Pentecostalism and Empowerment:
A Study of the Church of Pentecost and International Central Gospel Church

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A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in World Christianity

University of Edinburgh

2015
Declaration

I composed this thesis and the work is my own. No part of this thesis has been submitted for any other degree or qualification.

Name: Michael Perry Nii Osah Tettey
Abstract

Contemporary Pentecostal and Charismatic (PC) Christianity has attracted scholars and practitioners of religions globally. This is because Pentecostalism in all its variations has been reckoned as the fastest growing brand of Christianity. In the particular case of sub-Saharan Africa, Pentecostalism has become one of the key religious features of Christianity since the late 1990s. As such, it clearly has a strong appeal to millions of Africans. Notwithstanding, the PC movement has also had its share of criticism based on its distinctive beliefs and practices, particularly in relation to the prosperity gospel and the abuse of power. In this thesis, using the Church of Pentecost (COP) and International Central Gospel Church (ICGC) as case studies, I examine the individual (personal) and group (collective) empowerment/disen empowerment components in Pentecostalism in Ghana. Theories encompassing empowerment, social, cultural and religious/spiritual capital are reviewed within Pentecostalism in Ghana.

The thesis central focus is on how the churches (COP and ICGC) constitute social, cultural and religious capital in their efforts to empower individuals and society. The study explores internal structures of power, polity and leadership in the churches, as well as their role in social policy, human development programmes, civic and public life issues. These were the main themes that emanated from the research. The findings show that the churches have made positive impact in transforming religious and social landscapes. They have also shown prospects in human development and brought awareness in the spheres of politics and civic responsibility. However, some beliefs and practices (i.e. gender inequality in church leadership, structures of power and authority, etc.) have affected aspects of individuals’ and groups’ empowerment. These insights
come from the research analysis of the processes and outcomes of the churches’ practical work, for instance, theology/preaching, practical ministries, church projects in areas such as education, gender roles and practices, moral conduct and church discipline, trust and voluntarism.

A case study research method involving textual examination of primary documents, qualitative interviews and participant observation was used to show the different perspectives from a representative sample of pastors and members of the COP and ICGC. While most scholarly works give a lot of insight to the developments of Pentecostalism in Ghana, their efforts have mainly focused on the founders and leaders of the movement as representative of their organisations. This has been useful to a point; however, this study has shown that such an approach muted the voices of the members of the churches whose viewpoints in the development of the PC churches remain significant. Thus, this study built-in views from both the clergy and laity of COP and ICGC.

The thesis shows the present developments (life, thoughts and practices) of the PC churches in Ghana with COP and ICGC in context. It expands discussions on works previously written by Paul Gifford and Emmanuel Kingsley Larbi. Gifford and Larbi give an account of the developments of the churches with tremendous insight into their religious and social backgrounds. J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu further builds up the discussion on Pentecostalism in Ghana and draws attention to its contemporary forms and religious significance in Ghana’s religious life and society. The fluid nature of Pentecostalism requires constant updating and this thesis fills in some of the previously unexplained recent developments and on-going reforms within Pentecostalism in Ghana.
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I am truly thankful to the Almighty God for his faithfulness and love towards me. I am grateful to Him for his providence that allowed me to complete my education successfully. May His name be praised now and forever more, Amen!

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In a very special way I say a big thank you to my wife, Debbie and children Michaella Naa Imiishie Tettey, Nii Armah Nyam Odassey Tettey and Adjormi Tettey for sacrificing so much to make my studies possible. I am grateful to God that I have you as my family. I also appreciate the support I received from family members and friends in the UK i.e. Mr. and Mrs. Edward Tsotovor, Dr. Kofi Asare and family, Mr. and Mrs. Emmanuel Nunoo, Mr. and Mrs. John Sam Aikins and Mr. Robert Nii Awuley Tettey. My sincere thanks and appreciation also goes to my friend and brother Rev Samuel Antwi. I
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Dedication

To Rev. Dr. Mensa Anamoa Otabil

A man of many parts

and

To all present on the 24th February 1984,

at the birth of International Central Gospel Church.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>Apostolic Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>ACITMC</td>
<td>Akrofi Christaller Institute of Theology, Missions and Culture</td>
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<td>AFREG</td>
<td>African Forum on Religion and Governance</td>
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<td>AG</td>
<td>Assemblies of God Church</td>
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<td>AIC</td>
<td>African Indigenous church</td>
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<td>AICs</td>
<td>African Indigenous Churches</td>
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<td>AIWC</td>
<td>Accra International Worship Centre</td>
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<td>AME Zion Church</td>
<td>African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church</td>
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<td>ARS</td>
<td>The Apostles Revelation Society</td>
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<td>ASO</td>
<td>Accra Symphony Orchestra</td>
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<td>CAC</td>
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<td>CAFI</td>
<td>Christian Action Faith International</td>
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<td>CBC</td>
<td>Catholic Bishops Conference</td>
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<td>Christian Broadcasting Network</td>
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<td>Central Business School</td>
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<td>CCC</td>
<td>Calvary Charismatic Centre</td>
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<td>Christian Council of Ghana</td>
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<td>CD</td>
<td>Compact Disc</td>
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<td>CED</td>
<td>Central Educational Directorate</td>
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<td>CIC</td>
<td>Council of Independent Churches</td>
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<td>COP</td>
<td>Church of Pentecost</td>
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<td>CUC</td>
<td>Central University College</td>
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<tr>
<td>DAGG</td>
<td>Dialogue and Advocacy for Good Governance</td>
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<td>DVD</td>
<td>Digital Video Disk/ Digital Versatile Disc</td>
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<tr>
<td>EISA</td>
<td>Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa</td>
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<td>EPC</td>
<td>Elim Pentecostal Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>FASS</td>
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<td>FBO</td>
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<td>FCUBE</td>
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<td>FGI</td>
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<td>Ghana Evangelical Fellowship</td>
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<td>Ghana Evangelical Society</td>
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<td>Human Development Index</td>
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<td>HDR</td>
<td>Human Development Report</td>
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<td>Hour of Visitation Choir and Evangelistic Association</td>
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<td>ICGC</td>
<td>International Central Gospel Church</td>
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<td>IEA</td>
<td>Institute of Economic Affairs</td>
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<td>International Monitory Fund</td>
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<td>Kingsway International Christian Centre</td>
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<td>LCI</td>
<td>Lighthouse Chapel International</td>
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<td>MDCC</td>
<td>Musama Disco Christo Church</td>
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<td>NAB</td>
<td>National Accreditation Board</td>
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<td>NACCC</td>
<td>National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches</td>
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<td>NBC</td>
<td>National Baptist Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCCE</td>
<td>National Commission of Civic Education</td>
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<td>NDC</td>
<td>National Democratic Congress</td>
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<td>NEA</td>
<td>Nation Evangelistic Association</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental Organizations</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIP</td>
<td>National Independent Party</td>
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<td>NIV</td>
<td>New International Version</td>
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<td>NPC</td>
<td>National Peace Council</td>
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<td>NPP</td>
<td>New Patriotic Party</td>
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<td>OAIC</td>
<td>Organization of African Initiated Churches</td>
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<tr>
<td>PC</td>
<td>Pentecostal Charismatic</td>
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<td>PENTSOS</td>
<td>Pentecost Social Services</td>
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<td>PENTWAS</td>
<td>Pentecost Welfare Association</td>
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<td>PHC</td>
<td>Population and Housing Census</td>
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<td>PIWC</td>
<td>Pentecost International Worship Centre</td>
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<td>PLUS</td>
<td>Peace Love Unity and Stability</td>
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<td>PMA</td>
<td>Pentecostal Ministers’ Association</td>
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<td>PNDC</td>
<td>Provisional National Defence Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>PUC</td>
<td>Pentecost University College</td>
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<tr>
<td>PUCC</td>
<td>Pentecost University College Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>PVV</td>
<td>Precious Vessels of Virtue</td>
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<tr>
<td>RCC</td>
<td>Roman Catholic Church</td>
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<tr>
<td>RHCI</td>
<td>Royal House Chapel International</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAC</td>
<td>Social Action Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAS</td>
<td>School of Applied Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>STEE</td>
<td>School of Theological Education by Extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STM</td>
<td>School of Theology and Missions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SU       Scripture Union
TAC       Twelve Apostles Church
UNDP      United Nation Development Programme
UoG       University of Ghana
VVU       Valley View University
WMC       Word Miracle Church
YAFCA     Youth Ambassadors for Christ Association
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

1.0. Preamble

This chapter is in two parts: the first part gives the introductory section of the study which includes the background of the study, the research objectives, and a brief survey of the history of Christianity in Ghana. The focus is on the major strands of Christianity in Ghana’s religious landscape. The segment concludes with a definition and clarification of terms and an outline of how the study is organised.

The second part of the chapter presents the methodology used for this research. It shows the exploratory nature of the study and the approach employed in arriving at certain conclusions. Furthermore, the methodology segment discusses the research data i.e. interviews and participant observation, the coding of the quantitative data and the case studies.

PART I INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the Study

Over the last century Pentecostalism has become a significant feature of the global religious landscape.\(^1\) Pentecostalism in Africa responds to particularities of cultures, religious ideologies, social landscapes, economic and political considerations. Ogbu Kalu for instance asserts:

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African Pentecostalism has become a religious force that is sensitive to the socioeconomic and political terrains. Its adaptability in various regions has been one major source of growth even though it has been accused of being other-worldly. Asamoah-Gyadu on his part argues that the pragmatic and adaptable character of Pentecostalism has enabled African Christians “to take their spiritual destiny into their own hands by deploying within local contexts a religion with a global outlook.” As a result, Pentecostalism has become a key religious character in African Christian experience especially in the last three decades. The indication that African Pentecostal-Charismatic (hereafter abbreviated to PC) churches have great relevance in the areas of religion, society, economics and politics among individuals, congregations and communities give relevance of any study that endeavours to unearth how these churches marshal resources (human, financial and material) for societal development and change. For instance, Longman observes:

Because of their economic assets, large membership, international connections, institutional recourses, and moral authority, churches are clearly powerful institutions …by which I mean, they have substantial influence over the conduct of political, economic, and social life.

Longman’s reflection underscores three critical elements needed in embarking on any empowerment programme i.e. the churches human, material and financial resources, the available social network and the ‘power’ factor that is accessible to the churches in Africa. This strengthens the view of Stephen Ellis and Gerrie ter

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Haar that “in future, state and religious organizations may be called upon to play a complementary role in the governance of society.”\textsuperscript{6} Hence, a suggestion that the churches empowering role transcends an exclusive religious impact. Ogbu Kalu’s impression that Pentecostalism especially in Africa is to the effect that “the contemporary growth of the movement appears unstoppable and globally significant.”\textsuperscript{7} He therefore writes:

\begin{quote}
Beyond caricatures, questions abound about its socioeconomic and political significance, gender ideology, and ecumenical temper precisely because of its aggressive evangelism and nondialogical, deliberate endeavor to reshape many religious landscapes.\textsuperscript{8}
\end{quote}

The issues Kalu raised sought to emphasise the religious significance of Pentecostalism in the African milieu, and whether Pentecostalism has the gravitas that translates into more authentic and useful establishments within the African society. David Martin,\textsuperscript{9} for instance, had imagined this same journey. Kelly Chong pointed this out:

\begin{quote}
All in all, the picture that emerges of Pentecostalism here is that of a voluntary, participatory, enthusiastic, and pragmatic faith centred on personal transformation that, though playing a pivotal role in helping the marginalized—especially women—negotiate poverty, suffering, and various challenges of the modern world, remains highly ambiguous in its effects.\textsuperscript{10}
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
\item Kalu, \textit{African Pentecostalism}, p. 5.
\item Ibid.
\item Martin, \textit{Pentecostalism}.
\end{footnotes}
Chong raises the perceived ambiguities that scholars such as Martin presents about Pentecostalism regardless of the sheer numerical advantage and its attendant effects on different sectors of society. This was an impetus for this study as it underscored the actual situation for instance with Pentecostalism in Ghana.

1.2. Research Objectives
This research sought to find out components of individual (personal) and group (collective) empowerment/disempowerment models in Pentecostalism in Ghana. It therefore assessed both the processes and outcomes of the churches practical work i.e. theology/preaching, practical ministries, church projects in areas such as education, gender issues, and open participation in church work (voluntarism). The study also explored internal structures of power, polity and leadership in the churches, as well as their role in social policy and human development, civic and public life issues. The objective was to find out ways by which the churches empower or disempower in both micro level (for the individual) and macro level (community empowerment). This approach is consistent with the position taken by Jennifer Nachshen, maintaining: “one way to incorporate the concept of empowerment into research is by examining the factors that predict or cause it.”

The concepts explored include: (a) Ghanaian Pentecostalism has influenced social, religious, economic and political affairs by its numerical growth, sensitization programmes, and promised succor. Besides, Pentecostalism in Ghana, is considered to exhibit continuity and discontinuity with primal religion which serve as both source and influence to empower and/or disempower; (b) PC churches have moved

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into direct and robust engagement in their quest in creating spiritual and human capital but also pragmatically creating social capital for socio-political transformation howbeit slowly, (c) the prosperity gospel preached by PC churches, regardless of its pros and cons, has facilitated the participation of personnel into church volunteerism. The expertise of these volunteers goes beyond theological matters thus incorporating the principles of good corporate values in church work which impact the churches with new dynamics and (d) Pentecostalism in Ghana has no predetermined connection to structures of power (politically), but represent an important establishment for the development of institutions, programmes for poverty alleviation, political responsiveness and participatory approaches due to their clout in society.

This research is interested in establishing the connectedness between people, structures and processes and the changing conditions of individuals and groups (congregations). This led to the adoption of four important procedures espoused by Parpart et al.\textsuperscript{12} The theory suggests, first, the multi-dimensions of conditions that exist within a given context and their connections to religious, sociological, economic and psychological aspects of peoples lives before a social process starts. Second, the different levels i.e. individuals and groups (including communities) that are directly affected by the social processes. Third, the social process itself, because it does not take place in isolation and finally, the outcomes of the social process.

In this regard, the key activities of the PC churches were considered as social processes. The churches, however, carry out these activities primarily as their

religious obligation. However, exploring these key activities\textsuperscript{13} of PC churches establishes grounds for assessing the connection in the empowerment/disempowerment discourse with the churches.

1.3. Research Questions

The thrust of the research is focused on how the growing phenomenon of PC Christianity in Ghana constitutes social, cultural and religious capital which translates into empowerment. The study further examines how PC churches create improved conditions of life in the areas i.e. religious, social, economic and political to the benefit of members and society. Accordingly, I explored the following questions: (a) how and to what extent does Pentecostalism serve as an agent of empowerment? And how do they engage in the process of empowerment? (b) What changes do PC churches discussions and activities offer disempowered and needy church members and people in society? And (c) what is the impact of PC churches in Ghana on the wellbeing of individuals, congregations, communities and the public?

1.4. Christianity in Ghana: A Brief Historical Profile

Ghana (formerly the Gold Coast)\textsuperscript{14} is predominantly Christian though there are other religious formations. Out of the three leading religions in Ghana -

\textsuperscript{13} The Cornell Empowerment Group and Robert Putnam discussion on social processes for establishing empowerment and creating capital (social, cultural and religious) respectively is discussed in the next chapter.

\textsuperscript{14} The Gold Coast now Ghana is on the West coast of Africa. The change of name took place upon the attainment of independence from the colonial British master in 1957. On 1\textsuperscript{st} July 1960 Ghana attained a Republican status.
Christianity, Islam\textsuperscript{15} and Indigenous Traditional Religions.\textsuperscript{16} Christianity has shown consistent growth. For example, The \textit{Ghana Population Census} report, 1960, situated the three main religions in Ghana as follows: the Indigenous Traditional Religions 38.2\%, Islam 12.1\% and Christianity 42.79\%.\textsuperscript{17} Forty years later, the \textit{2000 Government Census} gave Indigenous Traditional Religions 15.4\%, Islam 15.6\% and Christianity 69\%.\textsuperscript{18} A government survey taken in \textit{2010 Population and Housing Census (PHC)} released by the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) presented the following statistics: Indigenous Traditional Religions 5.2\%, Islam 17.6\% and Christianity 71.2\% at a population of approximate 24.65 million.\textsuperscript{19} A comparative assessment of 1960, 2000 and 2010 religious surveys imply Christianity has grown steadily, Islam has grown marginally and the traditional indigenous religions declined.

The growth and development of Christianity in Ghana has been an influencing factor in the social, religious, political and economic life of the nation.\textsuperscript{20} The history of Ghana’s independence and republican status shows the active role of Christianity


\textsuperscript{18} International Religious Freedom Report 2006, released by the \textit{Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor}.


in its campaign for emancipation. Some notable personalities in the emancipation process were Rev. Samuel Richard Brew Attoh-Ahum, George Kuntu Blankson, Joseph Boakye Danquah, and Kwame Nkrumah. These precursors were not only noted for their political activism but also their Christian convictions that precipitated the struggle for nationalism in Ghana.\textsuperscript{21} In addition to the precursors, other clergymen such as Rev. Stephen Dzirasa and Rev. Christian Dovlo were comrades of Kwame Nkrumah during the first republican regime and contributed hugely to the development of the church and nation.\textsuperscript{22} Apart from these personalities, some churches supported the nationalist struggle. They included, The National Baptist Church (NBC), The African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church, and the Nigritian Church.\textsuperscript{23} These church groups were significant in the political development of Ghana.

The above historical account indicates the immense role Christianity played and continues to play from the beginning of Ghana’s nationhood. A brief historical profile is necessary to show the origins, growth and development of different Christian groups in Ghana. The churches listed include the Mission churches (also known as the Historical or Mainline churches), the African Indigenous Churches (AICs), the Classical Pentecostal and Charismatic churches. Since this study is primarily centered on the Church of Pentecost (COP) and International Central


Gospel Church (ICGC), a historical overview of their origin and development is presented.

1.4.1. Mission Churches

The Roman Catholic priests came with the earliest Portuguese merchants in the 15th century in the Gold Coast. These were *attachés* to the merchants whose effort to propagate the Christian faith was unfruitful. Thus, until 1828 when the first foreign missionary started there was Christian contact in the Gold Coast but with no real success. Jones Darkwa Amanor has pointed this out:

An earlier first attempt in the 15th century by chaplains who accompanied the Portuguese explorers had very little to show in terms of natives evangelized for about four centuries. The only signs of Roman Catholicism that survived the Portuguese era were a small group of Efutus (tribe along the coast) and their chief, probably converted by Augustinian Fathers in 1572, and an unrecognizable stump of a statue of St. Anthony in Padua in Elmina.

Subsequent to that were the Moravians who undertook the missionary task of reaching the Gold Coast in the mid-18th century. Their efforts were unsuccessful owing to a high mortality rate. After the Moravians, the Church of England sent the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to the Gold Coast in 1751. In 1754, the Society sent Rev. Thomson to Cape Coast. He laboured for five years with little impact on the mission field. What he is best remembered for was the role he played in the sponsorship of three Cape Coast youths to be educated in Britain, among

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them was Philip Quacoe the only one who survived. The Society’s work was however revived in 1904.

