Religion, Psychology and Globalisation Process: Attitudinal Appraisal

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Abstract

A key consequence of globalisation is the integrative approach to reality whereby emphasis is placed on interdependence. Religion being an expression of human culture is equally affected by this cultural revolution. The main objective of this paper is to examine how religious affiliation, among Christians, influences attitudes towards the application of psychological sciences to the assuagement of human suffering. The sociological theory of structural functionalism was deployed to explain attitudinal appraisal. Ethnographic methodology, through quantitative analysis of administered questionnaire, was also used. The study reveals that religious tenets largely shape attitudinal appraisal and redefine the borders of globalisation's metanarratives.

Keywords: globalisation processes, psychological sciences, religious affiliation, pastoral care, attitudinal appraisal

Introduction

The symbiotic relationship between culture and religion is widely studied in sociology

of religion from various perspectives. Changing patterns in Christianity and its religious cultures within Nigerian society, as regards psychology and pastoral counselling, are at the centre of this study. Scholars of religion are interested in these developments as they seek to give phenomenological and theoretical interpretations to the way in which a religion responds to changing cultural patterns in a given society (Duke, 2014, p. 49).

There are multidimensional approaches to the study of religion. This is because human understanding of things that pertain to ultimate realities permeates almost all the facets of life. Thus Jonte-Pace and Parsons maintain that dialogue between psychology and religion has revolutionized the field of psychology of religion thereby improving the well-being of human persons (2001, p. 3). On a related note, Kinnvall examines how globalization shapes religion and the politics of global security after 9/11 terrorists attack (2004, pp. 741-2). In addition, Agara and Osawe (2012) indicate that modernism and globalization render every totalizing ideology as expressed in terrorism baseless because interconnectedness remains one of the fruits of civilization (p. 183). Nanda examines the impact of globalization on the Hindu population in India and finds out that surprising this phenomenon is improving religiosity on one hand, and heightening ethnic nationalism on the other hand (2011, p. 2). Ogbonnaya (2013) avers that the transformation of the world through internet technologies has promoted religious extremism and international insecurity prominent among Muslim communities around the world (p. 62). There is no written evidence that the changing patterns in religion, psychology, and globalization among Christians in Nigeria have been investigated. Hence this study intends to fill this knowledge gap by appraising the attitudinal changes among members of selected Christian churches with regard to how developments in psychology and globalization shape their existence in the society.

The contemporary process of globalisation is a dominant social factor that is shaping cultural patterns within the society. It has encouraged intensive interrelationships among cultures and a deeper interest in how religious patterns are changing. The process of globalisation has, more than ever, overtly influenced the interdependence that drives the integrative approach to scientific investigations because it highlights interconnectivity and relatedness. This work investigates the relationship between psychological sciences and the practice of Christianity as well as how globalisation processes affect this integration among young Nigerians. Therefore, its concluding remarks will articulate these appraisals. Attitudinal appraisal is an important aspect of social psychology that aids the understanding of behavioural patterns. Greenwald (1989) describes attitudes as predispositions of human beings to respond to certain stimuli with particular responses. They designate cognitive, affective and behavioural responses to certain stimuli. Attitudes reinforce themselves and with time become enduring systems of positive or negative evaluations, emotional feelings and assessment of tendencies towards social objects (p. 6). These explanations indicate that diverse stimuli are responsible for building one's attitude towards something or someone. Furthermore, after a period of time, one's attitude towards an important object or subject in a person's life often controls significantly his or her behaviour towards other realities. This study is divided into seven sections: (1) Introduction, (2) Understanding Contemporary Globalisation, (3) Social Theory of Structural Functionalism, (4) Religion and Psychological Sciences: Patterns of Emerging Partnership, (5) Methodology (6) Research Data: Analysis and Discussion and (7) Conclusion.

Understanding Contemporary Globalisation

Globalisation remains the distillation of cultural experiences shaped by human civilisations for more intensive interrelationships. Definitely, these experiences have historical

antecedents. Ugwuanyi and Agwu (2012) support this claim in their work by highlighting three eras of globalisation: archaic, proto, and modern (pp. 80-81). According to them, *archaic globalisation* predates the 16th century (C.E) civilisation and it articulates commercial links between economic powers that shaped those empires. *Proto-globalisation* embraces international relationships in the 16th and 17th centuries; this phase is characterised by maritime explorations and the 'discovery' of other parts of the world, colonisation of 'new' worlds, and global economic integration processes. *Modern globalisation* was anticipated by scientific discoveries of preceding centuries and inaugurated in the 19th century with the birth of industrialisation and neo-imperialism. It was truncated by the two world wars of the twentieth century that hampered for a while economic exploitations of other nations and the expansionist agenda of the more powerful nations. As a result of this belligerent hiatus, the framework of international commerce and co-operation was developed with the help of international institutions led by the United States and European nations so that the desires of domineering nations would not annihilate the weaker ones anymore.

