

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

A global study and research on Pentecostal churches is an on-going assignment because of its impact on the religious, political and socio-economic life of the people. A survey of the available number of Pentecostal churches in Nigeria as shown that they are emerging daily in the nooks and crannies of the country. The emergence of Pentecostal churches is daily challenging the existing Mainline and *Aladura* Pentecostal churches in national development. It has therefore become a fundamental concern for scholars of Pentecostal Church History, History and Sociology in Nigerian Universities to devote much time to study such Pentecostal churches. Essien (1998) opines that "this situation calls for continuous research of their forms, the socio-religious and economic conditions that necessitate their emergence and their relevance to the social life of their adherents and to the society at large". This has necessitated the need for this study on the influence of Pentecostal churches on the development of education in Nigeria. In Nigeria, some of the established Pentecostal churches are Pentecostal Church of God's Mission, founded by the late Arch-Bishop Benson A. Idahosa in Benin City, Edo state, Household of God's Pentecostal church, being led by Rev. Chris Okotie in Oregun, Lagos, the Redeemed Christian Pentecostal church of God founded by the late Pastor Josiah Akindayomi and presently under the leadership of Pastor Enock Adejare Adeboye with International headquarters at Mowe, Ogun state. The Deeper Life Christian Pentecostal church founded by Pastor Williams Folorunso Kumuyi and based in Lagos. Rev. Gabriel Oduyemi's Bethel Ministry at Wonder City, Lekki Peninsular, Lagos, Pastor Patrick Anwuzia's Zoe Ministries, and Pastor Tunde Bakare's Latter Rain Assembly in Lagos, Rev. Tunde Joda's Christ Chapel International, Lagos and Bishop Wale Oke's Sword of the Spirit Pentecostal church based in Ibadan. Others are the Victory Life Pentecostal church International established by Pastor Mike Bamidele at Ilesa, Osun state, New Testament Pentecostal church based in Ilorin and established by Pastor M.R. Popoola, Mountain of Fire and Miracles, founded by Pastor Daniel Kolawole Olukoya with its

headquarters in Lagos, the Synagogue of All Nations, established by Prophet Temitope Balogun Joshua in Lagos, Rhema Chapel, Ilorin established by Rev. George Adegboye, the Word Assembly being led by Rev Isaac Omolehin and of course the Living Faith Pentecostal church (a.k.a. Winners Chapel) founded by Bishop David Olaniyi Oyedepo. Many Nigerian scholars have researched on Pentecostal churches in the country. For instance, Deji Ayegboyin, Matthews Ojo, Michael Ogunewu, Richard Burgess, Hannah Ishola, and of course Rotimi Omotoye. Generally, Pentecostal churches are "Christians seeking deeper experience of God beyond regular church attendance. They rely on the new birth and the power of the Holy Spirit" (Ojo, 2004). In other words the Pentecostal churches are seen emphasizing the importance of the Holy Spirit in daily worship. This research is focused on the Living Faith Pentecostal church a.k.a. Winner Chapel and its contributions to education development in Nigeria.

Pastor David Oyedepo in Ilorin started Living Faith Pentecostal church with about 48 members in 1980 and within nine months of its existence, membership rose to about 128. He eventually established the Living Faith Outreach Centre in May, 1981. Pastor Oyedepo then relocated to Kaduna. It was from Kaduna that he went to Lagos in September 1989 before he moved to Ota, Ogun state which is now regarded as Canaanland and International headquarters of the Pentecostal church. The Pentecostal church has over three hundred branches in Nigeria alone (Opoola, 2010). The Pentecostal church building at Ota is assumed to be the biggest auditorium in Nigeria seating fifty thousand and four hundred congregation as at September 2000. Living Faith Pentecostal church has however contributed to education development in Nigeria in several ways (Omotoye, 2006).

Western education was introduced to Nigeria by the Christian missionaries in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was a strategy adopted by the early missionaries to get converts into Christianity. The Living Faith Pentecostal church went into the establishment of schools early, unlike some other Pentecostal churches that ventured into education. The Living Faith Pentecostal church has to its credit a conglomerate of Nursery, Primary, Secondary and Universities. The nursery and primary schools are under the name Kingdom Heritage while the Secondary section is named Faith Academy. These schools are found in all the nooks and crannies of Nigeria. The first University of the Pentecostal church was named Covenant University and

was established in Ota in 2002. The second University was named Landmark and was established in Omu-Aran, the native town of Pastor David Oyedepo in 2010. The Universities as also complemented the efforts of Federal and State Governments in providing admission to many applicants who are seeking admission to the Universities in Nigeria. We also believe that that the missionary orientation of the schools would minimize cultism and moral decadence in the Nigerian Universities. Apart from providing jobs for teeming Nigerian populace, scholarships are usually provided by Pastor Oyedepo for indigent students, most especially in the Covenant and Landmark universities. He was once quoted saying that "All school age children, not in school, due to inability of parents, will be fully taken care of by the Pentecostal church".

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The Pentecostal Pentecostal churches was introduced at a time when Nigerians were experiencing economic depression, poverty, un-employment, corruption and sicknesses. The education sector is in the poorest state. These are socio-economic problems being witnessed in Nigeria because of bad leadership in the country. The Living Faith Pentecostal church has been able to provide schools that offer quality education services from Nursery to tertiary level nationwide. The cost of education in Nigeria is very high. Odumuyiwa (2006) observed in his study that the tuition fees being paid in the Christian Universities are too exorbitant and beyond the reach of the common man in the society. He opines "A situation in which pentecostal churches establish private universities, charge exorbitant fees should be replaced with technical colleges that can be maintained within the resources of the pentecostal church. However, this study is examining the influence of Pentecostal pentecostal churches on the development of Education.

## **1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The following are the objectives of this study:

1. To examine the influence of Pentecostal pentecostal churches on the development of Education
2. To examine the educational activities of Pentecostal pentecostal churches in Nigeria.
3. To identify the factors that can contribute to rapid development in education in Nigeria.

## **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. What is the influence of Pentecostal churches on the development of Education?
2. What are the educational activities of Pentecostal churches in Nigeria?
3. What are the factors that can contribute to rapid development in education in Nigeria?

## **1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The following are the significance of this study:

1. The outcome of this study will educate the general public on the influence of Pentecostal churches on education development in Nigeria.
2. It will be a useful guide for the management and the authorities of Living Faith Pentecostal Church Worldwide and their academic institutions on how to improve on their services in a bid to contribute to educational development in the nation.
3. This research will also serve as a resource base to other scholars and researchers interested in carrying out further research in this field subsequently, if applied will go to an extent to provide new explanation to the topic.

## **1.7 SCOPE/LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This study on the influence of Pentecostal churches on the development of education in Nigeria will cover all the educational activities and contributions of Living Faith Pentecostal Church A.K.A Winners Chapel.

### **LIMITATION OF STUDY**

**Financial constraint-** Insufficient fund tends to impede the efficiency of the researcher in sourcing for the relevant materials, literature or information and in the process of data collection (internet, questionnaire and interview).

**Time constraint-** The researcher will simultaneously engage in this study with other academic work. This consequently will cut down on the time devoted for the research work.

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