Thereafter the Basel Mission started the first enduring missionary work in 1828. The Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society followed in 1835. The North German Mission (Bremen) in 1847 followed by the Society of African Missions in 1880. This resulted in the establishment of the following Ghanaian churches i.e. Presbyterian Church, Methodist Church, Evangelical Presbyterian Church and the Roman Catholic Church respectively. Apart from the Roman Catholic Church, the three churches mentioned above with the Anglican and African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church formed the foundation members of the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) in 30th October 1929. The present membership of the CCG stands at eighteen churches.

The mission churches (as I prefer to call them in this thesis) after their establishment have contributed in the development of Ghana in areas such as education, linguistic studies, agriculture and trade, architecture, transportation and healthcare. They have also influenced church forms in Ghana by imbibing aspects of the culture into the mission’s churches liturgy. Elom Dovlo has shown this aspect of inculturation. Dovlo argues:

The missionary church in Africa is often accused of being hostile to African culture and tradition and demonizing it, while imposing European culture and tradition on African Christians. Though this is to


28 Christian Council brochure, see Appendix 2.

a large extent true, it must be noted that missionary aspirations often included plans to inculturate the Gospel and the churches planted were not without the seeds of engagement with African culture, though some of these seeds were transplanted, and grew in the church forms which emerged later.\footnote{Dovlo, "African Culture and Emergent Church forms in Ghana", p. 30.}


Elom Dovlo,\textsuperscript{41} and others.\textsuperscript{42} One important factor in their theological thought is a call for serious reflection on the inculturation and indigenization of African churches. This gives impetus for the study of African indigenous churches particularly in Ghana.

1.4.2. Prophetic Movements and African Indigenous Churches
In the study of the various indigenous Christian initiatives that shows the trajectory of Pentecostalism in Ghana, subsequent to the missionary enterprise, it is imperative to clearly distinguish the emergence and activities of the prophetic movements and the African indigenous churches (AICs). Ogbu Kalu for instance has raised awareness that, “it is essential to distinguish between the early prophetic movement from the leaders of the AICs.”\textsuperscript{43} Our discussion of the Prophetic movement and related matters is limited to the developments in the Gold Coast (now Ghana). Emmanuel K. Larbi, in his Ph.D. dissertation, now published as 

\textit{Pentecostalism: the Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity} has presented a dossier of key personalities and their prophetic activities in the nation. The first among them is the Prophet William Wade Harris, from the Grebo (Kru) tribe who made his brief appearance in the Nzema, the Western Region of Ghana in 1914.\textsuperscript{44} Larbi’s assessment of Prophet Wade Harris gives insight to the prophetic movements:

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{43} Kalu, \textit{African Pentecostalism}, p. 35.
\end{flushleft}
Harris’ attitude to the tribal gods, his understanding of the gifts and operations of the Holy Spirit, his adaptation of indigenous forms of worship, and aspects of his evangelistic strategy, do suggest that the prophet’s movement, does belong to mainline Pentecostalism rather than the Spiritual church category yet, in view of the fact that some of his followers later organized as Spiritual churches, Harris could still be regarded as the progenitor of the spiritual church movement.\textsuperscript{45}

The description of Harris follows in the same outlook of Prophet John Swatson form the Apolonia in the Western Region of Ghana and Prophet Sampson Oppong “an illiterate fetish practitioner with Christian background”\textsuperscript{46} also from Ghana. A common attribute that marked these three prophets whose religious activities brought a turning point in Ghana’s socio-religious and political life is because they “understood the African world view and made Christianity relevant to [their] followers.”\textsuperscript{47} Prophet Harris followers, subsequently established ‘The Twelve Apostles Church’ (TAC) also known as Nackabah a Sunsum sore (spiritual church in the Akan language).\textsuperscript{48} Other AICs established in Ghana include, The Apostles Revelation Society (ARS), Musama Disco Christo Church (MDCC), Nigritian Church and the Saviour’s Church.\textsuperscript{49} Most of these churches were founded between 1914 to 1930.\textsuperscript{50}

The second, the African Indigenous Churches (AICs)\textsuperscript{51} represent a very important segment in Christian experience in Africa. This is because, as C.O. Oshun asserts,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{45} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{46} Ibid., p. 66.
\item \textsuperscript{47} Ibid., p. 58.
\item \textsuperscript{48} Ibid., p. 69.
\item \textsuperscript{49} Dovlo, "African Culture and Emergent Church forms in Ghana", p. 33.
\item \textsuperscript{50} See, Baeta, \textit{Prophetism in Ghana}.
\item \textsuperscript{51} These churches are designated by different scholars as African Initiated Churches, African Independent Churches, African Indigenous Churches and African Instituted Churches. The acronym AICs represents all of them as the same church-type. See, Dovlo, "African Culture and Emergent Church forms in Ghana", pp. 28-29.
\end{itemize}
by them “Christianity in Africa had taken on colour, freshness, potency, vibrance [sic] and originality.” Their origin, life and thought have spurred scholars to research into Christianity in Africa. Afe Adogame and Lizo Jafta maintain, “The AICs now constitute a significant filament of African Christian demography. Arguably, the AICs served as a ‘modernist vanguard’ in the origin, growth and development of Pentecostalism in Africa. For instance, Ogbu Kalu sees the AICs as a significant force in the challenge to Western form of Christianity. Yet again, Oshun maintains:

[The AICs] forged a completely new church identity ...by tapping into the supernatural to effect an epochal and unprecedented mass revival movements in Africa which radically changed the socio-spiritual climate of Africa, from South Africa to West Africa

This accomplishment of the AICs had not only received commendation from scholars and practitioners, it has also attracted diatribes in equal measure from both mission churches and Pentecostals – classical Pentecostals and Charismatic churches - alike.

In Ghana, the AICs have had friction with the mission churches mainly on theological grounds. Clifton R. Clarke, reviewing the situation claims, “in their efforts to inculturate Christianity within an African setting, some have – by virtue of certain practices and unorthodox theological viewpoints – position themselves

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55 I associate the term ‘modernist vanguard’ with the AICs because of their lead-role in contextualizing Christianity within African culture.


57 Oshun, “Foreword”, p. 5.
outside of the mainstream Protestant theological position."\textsuperscript{58} This according to Clarke, raises questions of “validity of them being described as ‘Christian Churches,’”\textsuperscript{59} as a result, they are viewed as syncretic sects for which reason “Many Methodist, for example, described Prophet Appiah (Ahaboha I) and his followers as ‘false prophets’, as foretold in the Bible, and denounced them as heretics.”\textsuperscript{60}

The Pentecostal and Charismatic churches on their part see them as an aberration to the Christian faith. Kalu draws attention to this:

Moreover, how do we explain the diatribe in Pentecostal rhetoric and practices that variously demonizes the AICs as “white garment churches” or \textit{mademoni}, people covenanted to familiar spirits? For instance, those who came for deliverance in a Pentecostal church are asked to fill out a form indicating their life history, family and business contacts, and religious journey. If the candidates indicate an earlier participation in a white garment church, the first process of the deliverance ministry would be to deliver the person from the foul spirits and covenantal rituals in those churches. Yet it is acknowledged that many new Pentecostal churches had AIC roots.\textsuperscript{61}

The AICs have responded to these challenges by claiming their Christian heritage. They take any attempt to isolate them from the wider Christian community very seriously. \textsuperscript{62} To maintain their Christian identity, the AICs in Ghana have strengthened their ecumenical relations. These are, Council for African Indigenous Churches (CAIC), Council of Independent Churches (CIC), Organization of African Initiated Churches (OAIC), and Pentecostal Ministers’ Association

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{61} Kalu, \textit{African Pentecostalism}, p. 65.
In their efforts to improve co-operation among themselves, the African indigenous churches in Ghana held a meeting on the 14th to 16th October 2004 to improve collaboration among themselves. The classification of AICs with the classical Pentecostal and Charismatic churches by scholars has therefore become a contentious issue. Kalu’s question about their inclusion and Asamoah-Gyadu’s assertion about the connection with modern African Pentecostalism and the AICs deserve attention. The debate over the AIC’s depiction as Pentecostals can be defined from different standpoints - either from theological, sociological, phenomenological or historical perspectives - as suggested by Afe Adogame. This helps resolve the contentious nature about their categorization and linkage to the African Pentecostal family.

1.4.3. Classical Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches

The Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council (GPCC) is the ecumenical body of most of the classical Pentecostals and selected charismatic churches in Ghana. The Council traces its origin to the Ghana Evangelical Fellowship (GEF) which was established in March, 1969. The founding member churches were; Assemblies of God church (AG), The Church of Pentecost (COP), Elim Pentecostal Church (EPC), the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC), and the Apostolic Church (AC). By 1994 the membership of the GPCC had increased to 57 denominations and

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63 Ibid., p. 21.
64 Ibid., p. 22.
67 Adogame, “Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements in Global Perspective”, p. 500.
 Churches, and by 1999 it had further increased to 150 with many more in the queue waiting to be admitted.68

The classical Pentecostals historically are considered as the “second strand of the renewal movement”69 in Ghana. This is because their emergence follows the AICs though they are demonstrably different in theological orientation and social outlook. Larbi for instance refer to them as the “Evangelical Ghana Pentecostalism”70 perhaps because of their ‘literalist’ approach to the Bible and their emphasis on the spiritual gifts, worship and prayer.71 With the exception of the Assemblies of God Church72 and the Elim Pentecostal Church, the rest i.e. the Christ Apostolic Church, the Church of Pentecost and the Apostolic Church, have their origin traceable to the work of Peter Newman Anim and his Faith Tabernacle Church (FTC).73 These churches were later developed independent of Anim’s leadership due to various leadership and doctrinal differences that brought schisms.74 Anim, remained the leader of Christ Apostolic Church until his retirement in August 1957.75 For our particular interest, we would look into the development of the Church of Pentecost later.

There were two separate movements, which had bearing on the emergence, growth, and development of charismatic churches in Ghana. These are the charismatic

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68 Amanor, Pentecostalism in Ghana, p. 19.
69 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 69.
70 Ibid.
72 The Assemblies of God Church started in Ghana in 1931 as a missionary work undertaken by the American Assemblies of God in the northern part of Ghana. For further readings, see, Larbi Pentecostalism, pp. 71-80.
73 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 69.
74 Amanor, Pentecostalism in Ghana.
75 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 127.
movements within the mission churches\textsuperscript{76} and the work of the para-church movements.\textsuperscript{77} The historical works on Charismatic churches in Ghana acknowledge Archbishop Nicholas Duncan –Williams and his Christian Action Faith International (CAFI) as “the oldest neo-Pentecostal church in Ghana”.\textsuperscript{78} This accounts is not entirely accurate.

Historical records available show that a year before Duncan-Williams founded his church in 1979, Samuel Mensah, a former Presbyterian catechist had already established the Full Gospel Church International (FGCI) in 1978 at the industrial city of Tema in the Greater Accra Region. Samuel Mensah seceded from the Presbyterian Church due to the lack of scope in excercising his spiritual gifts. The Presbyterian Church at Tema Community One assembly where he served as a catechist restrained him from operating his spiritual gifts.\textsuperscript{79} As a result, he left to establish the FGCI. The FGCI has since been a member of the GPCC. Thus, Duncan Williams’s church, which started in 1979, could not be the first charismatic church in Ghana. However, the extraordinary charismatic leadership and ministry of Duncan-Williams could not be taken for granted in the establishment, growth and development of Charismatic Christianity in Ghana. Duncan Williams is by far the foremost charismatic church leader in Ghana, and his work, according to Larbi, “defined the nature of the independent charismatic movement in terms of theology,


\textsuperscript{79} This information was obtained from Rev. Clement Oboh, one of the National Executive members of the Full Gospel Church International on 5\textsuperscript{th} April 2013.
liturgy, polity and ethos.” 80 Thus, his role in Christianity in Ghana makes him and his church significant in Charismatic Christianity in Ghana.

The emergence of the Charismatic churches during the later part of the 1970s to date has been one of the significant religious developments in Ghana’s Christian history. Scholars agree on their impact in Ghana’s social and religious landscape. Paul Gifford asserts that they are “an increasingly important sector of Ghanaian Christianity.” 81 Gerrie ter Haar has also noted the relevance of their emergence when she reiterated Abomfo Atiemo’s view that “The rise of the Charismatic movement in its various forms is undoubtedly the most significant trend in church life in Ghana today.” 82 Over time, scholars sought to know the reasons for their emergence. Some suggestions include; they encompass the realm of spiritual, social, economic and the political. Kofi Appiah-Kubi has suggested:

> The most significant and unique aspect of these churches is that they seek to fulfill that which is lacking in the Euro-American missionary churches, that is, to provide forms of worship that satisfy both spiritually and emotionally and to enable Christianity to cover every area of human life and fulfill all human needs. 83

Though Appiah-Kubi was directly underscoring the factors that influence the emergence of the AICs, by extension, the same consequence is attributed to the Charismatic churches. 84 James Anquandah, following the events on the religious landscape in Ghana in the late 80s, predicted the growing presence and impact of the Charismatic churches in Ghana’s religious life. He writes:

80 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 502.
84 Bediako, “Africa and Christianity on the Threshold of the Third Millennium, p. 311.
It is on the cards that if the older [mission] churches take up the “full gospel” of early Christianity with its emphasis on direct intervention and guidance of the Spirit of Jesus, and if they encourage the use of indigenous Ghanaian music and liturgy, and if they discard the European “lecturer to student” style of worship and adopt a more relaxed and freer form of worship, we should see a refreshing wind of change blowing across the church in Ghana. If not, the Lord will use the independent Pentecostal movement [Charismatic churches] to carry out his plans.  

The influence of the Charismatic churches is mainly spiritual, i.e. the pursuit of spiritual revival, the exercise of spiritual gifts, the call for repentance (born again), etc. However, in some regard, their activities transcend an exclusive spiritual quest; it is an all-embracing phenomena. Larbi is of the view that the Charismatic church in Ghana represents “a potent agent for change, engendering a fundamental transformation of social and religious values.” Hence, Paul Gifford’s assertion that Charismatic churches are “the big winners in Ghana’s Christianity”. Most Charismatic churches organise under the National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches (NACCC) which serves as their ecumenical body.

1.4.4. Church of Pentecost (COP)

The salient aspect of the history of the Church of Pentecost (COP) is written in the preamble of the church’s constitution. It states:

IN THE NAME OF THE ALMIGHTY GOD, we, the Members of The Church of Pentecost, IN EXERCISE of our natural right and freedom to

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87 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 328.

establish a CHURCH which shall be used to propagate the WORD of GOD;

1. WHEREAS we regard as part of the body of CHRIST The Church of Pentecost (hereinafter called “THE CHURCH”) which traces its origins to the ministry Rev. JAMES MCKEOWN began in 1937 culminating in the establishment of The Gold Coast Apostolic Church in 1953, and of which JESUS CHRIST is the Head, on the attainment of independency by the Gold Coast in 1957, the Church became known as Ghana Apostolic Church.

2. AND WHEREAS on the first day of August, 1962 The Ghana Apostolic Church adopted the name The Church of Pentecost as its new name and thereafter registered its Board of Trustees under its new name on the 14th day of June, 1971 under Certificate No. XO 158 as a Religious Non-profit Making Organization. The above quotation is a summary of the history of the COP. Larbi has offered other aspects of the COP’s history that is relevant to our background information about the church in relation to the founder, James McKeown and the development of the COP.

James McKeown (1900-1989) founded the church and assumed its leadership from 1953 to 1982. Before that, Mckeown arrived in the Gold Coast (presently called Ghana) as a missionary of the Bradford Apostolic Church in 1937 and initially teamed up with Apostle Peter Newman Anim (1890-1984) the doyen of Ghanaian Pentecostalism and the founder of Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) until 1939. The two, Anim and Mckeown separated in June 1939 due to doctrinal differences on healing and both continued with their separate churches i.e. Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) and Gold Coast Apostolic Church (GCAC) respectively.

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90 Lardi, Pentecostalism, pp.175-205.
91 Larbi, Pentecostalism, pp. 108-110
92 Ibid., p. 108.
93 Gold Coast Apostolic Church later became Ghana Apostolic Church (GAC) by reason of Ghana’s independence on 6th March 1957 when the Gold Coast became Ghana.
McKeown continued in missionary work with Gold Coast Apostolic Church which was affiliated with Bradford Apostolic Church. In 1953, McKeown seceded from the church.\textsuperscript{94} Subsequently, McKeown steered his own founded church that is now known as the Church of Pentecost (COP).\textsuperscript{95}

The COP, according to Asamoah-Gyadu, is “one of the largest and fastest growing indigenous Pentecostal denominations in the West Africa sub-region.”\textsuperscript{96} The COP registered membership in 2010 was 1,703, 585 distributed in 11,874 local branches.\textsuperscript{97} The church at the same period had 2,002 branches in 81 countries outside Ghana.\textsuperscript{98} It registered a growth rate of 5.3% from the previous year’s statistics.\textsuperscript{99} This pattern of growth consequentially has implications in the social, religious, economic and political affairs of Ghana. The COP has also founded a private university and other institutions i.e. hospitals, etc. The church’s influences in contemporary Ghanaian society deserve to be studied, thus, it serves as a good case for our research into Pentecostalism and empowerment.

1.4.5. International Central Gospel Church (ICGC)

Mensa Anamoa Otabil founded the International Central Gospel Church (ICGC) on the 26th February 1984 in a classroom situated in Kanda, a suburb of Accra in the Greater Accra region of Ghana. The ICGC began with twenty committed

\textsuperscript{95} Ibid., p. 243.
\textsuperscript{97} The Church of Pentecost, 39\textsuperscript{th} \textit{General Council Meeting Report}, Accra, May, 2011, p. 20.
\textsuperscript{98} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{99} Ibid.
members “who believed they had received a mandate from God to raise a model indigenous church.” The ICGC describes itself as “An Evangelical, Bible-believing, Charismatic Christian Church.” The ‘corporate vision’ of the church is “To establish the House of God through the development of Model New Testament Christians and Churches.” As a result, ICGC never misses an opportunity to states it twofold purpose: (a) bring leadership and vision to our generation; (b) influencing society with the principles of the Kingdom of God. Otabil is convinced that the primary commitment of ICGC is “To prepare the black person to be a channel of blessing to the world.” ICGC runs with a three-prong ministry philosophy i.e. practical Christianity, human dignity and excellence. This is taught in membership orientation class together with the ‘vision’ and ‘mission’ of the church.

The growth pattern of ICGC from its early days to the present had been phenomenal. Records available indicate:

In the days of its existence, the church met in several locations including private homes, a school laboratory, a garage, a cinema hall, different schools and hall. Within a space of two and a half years, the membership grew to over 1000. From 1986 to 1996, the church settled in a rented scout hall, the Baden Powell Memorial Hall, which it

102 Ibid.
103 Ibid., p. 6.
104 Ibid. p. 10. The Purpose of the church is read by the emcee of the church during the church service especially when new comers are received and introduced to the congregation.
107 International Central Gospel Church, Connecting with God’s Family, pp. 11-15.
The ICGC has grown tremendously over the years and made its presence felt in many areas within Ghana and overseas. Due to its growth, the church started establishing branches in Ghana. Presently, ICGC has branch churches in Africa, Europe and North America. Its leader, Mensa Anamo Otabil, has also become an icon in both ecclesiastical circles in Ghana and beyond. He also wields great influence in society in general. The church has developed several institutions including a private university and innovative ministries that make it one of the thriving Charismatic churches in Ghana today.