Various theories view contemporary globalisation as a product of modern technology and the mass sharing of cultural civilizations, driving the new international systems and world order towards the progress of the world. Though the term 'globalisation' is new, the thinking, theorising and praxis of global interconnectedness have been part and parcel of human history. Thomas Eriksen argues that the German Philosopher G. W. F. Hegel (1770-1831) is the first theorist of globalisation who, with his philosophy of connectedness as emerging consciousness, saw the future of human progress as a movement towards a global community under the guidance of *Weltgeist:* the world-spirit. In the light of this Hegelian *Weltgeist,* Eriksen (2007) views the contemporary perspectives on globalisation that delineate the possibilities within a new global community (p. 1). But if Hegelian *Weltgeist* is solely interpreted as Western culture

and/or civilisations, Eriksen's proposition can hardly be accepted wholly because globalisation is not westernisation of other cultures and civilisations. It involves much more than that. Contemporary globalisation process involves give-and-take on the 'highways' of modern technological/communication systems. It is gradually becoming another metanarrative of this age.

Metanarratives are totalising or all-encompassing discourses that explain every other small story concerning human existence. The instrumentality of language metanarratives attempts to organise knowledge in such a way that it sustains social interactions and cohesion in the society. Russell argues that Lyotard identified two metanarratives in the modern European history, namely: emancipatory narrative of progress and the speculative narrative of unity of all knowledge. He went on to show how Lyotard averred that metanarratives are a definitive feature of modernity characterised by order, reason, stability and progress in favour of humankind (2011, pp. 699-700). As the fruit of modernisation, globalisation makes the latter to overlap with the former. And in line with modernity, globalisation thrives through the practicality of its metanarratives. Lewellen (2002) stresses this idea as follows:

> The metanarrative of globalization would go something like this: Globalization is impacting people everywhere by erasing local boundaries and transforming identities. Restrictive categories like tribal, peasant, community, local, and even culture are giving way to terms that emphasize blending, plasticity, and on-going identity-construction: ethnic, hybrid, creole, national, and transnational (p. 234).

The transformation of identity as stated in the above citation is a very complex process

of assimilation and conflict. This is because the interface of cultures is sometimes threatened by some sort of resistance on the part of recipients/victims for various reasons. Yet, the osmotic penetration of one culture by the other through the membrane of media technology cannot be resisted for too long. Therefore, globalisation process is a complex and transnational reality of exchange that can be lopsided at times because of the power play involved.

The dialectics of globalisation shows that although this process transforms cultures, certain groups of people suffer isolation, exclusion or exploitation because of its operations. This occurs in every society as long as there is disparity between the rich and the poor, professionals and laymen, the powerful and the weak, the schooled and the unschooled. For this very reason, some are excluded from the benefits of the globalising process. This is evident, for example, in the demographics that show those who can use or have access to the internet and those who cannot.

Since the present human condition is shaped by its pasts, globalisation is the product of past human endeavours and historical situations that are sustaining a process of cultural revolution and are redefining the vision and identity of contemporary world based on the logic of co-operation, progress and integration towards the wellbeing of humankind. This emerging system of social interactions affects the organisation of the society in so many ways. Thus it cannot be gainsaid that globalisation influences all facets of human life: cultural, political, religious, economical, educational, etc. From this flows the ongoing worldwide symbiosis of cultural civilisations.

The writer agrees with the opinion of Mozaffari (2002) which holds that for every civilisation there is an explicit world view driven by cultural systems and a coherent historical

framework that guides it (p. 26). From this viewpoint, it can be seen that the contemporary understanding of globalization is strongly driven by the spirit of connectivity, mediated through powerful technologies of information and the immensity of multiculturalism that are changing human interactions and relationships in the society. These technologies have expanded the media of globalisation through the Internet system, mass culture, writing, printing and mechanisation. For these reasons, Mott IV (2004) asserts that globalization is not limited to commerce and economics, but extends to culture, politics, religion, ecology, language, information and every sphere of human life (p. 179).

