churchgoers.

Church Ministries

Pastors were asked to list any schools sponsored by the church. Twenty-five percent of the churches reported sponsoring a school. Most of these churches reported having a nursery and a primary school (36%), followed by a bible school (also including School of Theology; 17%). A number of churches did not clearly identify what type of school they sponsored (19%). The remaining 28% of the schools were evenly distributed between other levels of education, with less than 5% per school level for the following: nursery only, primary only, secondary only, tertiary only, primary and secondary, nursery through secondary, nursery through tertiary, and leadership programs.

Pastors were also asked to report the types of ministries that their churches offered to church members only and to other community members not part of their church (see Table 1). Only

4% of the churches reported not offering any of the ministries listed on the questionnaire to church members. However, 19% of the churches reported not offering any of the ministries listed on the questionnaire to community members. Thirty-six percent of Pentecostal churches reported offering five or more ministries to church members, whereas only 15% of the churches reported offering five or more ministries to community members.

Table 1. Ministries Offered by Pentecostal Churches.

Type of Ministry	Offered to Church Members	Offered to Community Members
Counseling	78%	55%
Welfare	74%	47%
Political Awareness	44%	28%
Economic Empowerment	44%	20%
Assistance after Disaster	41%	25%
Health/Medical	32%	26%
Educational Scholarships	23%	14%

Most Pentecostal churches offered counseling and welfare to both church members and community members. Slightly less than half of the Pentecostal churches offered political awareness, economic empowerment, and assistance after a disaster. Less than one-third offered health/medical services and educational scholarships.

In the study of Pentecostal churchgoers (Korb, 2012), churchgoers reported their church's ministries that they had personally benefitted from, as can be seen from Table 2.

Table 2. Ministries that Pentecostal Churchgoers have Benefited From (Korb, 2012).

Ministry	Percent
I have received counselling from the church.	23%
I have receive welfare assistance from the church.	14%
I have received health and medical benefits .	12%
My children attend this church's school .	4%
I have received economic empowerment from the church.	4%
I have received assistance after a disaster/crisis .	3%
I have enjoyed a scholarship from the church.	2%
I have been made more politically aware from the church.	2%

The rank-order of ministries reported by Pentecostal pastors and churchgoers are similar, with a few exceptions. Both pastors and churchgoers report counseling and welfare as their top two ministries. However, whereas pastors report political awareness and economic empowerment as the next most frequent ministries offered, churchgoers report benefitting from these ministries considerably less, with political awareness as the least frequent ministry that Pentecostal churchgoers reported benefitting from.

Reference

Korb, K. A. (2012). Census of Pentecostal churchgoers in Nigeria. (NPCRC Technical Report No. N1104). Jos, Nigeria: Nigerian Pentecostal and Charismatic Research Centre.