1.4.6. Trajectories and Fluidity in Pentecostalism in Ghana: COP and ICGC

The life experiences, religious roots and convictions of James McKeown and Mensa Otabil, the founders of the COP and ICGC respectively, have shaped and continue to impact on the churches they founded. These have largely informed the theological formation and social outlook of their pioneered works. However, as in the case of most new religious movements, there is great fluidity in the churches’ theological thoughts and pastoral work ethos. It follows therefore that the individual leaders, at least in the formative stages of their churches, and/or possibly in the formation of their churches’ polity, theology, liturgy, and other ecclesiastical considerations were shaped by their religious backgrounds, beliefs and spiritual values. Additionally, it could be argued that both McKeown and Otabil largely molded the character of the COP and ICGC respectively as founders. Thus, their

108 Ibid., p. 9.
personal experiences could not be taken for granted in the narration of the history, life and thought of their churches and the wider societal commitment in relation to civil and public life engagements. This section therefore discusses McKeown and Otabil by mapping out the religious trajectories and influences on their respective establishments; it thus shows both the historic aspects and major developments in both COP and ICGC.

1.4.6.1. James McKeown

Pastor James McKeown’s Pentecostal roots is linked with his father who originally was a member of the Presbyterian Church in Antrim in Northern Ireland and later became a member of a Pentecostal church (The Elim Pentecostal Church) in 1908.\(^{111}\) James McKeown who at this time was a child attended the Elim Pentecostal Church meetings. Robert Wyllie firsthand communication with McKeown suggests:

> I had been in the Pentecostal work since a boy in Coatbridge in 1908. My father got into the work and I was quick to follow all the upheavals, hearing them discussed in the home and being forced to attend all the conferences in Kilsyth and many other places around Coatbridge. It had become part of me.\(^{112}\)

James McKeown Pentecostal trajectory started with the Apostolic Church (AC) where he got established as a member and later a leader in the church.\(^{113}\) Larbi maintains that “Between 1925 and 1937 he was supervising the work of various assemblies throughout Ayrshire, Renfrewshire and Lanarkshire.”\(^{114}\) McKeown eventually responded to the call to mission in the Gold Coast (presently Ghana) and

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\(^{112}\) Ibid., p. 113.

\(^{113}\) Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, p. 175.

\(^{114}\) Ibid.
arrived in March 1937.\textsuperscript{115} This mission marked a new Pentecostal track,\textsuperscript{116} which culminated in the establishment of one of the major Pentecostal denominations (the COP) with strong mission emphasis.\textsuperscript{117}

McKeown’s association with the AC ended in the 1953 (see Section 1.4.4.) paving the way for the COP to be formed and be managed by McKeown and his local leadership. Notwithstanding, McKeown’s COP continues to demonstrate elements correlated with AC. Arguably, the emphasis of spiritual gifts especially ‘directive prophecies’ and ‘authoritarian and hierarchical’ church polity noted in COP where features of the AC (see Section 3.1.). For instance, Walter Hollenweger pointed out that the AC has a characteristic feature that “gives greater play to the gifts of the Spirit.”\textsuperscript{118} The practices in COP where apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers were called to serve in offices are all carried over traits of the AC now incorporated in the COP. In the same way, as Onyinah writes, “Others were called to the offices of elders and deacons. Women were called as deaconess.”\textsuperscript{119} Again, Onyinah admits:

Besides, they held to ‘an ethical rigorism’; drinking alcohol and smoking were prohibited and members who were found making a practice of going to questionable places and falling to open sins were to be discipline.\textsuperscript{120}

\textsuperscript{115} There have been disparities on the day of McKeown’s arrival in the Gold Coast. Wyllie, Larbi and Onyinah suggest the following respectively 2\textsuperscript{nd} March 1937 (Wyllie, “Pioneers of Ghanaiian Pentecostalism”, p. 114), 4\textsuperscript{th} March 1937 (Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 176) and 7\textsuperscript{th} March, (Onyinah, “The Akan Witchcraft and the Concept of Exorcism in the Church of Pentecost”. A Thesis submitted to the University of Birmingham for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, 2002, p. 168).

\textsuperscript{116} Larbi has given a great detail of McKeown work prior to his coming to the Gold Coast and his mission related activities that led to the establishment, growth and development of the COP under McKeown’s leadership. See, Larbi, Pentecostalism, pp. 175-205.

\textsuperscript{117} See, Leonard, A Giant in Ghana.


\textsuperscript{119} Onyinah, “The Akan Witchcraft and the Concept of Exorcism in the Church of Pentecost,” p. 167.

\textsuperscript{120} Ibid.
Onyinah’s admission is an observation made earlier in separate scholarly works by Hollenweger\textsuperscript{121} and Andrew Walker.\textsuperscript{122} The ethical codes were more generic with British Pentecostalism of the time and were practically observed by McKeown’s former AC. It is no surprising to note that the COP from its inception till now adhered firmly to same ethical requirements, which are also enshrined in the church’s constitution as discussed under Section 5.1.5.

The standoff that ensued between McKeown and Peter N. Anim in June 1939 is worthy of attention as it shows the theological differences that existed among Pentecostals (see Section 1.4.4.). Pentecostals could not be assumed to have unified theological position even in common practices noted in their beliefs and worship. Larbi commenting on the grounds of separation between Anim and McKeown stated, “It later became clear that McKeown’s theological perspective on divine healing was different from the position espoused by Anim’s organization.”\textsuperscript{123}

Onyinah has also offered another theological contestation that caused a break between McKeown and an AIC group, the Twelve Apostles, who sought a kind of partnership with McKeown’s group. It is reported, “When McKeown began to teach, as he used to do, about one man one wife, confusion started which eventually led to a break between them.”\textsuperscript{124} Additionally, it could be concluded, “it was the issue of exorcism and polygyny which led to the break.”\textsuperscript{125}

\textsuperscript{121} Hollenweger, \textit{The Pentecostals}, p. 192.
\textsuperscript{124} Onyinah, “The Akan Witchcraft and the Concept of Exorcism in the Church of Pentecost,” p. 171.
\textsuperscript{125} Ibid.
There is yet another opinion that may explain the COP’s posture in social policy and political practice in its early years. The COP, just as it was with both mission churches and classical Pentecostals such as AC at the time, direct political participation was not congruent within their worldview in the early 20th century. Jean Comaroff and John L. Comaroff have showed in their two-volume work, *Of Revelation and Revolution Vol. 1&2*, how the missions perceived the work of the church and socio-political practice from the South African perspective. At the time of the missions, churches accepted the fine demarcation between the sacred and temporal realms of both the activities of the church and state. A situation that made the AC and later the COP focus mainly on evangelism and spiritual activities such as exorcism, healing etc. to the detriment of socio-political activism (as discussed under Sections 6.2. and 7.2.). For example, the spiritualized activities brought vitality to the AC (and later the COP) in terms of its growth and development. This also drew many members of the mission churches especially the Presbyterian Church of Ghana to the AC under the leadership of McKeown. The AC for instance, offered ready solution to the prevailing challenges, perceived or real, which included the many accusation of witchcraft and its corresponding social implications in families and communities. The AC also took seriously the issue of healing and exorcism which generated some hope for those who were spiritually and physically afflicted due to sickness and other life mishaps. Adam Mohr reviewing the events of the time concluded:

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128 See, Larbi, *Pentecostalism*. 
Between 1918 and 1960 the Presbyterian Church of Ghana was disenchanted. The church denied the existence of many afflicting spiritual forces, such as witches, even while witchcraft accusations flourished in Akan society, particularly during the cocoa boom. Correspondingly, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana did not offer methods of religious healing or protection from these spiritual afflictions.\(^{129}\)

Another factor that moved members out of the Presbyterian Church had to do with challenges related to the decline of cocoa production and prices on the world market.

Mohr asserts:

> Many young Presbyterian cocoa migrants, particularly in the Eastern and Asante Regions, joined a branch of Faith Tabernacle church Congregation, a divine healing church.\(^{130}\)

The Faith Tabernacle church\(^{131}\) became a viable alternative to the disenchanted members of the Presbyterian Church.\(^{132}\) However, the crises in leadership that occurred in the Faith Tabernacle church in Philadelphia in 1925 had its attendant effect on the other branches including Ghana.\(^{133}\) The AC became the beneficiary of the crisis in the Faith Tabernacle church. For example, the AC under McKeown “grew faster in the Eastern Region than in any other in the 1940s.”\(^{134}\) Mohr was very clear:

> Many of the new converts and early leaders of the Apostolic Church in the Eastern Region were former Presbyterians or former Faith Tabernacle members.

> In the fifteen-year period between 1938 and 1952, the Apostolic Church grew rapidly under McKeown, in large part

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\(^{130}\) Ibid., p. 62.

\(^{131}\) For comprehensive discussion on Faith Tabernacle church in Ghana and their religious response to the challenges of the time, see, Mohr, *Enchanted Calvinism*, pp. 62-76.


\(^{133}\) Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, p. 181.

\(^{134}\) Mohr, *Enchanted Calvinism*, p. 76.
because of the various healing campaigns involving leaders or members of the Apostolic Church.\textsuperscript{135} 

The situation provided the seedbed for McKeown to have significant following to form the COP after his secession from the AC. One of the former Presbyterians who joined McKeown’s COP was M. K. Yeboah.\textsuperscript{136} M. K. Yeboah later became the third chairman of the COP from 1988 to 1998. Yeboah is acknowledged as a gifted church administrator who led COP effectively during his rule as the chairman of the church. He also held state appointment (see Section 7.2.). Mohr for instance has shown that a greater number of the followers of McKeown were originally Presbyterians and Faith Tabernacle church members before joining McKeown’s group. It could therefore be argued that the religious trajectories that culminated in the establishment of the COP is important as it has ramifications of the life, beliefs and practices of the church which places our discussions in context. The importance of this historical tracks is seen first in the church’s spirituality. The COP’s beliefs and practices unquestionably take cognizance of the African primal imagination (see Section 4.1 and 4.2). This understanding of spiritual approach to life became the lifeblood that initiated the church during the period members of some existing religious groups such as the Presbyterian Church, AC, etc were so disenchanted. This religious orientation, to buttress my point, shows why the COP engages in practices of spiritual warfare, deliverance, healings and exorcism, spontaneous worship and loud prayers which is believed to assuage life perils, etc.\textsuperscript{137} All these

\textsuperscript{135} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{136} Ibid., p. 79.

\textsuperscript{137} See, Opoku Onyinah, “The Akan Witchcraft and the Concept of Exorcism in the Church of Pentecost”. A thesis submitted to The University of Birmingham for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, 2002.
are religious practices that give explanation to spiritual causality which is central in the African religious cosmology.\textsuperscript{138} Second, the religious trajectory of the COP also gives indication to the pattern of church leadership and church governance structure developed. As already indicated, the followers who worked with James McKeown in the establishment of the COP came from diverse religious backgrounds. The notable leaders who were part of the early followers, to reiterate my point, is Apostle M.K. Yeboah (the third chairman of the COP) formally a member of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, J. Cofie Quaye, S.A. Mensah and A.S. Asomaning from the AC. These early followers undoubtedly had profound influence on the formation of leadership and governance structure of the church.\textsuperscript{139} This mostly has been the case as observed by scholars with particular mention of Bengt G.M. Sundkler whose classical study of independent churches in South Africa reveals how the dynamics in leadership formation among independent churches in Africa are shaped by both the leaders and the led.\textsuperscript{140} For instance, a remarkable feature of the COP church planting and mission work has been the emphasis on the lay church workers, a trait that characterized the Presbyterian mission in its early days where catechist and gifted lay church workers were at the forefront of the Presbyterian missions.\textsuperscript{141} This perhaps may be one of the religious elements imported by the many Presbyterians who join the COP in its mission and leadership formation. Finally, the COP quiet response in socio-political issues on the national level shows


\textsuperscript{139} Larbi, \textit{Pentecostalism}, pp. 176-181.


a church that was preoccupied in engaging the felt and aspirational needs of followers and not a church that initially had the orientation and capacity in non-spiritual affairs. All these ramifications are as results of the historical and religious trajectories of the COP and they are thoroughly discussed under various themes in this thesis with insight from the past and the present realities of the church. By the demands of clarity in the analysis, the themes are treated separately in different chapters; however, they show a dynamic interplay in relating with one another.

1.4.6.2. Mensa Otabil

Mensa Otabil, the founder and leader of the ICGC never misses the opportunity to tell his story that turned his life around. From a despondent experience as a teenager who lost his father and mother within a short period of time, he struggled through secondary education with the dream to live an accomplished life. His emphasis on self-realization, self-discovery and fruitfulness is based on his understanding of the Bible and life experiences that have shaped his perspective about the realities of life, encounter with God and pastoral values. Otabil admits in an interview that the struggles through the early stages of his life and his religious trajectories i.e., his personal faith in Jesus Christ, his encounters with the Holy Spirit, etc. have largely influence his view about human existence. For instance, Otabil’s emphasis on faith in God and self-development is a direct reference to his personal determination as a young Christian who sought to empower himself at the lost his parents. Otabil’s therefore resolved to persevere through life as he usually

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142 Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18th August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
mentioned in his preaching. His perseverance seems to be the strength of his robust faith in God.\textsuperscript{143}

Otabil’s religious background is traceable to the Anglican Church. He was baptized an Anglican at a very early age and later joined the Assemblies of God (AG) church as a teenager. It could be argued that his spiritual formation was developed in the AG church through the influence of his mother who happened to be a member of that church.\textsuperscript{144} Otabil has indicated on numerous occasions that his mother bequeathed some religious values to him.\textsuperscript{145} He recalled through his testimonies how a scriptural passage in Jeremiah 31: 17 “\textit{There is hope in your future, says the Lord}” highlighted (for reference) in his mother’s King James Bible ‘prophetically’ spoke to him.\textsuperscript{146} Again, Otabil tells his story, “My first effort towards pastoral ministry is to become a pastor in the AG church.”\textsuperscript{147} The AG church felt at his age, the teenage Otabil was too young to enroll as a pastor therefore declined his application. The AG church therefore could be said to have to some measure influenced Otabil religious orientation especially in the formative years of his pastoral work. This is seen in aspects of Otabil’s ICGC. For example, the religious polity adopted by Otabil’s church (the ICGC) is similar to the AG church governance practice.\textsuperscript{148}

\textsuperscript{143} Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.


\textsuperscript{147} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{148} The Assemblies of God Church in Ghana maintains a semi-autonomous church governance system, which is similar to the ICGC. The local church board/council directs the affairs of the church with the head quarters playing a supervisory role (see Section 3.2).
There is no direct linkage or influence of Anglicanism on Otabil’s religious experience and his ICGC in relation to the polity, theology and ethos in scholarly works, biographical details or direct confirmation by Otabil himself. Anglicanism therefore does not seem comparable to Otabil’s concept of church polity and theology. Though baptized as an Anglican, Otabil hardly make reference of any influence of Anglicanism in his life and thought. It is therefore obvious that Otabil’s ICGC has no Anglican roots or direct influences. Otabil rather admits in his preaching and public statements the religious influences in his early ministry prior to the establishment of the ICGC. He mentions American faith preachers and church ministries such as Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, T. L. Osborn and their ministries.\textsuperscript{149} Otabil was quick to add that their spiritual and pastoral influence only prepared him to move into his primary commitment, which is, to establish a church whose philosophy is to “prepare the black person to be a channel of blessing to the world.”\textsuperscript{150} The messages of Otabil, using his life experience especially his humble beginnings as an example; preach the discovering of potential and personal development.

Otabil’s preaching also echo strongly the idea of ‘black pride’ and ‘black consciousness’. Concepts Otabil believe inform his pastoral orientation and that of the ICGC.\textsuperscript{151} Emmanuel K. Larbi termed it ‘Evangelical Pentecostal Liberation Theology’.\textsuperscript{152} Rijk van Dijk referred to it as “Pentecostal-inspired Pan-Africanist

\textsuperscript{149} See, Larbi, \textit{Pentecostalism}, pp. 308-310.
\textsuperscript{150} Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region. See also, International Central Gospel Church. \textit{The Vision}, p.11.
\textsuperscript{151} Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
\textsuperscript{152} Larbi, \textit{Pentecostalism}, p. 349.
ideology.”\textsuperscript{153} For instance, van Dijk is of the view that Otabil’s notion of black consciousness “proclaims a highly Christianized Pan-Africanist sequel to the ideas of Fanon, DuBois and, more recently, Gilroy.”\textsuperscript{154} My interest here is to find out if there were influences or establish links that serve as catalyst for Otabil’s lofty ideas which is also seen in his widely celebrated published work, \textit{Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia: A Biblical Revelation on God’s Purpose for the Black Race}. There seem to be no direct linkage of Otabil’s ‘Pentecostal-inspired Pan-Africanist ideology’ with Fanon, DuBois and Kwame Nkrumah proponents of Pan-Africanist ideology. However, It is worth noting that the city of Accra played a significant role as a seedbed for the spread of Pan-Africanist ideology in Africa with Kwame Nkrumah in the forefront. This probably might have influenced Otabil’s concept of spiritual, social and political liberation as conceptualized by Larbi as ‘Evangelical Pentecostal Liberation Theology’. The level of emphasis Otabil places on his ‘Christianized Pan-Africanist’ concept has changed. Though he maintains the ideals and demonstrates it especially in his symbolic African costume as a sign of his ‘Africanness’, Otabil admits, “I may not directly address those issues [related to his concept of ‘Christianized Pan-Africanism’] but I am conscious that this is the underlying problem I may bring a solution to through my teaching.”\textsuperscript{155} For example, Otabil has stop organizing the Pan-African Believers Summit,\textsuperscript{156} which used to be a major feature in his commitment to ‘Christianized Pan-Africanism’ over the last decade. Pastors of the ICGC also do not express any definite aspect of

\begin{footnotesize}

\textsuperscript{154} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{155} Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.

\textsuperscript{156} See, Larbi, \textit{Pentecostalism}, p. 344.
\end{footnotesize}
the ‘Christianized Pan-Africanist’ ideology. Otabil acknowledges, “some [pastors] I think do not have any clue about what we are dealing with.”\textsuperscript{157} The ICGC as it appears, seems to have relegated to the background its earlier distinguishing character as a charismatic church with the objective to liberate the ‘black person’ as suggested and seen in the initial stages of its establishment. Notwithstanding, Mensa Otabil is one of the most acknowledged eminent church leaders who has influenced both ecclesiastical and public opinion in Ghana and beyond.\textsuperscript{158} ICGC therefore is considered as one of the widespread and influential churches in Ghana especially among the elites and the upwardly mobile group within the Ghanaian society.

1.5. Definition and Clarification of Terms

The definitions and clarifications follow the self-descriptions of terms, designations, titles, and particular words or phrases by PC churches. I intend to describe accurately, where necessary, PC self-expressions. Thus, the words and terms listed below are duly explained within the practices of the PC churches.

\textit{Reverend Minister} is an ordained clergy with full ministerial credentials by the Church to perform all statutory church functions and ordinances.