Nonetheless, globalisation affects cultures, peoples and nations of the world differently. It has created opportunities of gain and dominance of some at the expense of many who are exploited by it. For example, the United States of America has benefitted from the financial systems of globalisation more than any other nation while Chinese volume of trade is growing higher with 'made in China goods' flooding the global market. Sheri and Chi-Yue et al (2011) explain further:

> Although globalization has transformed the cultures and life practices in all countries, the flow of resources, wealth and sociocultural practices between countries is asymmetrical. For instance, the United States has been a major exporter of pop culture, and China has been a main beneficiary of global trade. A productive way to begin the scientific study of the relationship between globalization and psychology is to examine the similarities and differences in the lay perceptions and appraisals of globalization and social change across nations (p. 664).

The network of social changes that arises from globalisation has compressed the world and intensified the consciousness of interconnectedness. Despite all this, Eriksen (2007) states that the force of homogeneity implicit in the globalisation process has not extinguished heterogeneity of its recipients, be it in the spheres of religion, business practices or sub-cultural practices. Consequently, globalisation creates tension between and within cultural groups (p. 4). This notwithstanding, it remains a beneficial process for our time.

In summary, Eriksen (2007) describes contemporary globalisation as a process that entails both the intensification and awareness of transnational connectedness. It is largely driven by technological and economic processes in a multidimensional way so much that every facet of human life is affected. The multidimensional character of globalisation is expressed in its homogenic and heterogenic effects that reverberate across all spheres of human life and geographical boundaries. From the foregoing, it can be deduced that this concept is wider than westernisation, neo-imperialism, transnational capitalism and commercialism. Finally, as experienced in the past 30 years, contemporary globalisation is marked by distinctive traits enhanced through mass communication technology and the global spread of capitalism (p. 14).

The above is just a terse and descriptive expositions of the concept designated as globalisation. From the foregoing, it can be said that globalization is so pervasive that it is gradually becoming a cultural metaphor and stimulus that will shape studies on structural framework in contemporary sociology. But what is a metaphor? According to Kövecses (2002), a metaphor, from a cognitive linguistic perspective, is a verbal instrument for 'understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another domain' (p. 4). Based on this perception, contemporary globalisation process is an emerging cultural metaphor practically drawn from the conceptual domain of historic transnational commerce and its dynamics that are bringing

people from all corners of the world together for diverse forms of interactions through the help of mass technology. Hence, Harvey (2000) alludes that the assumption that globalisation is fast becoming a cultural metaphor for contemporary society is premised upon its influence on all spheres of life and emerging societal interactions that shape the society (p. 19). Given that globalisation is an emerging social force, the next section will examine how it is influencing structural frameworks that determine the functions of the society.

Social Theory of Structural Functionalism

This paper adopts social theory of structural functionalism to analysis how the emerging process of globalisation is changing contemporary religious structures and how young people are responding to it across faith denominational circles. Data from the administered questionnaire for this work show receptive and cautious approaches to the application of psychological sciences to the practice of Christianity. Some of the respondents acknowledged that the application of psychology to pastoral care is gradually changing the morphology of contemporary Christian praxis.

Functionalism or structural functionalism is a form of social theory that visualises the society as a complex system wherein the coherent ordering of its social structures and components guarantee its stability. Social theory is descriptively simplified as basic surviving skills within an organised system. This is premised on the assumption that if one knows the operations of an organised system, like the society, and fits into it, the one will live in relative peace and harmony (Lemert, 1999, pp. 1-2). Social theories are constructed modes of looking at the society based on certain assumptions, self-identity and the end of its interactions. Thus

these theories present social realities in perspectives and as such, societal variables necessarily engender modifications. That is why there is, for example, neo-structural functionalism.

There is a general consensus among scholars of sociology that Auguste Comte (1798-1857), a French philosopher and sociologist, laid the groundwork for the importance of social integration, especially when the society is undergoing rapid change. This integration is necessary because when social realities change, the adjustment of its social structures will facilitate the process of integration of all into the main fabric of the society, thereby reducing dysfunctional backlash. Herbert Spencer (1820-1901) and Emile Durkheim (1857-1917) built upon Comte's ideas. The success of their work led to the emergence of sociology as a distinct field in the sphere of social science. But it was Talcott Parsons (1902-1979) who popularised the structural-functional paradigm of social theory while Robert Merton (1910-2003) emphasised the role of agency that was lacking in the former's views (Macionis, 2005, pp. 14-15).

Henslin (2005) explains that Robert Merton's logic of structural functionalism does not only visualise the society as an organism but also aids the understanding of changes that take place in human communities. Hence, the adjustments in social structures should be viewed as serving two functions: manifest and latent. The manifest functions are the ones that the society can predict and control whereas the latent ones are not directly intended. Hence, for every intended or pre-emptory adjustment to social structures, there are always positive or negative unintended effects (p. 13). For example, as the Chinese government relaxes its one-child-one family policy in view of taking care of its aging population, future economic growth and other related issues, other social institutions will be affected by this programme and unintended results will follow.