\textit{Pastor} is used synonymously with \textit{minister} to represent a member of the pastorate, in full-time or part-time service of the church who serves as either a shepherd or leader of a local church, or who is assigned a responsibility for a specific ministry or function in the church but not necessarily given full ministerial credentials.

\textsuperscript{157} Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.

\textsuperscript{158} See Gifford, \textit{Ghana’s New Christianity}, pp. 113-139.
*Elder* denotes a Christian leader in the COP trained to undertake basic pastoral responsibilities in a lay leadership capacity. The elders who are directly in-charge of local assemblies in COP are called *Presiding Elders*. ICGC does not have elders in their ministry portfolio.

*Deacon(ess)* A person who serves under the guidance of the local pastor and shares with him/her the concerns for the local assembly.

*Ministry* denotes a pastoral/spiritual function or a particular Christian service in a church or among believers or unbelievers depending on the need of the people and the calling of the minister. *Ministry* is also used as an alternative to ‘church’.

*Ministration* is the function of the ministry or a minister (pastor) i.e. preaching of the word, prayer, officiating at a ceremony or excercising spiritual gifts. Charismatic churches mainly use this term.

*Ministry Philosophy* is a purpose by which a particular function is undertaken in the local church or in a group within the church.

*Church Meetings/Church Service* is a congregational gathering for worship, convention or a special church programme.

*Church member* is a person who identifies with a local congregation either by registration through membership class or in constant participation in most activities in the church over a period.

*Local Church/Local Assembly* is the unit congregation or church headed by a reverend minister, a Pastor or a lay leader.

*Supervising Minister* is a member of the pastorate with oversight responsibility for an Area, District or Region of the Church.
Lay Leader/ Lay Minister is a trained church official who undertakes pastoral responsibilities or functions in a church on a voluntary basis. A lay leader could also be a Presiding Elder as in the case of the COP. Any term that comes up in the writing of this thesis particularly in the context of PC Christianity may appropriately be defined.

1.6 Organization of the Study

The dissertation is composed of eight chapters. Chapters one, two and eight are focused on the introduction and methodology, theoretical framework and general conclusion respectively. Chapters’ three to seven are grouped in themes based on the research data. The outline of the study is as follows: the first chapter is in two parts i.e. the introductory segment that gives the background to the study, an outline of the research objectives, research questions and an overview of Christianity in Ghana with particular interest in PC churches. It also discusses the development and growth of the COP and the ICGC as our focus for the study. The second part of the chapter is centred on the research methodology. The issues that were focused on consist of the research approach, the data, qualitative interviews, participant’s observation and the case study. Discussions under methodology also describe the practical situation in the field of research which highlighted the challenges and opportunities encountered. The chapter ends with the definition and clarification of terms and the organization of the study.

Chapter two constitutes a review of the key concepts in the research. Theories encompassing empowerment, social, cultural and religious/spiritual capital are reviewed in the context of Pentecostalism in Ghana. The objective is to find a
synthesis in these theories to establish a basis for the research because of the interdisciplinary nature of the study. Chapter three focused on the structures and governance systems of the COP and the ICGC. The analysis was directed to the administrative structures in the governing system i.e. church constitutions and key leadership arrangements such as the functions of the General Church Councils (GCC). Further discussions were focused on the organizational structure of the churches in regions, areas, district and local presbyteries. The chapter also focused on church leadership (pastoral and administrative), financial administration, church membership and ecumenical relationship. Attention was given to the churches established structures in pursuance of goals in key aforementioned areas that examined its drive in empowerment.

Chapter four explores particular theological themes that are focal to the theme of empowerment and at the same time characteristics of PC beliefs and practices. These were also theological themes that were highlights in the research data. They include, the PC theological idiom in religio-cultural realities, wellbeing, soteriological matters and their ramifications, and gender related roles and practices in connection with empowerment. Chapter five examined COP and ICGC liturgies and their empowering role. It reviewed the forms and reforms in the liturgical arrangements and their impact in the churches. The discussions revolved around components in the organization of church services and special programmes, the concept of worship and music, along with the uses of the Bible, prayer as a transcendent experience and their impact on believers and the churches. Again, the chapter explored PC spiritualties vis-à-vis morality with emphasis on moral conduct and church discipline. The role of church functionaries and volunteerism in the
COP and ICGC is discussed before the chapter concluded with a comparison on the similarities and dissimilarities in PC liturgy.

The major activities of the COP and ICGC on social policy and human development were examined in chapter six. The focus of discussion was on the churches policies for social interventions, the structures and institutions (educational, health and welfare), social projects undertaken and their outcomes on individuals, groups and society. The penultimate chapter dealt with the role of COP and ICGC in politics and civic engagements in Ghana’s democratic journey especially in the fourth republic. The subtitles for the study were on the churches political responses, network for political projects and political attacks and reactions of the churches. The chapter further interrogated the churches ‘prophetic actions’ and civic responsibilities in public life issues. The final chapter, chapter eight, is the general conclusion which highlighted key observations in COP and ICGC. It presented a summary of key issues, juxtaposed the main findings with the concepts of capital (social, religious/spiritual, and cultural) and empowerment and/or disempowerment, drew conclusions with recommendations based on the findings, and state the contribution of the research to the study of contemporary PC Christianity in Ghana.

PART II METHODOLOGY

1.7.1. Research Approach

The qualitative method was employed in this research. This is because it seeks to explore and understands the sentiments, diversities, provides insight and explanation to the study. The qualitative method gives more than statistical representations but rather helps “understand complex behaviours [and processes],
needs, systems [including religion] and cultures.⁵⁵ This makes it most suitable for the study of Pentecostalism and empowerment especially using a comparative approach. By adopting qualitative approach in this study, it helps with the collection of relevant materials through accounts of people’s experiences, observations and interactions through unstructured interviews. The qualitative approach was particularly useful in my fieldwork when I needed more insight into some of the primary documents I gathered. It helped with the effective exploration of the research data. This buttresses Denzin and Lincoln notion that most traditional division between the uses of qualitative and quantitative research in the social sciences is that qualitative methods are used for exploration.⁶⁰ Furthermore, my discussions (in this study) on why certain results came about and not just what has been realized are because respondents offered additional information than a quantitative approach would have provided. This accounts for why most research works and existing literature, for instance, on the church’s increasing political activism in Ghana had mostly focussed on qualitative analysis as argued by Kwesi Yirenkyi.⁶¹

I combined historical and phenomenological approaches for the research because PC Christianity is rooted in religious experiences of the past even as they evolve new trends. Studying PC churches within these perspectives highlighted the history and contemporary dynamics within the COP and ICGC. This led to discussions


pertinent to existing developments, opportunities, problems and challenges in relation to empowerment/disempowerment elements in the churches. My background and involvement in a PC church work for many years may be relevant to this discussion. Again, my role as a PC pastor who has autonomy to develop both pastoral skills and academic potential over the years has largely shaped my perspective in the activities and practices of PC Christianity. I started my church leadership work as a volunteer at different levels in ICGC. I was Covenant Family leader, a member of the outreach team, a counselor, etc. The quest for spiritual, social and intellectual developments became more intense after years of engaging in lay pastoral work. ICGC at this time required all newly appointed pastors to be trained at the School of Theology in the Central University College, where I undertook my Bachelor of Arts degree in theology. I discovered my intellectual potential and thus pursued further academic work in the University of Ghana where I graduated with a Master of Philosophy degree in Religions while pastoring. Due to the autonomy ICGC grants its pastors in running their churches, and in addition to the consistent teaching/preaching by Otabil on self-development,\textsuperscript{162} pastors, church staffs and members who sought an opportunity for personal development had the chance to pursue their dreams. For instance, as a pastor in-charge of a branch church (ICGC Tema Community 21 assembly), I plan the church’s programmes and activities with local leadership. Such programmes and activities are not subjected to the scrutiny of the hierarchy of the church outside of the local assembly. Accordingly, the local pastor’s initiative in matters relating to the spiritual and physical development of the church and him/herself is largely

\textsuperscript{162} See, Larbi, \textit{Pentecostalism}, p. 503.
determined locally. This autonomy primarily explains my personal progress in pastoral work and academic development. It also inspires interest in local leadership participation in the building of the entire church organization (ICGC).

My perspective about a member, pastoral and non-pastoral staff and personal experiences collaborate or show diversity of how the PC churches impact their followers. For instance, Kwesi Sampong, a pastor of an ICGC branch church and a senior lecturer at the CUC exemplifies the same. Regardless of his role as a senior member of faculty, he is also allowed to work as a pastor in full time capacity in ICGC branch church. This goes to explain the autonomy the ICGC grants its pastors in their quest for self-actualization.

Again, the incidents of my life resonate with to some extent information shared by many respondents during my qualitative interviews. My self-reflection about life before and after joining the ICGC gives me, as an insider (ordained pastor) of a PC church, the opportunity to critically assess the processes and outcomes pastors and members of the churches go through. It also assists in determining the churches’ thoughts and actions relating to empowering and as it may be, disempowering of pastors and members. My particular context as a PC practitioner with years of experience into pastoral work allowed me the advantage to situate the research approach and method effectively.

Notwithstanding, my background as an ordained minister in ICGC researching into development in COP and ICGC was also challenging. The challenging aspect had

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163 Rev. Dr. Kwesi Sampong obtained his PhD at the Oral Roberts University. Prior to his PhD, he worked as a pastor and a staff under Dr. Emmanuel Kingsley Larbi who obtained his PhD in the University of Edinburgh in 1995 under the sponsorship of ICGC.

164 Some members of the church (COP and ICGC) were quick to allude to their present life transformation as a result of the churches activities and impact on them.
to do with the “insider outsider” conundrum couple with the huge preconceptions and the usual challenging nature associated with the qualitative research approach make it even more problematic.

As an insider (a Pentecostal/charismatic pastor), I had to confront the following issues; I acknowledged my mutual role as a researcher/practitioner and the tendency for that to impact on the data, findings and outcome of the research. For instance, my role as a pastor of the ICGC, whose subjective experiences and reflections on how the beliefs, activities and practices of the church reflect in peoples’ experiences at different levels in the day-to-day functioning of the church was to be noted in order not to skew the processes of the research i.e. the selection of my respondents, my relationship with some of the respondents, the themes that informed the research questions, the narratives and accounts of respondents, etc. These were all factors that could be influenced by reason of my role as an insider which could potentially impact the research outcome. This awareness made it necessary for me to take certain actions to mitigate my preconceptions in order not to unduly influence the processes of the research. Accordingly, I randomly selected most of my respondents except the key church leaders i.e. Apostle Dr. Opoku Onyinah and Apostle Dr. Alfred Koduah who were the Chairman and General Secretary of COP respectively. In the same vein, I selected Rev. Dr. Mensa Otabil and Rev. Morris Appiah the General Overseer and Deputy General Secretary of the ICGC respectively. This research approach helped in avoiding the possibility, as an insider, from collecting views exclusively from known respondents. My effort was to prevent any situation that may compromise the trustworthiness of the qualitative data (I have provided information on respondents and a breakdown of
data collected under Section 1.7.2.1. See also Tables 1-4 for further demographic representations of respondents).

My other effort in avoiding the pitfall as an insider to keep the credibility of the research was to guard against ‘truth claims’ and eschewed constructing personal meanings out of the practices and experiences of respondents of the COP and ICGC. This is in consonance with the suggestion of A. Cunliffe who maintains that there is the need for researchers to show reflexivity by questioning their intellectual suppositions and exploring researcher/participant relationships and their effect on knowledge.\footnote{A. Cunliffe. “Reflexive Inquiry in Organizational Research: Questions and Possibilities.” \textit{Human Relations}, Vol. 56 No. 4, p. 991.} Cunliffe continue to affirm the need for researchers to notice the constitutive nature of research discussion, construct ‘emerging practical theories’ rather than objective truths, show the situated nature of account through narrative and highlight on life and research as a process of becoming rather than an already established truth.\footnote{Ibid.} Thus, in this research, I thought through and questioned ways by which the churches’ claim they empower their followers \textit{vis-a-vis} peoples’ experiences. I therefore collected, reflected and interpreted peoples’ experiences and viewpoints and presented them descriptively in my research writing. The construal and reflection on the data made it possible for me not only to interpretate experiences and actions based on my assumption as a practitioner, but rather responded as an ethnographer who gives an ‘interpretation of the interpretation.’\footnote{See, M. Alvesson and K. Skolbburg. Reflexive Methodology. London: Sage, 2000.} My knowledge of the churches understudied (COP and ICGC) enhanced the research processes. I interrogated issues that are inherently present and claimed by the churches themselves as their impact on their members and society because of
my awareness as an insider. This is seen in the themes that emerged in the qualitative data (under Section 1.7.2.1.). To cite an example, the discussion on the gaps that exist in the ICGC governance structure and practices (see Sections 3.2 and 3.2.1.) and politics and civic engagements (Section 7.3.) was interrogated thoroughly because of my position as an insider. The insight gain was well beyond what a researcher without an insider perspective could arrive at. The thesis has shown aspects of this in other section. For example, I argued under Section 3.2. that the ICGC polity in practice is not always in accord with the tenet of the church’s constitution. This clearly shows an insiders voice that brings clarity to the subject under discussion. Such knowledge may even elude ICGC respondents but may be available to a researcher who studies his own organization.

In addition, access to particular church documents and key officers that facilitated relevant data collection enriched the research experience and provided greater insight to the interpretation and writing of the thesis. This accounts, notwithstanding, demanded strategies for my reflexive awareness. I therefore undertook the following: first, I wrote down my theoretical assumptions and presuppositions about the theme of the research and reexamined these during the research process as I indicated the changes that may have occurred. Second, I considered whether perceived changes demanded revising the research questions and focus. Third, I kept a research diary taking notes on views and sentiments about the research process. As part of my fieldwork notes, I particularly gave attention to incidents, emotional responses, interaction and other observations. Finally, my recorded interviews were aimed to allow a free flow of respondents’ opinions without affecting the information being communicated. In the process of
transcription, I paid attention to the qualitative interview noting how personal position and interaction as an insider impacted on the process. These were done to maintain a reflexive consciousness. I maintained that approach because, scholars have argued that in doing qualitative research, the question has been raised about the influence on the “research process and the relationships between the researcher and the researched.”¹⁶⁸ Karen Lumsden observed:

> We no longer question the need for reflexivity: the question is how to do it… Researchers have chosen to reflect upon their social location and background (including gender, sexuality, ethnicity, age, social class, religion, political beliefs and so on) and how this may have influenced various aspects of the research process. This involves accounting for the influence of their personal values and beliefs on the research process and their selection of a particular research topic, culture or fieldwork site.¹⁶⁹

My strategies for reflexive awareness therefore help account effectively my subjective and objective inclinations as seen in the writing of the research (see Sections: 3.4.3. reports on ICGC pastoral development and capacity building; 3.6 ICGC and ecumenism; 6.3. ICGC social policy and human development; 7.3. ICGC political behavior; etc. Aspects of this information were not documented or given by the respondents. These were information available to the researcher as an insider as seen in the research writing).

Again, as part of my effort to navigate the problematic nature of an insider embarking on a qualitative research, I employed the use of a multiple case studies approach. The choice of COP in addition to ICGC as case studies provided the means where analytic methods were applied to data for effective comparatives. In the process the researcher’s findings were effectively compared, this strengthened


¹⁶⁹ Ibid.
the research conclusion as presented in Chapter Eight. Susan Soy theory on case study corroborates my approach. She states:

> The case study method, with its use of multiple data collection methods and analysis techniques, provides researchers with opportunities to triangulate data in order to strengthen the research findings and conclusions.\(^{170}\)

Again, my experience as a PC pastor most invariably helped with the conduct of the research. I undertook this research disclosing my identity as a pastor/researcher to the leadership of both churches used in my case studies. I also made open my objective for the research (see Section 1.2.). Research theorist considers this disclosure necessary. For instance, Kirsti Malterud has suggested, "Preconceptions are not the same as bias, unless the researcher fails to mention them."\(^{171}\) She argues:

> A researcher's background and position will affect what they choose to investigate, the angle of investigation, the methods judged most adequate for this purpose, the findings considered most appropriate, and the framing and communication of conclusions."\(^{172}\)

In the same vein, Lincoln and Guba have recommended that the researcher needs to develop techniques to mitigate bias in the research processes. According to them, trustworthiness of a research study is essential to judging its worth.\(^{173}\) Trustworthiness includes establishing credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability of any research.

As a PC pastor, I have shown some benefits I had in my fieldwork. Both the COP


\(^{172}\) Ibid.

and ICGC offered me protocol services to have audience with key church officials without difficulty. The churches also provided me with available primary documents for the research, and in some cases, publicly introduced me to their members out of which I had my respondents. This was possible because, both COP and ICGC were convinced the theme *Pentecostalism and Empowerment* remains relevant in their beliefs, activities and practices in their respective churches.

The churches’ reflection on the theme may have suggested to them that the outcome of the research was intended to further their cause. Thus, I experienced minimal limitation in accessing relevant data and personels. The only obstruction to some relevant information during the interview came from some ICGC officials who felt I have answers I was seeking because I am an insider. In such situation, I emphasized to them the need for me to remain an independent and objective researcher on the matters, an opinion which most of them accepted. Other pastors also pleaded anonymity because they felt their views could implicate them and their branch churches with it attendant consequences. For such, I declined tape-recording them. I further assured them that their views would be kept anonymous and their concerns noted in the research report. Other church lay leaders/workers such as deacons(ess) in ICGC could hardly dissociate me from the knowledge they have about the church. This made it difficult for them to see the need in answering some of my questions. On the contrary, ICGC respondents who were not leaders and lay workers of the church freely gave their opinions during the qualitative interviewing.
1.7.2. Research Data

This research is based primarily on the data collected on the field with additional input from scholarly works that relate to the subject. The primary data includes interviews, participant observations and collections of primary documents i.e. pamphlets, church constitutions, policy papers, etc.

1.7.2.1. Key Respondents (Interviews)

Personal interviews were used in the process of collecting data for the research. These were unstructured (open-ended) interviews. This approach is purposely considered to capture the sentiments, experiences and perceptions of the respondents.\(^{174}\) I thus adopted a face-to-face in a free format, which has been defined by Michael Wilson and Roger Sapsford as,

\[\text{[A research interview] conducted, approximately, like natural conversations between two people. They are often tape-recorded in full for later analysis; although the interviewer may take continuous and contemporaneous notes…}\]\(^{175}\)

This method was very useful because of my familiarity with some of the clergymen and women (especially those in ICGC) I interviewed. It offered me the opportunity to probe deep into the research questions with additional follow-up questions. Wilson and Sapsford argued that the face-to-face in a free format allows the interviewer to “set the agenda of questions, probe more deeply into issues of interest with supplementary questions and records the answers and the discussion.”\(^{176}\) I therefore proposed to limit the interview to forty (40) respondents who were put in four categories i.e. clergy/leaders, lay representation and non-

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\(^{176}\) Ibid.
COP/ICGC leaders and members. These respondents comprised men and women, younger and older people. However, I envisaged an uneven male/female clergy and leadership representation due to my knowledge of the churches (COP and ICGC) leadership compositions. For example, the COP does not admit female clergy and the ICGC has just a handful of female clergy and leaders.177

In line with the plan adopted for the research, I undertook a two-tier fieldwork. The schedule for the fieldwork was; first, August 2011 to January 2012 and second, April to June 2012. During the first fieldwork, I was able to interview thirty-seven (37) respondents and during my second fieldwork an additional seventeen (17). As noted above, I did not originally intend to have more than forty (40) interviews, it became necessary when some of the respondents gave me referrals during interviews. For example, the chairman of the COP, Opoku Onyinah, contacted the General Secretary of the COP, Alfred Koduah, and made an instant appointment on my behalf. I therefore had more interviews as a result of the recommendation of the earlier interviewees. This accounted for the increase in the total respondents interviewed which came up to fifty-four (54). This technique usually referred to as snowball sampling and explained as “A technique for finding research subjects.

One subject gives the researcher the name of another subject, who in turn provides the name of a third, and so on.”178 Rowland Atkinson and John Flint have noted:

Snowball sampling can be applied for two primary purposes. Firstly, and most easily, as an 'informal' method to reach a target population. If the aim of a study is primarily explorative, qualitative and descriptive, then snowball sampling offers practical advantages… Snowball sampling is used most frequently to conduct qualitative

177 An extensive discussion on this is found in Chapter Four.

research, primarily through interviews. Secondly, snowball sampling may be applied as a more formal methodology for making inferences about a population of individuals who have been difficult to enumerate through the use of descending methods such as household surveys...¹⁷⁹

Thus, the population interviewed was church leaders, members of the congregation of both COP and ICGC and other PC believers in five political regions of Ghana.¹⁸⁰

Most of the interviews were done in the respondent’s offices at the church premises and were recorded for verbatim transcription. I was granted audience by the chairmen of the COP and founder and general overseer of the ICGC Apostle Dr. Opoku Onyinah and Rev. Dr. Mensa Otabil respectively.

The tables below show the various categories and distributions of respondents.

**Table 1. Distribution of Respondents Interviewed**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Female Respondent (Members only)</th>
<th>Male Respondents (Members only)</th>
<th>Female Respondent (Pastors only)</th>
<th>Male Respondents (Pastors only)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COP</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICGC</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Twenty-five (25) each from COP and ICGC and four (4) from other P/C churches.

The distribution shows gender distribution of the COP and ICGC and the others as indicated in Table 1 for analysis. The selection of respondents was influenced by

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ghana has ten (10) political regions. I covered five (5) out of the ten for my interviews. The five were mainly in the southern part of Ghana namely; Greater Accra, Central, Western, Eastern and Volta regions.
location, age, gender, family life and member’s participation as indicated on Tables 2, 3, and 4.

**Table 2. Distribution of Respondents Interviewed based on Age**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>18 – 29 Year</th>
<th>30-45 Years</th>
<th>46-60 Years</th>
<th>60 and Above</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COP</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICGC</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of the respondents within the age category of 18-29 years interviewed had completed their tertiary education and are either serving their national service or have just started work except for three members who are still in school.

**Table 3. Distribution of Respondents Interviewed based on Family Life**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Single</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Divorced</th>
<th>Widow(er)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COP</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICGC</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4. Distribution of Respondents Interviewed based on Participation in Church**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Only Church Member</th>
<th>Voluntary Church worker</th>
<th>Paid Non-Pastoral Staff</th>
<th>Paid Pastoral Staff</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COP</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICGC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.7.3. Participant (Field) Observation

I visited selected COP and ICGC congregations in five different regions in the southern part of Ghana. This gave me first-hand experience in the practical day-to-day church activities. Tehmina Basit, for instance, has emphasised, “researchers draw on their first-hand experience with settings, informants or documents to interpret their data.”¹¹⁸¹ I observed the various processes and procedures by which COP and ICGC engaged members of their congregations; at local congregational level and general church organizational level. The attention was on individual, existing groups and general conduct of the various churches visited. The conduct and content of the activities of the churches were studied. The organization of the Sunday and midweek meetings were of particular interest. I also visited and participated in other church programmes i.e. conventions and revival meetings as in the case of COP, and Greater Works and Destiny Summit conferences for ICGC. These were special annual programmes that gave indications of the churches orientation and commitments to their members and general public. General public events that involve the churches, example, the independence anniversary celebration and election (political) related rallies, was also noted, especially those that employ religious resources in dealing with socio-political and economic activities.

In the view of Paul Atkinson and Martyn Hammersley, participant observation refers “to observation carried out when the researcher is playing an established

participant role in the scene studied.”¹⁸² They argue on “the variation to be found in
the roles adopted by observers, the simple dichotomy is not very useful, not at least
because it seem to imply that the nonparticipant observer plays no recognized role
at all.”¹⁸³ In line with this observation, it becomes useful to have a clear theoretical
position. Raymond Gold¹⁸⁴ has suggested the theoretical conceptualization of
Buford Junker discussion on participant observation.¹⁸⁵ He noted the fourfold
typology, “complete observer, observer as participant, participant as observer and
complete participant.”¹⁸⁶ My peculiar role as a pastor in ICGC and a researcher
suggested an adoption of different types of Junker’s theory. In COP, I adopted the
‘observer as participant’ role, whereas in ICGC, I played the role of a ‘participant
as an observer.’ This was to help locate my orientation as a pastor in perspective
and how carefully I adopt the orientation of an insider or outsider. This technique
was necessary because it helped me make critical observations from different
standpoints.

Whilst doing the fieldwork, I gathered primary source materials. These include;
church policy documents, memoranda, dairies, church constitutions, church
manuals, periodicals, newsletter, photos, pastoral letters and annual prophetic
declarations and themes, magazines, electronic resources i.e. DVD/CD of church
conferences and special programmes, etc. The gathering of these research resources
largely made significant input in the data.

¹⁸³Ibid.
1.7.4. Coding of Qualitative Data

My primary task as a researcher working on multiple case studies was to collect the data, transcribe the tape-recorded interviews, label and analyse the data before writing the thesis. This is consistent with coding as a term in research, meaning, the conversion of raw data collected through interviews, field notes and other primary documents into useable qualitative data by classification.\textsuperscript{187} Thus, I first transcribed all the tape-recorded interviews, sorted them by categories in line with case studies (COP and ICGC) to guarantee effective analysis and established outcomes with reference to the research questions. This follows Robert K. Yin’s theory presented in his book \textit{Case Study Research: Design and Methods} where he espoused two general analytic strategies: first, relying on theoretical propositions and second, developing a case description.\textsuperscript{188} Equally, M. Hammersley and J. Atkinson have argued that research data “constitute a central research activity, and it should be carried out with as much care and self-conscious organisation as possible.”\textsuperscript{189} Accordingly, Basit’s perspective that the object of qualitative data analysis is to determine the categories, relationships and statements that inform the respondents’ view of the world in general, and the topic in particular was instructive.\textsuperscript{190} As a result, I related the coding with the emerging categories and the objectives of the research. I therefore sorted the data to establish components of individual and group empowerment and/or disempowerment models in both COP and ICGC. I

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{187} Christina Hughes. “From Field Notes to Dissertation: Analysing the Stepfamily.” Alan Bryman and Robert G. Burgess eds. \textit{Analysing Qualitative Data}. London: Routledge, 1994, p. 36.
\item \textsuperscript{190} Basit, ”Manual or Electronic?”, p. 143.
\end{itemize}
further stressed the need for the qualitative data to have a corresponding relationship with the respondents and showed connection with the thesis objectives. Thus, I explored the perceptions through the interviews of the church members of the COP and ICGC and showed how they perceive the churches and their activities.

Finally, the qualitative data captured the various statements of the respondents and field notes for analysis. I therefore applied the *inductive analysis* techniques.\(^{191}\) This is because, as David Thomas has noted, “*inductive analysis* refers to approaches that primarily use detailed readings of raw data to derive concepts, themes, or a model through interpretations made from the raw data by an evaluator or researcher.”\(^{192}\) In the converse, Thomas, “refers to data analyses that set out to test whether data are consistent with prior assumptions, theories, or hypotheses identified or constructed by an investigator”\(^{193}\) as a *deductive analysis*. Using the *inductive analysis* technique, I searched the data set for themes, established analytical categories, and indexed the data accordingly.\(^{194}\) I adopted a descriptive framework for organizing the case study, conducted analysis based on description of the general characteristics and relations of the beliefs and practices of the COP and ICGC. This led to the formulation of the concepts and themes that emerged from the qualitative data, which I organised into chapters that constitute this thesis.

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\(^{193}\) Ibid.

1.7.5. Case studies

The selection of case studies may be influenced by four variables (the subject, purpose, approach and process). The COP and ICGC were selected for the case studies. Two things basically informed the choice. First, though the former is a classical Pentecostal church and the latter a charismatic church, they both enjoy considerable visibility and are very widespread in Ghana. Their immense presence in Christianity in Ghana was the reason I sought to know their impact over their members and society. And second, regardless of their striking contrasts i.e. aspects of their beliefs, liturgy, polity and ethos, both COP and ICGC continuously exhibit church innovations that are relevant to issues of empowerment.

Having the twofold purpose in mind, I proceeded to collect data from both COP and ICGC. The data was in response of the research questions for both churches. This is because, as Gary Thomas has said a case study is “a kind of research that concentrates on one thing, looking at it in detail, not seeking to generalise from it,” my objective therefore was to find out the actual and particular state of affairs in line with my research objectives. This corresponds with the theory that “when you are doing a case study, you are interested in the thing in itself, as a whole.”

Robert Yin supports the view of Gary Thomas. In Yin’s opinion, case study is “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life

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197 Thomas, How to do your Case Study, p. 3.
198 Ibid.
context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used,”199 hence my choice to use multiple sources during data collection. The data was marked correspondingly with the cases understudied for coding and analysis.

A descriptive approach was adopted in the process of coding because of the suggestion that the purpose of the research must direct the selection of the appropriate approach to be used.200 My purpose was to capture the statements, sentiment and manifest situation of each particular case. This is in accordance with Robert E. Stake’s proposition. He writes, “The real business of case study is particularization, not generalization.”201 However, Thomas raised an argument about generalization in case study and concluded that:

There may be generalisations, but that each of us hold in our heads – not scientific generalisation, but everyday generalisations – that a case study may help to confirm or refute.”202

The multiple case study approach I applied in this research clearly brought out the particularities and unique features in the study of the churches. This is exemplified in the writing of the thesis because of the descriptive analytic approach that situate each of the churches in particular categories. Yin for instance agrees that analysis of evidence is a difficult task in doing case studies. However, he advised on two general analytic strategies. These are, relying on theoretical propositions and developing a case description.203

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203 See, Yin, *Case Study Research*. 
1.7.6. Challenges and Incentives

There were three challenges I encountered. First, due to the geographical spread of the sample size, participant observations and interview appointments were initially planned together. However, there were times that my interview appointments were rescheduled at short notice. This inevitably put more strain on my time and resources. My quest to have a spread-out representation demanded I traveled long distance sometimes more than once to the same destination, to conduct interviews as a participant observer. The second difficulty was in relation to dealing with assumptions from respondents especially the clergy. The pastors who knew me as an ordained minister were sometimes reluctant to give direct answers to interview questions especially those in ICGC. There were moments during the interviews they assumed I knew the answers to the questions I was seeking. In such situation, they retorted, ‘you know it, right?’, ‘as you know’ or ‘you can tell’. This sometimes obstructed getting responses to particular questions.

The final difficulty had to do with resource mobilization for the fieldwork. Aside from a token amount of £300.00 from the School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh, there was no other source of funding for the fieldwork. I had to personally fund all the research expenses. Considering the extensive travels, accommodation and other cost during the fieldwork in five regions, this made the fieldwork very burdensome.

Nonetheless, I obtained a major incentive during the fieldwork. This was relative to my role as a researcher vis-à-vis my position as an ordained minister researching my own organization. Two reactions occurred. First, I gained easy access to

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information and documents that would have normally been difficult to get. This is because I knew personnel who were either in-charge of specific materials or who knew how I could reach specific research materials or people. Second, some respondents who knew me as a minister were emboldened to speak out their reservations owning to the fact that they have not found legitimate grounds for expressing their misgivings. I however remain cautious of such information, as it is difficult to ascertain the authenticity and validity of such reports. This was done to keep my objective stances as a researcher and ensure the ethical code for the research was not infringed.
CHAPTER TWO
EMPOWERMENT, SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL CAPITAL IN
PENTECOSTALISM

2.0 Introduction

The study of Pentecostalism and empowerment and/or disempowerment is crucial to the discourse of ‘Religion and Development’ and ‘Religion as Social Capital’. This chapter deals with concepts of social, cultural and religious/spiritual capital as empowerment in Pentecostalism. It first discusses the concepts of empowerment and social, cultural and religious/spiritual capital theories and then finds ground to establish a synthesis for the concepts. This forms the main theoretical framework of this research.

The second objective of the chapter is the appraisal of various scholarly works on the themes of empowerment/disempowerment and contemporary Pentecostalism. Particular reference to Pentecostalism in Ghana is focused on the COP and ICGC. The purpose is to establish a basis for Ghanaian classical Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in a comparative analysis using the concepts of social, cultural and religious/spiritual capital as empowerment and the lack of social, cultural and religious/spiritual capital as disempowerment.

2.1. A Theory of Empowerment

Empowerment as a buzzword embraces vast interpretations and definitions in different subject fields such as philosophy, psychology, economics, sociology,

gender, religion, etc. The term has been used in different epochs to denote different social interventions. As an academic concept, empowerment is first attributed to Paulo Freire\textsuperscript{207} who applied the concept in the field of education and humanitarian work as he pursued an objective to liberate the oppressed.\textsuperscript{208} Elisheva Sadan, *Empowerment and Community Planning* (translated from the Hebrew by Richard Flantz) elaborated on how the concept (empowerment) changes over time. She showed the historical trajectory and the different social situations to which it was applied. She argued that the two concepts, *empowerment* and *social capital* have mutual attributes and objectives.\textsuperscript{209}

The notion of *power* is pivotal in empowerment discourse. This is evident in Mann Hyung Hur's work, "Empowerment in terms of Theoretical Perspectives".\textsuperscript{210} He identified the concept of *power* and *powerlessness* at their various levels, that is, the individual, group and community. His suggestion was that reviewing empowerment in specific subject areas (such as religion), at different levels and noting specific variables, could determine the understanding of the concept of empowerment and lead to the established processes. Hur pointed out:

> There exist three issues basic to the understanding of empowerment. First, empowerment is multidimensional in that it occurs within sociological, psychological, economic, political, and other dimensions. Empowerment also occurs at various levels, such as individual, group, and community. Third, empowerment, by


\textsuperscript{210} Hur, "Empowerment in Terms of Theoretical Perspectives."
definition, is a social process because it occurs in relation to others. Following Hur’s proposition as stated above, I seek to conceptualize empowerment within the factors mentioned in the study of PC Christianity. They include; multidimensional purview, different horizons, and the processes by which they happen.

2.2. Multidimensional Purview of Empowerment

J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu has shown that the concept of empowerment is part of the orientation and practices of PC churches in Ghana. It is contemporaneous in their rhetoric, liturgical arrangements and also serves as a common maxim. Empowerment motifs are part of their practices and ministry focus. For instance, they run programmes that suggest strong interest in different levels of empowerment that are variably emphasised. This encompasses spiritual, economic/financial, and social (family) empowerment.

*Spiritual empowerment* is seen as part of the PCs desire for revival and the capacity to engage in spiritual warfare. This is consistent with their soteriological objectives. Asamoah-Gyadu has noted, “Their key ‘soteriological goals’ therefore include the realisation of ‘transformation and empowerment’, ‘healing and deliverance’, and ‘prosperity and success’ in the lives of believers.” The PC churches also embark on programmes of *economic and financial empowerment* which underscore the belief and expectation of prosperity and success in their lives.

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211 Ibid, p. 524.
213 See Appendix 3.
214 Larbi, *Pentecostalism*.
Gifford cited Otabil, “Some people call us charismatic prosperity preachers. I am happy [with that]; I am not a poverty preacher, but a prosperity preacher.”

Otabil’s assertion connotes a strong self-understanding and realisation of many Charismatic church leaders and followers on the subject of economic and financial prosperity.

The classical Pentecostals in Ghana could be considered ‘moderate’ in their pursuit of economic and financial prosperity. However, the interest in economic and financial empowerment and wealth seeking is not absent in their orientation. The chairman of the COP, Apostle Opoku Onyinah cited an elder of the COP, Elder Michael Agyekum Addo, as a testimony of the church’s drive for prosperity for their members.

In recounting his own story, Addo, a successful business entrepreneur and the founder and Chief Executive Officer of the Kama Group Limited and a member of Ghana Club 100 and Association of Ghana industries (AGI), collaborated the ministry impact the COP had made on him. He stated: “By the support of that big “Unknown Hand” of God… the company has been growing at a very fast rate and prosperity has not left us behind.”

In the same vein, the testimony of Kwabena Boateng, an academic and a pastor of COP narrated how through giving a seed offering to the church out of his loan got him...

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216 Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity*, p. 120.
217 The term ‘moderate’ used here is in relation to their search for financial prosperity in comparison with the Charismatic churches strong teachings and theological position. See Larbi, *Pentecostalism*.
218 Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office at Accra in the Greater Region.
221 A term Pentecostals and Charismatics use to denote an offering giving out of faith to provoke blessing for particular needs.
a scholarship to study at Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada, having benefited from the Canadian scholarship scheme. Thus, seed offerings have become an empowering means by which believers exercise their faith to receive particular blessings.

Another recurrent theme in PC churches that deserve attention in empowerment discourse is family empowerment. The churches themselves express this as ‘God’s power in the family’, ‘covenant blessings’ or ‘covenant family’. The basic understanding is that the family is God’s idea; a divine institution established by God himself for all who are created in his image and have experienced regeneration through salvation in Christ.

The notion of a ‘covenant family’ description adopted by ICGC as part of the cell structure of the church shows a coming together of two concepts: a Christian community and an African traditional family heritage. ICGC, seem to have redefined traditional African practice which usually finds its meaningful expression around the three turning points of the African family; ‘point of entry’, ‘point of maturity’, and ‘point of departure’. The ‘covenant family’, as the term implies, depicts a merger of the traditional family identity and faith community identity as a catalyst in the growth and development of the church. The covenant family has been used to harness and develop talents. It also serves as a cell system that fosters

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223 These terms i.e. ‘God’s power in the family’, ‘covenant blessings’ or ‘covenant family’ may be used interchangeable. Where it connotes something different, it may be duly explained.


effective networks of different relationships among members and others in the community.\textsuperscript{226}

Thus, COP by its cell system and ICGC by its ‘covenant family’ concept\textsuperscript{227} has both sociological and religious responsibility in seeking protection, favour and well being for its members. For instance, the way people are admitted into church membership, the obligation of members to the church and the commitment of the church to its members are all designed to operate within a system typical of a family setting. This consideration stems from the view that the PC churches have a strong sense of community identity that resonates with the traditional African worldview of family.