For Martin (2009), social structures are analytic constructs that make up relationships among active agents in the society. It is these relationships that constitute social institutions (p. 17). The family, marriage, religion, health, economy, politics, etc., are few examples of social structures and institutions that perform vital functions within the society. According to the structural functional theory, each member of the society is shaped by these institutions; therefore, human behaviours are structurally patterned. One of the goals of governments is the alteration of the functions of these institutions according to their vision of the society. Nock (1987) mentions that since structuralism presents the society as a complex organism that should always be kept stable, the dysfunction or change in even one of its social structures will reverberate in other spheres of social life – be it at the macro or micro levels (p. 12). At this juncture, it is pertinent to ask: what are the implications of this theory on the influence of globalisation within the society? The (practical) responses to this question will be examined later in the section on questionnaire data analysis. What follows now is an overview of the partnership between religion and psychological sciences.

Religion and Psychological Sciences: Patterns of Emerging Partnership

The relationship between the practice of religion and psychological sciences has moved from sheer antagonism to constructive integration. Many reasons account for this development, prominent among which is the globalising effect of knowledge and interdisciplinary studies. Clinical psychology has been the major domain for integration because it treats people with various problems traceable to the mind. Yet Gorsuch (2002) cautions that there are some areas of clinical psychology that ought not to be integrated with practice of religion because the latter

involves values and ethics (p. 111). Perhaps, it is because of this or other reasons that some Christians suggest that psychology, viewed as a 'profane' science, has nothing to contribute to the practice of religion or spirituality. This section explores the contributions of psychological sciences to the scientific study of Christian spirituality and the results of this integrative study.

Meaning of Psychology and Christian Spirituality

Morphologically speaking, the term 'psychology' is a compound word. It is derived from two Greek words: *psyche* (mind) and *logos* (knowledge or study). Hence, etymologically, psychological sciences are directed towards a study of the mind. The mind is considered by many to be the seat of human actions and interactions. Based on this postulate, psychology becomes the scientific inquiry into human behaviour within its immediate context. From the literal meaning of psychology, it can be seen that this scientific study deals with human interiority (the mind), precisely as the 'foundation' of human actions. As such, it has much to do with spirituality that richly engages with the non-corporeal aspect of the human person (Ruffing, 2011, p. 308). This definition of psychology excludes the studies of animal behaviour given that spirituality concerns human beings only

As personality science, psychology provides a lot of resources that aid a better understanding of the human person and its integral wellbeing. The discoveries in the field of developmental psychology, experimental psychology, analytical psychology, psychoanalysis, clinical psychology, transpersonal psychology and other related branches of personality science have dug into observable human experiences thereby offering possible explanations to behaviours that were hitherto considered paranormal or abnormal. In this wise, one is able to

make a distinction between spirit possession and psychotic pathologies: groundless or reasonable fear, vision or hallucination, depression or spiritual darkness and psychological or spiritual trauma.

Transpersonal psychology claims to integrate the spiritual realm and transcendental being with the scientific study of human behaviour. Specialists in this area affirm that human beings relate with the Supreme Being or God and this relationship influences every religious adherent. Against this backdrop, Sutich (1969) submits that transpersonal psychologists hardly describe religious experience in the early Freudian sense as illusion or childhood neurosis. Rather, they see the human experience of the divine as the sacralisation of earthly existence: a medium through which human beings encounter the transcendent (p. 15). With this relational understanding of psychology, the possibility of integrating spirituality with the scientific study of human behaviour as conditioned by the immediate context and other environmental factors becomes clear.

Psychology and the developments in personality types have enhanced the understanding of human behaviours as well as interpretations of their actions. This progress is enhancing self-knowledge which in turn benefits the choice of spirituality that suits one's personality. Personality psychology indicates that every human being is different and this individual difference enables a better understanding of human nature (Meyers, 1993, p. 29). Therefore, the scientific study of human behaviour will be of an immense benefit to spirituality and the society. Notton and Jacobs (2001) agree that many psychotherapists and counsellors make use of the Enneagram personality types in helping their clients solve some of life's enigmas. This is very useful for spiritual development because knowledge of self is crucial to growth in the spirit (p. 100).

With respect to spirituality, it is worth noting that religion is a cultural concept etymologically derived from two Latin words: *re* and *ligare*. *Re* is a pre-fix which connotes something done again and again, while *ligare* means to bind oneself to another. Hence, from its Latin root, religion denotes binding oneself again and again to a divine being through prayers, value based praxis, sacrifices and acts of faith. This etymological approach does not, however, exhaust the meaning of religion. For his part, Macionis (2005) writes that religion concerns realities that transcend the boundaries of human knowledge and as a social institution, involves beliefs and practices concerning the concept of the sacred (p. 489). Spirituality has to do with personal and relational dimension of value-laden interactions with the sacred that is informed by narratives, myths, revelation and sacred texts. Additionally, spirituality is as 'an individual's inner life, his ideals, attitudes, thoughts, feelings and prayers towards the Divine, and about how he expresses these in his daily way of life' (Schreurs, 2002, p. 25). Consequently, Duke (2014) argues that the functional dimension of religion can be regarded as existential spirituality because it demonstrates how religious beliefs regulate the details of the everyday life of adherents' (p. 50).

According to the adherents of the Christian faith, Christian spirituality is centred on the person of Jesus Christ acclaimed as God, the meaning and goal of human existence. As a corollary, Christian spirituality is informed by the human experience of the God of Jesus Christ, Christian scriptures and traditions. Given that the relationship between God and human beings as well as among the latter is observable, a scientific study of Christian spirituality is possible. To this effect, Schneiders (2011) states that:

> Christian spirituality as an academic discipline studies the lived experience of
> Christian faith, the subjective appropriation of faith and living of discipleship

> in their individual and corporate actualization(s)....[It is] the experience of conscious involvement in the project of life-integration through self-transcendence toward the horizon of ultimate value one perceives….This life of faith and discipleship constitutes the existential phenomenon that Christian spirituality as discipline studies (p. 16).

The experience of Christian faith becomes a life-long process by means of which the faithful integrate the values taught by Jesus Christ through the mystery of His incarnation. Since they believe that the deposit of this experience lies within the ecclesial community, Christian spirituality is not a mere personal journey. It needs the support and discerning guidance of the Church wherein one identifies himself or herself as a member. One can observe varieties of Christian experiences that shape particular denominations' expression of faith in Jesus Christ; this will undoubtedly influence how psychological sciences are integrated. From this flows the plurality in Christian spirituality: Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, Pentecostal, etc. The questionnaire for this study was given to Christians from the Roman Catholic, African Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal traditions. African Pentecostals and Neo-Pentecostals belong to indigenous charismatic-like movements. According to Kalu (2008), 'Each of the indigenous group designates itself by its ministerial emphasis, such as evangelicalism, deliverance, intercession, fellowship…theological emphasis such as prosperity, holiness, witchcraft cleansing, spiritual warfare, prophecy' (p.15). These churches were selected because of the following reasons: firstly, the research wanted to know if difference in doctrinal beliefs between mainline churches (like the Roman Catholic Church) and African Independent churches (like the Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal churches) significantly influence how both groups respond to the developments in psychological sciences and the culture of globalization. For this reason, Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists, and

Presbyterians (who fall under the mainline churches) were not given the questionnaires. Secondly, the mainline churches have a firmer institutional control of charismatic initiatives while the Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal churches have a lesser restrain on how vibrant Pentecostal-like programs utilized. Consequently, this work is interested in discovering how these different mind-sets shape the application of psychology-based-aids and globalization apparatus to the pastoral environment.

Furthermore, Schneiders (2011) avers that the main focus of Christian spirituality as a field of study is the experience of the spiritual life *as* human experience (p. 18). This means that a scientific study of Christian spirituality is not confessional; consequently, anybody can be engaged in it. A believer needs to bracket his or her faith and rather concentrate on the experiences of those who attempt to replicate in their lives the teachings of Jesus Christ. These experiences ought to transform the life of those who practice this religion. Since the expected transformation is observable in one's quality of life and the betterment of the society at large, sciences that aim at improving the quality of human life are not counter-productive to Christian spirituality. So the question is: what are the contributions of psychology to Christian spirituality?

Contributions of Psychological Sciences to Christian Spirituality

First, psychology has contributed to a better understanding of human personality. Meyer-Briggs' personality and Enneagram programmes are key psychological tools for describing, improving upon and remedying personality types. Since self-understanding is crucial to relating with God and others, personality psychology is important for spiritual growth. Based on this, growth in Christian spirituality will benefit a lot from a proper

understanding of the self through the help of psychological sciences. For example, introverts and extroverts will be encouraged to take on spiritual exercises that suit their personality types with a view to overcoming unnecessary conflicts caused by lack of self-understanding. An introvert who is more drawn to meditative prayers will be encouraged to do more of that rather than being worried about his or her inability with respect to vocal prayers.