2.3. Empowerment Horizons

The components or levels of empowerment have been diverse. This is mainly based on the focus and the discipline within which the subject is examined. Some scholars have suggested two levels i.e. individual empowerment and collective empowerment.\textsuperscript{228} Others have noted a three-level approach. Proponents of the later approach include John Lord and Peggy Hutchison. They pointed out:

Empowerment can exist at three levels: at the personal level, where empowerment is the experience of gaining increasing control and influence in daily life and community participation… at the small group level, where empowerment involves the shared experience, analysis, and influence of groups on their own efforts… and at the community level, where empowerment revolves around the

\textsuperscript{226} International Central Gospel Church, \textit{The Covenant Family}, pp. 3-6.

\textsuperscript{227} The ICGC \textit{Covenant Family} and the \textit{Home Cell} system of the COP are all structured in the same way and function is similar mode.

\textsuperscript{228} Hur, ‘Empowerment in Terms of Theoretical Perspectives”, p. 530.
utilization of resources and strategies to enhance community control…

The two-level approach (the personal or individual and groups or collective) suits the structure of the churches in their attitude toward pastoral work, church developments and other civic and public life engagements. Consequently, the examination of the subject of empowerment of the churches would be organized around the personal (individual) and group (collective) levels.

2.3.1. Personal Empowerment

Lee Staples defines personal or individual empowerment as “the way people think about themselves, as well as the knowledge, capacities, skills, and mastery they actually possess.” Hur affirmed this explanation of personal empowerment relating to the key elements mentioned in the definition such as ‘think’, ‘knowledge’, ‘capacities’ and ‘skills’ possessed by the individual. This implies self-awareness, individual perception and worldview. The elements are significant in reviewing individual members in the churches (COP and ICGC) to find grounds for assessment. These features are also components necessary in assessing groups and (faith) communities in the quest for empowerment. He asserted, “Personal empowerment should be consistent with collective empowerment to improve the value of social and economic justice more effectively.”

231 Quoted it from Hur, “Empowerment in Terms of Theoretical Perspectives,” p. 530.
232 Ibid., p. 531.
The theory assists in acknowledging the factors and procedures responsible in achieving any empowerment objectives. The linkage of the two, personal and collective (group) empowerment approaches cannot be reviewed exclusive one from the other. Howbeit, “The place of the community [group] as the setting for the development of Christian formation has always been important for Pentecostals”233 Admittedly, Hur presents a good understanding of an individual empowerment model which links up with collective empowerment. In the study of PC churches, his theory on individual empowerment remains useful. This individual determination toward empowerment connects with the collective goal of the believing community. This has been acknowledged:

In the theology of the CMs [Charismatic Ministries], the religious experience of salvation is considered the gateway to the renewal and spiritual empowerment of the believer and of the believing community. What this empowerment entails is evident through the expectation that individual Christians through their charismatic gifting will function within the body of Christ.234

In Asamoah-Gyadu’s view, PC Christianity in Ghana stress on ‘personality transformation’.235 Subjects related to ‘personal transformation’ and ‘self-development’ expressions are predominant in the rhetoric of the PC churches and also indicate another means by which the personal empowerment motif is communicated.236 The churches focus is on individual self-improvement in aforementioned areas of spiritual, economic (financial) and family empowerment. Most of the PC churches have ‘declared annual themes’ which guide the conduct of the churches programme for that particular year. For instance, Otabil on the 6th

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234 Asamoah-Gyadu, African Charismatics, p. 149.
235 Ibid., p. 133.
236 A thorough discussion on this will follow subsequently under the caption ‘empowerment rhetoric’.
December 2013 declared 2014 as a year of “Order” for ICGC. He went further to talk about how the individual members of the church needed to develop on ‘priorities, processes and patterns.’ Otabil stated: “just being alive is not an achievement; we must anticipate old age and plan for it.” In pursuit of the ‘plan’, Otabil circulated a ‘20 Year Personal Development Plan’ for every member of the ICGC in Ghana. This is an example of how the PC churches seek to empower the individual members. Emmanuel Larbi refers to the Charismatic churches as “potent agent for change, engendering a fundamental transformation of social and religious values.” ‘Transformation’ has an empowering connotation, it involves, as Asamoah-Gyadu explains, “the expectation that…believers could actively experience the Spirit of God arousing in them a passion for God’s Kingdom [and all the promises for wellbeing].” Again, Larbi further pointed out the character of the Charismatic churches, asserting their practical approach to mission as a longing for ‘self-determination’ and also “a search for identity in the context of the African experience.” Two key issues, ‘self-determination’ and ‘search for identity’ are components that engender individual empowerment. Hur asserts, “Self-determination is most frequently reported in the literature and considered as a single

237 Mensa Otabil, “Theme of the year 2014” declared at the M Plaza Hotel in a pastor’s conference on the 6th December 2013 at Accra, Ghana.
238 Ibid.
239 Ibid.
240 See Appendix 4.
241 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 328.
243 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 329.
and critical component of empowerment.” He argued that self-determination is coherently interfaced with ‘notions of personal control.’ This has implications for the PC Christian who is constantly aiming at subjugating spiritual forces perceived to be inimical to one’s progress in all facets of life. Other scholars, R. Van Dijk, Larbi and Asamoah-Gyadu concur with the empowering effect through self-determination and self-awareness of the PCs.

A predominant idea, which runs through the responses of respondents during the fieldwork, could succinctly be noted as ‘salvation as the basis for the believers empowerment.’ This understanding dominates most PC believers in Ghana as they negotiate for aspirational and felt needs. PC believers are therefore empowered “to live lives devoid of fear and intimidation” notwithstanding perceived hostile spiritual and physical forces they encounter.

2.3.2. Collective (Group) Empowerment

The term ‘church’ or ‘congregation’ in this study may be applied in two ways. First, it refers to the entire audience or members within a particular local assembly.

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245 Hur, “Empowerment in Terms of Theoretical Perspectives,” p. 531.
246 Ibid., p. 532.
248 Larbi, Pentecostalism, pp. 325-329.
250 Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office in Accra; similar interviews with Apostle Alfred Koduah on the 9th August 2011at the COP head office in Accra and Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18th August 2011, at the ICGC head office in the Greater Accra Region.
Most Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians attested to this during my interaction with respondents. This would be seen in the data discussed into the write-up.
Second, it is in reference to the group of local assemblies of a given church denomination such as COP and ICGC within Ghana. Thus, church or congregational/group empowerment may well be considered within Hur’s description of collective empowerment.\textsuperscript{252}

The church as a body is made up of different groups and it’s the functions of these different groups that show the churches’ distinctive character. Both the classical Pentecostals and the Charismatic churches demonstrate their ideals through the operative mechanisms of the existing groups within the churches. These groups are important in the study of the churches’ conduct because they point to what the churches seek to do and the very practical things that are done.

Group empowerment in this study refers to the existing relatively smaller groups in the congregations recognized as part of the structure to execute specific functions of the church based on talent, skills, natural or spiritual endowed gifts and the members’ collective and individual interest.\textsuperscript{253} These groups may include but are not limited to the music groups, protocol services, cell (covenant family) groups, creative art, technical support units, men’s ministry, women’s ministry, young adult and singles ministry. The changing character of Pentecostalism in Ghana allows new groups to be formed in the churches with great fluidity. This may be due to the churches ministry needs or in pursuit of particular ministry objectives. Members and functionaries of the various groups are mostly volunteers. Scholars such as Kalu,\textsuperscript{254} Gifford,\textsuperscript{255} Larbi,\textsuperscript{256} Dovlo\textsuperscript{257} and Omenyo\textsuperscript{258} have assessed the history,

\textsuperscript{252} Hur, “Empowerment in Terms of Theoretical Perspectives,” p. 533.
\textsuperscript{253} Lord and Hutchison, “The Process of Empowerment”, p. 4
\textsuperscript{254} Kalu, \textit{African Pentecostalism}, 2008.
character and profile of PC churches in Ghana. However, in assessing the elements associated with both individual church members and the congregations, it is Asamoah-Gyadu who theorizes that PC churches empower identity. The objective here is to discuss the potential of group dynamics within the PCs in line with their empowering agenda. For instance, Maton and Wells agree:

religion has the potential to facilitate groups' critical awareness of oppressive forces, to offer compelling alternative visions and cultural values, and to mobilize human and institutional resources.

What Maton and Wells suggest is central in assessing the role of PCs in engendering empowerment or disempowerment. The objective of this study therefore is to find out whether the stated perceived ‘potential’ for empowerment is realised in Pentecostalism. The three elements stated i.e. ‘critical awareness’, ‘alternative visions and values’ and ‘mobilization of resources’ are components to be used to assess the churches drive toward group empowerment. The conduct of church activities, group and individual participation showed a correlation with benefits.

Hur presents notions such as collective belonging and involvement as key characteristics of collective empowerment. These concepts, collective belonging

256 Larbi, Pentecostalism.
and involvement, are features of the PC churches in their ethos and functions. Other scholars such as Amnon Boehm and Lee Staples from a social work perspective have noted the elements of (collective belonging and involvement) as expressed by Hur with an additional notion of control as a third component of collective empowerment. Accordingly, theorizing church or congregational empowerment levels may include components of collective belonging, involvement and control. These elements would be used to examine the outcomes of churches empowerment conduct. Again, Hur’s observation that ‘Not many studies were reported in the area of the components of collective empowerment’ is instructive in developing a theory in the studying of churches behaviour and empowerment. The two levels of studying empowerment in church organizations as discussed above are imperative in understanding the processes and components that go on in the PC churches. This work therefore focuses on two levels in both the comparative assessment of COP and ICGC and also within the individual churches. As Seth Kiersbery has said, “most empowerment theorist see individual and community destinies as interdependent and mutually reinforcing.”

2.4. Components and Processes of Empowerment

The major work of the PC churches is to direct people to God’s saving power through Jesus Christ. In pursuing this objective, the churches have also

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261 Ibid.


264 Both the COP and ICGC have stated in their constitution ‘the depravity of humankind and the need for salvation through Christ Jesus. Accordingly, the churches have stated in their tenets their primary mandate to pursue this salvation found exclusively in Jesus Christ. See, COP’s Constitution, p. 1 and ICGC Constitution, p. 6.
demonstrated that in order to satisfy the ‘felt’ and ‘aspirational’ needs of her members and to fulfil its mission, other issues sensitive to the needs of her own must be engaged.\textsuperscript{265} As a framework for analysis, the notion of ‘power and powerlessness’, rhetoric, awareness and control and human development programmes are elements considered in the processes of empowerment.

\textbf{2.4.1. Power and Powerlessness}

The notion of power is central to both empowerment discourse and Pentecostalism. Discussions around empowerment take cognisance of the dynamics of ‘power’. Lord and Hutchison agree, “Empowerment can begin to be understood by examining the concepts of power and powerlessness.”\textsuperscript{266} The term ‘power’ may be applied in different fields of studies with precise definition within the context of each study. It may also be examined from different theorists from diverse backgrounds, perhaps from Max Weber\textsuperscript{267} to Michel Foucault.\textsuperscript{268} Power may also be studied from diverse contexts and disciplines i.e. political, financial and economic, cultural, gender, religious, etc. However, a general consideration of the term ‘power’ may be understood as the “capacity of some persons and organizations to produce intended, foreseen, and unforeseen effect on others.”\textsuperscript{269}

The ‘capacity’ in the context of our studies is people (social and human capital) and

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{265}Kalu, \textit{African Pentecostalism}, pp. 249-266; Larbi, \textit{Pentecostalism}, pp. 349-358.
\item \textsuperscript{266} Lord and Hutchison, "The Process of Empowerment", p. 2.
\end{itemize}
resources (spiritual, cultural and material capital). This shows the benefit that accrues to religious groups especially in Pentecostalism. Therefore, our deliberations on power and its implications concentrate on developments within PC Christianity.

Powerlessness, on the other hand may be regarded as the hope of an individual or a people who consider their actions to have no consequence in affecting the outcomes of life occurrences. This is distinguished as ‘real powerlessness’ and ‘surplus powerlessness.’ The former is relatable to “inequalities and oppressive control exercised by systems and other people.” And the later, as “an internalized belief that change cannot occur, a belief which result in apathy and an unwillingness of a person [or a people] to struggle for more control and influence.” The two concepts, ‘power’ and ‘powerlessness’ is useful in predicting religious phenomena whose conception of ‘power’ is key in its beliefs and practices. Both concepts (power and powerlessness) form the very ideological basis of Pentecostalism. Stephen Ellis and Gerrie ter Haar note the expression of power in counteracting negative forces and using power to negotiate in social, spiritual, political and economic interest by the churches. P.J. Grabe examining the theme of God’s power in the context of Pentecostalism in Africa, affirms, “…focus on the power of God is one of the reasons why Pentecostalism has been such a potent movement in

270 Longman, “Empowering the Weak and Protecting the Powerful”, p. 54.
271 Lord and Hutchison, ”The Process of Empowerment”, pp. 8-10.
272 Ibid.
273 Ibid., p. 2.
274 Ibid.
a variety of cultural contexts.”

He continues, “This assumption is especially true in the African context in which ‘Pentecostal-like’ worship and practices are widespread.”

The PC churches are conscious of this ‘power dynamics’ especially as it is manifest in their beliefs and practices. They do not consider spiritual power conclusive in itself. It affects religious and supernatural outcomes. However, it is also deemed to affect all departments of life, from economic to health, public life issues to social behaviour. This ‘power’ construct has been associated with Pentecostalism by Keith Warrington. He emphatically noted:

"One of the keywords relating to Pentecostals is ‘power’ and one of the most important verses for them (Act 1:8) identifies ‘power’ as that which follows an experience with the Spirit."

Consequently, spiritual experience, which PC churches and believers rely on, connotes spiritual power. That is what I refer to in this study as ‘power dynamics’.

Warrington is not the only one who attributes ‘spiritual experience’ to ‘power’ in Pentecostalism. Harvey Cox declares in connection with Pentecostalism, specifically in the Africa context, “they provide their followers with the weapons of the Spirit they need to fight back against the forces of evil as they manifest themselves in disease and discord…” PCs perceived the Spirit of God as transcendent power who fills powerless people with power. Jane Soothill employs

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277 Ibid.

278 Warrington, Pentecostal Theology, p. 56.

terminologies in her description of a ‘born again’ Christian\textsuperscript{280} that relates with our ‘power’ concept. She points out that among other theological features in Pentecostalism is “a belief in the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.”\textsuperscript{281} Again, she referred to the Bible as “an object of power”\textsuperscript{282} for Pentecostal and Charismatic believers. This agrees with J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu’s position that “the born-again is considered so empowered.”\textsuperscript{283}

Donald Dayton’s four-fold theological depiction of Pentecostalism (Jesus as the Saviour, baptizer, healer and soon coming King)\textsuperscript{284} carries associations of ‘power’ and ‘empowerment’. PCs themselves explain that, as Saviour, Jesus breaks ‘the power of sin’ and its associate elements of bondage. As baptizer in the Spirit Jesus is seen to impart spiritual power to his follower to deal with inimical (spiritual and non-spiritual) forces and give his people the wherewithal to live. As healer, Jesus is seen to satisfying the needs for the wellbeing of believers and to establish a covenant of health by the power of his Spirit.\textsuperscript{285} Kalu concurred:

the Christian concept of Amandla in the Zulu language signifies the authority and power of the Holy Spirit over all types of oppression.

\textsuperscript{280} This term is used to describe Charismatic Christians who experience regeneration or spiritual rebirth (change) in their lives.


\textsuperscript{282} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{283} Asamoah-Gyadu, "Born of Water and the Spirit: Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity in Africa", pp. 392-393.


\textsuperscript{285} Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at the COP head office in Accra the Greater Accra Region. See also, Allan Anderson. “Pentecostal and Charismatic Theology” in David F. Ford and Rachel Muers eds. \textit{The Modern Theologians: An Introduction of Christian Theology since 1918}. Oxford: Blackwell, 2005, pp. 589-603.
It evokes the extra power and grace through which the Holy Spirit diagnoses, heals, and revitalizes believers.\textsuperscript{286}

What Kalu underscores here is a view of Pentecostalism, which activates and utilizes the ‘power dynamic’ in pursuit of wholeness of life. Finally as king, Jesus rules with absolute power and authority. These notions are major theological positions in PC Christianity in their contemplation of life.\textsuperscript{287} In the African cosmology, spiritual reality, which is associated with power, is not taken for granted.\textsuperscript{288} Thus, spiritual power or as PC believers may term it ‘supernatural power’ is a common factor that determines everything about life. Therefore, ‘powerlessness’ portrays a disempowering condition. What makes life tick is the power factor and Pentecostalism guarantees this.\textsuperscript{289}

Conceptualizing ‘power dynamics’ opens the door for Pentecostalism to be explained in different facets. For example, the leadership of the churches, especially the Charismatic churches are seen as embodiments of power in a spiritual, financial and political sense. This fits what Michel Foucault calls ‘the pastoral power.’\textsuperscript{290} Foucault sees the word ‘pastor’, to define, ‘a very special form of power.’\textsuperscript{291} Foucault gives the characteristics of pastoral power:

1. It is a form of power whose ultimate aim is to assure individual salvation in the next world.
2. Pastoral power is not merely a form of power that commands; it must also be prepared to sacrifice itself for the life and salvation of

\textsuperscript{286} Kalu, \textit{African Pentecostalism}, p. 264.
\textsuperscript{289} Asamoah-Gyadu, \textit{African Charismatics}, pp. 134-135.
\textsuperscript{291} Ibid.
the flock. Therefore, it is different from royal power, which demands a sacrifice from its subjects to save the throne.

3. It is the form of power that looks after not just the whole community but each individual in particular, during his entire life.

4. Finally, this form of power cannot be exercised without knowing the inside of people’s minds, without exploring their souls, without making them reveal their innermost secrets. It implies a knowledge of the conscience and an ability to direct it.  

These characteristics are useful in the measure of pastoral interaction about ‘power brokerage’ in PC Christianity. For example, John McCauley in his discussion of patron and client in the context of Pentecostalism allude to ‘spiritual power’ as one of the grounds by which pastors serve as patrons. Thus, empowerment and ‘power’ coexist in effecting positive transformation much as disempowerment and ‘powerlessness’ also share mutual attributes. The same impression explains respondents’ experiences in different areas of life in the PC churches.

2.4.2. ‘Declarations’ as Empowerment Rhetoric

Religious and theological language expressed by PC churches often carries empowerment motifs. These churches develop themes that capture their ministry philosophies and objectives. The themes may be short or long term objectives. Other slogans, catchphrases and words are declared as an affirmation of faith and/or expectation. These statements are premised on their theological reflections in day-to-day experiences of the divine. This is what I refer to in this discussion as ‘declaration theology.’ The objective is to point out the language forms of the PC


294 The term ‘Declaration Theology’ is coined and applied in this work to denote the practice of Pentecostal-Charismatic believers’ beliefs which are spoken by faith with the expectation to bring
believers that carry their everyday expressions, beliefs and experiences. These declarations and thematic expressions are used as the basis to discuss empowerment in their reflections and practices. The term, empowerment, may not directly be cited but the idea is conveyed in other expressional forms especially through religious communication. For instance, a routine cliché and ‘catchphrase’ may serve as a ‘faith booster’ to embolden PC believers in their everyday quest to survival.