Secondly, the field of psychoanalysis has unveiled the relationship between the subconscious and human actions. By probing into the subconscious, psychoanalytic techniques have diagnosed and resolved some human problems. It is possible to manage anxiety-related problems by probing into the human subconscious self. This approach is very helpful when dealing with psychotic issues. By means of this approach, Christian ministers or pastoral agents are able to make a distinction between diabolical/spiritual cases and clinically psycho-somatic illness. When this is done, diabolical cases will be hardly confused with clinical pathologies and vice-versa.

Thirdly, social psychology is of immense help when one considers the management of people in Christian communities. Since human beings are informed and formed by various social factors that influence their perception of themselves and the world, dissemination of the faith on which Christian spirituality is built calls for an average knowledge of social psychology. This will help Christian ministers to be acquainted with the cultural taboos of their environment and consequently, dialogue with the community using the values of the gospel. When this is done, unnecessary conflicts between the people and Christian faith will be averted.

Fourthly, developments in guidance and counselling are fruits of extensive research in the field of psychology. These developments are therapeutic to the human person and

invariably beneficial to spiritual growth. Marriage counselling sessions that are faith-based have much to benefit from scientific developments in the field of psychology. For example, a technical knowledge of these counselling tools will benefit marriage counsellors as they deal with marital crises. The addition of these techniques to scriptural resources will enrich the help made available to married couples in times of need.

Fifthly, Plante (2011) describes how clinical psychology deals with the assessment, management and treatment of mental pathologies induced by stress or imbalance of organic substances in the body (p. 50). Sometimes, a mental sickness presents itself as a spiritual problem. For example, depression can be misdiagnosed as spiritual darkness. Additionally, psychological trauma apparently looks like spiritual trauma. At the crossroads of uncertain diagnosis, knowledge of clinical psychology will prove helpful to clear these doubts in order to help those who are afflicted with one kind of mental illness or the other.

Sixthly, Lartey (2003) proposes an intercultural approach to counselling that places a high premium on cultural sensibilities when one is attending to the pastoral needs of people in traditional African societies. According to him, this method of counselling explores the complex web of relationships and cultural influences within the African society before the application of Christian convictions to the problems of those who are both African and Christian (pp. 154-158). In addition, Lartey (2013) developed this intercultural approach to counselling in his post-colonial perspectives on pastoral theology. In this work, he uses a diagram to explain that every experience should be analysed in its situation before breaking down the theological context wherein such an occurrence falls. Further, before arriving at any pastoral action, the theology should be critiqued (p. 5). The merit of this approach lies, *inter alia*, in its accentuation of the particularity of every pastoral challenge, psychological or

otherwise.

Methodology

As observed earlier, globalisation has an enormous impact upon social structures of contemporary society. The functional implications of this cultural phenomenon for structural functionalism are evident because they have changed the patterns of governance, religious faith and its communication: family life, interdisciplinary interactions, commerce, pattern of pastoral approach, etc. Since the interest of this research is on how young Christians are adapting to trends in pastoral care that integrates religious practice with psychological sciences in the light of globalisation, the quota sampling technique was used in the distribution of questionnaire.

Quota sampling is one of the research methods for quantitative analysis in the social sciences. It is used when major research variables are of interest to the researcher. De Vaus (2002) explains that the principal aim of this quantitative research method is arriving at a representative sampling without random selection given that the quotas of particular types of subjects have already been mapped out beforehand (p. 90). For this work, the age bracket of the young people (between 17 and 29 years) was chosen. The age specification of these young adults is informed by the studies of Sefton-Green (1998, p. 91) and Taft (2007, p. 206). In addition, the characteristics of the sample quotas are young Christians who belong to various Christian denominations. Most of them do not have a highly professional understanding of globalisation and psychological sciences though show reasonable commitment to the praxis of Christian faith. Given the homogeneous nature of such groups and the small sample size of the respondents used for the study, Suen and Ary (1989) suggest that sample statistics will fairly

represent the population parameter under investigation (pp. 46-47).

The questionnaire was administered to young Christians in Calabar Municipality, Cross River State in Nigeria. A total of 250 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the target audience but 172 were returned. 34.6 per cent of the respondents were male while 65.4 per cent represented the female gender. Concerning the financial status of the respondents' families it was noticed that 24. 2 per cent came from upper income class, 48.4 per cent came from middle income class, and 27.4 per cent belonged to lower income class. It was otherwise observed that the financial status of their families did not have any significant influence on how they make use of the Internet and social network platforms. Most of them were conversant with the Internet- related products.