The PC churches and their pastors to be precise, employ religious terms or phrases such as, to cite some examples, ‘you are under open heavens’, your life will never be the same’, you have the anointing (unction) to function’, ‘you are blessed beyond measure’, ‘you are blessed and highly favoured’, ‘you are unshakeable’, ‘no weapon formed against you shall prosper’, ‘the eye of the Lord is upon you’, ‘you are above and not beneath’, ‘be still and see the salvation of the Lord’, ‘no condemnation’, ‘you are blessed to be a blessing’, ‘God is good all the time and Satan is bad all the time’, ‘God has an amazing plan for you’, ‘prayer is the master key’, ‘you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free’, etc.\textsuperscript{295}

Declaration of \textit{yearly themes} has also become a common feature of contemporary Pentecostalism in Ghana. The themes become the focus of the churches objective for the year and are changed annually. This practice is traceable to ICGC when the founder and General Overseer announced the yearly theme to the pastors and senior officials of the church in their annual pastor’s retreat in 2005. The theme for that outcome based on the spoken word. It has been described by some scholars as ‘say it and claim it’ theology. It is not the same as ‘Confessional Theology’ as implied in orthodox Christianity. \textsuperscript{295} These catch-phrases are usually seen among the Charismatic churches. Some are used as greetings, others as words of encouragement. Some of the terms or catch-phrases are partial biblical text which are familiar to the members of the churches.
year, 2005, was ‘Open Heavens’.\textsuperscript{296} The COP yearly theme for the 2013 was ‘Worship in Spirit and Truth John 4:23’.\textsuperscript{297} For ICGC, the themes come with specific declarations and ‘artworks’,\textsuperscript{298} which serves as a backdrop on the stage. The ‘prophetic declaration’ is said by the pastor or the leader of the congregation and is repeated by the audience every Sunday morning before the pastor delivers the sermon.\textsuperscript{299} Empowerment rhetoric is also seen in the advertised programmes of the churches. Billboards, flyers, print and electronic media are usually splashed with themes that clearly promote empowerment consciousness.\textsuperscript{300}

2.4.3. Empowerment as ‘Awareness’ and ‘Control’

Empowerment discourse conveys notions of awareness and control.\textsuperscript{301} This reflects Robin Horton’s argument on the subject of ‘communion’ on one side, and ‘explanation/prediction/control’ on the other.\textsuperscript{302} Horton’s reflections concern the components of religion especially religious systems in the African context. The thrust of his argument suggests:

\textsuperscript{296} Our Year of Open Heavens. An audio CD, Alter media, ICGC 2005.

\textsuperscript{297} Prior to this development the Pentecostal-Charismatic churches explained the focus of ministry for the year in their conventions, camp meetings or annual conference. The striking difference here is that they were not presented in declarations or themes as packaged in recent times – ‘our year of…’ The respondents, especially the pastors among them, attest to this.

\textsuperscript{298} See ICGC ‘2012 Backdrop’ and ‘art work’, Appendix 5.

\textsuperscript{299} This was noticed during my fieldwork when I visited a number of ICGC congregations in six different regions namely Greater Accra, Ashanti, Western, Eastern, Central and Volta as a participant observer.

\textsuperscript{300} See Appendix 6.

\textsuperscript{301} This follows our earlier discussion on collective belonging, involvement and control as postulated by Hur, “Empowerment in Terms of Theoretical perspectives, pp. 523-540; Boehm and Staples, "Empowerment: The Point of View of Consumers", 2004, pp. 270-280.

by stressing the communion aspect of religious life and underplaying the explanation/prediction/control aspect, it travesties virtually every one of the religious systems of Africa and most of those in the world at large.\textsuperscript{303}

Horton’s assertion rationalizes the phenomena in Pentecostalism in Africa that seeks to ‘explain, predict and control’ life events by spiritual means. The traditional religious orientation serves as a vehicle to explain life in the spiritual sense.\textsuperscript{304} The awareness, prediction and control create the setting for needs to be met in a very religious (but practical) way.\textsuperscript{305} Pentecostalism therefore becomes a Christian approach in dealing with familiar religious systems. It uses the ‘awareness’ to negotiate the very existential needs of people, by deploying ‘supernatural power’, as a ‘controlling measure to mitigate or completely vanquish inimical forces.\textsuperscript{306}

Two notable terms, ‘awareness and control’ are relevant in empowerment discourse. Zimmerman was categorical in his submission, “empowerment includes participatory behaviour, motivations to exert control, and feelings of efficacy and control.”\textsuperscript{307} Thus, a reflection of the empowering capabilities of contemporary Pentecostalism in Ghana is the movement’s ability to bring ‘awareness’, or remind devotees of the important aspect of life beyond the physical and the need for

\textsuperscript{303} Ibid., p. 8.


\textsuperscript{305} Baëta, \textit{Prophetism in Ghana}.


‘control’. It is on this note, for instance, Ogbu Kalu argues that Pentecostalism uses intercessory prayers as a political praxis.  

2.4.4. Development as Empowerment

Paul Streeten explains ‘human development’ as “expanding the choices people have, to lead lives that they value, and improving the human condition so that people have the chance to live full lives.” The underlying notions in the definition are ‘choices of people’, ‘value’ and ‘improve human condition’. These are the thoughts, for example, that undergird Martha Nussbaum’s theory of Capability Approach which shows what individuals are capable of doing in line with self-improvement.

Following the notions; ‘choices of people’, ‘value’ and ‘improve human condition’, and assessing the beliefs and practices of Pentecostalism in Ghana, show how the churches serve as agents of empowerment or disempowerment. For example, the growth of PC churches in Africa has been linked to the potential development of capital: human, cultural, spiritual, social, political and economic. Scholars in the field of social sciences have recognized this potential. Stephen Ellis and Gerrie ter Haar have noted:

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311 Ellis and Haar, "Religion and development in Africa."
Africa’s development in the twenty-first century will be shaped largely by religion. It is therefore important for any analysis or recommendations to take account of this.\textsuperscript{312}

Paul Gifford, an ardent critic of PC Christianity, agrees:

Many observers of Africa refer to the significance of Christianity in African society. A popular overview of the continent remarks simply. ‘Today… the Christian church is probably the most powerful institution in sub-Saharan Africa’.\textsuperscript{313}

John F. McCauley sees Pentecostalism in Africa as “the most powerful social movement to touch the continent over the last generation.”\textsuperscript{314} The single most important message that all the scholars mentioned above underscore is the potential of contemporary Pentecostalism serving as agent of social, cultural and spiritual transformation. Kalu’s viewpoint of contemporary Pentecostalism in Africa is captured vividly: “African Pentecostalism has become a religious force that is sensitive to the socioeconomic and political terrains.”\textsuperscript{315} Kalu, Kwame Bediako\textsuperscript{316} and J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu\textsuperscript{317} have all shown in their scholarly works that the exponential growth of contemporary Pentecostalism has relevance to development in Ghana. However, the PC movement has also been criticised for exhibiting characteristics inconsistent with empowerment.

\textsuperscript{312} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{313} Gifford, \textit{African Christianity}, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{314} McCauley, “Africa’s New Big Man Rule?, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{315} Kalu, \textit{African Pentecostalism}, p. 21
\textsuperscript{316} Bediako, "Africa and Christianity on the Threshold of the Third Millennium, pp. 323.
\textsuperscript{317} Asamoah-Gyadu, \textit{Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity}. 
2.4.5. Pentecostalism and Disempowerment

Religion in general has been criticised as “the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of spiritless conditions” by proponents like Karl Marx. The Christian religion to be precise has also been criticised. The critique has been that, Christianity has “been more interested in the baseness and sinful state of the individual than in the degradation, enslavement and impoverishment of the whole classes…” In the African context, the churches have also been censured for their contradictory nature in meeting the needs of society. For example, Timothy P. Longman has shown in his work, “Empowering the Weak and Protecting the Powerful”, that the churches in the Central African region have served the interest of the ruling class sometimes at the expense of the masses. However, the churches have also endeavoured to meet the needs of the vulnerable. Longman writes, “While churches have frequently defended the interests of the powerful, they have also provided opportunity to those with little power – the poor, women, ethnic minorities, farmers.”

On the part of African Pentecostalism, especially in the Ghanaian scene, there have been different reactions. Some scholars such as Paul Gifford, *African Christianity* and *Ghana’s New Christianity*, have made general observations. Gifford for instance suggests that present development in PC Christianity has potential to determine constructive socio-political outcomes. However, he is generally negative

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322 See, Gifford, *African Christianity; Ghana’s New Christianity*. 
in his assessment of the PCs contribution especially in social, political and economic aspects. Gifford’s observation, to sum up, suggests the PC churches promise much but fulfill little.\textsuperscript{323} Thus, with Gifford, the notion of empowerment in PC Christianity presents ambiguities.\textsuperscript{324} Gifford concludes in his assessment of the churches:

Thus in all sort of ways many [Pentecostal and] Charismatic churches, though concerned with national issues, contributed little to debate on modern government. They tend to spiritualise or moralise issues out of the mundane plane on which political issues have been most fruitfully addressed.\textsuperscript{325}

However, other scholars such as Ogbu Kalu have refuted this claim.\textsuperscript{326} Kalu shows in his response to Gifford’s analyses of the PCs indicating “Gifford approaches these churches with a hardware comprising of Western enlightenment worldview, a yardstick manifest in the World Bank reports, and a Weberian rational system of governance.”\textsuperscript{327} In Kalu’s view, “The debate on the strategy and character of the [PC] church’s engagement in a pluralistic public space is complex.” \textsuperscript{328} Accordingly, Kalu cautions on the need for balance between “an activist church focused heavily on issues of social justice and a conversionist church focused on individual salvation.”\textsuperscript{329} He also draws attention to the need for research to consider the place of worldview in their assessment of churches. For instance, Kalu maintains, to rebut Gifford’s position, that “Intercession could be a form of political

\textsuperscript{323} Gifford, \textit{African Christianity}, p. 111.
\textsuperscript{324} Gifford, Ghana’s New Christianity, pp. 164-169.
\textsuperscript{325} Ibid., p. 169.
\textsuperscript{327} Ibid., p. 13.
\textsuperscript{328} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{329} Ibid.
This is because, “a church appropriates the gospel from a certain worldview, otherwise, it cannot serve its particular community.” Other African scholars, Kwesi Dickson and Kwame Bediako subscribe to Kalu’s argument. Dickson on his part has said, “theology is done most meaningfully in particular settings: the cultural particularities is indispensable because theology is done by flesh and blood.” Thus, the daily engagements of PC churches take cognisance of this ‘cultural particularities’. Notwithstanding, there are questions about PC practices that are deemed to disempower. Our interest is to examine the function of power as a disincentive to PC Christianity.

A major component identified as an element that plays ambiguous roles in empowerment and/or disempowerment in contemporary PC Christianity in Ghana is the utility of power. Pastoral work in African PC church setting connotes power and privileges. John McCauley’s article, “Africa’s New Big Man Rule? Pentecostalism and Patronage in Ghana”, published by *African Affairs* reviews the link between big man rule and the PC Christianity in Ghana. In his deliberation, McCauley uses the concept of ‘big man’ as a description of a traditional or political leader in Africa who wields power and influence thus patronises his client or subjects to perpetuate his interest. He thus asked a question, “Are Pentecostal leaders and wealthy church benefactors the new big men in Africa?” Drawing on the typology of traditional and political leadership, McCauley presented an image

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331 Ibid.
332 Bediako, "Africa and Christianity on the Threshold of the Third Millennium”, pp. 303-323.
333 Dickson, *Theology in Africa*, p. 4.
of PC church leaders as ‘big men’ “who enjoy the authority and legitimacy necessary to maintain power.”

Though McCauley highlighted some positives about patron-client relationships between big man and his followers, he also looked at the downside of ‘big man concept’ and juxtaposed this with PC church leaders. McCauley writes:

because patron-client relations entail a direct exchange outside the formal channels of authority, the risk is high for corrupt use of resources as well as personal enrichment. Each of these consequences has analogies in the charismatic Pentecostal context.

McCauley directly answers the question of who the big men and the clients are. “Pastors are the most obvious patrons; all congregants and potential congregants constitute their client.”

Though McCauley believes there are ‘equilibrium of exchange’ in the transactions between PC pastors and their congregants, he still affirms “material pay-offs still favour patron over clients.” For our interest, the distribution of power shows a picture of how PC church leaders negotiate their interest by projecting images of themselves as repositories of spiritual power. For instance, most of the living founders of the PC churches entrench themselves by the church’s constitution. McCauley shows once again how the issue of succession is critical to Pentecostal churches and concludes:

In order for charismatic Pentecostal churches to survive beyond the lifetimes of their founders, the very difficult task of legitimising successors must be undertaken. The same could be said for conventional big man rule in African politics.

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336 Ibid., p. 4.
337 Ibid., p. 6.
338 Ibid., p. 11.
340 International Central Gospel Church, Constitution, p. 36. This is discussed thoroughly in Chapter 3.
The quest for power, which arguably serves very legitimate purposes in PC Christianity, has also been identified as a source to disempower as our discussion has revealed. Ogbi Kalu has a summary:

The life span of many groups in the [Pentecostal-Charismatic] movement could be very short. Within the atmosphere of rapid growth, we often lose sight of the fact that many Pentecostal groups fade as quickly as they started, decimated by schism, power failure, or funding constrains. They also age quickly; the charisma becomes routinized as the institution is bureaucratized.\(^{342}\)

In view of the enormous potential PC Christianity has over the lives of individuals and groups (communities), and having seen the positives and downsides in its practices, it is appropriate to review the movement it term of its capital input – socially, culturally and spiritually.

2.5. Pentecostalism and Social, Cultural and Spiritual (Religious) Capital

The literature dealing with social capital and allied concepts (cultural and spiritual capital) are as diverse as the definitions, theories and approaches.\(^{343}\) Deepa Narayan and Michael F. Cassidy in their work, *A Dimensional Approach to Measuring Social Capital*, noted:

Theories such as social capital comprise constructs that are inherently abstract and require subjective interpretation in their translation into operational measures. Such operational measures are invariably indirect surrogates of their associated constructs. An


intermediate step in defining what social capital is and is not is to unbundle the theory into its dimensions. This is obvious because the concepts have an interdisciplinary appeal even beyond the social sciences. To cite social capital as an example, scholars such as Ben Fine have explained the historical development of the concept and have concluded: it was predominantly used in different ways than it has been recently. In particular, in the latter history, the main, if limited, use of social capital in the past was as an economic category.

As Fine acknowledges, the concept in contemporary times has been focused largely outside of the economic mainstream to be “predominantly situated within civil society.” Thus, the churches engagements and activities as discussed within civil society show relevance in our effort in discussing social, cultural and spiritual capital as models of empowerment or disempowerment. This is because the concept of civil society, itself establishes a basis to see churches as part of the group. Timothy Longman acknowledges: “Scholars who discuss the currently fashionable concept of civil society regularly include churches along with human rights organizations… as social groups…” Accordingly, given that the PC churches activities are reviewed as civil society’s functions; it would be reasonable and relevant to study the concepts - social, cultural and spiritual capital- within the PC

346 Fine, Theories of Social Capital, p. 36.
347 Ibid.
348 Longman, “Empowering the Weak and Protecting the Powerful”, p. 50.
churches purview. Afe Adogame for instance has noted how African Christianities serves as social, cultural and spiritual capital.\textsuperscript{349}

This section discusses social capital but also with the understanding that a study of Pentecostalism would treat as relevant concepts of \textit{cultural capital} and \textit{spiritual capital}. However, greater attention is given to social capital because of its mutual attributes with empowerment and disempowerment discourses. For example, both empowerment/disempowerment and social capital construct their theory with the notions of power (linking social capital), network, norms and values as central\textsuperscript{350} and both concepts make individuals, groups and communities their domain of analysis.\textsuperscript{351} Elisheva Sadan agrees, “empowerment integrates well into the discourse on contemporary social ideologies and values, contributes to this discourse, and provides it with an important moral criterion.”\textsuperscript{352} The approach of using theoretical tools from a different social science to be applied to a different discipline (unusually in the same social science field) seems to have support from some scholars. For example, Andre Droogers in his work \textit{Globalisation and Pentecostal Success} attested to this, “any religion can influence non-religious social processes, just as it too can be influenced by them; equally, some degree of correlation, or complementarily, can exist between religion and social processes.”\textsuperscript{353}


\textsuperscript{352} Sadan, “Empowerment and Community Planning”, p. 31.

Notwithstanding, cultural and spiritual capital may be integrated into the discourse and highlighted appropriately. *Cultural capital*, as explained by Adogame, “brings to focus the question of cultural values as they relate to things like: what constitutes knowledge, how knowledge is to be achieved and how knowledge is to be validated.”

*Spiritual capital* on the other hand is associated with an investment an individual makes in his/her religious faith and or religious group. The investment may be in the nature of time or physical work involved with the religious faith. It also includes the personal investment in ideology, doctrine and practice.

Jerry Z. Park and Christian Smith maintain that, “Religiosity act as a form of cultural capital one obtains religious attitude and behaviours through religious practice or observation.” Park and Smith further assert that spiritual/religious capital includes “the concepts of stewardship and giving of ones time and human resources.”

The nature of spiritual capital as a “resource based on relationships” that persons and churches can access for their individual welfare, but can also give as a contribution to the broader group makes it relevant to study it together with social capital.

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355 Ibid., p. 106.
357 Ibid.
358 Ibid.
359 Ibid.
2.5.1. Social Capital

The contemporary usage of social capital brings to focus the works of three proponents; Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman, and Robert Putnam. I do not intend to have a thorough discussion on each of them and their works, but rather a cursory survey of their concepts of social capital and how it relates to our discussion.

Pierre Bourdieu, one of the social theorists of the 20th century postulated a concept of social capital which connects with his philosophy on class. He classified capital in three domains; economic, cultural and social. Robert Moore has noted:

Bourdieu’s purpose is to extend the sense of the term “capital” by employing it in a wider system of exchanges whereby assets of different kinds are transformed and exchanged within complex networks or circuits within and across different fields.

Martti Siisiainen has also drawn attention to the conceptual position on the subject and has succinctly noted Bourdieu’s perspective: “Social capital thus has two components: it is, first, a resource that is connected with group membership and social networks.” Siisiainen again reaffirmed Bourdieu directly to buttress a point, “The volume of social capital possessed by a given agent…depends on the

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size of the network of connections that he can effectively mobilize.\textsuperscript{366} Out of this, Bourdieu’s explanation of the concept has been noticed:

Social capital is the sums of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition.\textsuperscript{367}

It is important to establish that Bourdieu’s radical sociology was largely affected by the influence of \textit{neo-liberalism} and \textit{rational choice} perspective, which resonates aptly with James Coleman.\textsuperscript{368}

Coleman’s emphasis of social capital may be summed up as “an aspect of a social structure, and it facilitates certain actions of individuals engaged in particular activities.”\textsuperscript{369} Thus for Coleman, “Social capital is the resources, real or potential, gained from relationships.”\textsuperscript{370} However, as David Halpern admits, Bourdieu and Coleman’s perspective of social capital are closely related. Halpern argues, “Like Bourdieu, Coleman offered a very broad conception of social capital that was not grounded in a narrow area of study.”\textsuperscript{371}

Robert Putnam, in his two separate works: \textit{Making Democracy Work}\textsuperscript{372} and \textit{Bowling Alone}\textsuperscript{373}, shows his exploration of the subject, social capital, which brought a departure from that of Bourdieu and Coleman earlier postulated. His

\begin{footnotes}
\item[366] Ibid.
\item[369] Lin, \textit{Social Capital}, p. 23.
\item[370] Ibid.
\item[373] Putnam, \textit{Bowling Alone}.
\end{footnotes}
basic viewpoint is captured in the idea that “social networks have value.” He contrasts social capital with human capital and physical capital. In his examination, “Whereas physical capital refers to physical objects and human capital refers to properties of individuals, social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them.” Putnam’s notion of social capital has three main components – obligations and norm, trust and social values, and social networks. For instance, a contrasting element between Bourdieu’s theory and Putnam’s theory of social capital, the former focuses on the ‘sociology of conflict’, whereas the later emphasizes the ‘sociology of integration.’ Therefore, with Bourdieu and Coleman, “dense or closed networks are seen as the means by which collective capital can be maintained and reproduction of the group can be achieved.” Whereas with Putnam, “social associations and the degree of participation indicate the extent of social capital in a society.