Research Data: Analysis and Discussion

On lay perceptions of globalisation and psychological sciences, 68.2 per cent of them associate the former with the use of Internet for social and religious benefits while 32.8 per cent extended it to include commerce and politics. As regards a non-professional understanding of psychological sciences, 56.2 per cent showed an average knowledge of psychology with bias for guidance and counselling. While 38.1 per cent demonstrated an elementary awareness of this subject, 5.7 per cent indicated skilled knowledge of psychology. These data suggest that the respondents had a fair knowledge of the key variables on the questionnaire.

In addition, the section on religion and psychological sciences brought to the fore the useful practice of applying psychological sciences to pastoral approaches with a view to solving human problems. Some inquiries on this subject were as follows: 'Is there any relationship between psychological sciences and Christian spirituality?' 97.8 per cent said yes there is,

while 3.2 per cent considered psychological sciences to be profane studies that should not be allowed to desacralise the Christian faith. An interesting twist to this question was observed in some of the responses given. About 28 per cent of those who said 'yes' added that the relationship between the two fields of studies should be directed by the Word of God. Further scrutiny confirmed that those who made up this percentage belonged to the Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal traditions wherein *sola scriptura* principle is pronounced. Even though they did not state how this would be achieved, this response indicates how a particular religious attitude variegates the relationship between psychological sciences and Christian spirituality among its traditions.

In the same vein, another question was asked: 'Do you think that the knowledge of psychotherapy can aid pastoral work of Church ministers? If yes, how?' 94.3 per cent of the respondents said 'yes'. But some of them were wary of the kind of help that psychotherapy would give; perhaps it was because of their non-professional or shallow knowledge of the subject. This welcome integration still generated some tension that made some of them to remark: 'but the solution of psychotherapy is not supreme,' still others; 'the Bible remains supreme,' etc. Here again, one notices that the global trend of complementarity vis-à-vis the link between psychology and Christian faith is not homogenous within the small group of young people who constituted the respondents. This analysis agrees with what was observed above on how closed cultural groups resist the grand narratives of globalisation that threaten their comfort zone, which, in this instance, can be identified as the primacy of Christian faith in all issues of life. Furthermore, this small percentage of respondents reflected a similar thought pattern when asked: 'Do you think that those engaged in healing ministry need to be grounded in clinical psychology so that they may better distinguish spiritual problems from psychological ones? The response was that they did not need such help because those engaged

in healing ministry would always be guided by the Spirit. It seems that this group of respondents does not have much knowledge of the symbiotic relationship between the two disciplines under consideration or they allowed their faith to be dominantly implicated in their response.

One of the benefits of contemporary globalising processes is the availability of information to those who have access to its media. These pieces of information can go a long way to saving lives and ignorance of them, even as a non-professional can be very costly and sometimes fatal. In view of this, the following question was asked: 'Are you aware of instances whereby mental health issues which could have been treated by psychologists or psychiatric personnel were taken to pastoral agents as spiritual cases?' 60 per cent of the respondents stated that they were aware of incorrect diagnosis which could have been averted if relevant information had been available even at a layman's level. One of the respondents stated that this had happened to his brother; because of this, he cautioned against the rush to spiritualise human problems.

On another note, an integrative application of psychology to pastoral needs of Christian communities demands professionalism for its effective utilisation. Obviously, the Internet cannot truly give this help. This leads the researcher to one of the limits of the globalising process. It also reminds those who are over-dependent on this modern cultural process that when it comes to professionalism, much more needs to be done so that the lives of others may not be at risk because of inadequate knowledge and skills. Even when one is well prepared, the tension between strict adherence to psychological principles and what the Christian faith says may also arise. Hence the following question was asked: 'Does professionalism imply that a Christian psychologist or psychotherapist should bracket his or her faith for an unbiased

application of the benefits of this field to the Christian community?' 94.3 per cent said one can be a Christian psychological scientist without any inner tensions. But the 5.7 per cent of respondents who demonstrated professional knowledge of psychological sciences stated that there are a lot of conflicts in the mind of a psychotherapist who wants to be faithful to the principles of psychotherapy. These arise because of areas of irreconcilability between psychotherapy and some aspects of the Christian faith. In some instances, they declare that there is no connection between psychological sciences and the Christian faith. Nevertheless, they all agree that one can still allow his or her Christian faith to influence professional practice in the area of psychology. On another note, they argue that the availability of reading materials through the World Wide Web has revolutionised the study of psychological sciences on the basis that research findings published by internationally reputable bodies can be accessed from anywhere on the globe. Since focussed group discussion was also used, it is noteworthy to observe that one of the respondents went as far as making this totalising statement: 'A contemporary psychologist cannot thrive without the assistance of globalization.'

Interestingly, the use of Global System for Mobile communication (GSM) has revolutionized contemporary processes of globalisation. This technology efficiently enhances connectivity and actual time communication in nano-seconds. It is instrumental in solving human problems in many ways. But the privacy of what is communicated through this system cannot be guaranteed. Consequently, this seems to limit its adequacy as a trusted instrument vis-à-vis certain pastoral aids. Pastoral counselling through GSM-mediated services unites globalisation processes, psychological sciences and Christian praxis in a unique way. It is gradually becoming a trendy tool for worship, prayers, pastoral care and counselling among the so-called non-traditional Christian communities. About 96 per cent of the respondents appraised positively the use of Internet telephone services and GSM technologies for

counselling members of the Christian communities who are in need.

The boundary of this trend is shifting to accommodate praying with people in need through the GSM technology. The respondents were asked: 'Are you comfortable with the emerging trend of on-line or GSM-mediated prayer sessions?' 69 per cent of these young Christians saw nothing strange with the pastor praying with/for a church member via the GSM phone. Some were of the opinion that no privacy is breached when this is done because the prayers in question are directed to God. In addition, others said that GSM technologies aid communication and interactions and therefore, making use of them for prayers means that the sacralisation of modern technology has been achieved in some way. 31 per cent of those who considered this pastoral practice weird stated that the privacy of such solemn moments is gravely compromised. They stressed that since distance is not a barrier to divine intervention and prayers are not principally offered for the psychological satisfaction of church members, pastoral agents can still offer prayers for them in private. On this matter, it was noticed that there was no significant difference between the opinion of respondents from the Roman Catholic, Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal churches. These data show that young people across denominations exhibited similar behavioural patterns as regards the use of GSM technologies in pastoral care.

Conclusion

This study aimed at exploring the attitudinal appraisal of how young Christians relate to the psychological sciences and globalisation process from pastoral perspectives. Concerning how contemporary processes of globalisation influence how young Christians respond to psychological sciences, the following appraisals are significant. (1) This research shows that

even though a small percentage of the respondents showed a professional understanding of concepts like globalisation and psychological sciences, the entire group grasped the fundamentals of the main subjects of this inquiry. Therefore, their lay or non-professional knowledge of these key concepts did not have any negative effects on responses gathered.

(2) A cross section of young Christians in the Calabar municipality was strongly homogenous in their attitude towards the relationship between psychological sciences and Christian spirituality. According to the data collated, 97.8 per cent of them agreed positively on the integration of the findings of these sciences with Christian resources in solving human problems. Nevertheless, the particularity of their Christian traditions evinced heterogeneity as regards the place of the Bible in this discourse. Here, the points of convergence and divergence highlight the complexity of the globalisation process and its impact on social interactions.

(3) A reasonable percentage of the respondents were critical of globalisation's grand narrative as regards the solution of human problems. This attitude made them to subordinate psychological sciences to Christian religion no matter how beneficial the former might be to the latter. This caution should be expected because integration of A and B does not dissolve their differences and distinctiveness.

(4) The Christian religion as one of the social structures in the society is underdoing gradual change at the grassroots. This study indicates that the contemporary generation of young people are re-thinking and reshaping the art of prayer as a means of meeting human needs. The change in attitude towards the use of GSM technologies to meet the immediate needs of the people shows their swift sacralisation of an aspect of the globalisation process. There is the need for a thorough assessment of this emerging attitude, through faith-based

normative standards so that young Christians might not be carried away by what is trending.

Finally, the fact that discoveries and benefits made in the field of psychological sciences are pastorally useful in alleviating human problems cannot be denied. Nonetheless when dealing with specialised professions, such as psychotherapy, psychoanalysis, guidance and counselling, proper preparations are needed. Consequently, the church communities need to invest in the training of its pastoral agents so that they can meet the psychological needs of their congregation and others outside their religious groups. On a related note, critical approach to the integration of psychological sciences with Christian religion should not be exaggerated. Hence, greater awareness is needed on the possibilities and limitations of this process of integration. In addition, Contextualization provides information on the background for every human reality, event or happening. Based on this, the intercultural approach to pastoral counselling proposed by Lartey (2003) will help indigenous charismatic-like churches, Roman Catholic Church and other Christian denominations in Nigeria to be more sensitive to how African cultural beliefs condition the psychological needs of the people. And this can make a significant difference to pastoral care in African.

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