2.5.1.1. Sub-Types of Social Capital

Social capital as a concept has further been broken down into sub-types - *bonding social capital* and *bridging social capital*. The former (bonding social capital) relates more to the social connection within family and community, whereas the later (bridging social capital) reflects more of the level of interrelation between groups in the community. The third sub-type of social capital-*the linking social capital*- denotes “alliances with the connections to individuals or groups perceived

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374 Ibid., p. 19.
375 Ibid.
377 Lin, Social Capital, p. 23.
to wield political, economic or spiritual power. This can be related to power over
resources needed for social and economic development.”

Afe Adogame presents a set of differences of the two (bonding and bridging social
capital):

‘Bonding’ refers to the value assigned to social networks between
homogeneous groups of people, and ‘bridging’ to social networks
between socially heterogeneous groups. Bonding social capital tends to
reinforce exclusive identities and maintain homogeneity; bridging
social capital tends to bring together people across diverse social
divisions… Bonding social capital is good for undergirding specific
reciprocity and mobilizing solidarity, while serving as a kind of
sociological super glue in maintaining strong in-group loyalty and
reinforcing specific identities.379

From Adogame’s descriptions, bonding social capital seems to have ‘social
attachment’ within close ranks either by blood relations such as families or kinship
ties, and antipathy towards those perceived to be ‘outsiders’. Putman upholds this
suggestion and asserts, “by creating strong in-group loyalty, may also create strong
out-group antagonism.”380 Hence, with bonding social capital, it is more likely to
“expect negative external effects to be more common.”381 However, as Putnam
asserts, “under many circumstances both bridging and bonding social capital can
have powerful positive social effects.” 382 Notwithstanding, “Many groups
simultaneously bond along some social dimensions and bridges across others.”383

As Halpern indicates, the distinction between the bonding-bridging social capitals
highlights “an important characteristics of networks and the social identities that lie

379 Ibid.
380 Putman, Bowling Alone, p. 23.
381 Ibid.
382 Ibid.
383 Ibid.
within them.\textsuperscript{384} This has implication in our discussion of the PC churches as underscored by Adogame in the chapter six of his book \textit{The African Christian Diaspora: New Current and Emerging Trends in World Christianity}. Adogame indicates how faith communities in which people worship together constitute probably the single most important source of social capital.\textsuperscript{385} He did this after he had indicated the backgrounds of cultural capital and religious capital and how they manifest in religious communities such as PC churches. He further highlights the downsides of social capital with the conviction that “The same ingredients of social capital that enable productivity have the potential to cause negative externalities.”\textsuperscript{386} The crux of his discussion is shown in the many questions he raised in an effort to show the distinctive role that African Christianities play in producing social capital especially those in the diaspora. Adogame writes:

\begin{quote}
African Christian communities contribute enormous bridging, bonding and linking social capital, but also confront barriers to development and civic engagement. Their spaces of worship are not simply religious places, they are also space of socialization where business, politics, education, music, home country and food cultures, even gossips are engaged and negotiated. Such spaces often transcend socio-ethnic, race, class, gender and intergenerational boundaries. People meet others from different backgrounds, they share activities and build trust in one another, albeit temporarily.\textsuperscript{387}
\end{quote}

The above illustrates the various sub-types of social capital in a close relationship as in church settings. For instance, the ‘covenant family’, cell groups, women’s movements, men’s group, music department, prayer and intercessory groups, etc. within the PC churches give insight to how the churches coalescence as family.


\textsuperscript{386} Ibid., p. 106.

\textsuperscript{387} Ibid., p. 109.
However, the churches also show disparity in conduct of their activities. Adogame gives a vivid impression of such internal arrangements, which tend to exhibit the ambiguous character of religious groups, to empower and disempower. Adogame noted:

> The inequalities of power, such as in the subordination of youths and women, can also inhibit the generation of social capital. The choice of appropriate liturgical language for worship service, approved dress codes, moral instructions, prescribed respect modes for elders and authority, and gender role differentiation often engender conflict.  

By reviewing the sub-types of social capital, in context of the PC church beliefs and activities, one sees the enormous capital the churches generates. It also becomes obvious the difficulties and conflicts associated with social capital in church settings.

In summary, Halpern presents simplified conceptual strands together. They are the three main measurements consisting of, first, the components of social capital which is the networks, norms and sanctions. Second, social capital has also been effectively analysed in the domains of the individual, group, communities and nations. Finally, the function or character of social capital is indicated in the sub-types - the bonding, bridging, linking. There is hard evidence that these conceptual strands work effectively because of the vital elements including voluntary participation, the amount of trust existing among individuals and groups and the networking and collaborations.

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388 Ibid.
2.5.2. Voluntarism, Trust and Teamwork (Network)

Religion, by character and practice, stimulates the greatest voluntary work and relationship.\(^{391}\) Francis Fukuyama claims, “The norms that constitute social capital can range from a norm of reciprocity between two friends all the way up to complex and elaborately articulated doctrines like Christianity or Confucianism.”\(^{392}\) Other scholars who attest to this include Adam Seligman, in his work, *The Problem of Trust*, he listed among others “families, voluntary organizations, religious denominations, civic associations” as core networks in modern society.\(^{393}\) The inventory of institutions and networks listed by Seligman naturally manifest themselves within the field of religion. This is also apparent in churches especially the PC churches who are perceived to be the biggest beneficiaries of voluntarism. Kelly Chong’s attested to this voluntary spirit of Pentecostalism in his review of David Martin’s work *Pentecostalism: The World their Parish*. Chong noted, “Pentecostalism here is that of a voluntary, participatory, enthusiastic, and pragmatic faith centered on personal transformation…”\(^{394}\) The PC churches in Ghana for instance give their members strong orientation (see Chapters One and Five) on voluntarism and create opportunities for them to serve with their gifts. This is noteworthy in J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu’s assessment of Pentecostalism in Ghana. Asamoah-Gyadu pointed out that “the biblical idea of universal priesthood”\(^{395}\) has tremendous influence on the participation of the members of the

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\(^{391}\) Smidt, *Religion as Social Capital*.


PC churches. Thus, “the leader in principle is only a first among equal.” Church services and other activities of the churches are run on the strength of unpaid staff who are volunteers. The concept of lay leadership in the PC churches in Africa is the greatest motivation for voluntarism (see Chapter Five). In the case of Ghana, as seen in the Church of Pentecost (COP) and International Central Gospel Church (ICGC), voluntarism is a key feature in these churches. It is not the inability of the churches to fund their programmes that encourages volunteers as in the case of other PC migrant churches in Europe and America, it is rather the hope that divine favour would be bestowed upon people who serve the Lord. A popular cliché among Akan Christians in Ghana explains this; *Nyame adwuma na hwe na wudie akóso* (commit to God’s work for yours to prosper). Imbedded in this cliché is the philosophy of voluntarism that motivates PC Christians in Ghana.

Closely associated with *voluntarism* are *trust* and *networking* which are both necessary components in social capital and PC Christianity. Trust and networking are also inherent traits in African *religio-cultural* experience. This is so, because, as Kofi Asare Opoku suggests,

> Religion binds man to the unseen powers and helps him form right relations with these non-human powers; it also binds him to his fellow human beings. Religion acts as a cement holding our societies together, and provides the necessary support and stability for our societies.

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396 Ibid.


398 Ibid.

The fact that the PC churches take the African worldview seriously and operate in the African milieu make it difficult to relegate to the background influences as described by Opoku. Rebecca Ganusah, writing on community and individual right in Africa argues, “the charismatic [Pentecostals] could be said to be reviving the communal life as they show a sense of belongingness or communal life.” This has implications for bonding social capital. The African religious and communal system creates a platform for interactions based on kinship and trust. The individual and communal life is so interwoven to the extent that it becomes difficult sometimes to separate individual freedom from communal life. This is not to suggest the individuals lose their freedom to be independent persons. Adogame has indicated:

Social capital can be understood at two separate but interrelated levels. One is the individual level pertaining to the degree to which individuals are ‘community minded’ with a sense of the common good. The other level is more inter-subjective and structural, and relates to the absence or existence of trust between individuals in a society.

The religious duty of the PC churches is regarded as trust. The PCs teach their members the church’s commitment to them and their commitment to the church. As a result, members of PC churches expect their pastor, leader and fellow believer to visit them, pray for them and offer words of comfort in their moment of need.

Any infringement to this expectation is interpreted to mean the pastor/church does...

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405 International Central Gospel Church, Membership Class Manual, pp. 36-44.
not care. This reciprocity of trust also plays out in regular pastoral responsibility such as attending funerals of bereaved members, conducting naming ceremonies, etc. In return, members of the church make financial contributions towards church projects, share vital and privileged information with their pastors based on trust. Thus, community mindedness (network) and trust generated from solidarity cannot be taken for granted. Regardless of all the positive attributes of social capital, it has its downsides. It is worth exploring such downsides with their consequences.

**2.5.3. Downsides of Social Capital**

Social capital is not all constructive, there are obvious downsides that have been highlighted. Putman calls those handicaps the “dark side of social capital” in chapter twenty-two of his book *Bowling Alone*. As in the case of other forms of capital i.e. political, economic, etc., Putnam argues, “Social capital, in short, can be directed toward malevolent, antisocial purposes, just like any other form of capital.” Halpern, reviewing Putnam’s analysis of the downsides consequences associated with the concept, maintains, “social capital may be used to achieve objectives that some may regard as ‘bad’.” Halpern therefore contends, “Social capital facilitates co-operative action, but there is nothing to say whether that action will be for the general good or bad, just as physical and human capital may be used for good or bad, to make medicines or weapons.” This obviously makes the

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408 Ibid., p. 22.
410 Ibid.
concept (social capital) very ambivalent. Adogame has also noted these likely shortcomings of social capital. He writes:

> Potential downsides of social capital can include fostering behaviour that worsens rather than improves economic performance; acting as a barrier to social inclusion and social mobility; dividing rather than uniting communities or societies; facilitating rather than reducing crime, education underachievement and health-damaging behaviour.\(^{411}\)

Accordingly, the network of alliances and links among individuals and groups that engender social capital also has equal potential to disregard and exclude others.\(^ {412}\) Adogame therefore draws attention to four adverse effects of social capital. They include; “exclusion of outsiders; excess claims on group members; restrictions on individual freedom and downward levelling norms.”\(^ {413}\) These conditions persist in one form or the other among groups, religious or non-religious, whose functioning capability requires networking within and without the group. For example, churches by their configuration are composed of individuals who identify with certain beliefs, practices and visions among other factors. However, as the group develops together, other interests emerge (as associated with linking social capital). Thus, two negative conditions are likely to happen; first, an internal class distinctions in the extent of individual linkages as an internal system develops\(^ {414}\) and second, a broader system where outsiders are excluded, the *we* and *they*, as pointed out by Putnam.\(^ {415}\) In this regard, as Halpern points out, “it is not sufficient simply to describe the size and density of person’s network. We must also look at the

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\(^{412}\) Ibid., p. 107.

\(^{413}\) Ibid.


\(^{415}\) Putman, *Bowling Alone*, pp. 359.
resources that the network connects the individuals to. Following the concept of social capital in our analysis of the PC churches therefore means identifying how and to what extent the formations of the churches effectively linked to the collective good and/or individual good. In addition, to what extent does the activities of the PC churches work to empower or disempower to the benefit of the individuals and the church as a group. This is partly considered in our next chapter, chapter three (3), where the hierarchical and operational structures of the churches reviewed.

CHAPTER THREE
POLITY AND LEADERSHIP

3.0. Introduction

The present growth and activities of the Pentecostal and Charismatic (PC) churches in Ghana have direct linkage to the leadership structure established to run the churches. Most of these churches metamorphosed from small fellowship groups into what has become the fastest growing stream of Christianity in Ghana. This chapter focuses on the organisational structures and governance systems of the PC churches in Ghana, their internal administrative patterns and how it affects the spread, life and thought of the churches, and also how it impacts on individuals and communities. The COP and ICGC provide the immediate context in studying new trends in Pentecostalism in Ghana. This is necessary because regardless of how marginal or major the trends may be, it is relevant for the study of a movement that has become a face of Christianity in the majority world.

By church polity I refer to the governance system and structures established by the church to facilitate the smooth running of the various ministries, departments, the administration and main policy formulating groups and committees to ensure the realization of set objectives. The organization of churches and other religious establishments is diverse. The structures set in such religious groups have direct impact in the delivery of objectives and serve as tools for empowerment or disempowerment.


Ghana as a country provides religious freedoms in its 1992 constitution. For instance, the constitutional provision allows unbridled freedom for religious organizations to operate within her jurisdiction as long as they do not violate other clauses in the same document that guarantees “respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest.” Thus, all religious groups, and in this case the churches, are at liberty to exercise their right to ecclesiastical polity, theology and religious practices as long as it is not inimical to the interests of the citizenry and not at variance with the national constitution. The last military government, the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) under Jerry John Rawlings, passed the Religious Bodies (Registration) Law of 1989 (PNDCL 221) in June 1989. Elom Dovlo has noted how the law (PNDC 221) attempted to restrain the liberties of the church. An attempt foiled by the mainline churches under the umbrella of the Catholic Bishops Conference (CBC) and Christian Council of Ghana (CCG). It was around this time the growing PC churches, resorted to the use of public school facilities. The government, through the Ghana Education Service (GES) issued a directive to stop those using classrooms and other school facilities. All of this was an effort by the political authorities to exert control over the emerging PC churches.

Arguably the COP did not have as many challenges as the ICGC. The former had at this time consolidated itself into a reputable Pentecostal denomination with most of

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419 The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana, article 12, clause 2 guarantees religious freedom as fundamental human right.
421 Dovlo, “Religion in the Public Sphere, p. 642.
422 Ibid., pp. 642-646.
their branches having already established their own church properties, leadership and organizational structures. The later on the other hand was in its formative stages with enormous constraints. One such difficulty was a lack of stable and conducive places of worship.

3.1 COP’s Governance Structures

A major function of the COP that account for the growth and success of the church is the governance structure established to steer affairs and ensure the smooth running of the movement. A key concern for several churches has been the place of sovereign authority in the hierarchy of the church.\textsuperscript{424} This same concern exists in the COP which places much emphasis on the gifts of the Holy Spirit for its spiritual leadership. Cephas N. Omenyo for instance argues, “The gifts of prophecy, in particular, is quite prominent in the church [COP] and this is based mainly on evidence from Ephesians 4: 8 &11.”\textsuperscript{425} Omenyo further noted, “the COP believes and upholds the ministry of Prophets and Apostles, which they reckoned as the top position in the leadership of the church.”\textsuperscript{426} From its inception, the COP whose structures and organization over the years have been considered to have strong grassroots support, depends on spiritual direction from prophecies (the manifest gifts of the Holy Spirit) and also “operates under a well-structured administrative set up.”\textsuperscript{427} The COP maintains that the dependence on spiritual direction (prophecy) for leadership at the top echelon of the church’s administration has been their


\textsuperscript{425} Cephas N. Omenyo. “Man of God Prophesy Unto Me?”, p. 36.

\textsuperscript{426} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{427} Asamoah-Gyadu, “Pentecostalism and the Missiological Significance of Religious Experience: The Case of Ghana’s ‘Church of Pentecost’”, p. 35.
reason for success. However, there have been alterations in the hierarchy. Omenyo presents an order of offices for the hierarchy arranged in the following descending order: (i) Chairman, (ii) Missionaries, (iii) General Secretary, (iv) Apostles and Prophets, (v) Pastors, (vi) Overseers, (vii) Ministerial Probationers, (vii) Elders and (viii) Deacons. Omenyo’s source of information was based on “recording of minutes of the church’s general council.” Omenyo however did not give enough source information on the hierarchical order for us to cross-check with present developments since the 2010 constitution of COP suggests there has been a change. I have therefore presented a hierarchical order in the form of an organogram based on the COP 2010 constitution with the various offices:

Organogram of the Church of Pentecost

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430 Ibid., p. 37.
431 See, Appendix 7 for the details of the organizational structures.
3.1.1. COP’s General Church Council

The COP functions by hierarchical leadership, a top-down approach. The COP’s constitution mandates the General Council to be “the highest policy-making body.” The General Council is composed of The Chairman, the General Secretary, the International Missions Director and the Executive Council Members. Others are the Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists and the ordained pastors of the church with the committees’ heads such as the Area Executive Committee members, National Heads, National Deacons, National Secretaries, Trustees, Chairpersons of Boards and Committees and Movements’ General Leaders or Director(s). The General Council therefore is the central body with the authority to determine the major decisions in the COP and the chairman presides over all its meetings. As part of its first functions, in addition to policy issues, it elects the key officers in the administration of the church. The constitution of the COP states, “It [General Council] shall elect the Chairman, the General Secretary, the International Missions Director and the Executive Council Members.”

Second, the General Council ensures that the disciplinary code of the church is adhered to. COP is well-known for its rigorous church discipline, applied to both the clergy and members. Asamoah-Gyadu writing about the church remarked, “The COP is noted for its uncompromising holiness ethic and high moral standards,” a mark that distinguishes them among the other PC churches in Ghana. As part of

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432 The Church of Pentecost, Constitution, p. 7.
433 Ibid., p. 7.
434 Ibid., p. 7.
436 A careful study of the ethos of the two churches (COP and ICGC) is carried out in chapter five where issues of morality and discipline are covered extensively.
its mandate, The General Council setup “an appellate body in all disciplinary matters affecting the members of the Council.” In the same vein, the Council is empowered to exercise authority over its own members “on grounds of stated misconduct should the Executive Council fail to do so.” In this situation, The Council is expected to impeach officers who violate the church’s regulation and codes. One of the major concerns members of the church raised during the fieldwork was the procedure adopted by the church in the discipline of members who are found to have infringed established norms or entered into open sins. In the opinion of some of the members of COP, “the idea of discipline is good but it is usually carried out in an inhumane and undignified manner that sometimes violates the individual’s right to dignity.” Larbi gives the COP “rigorist code of morality” in a precise manner. Human rights issues have become a key concern in the mark of discipline in the church. The enforcement of discipline sometimes means that the transgressor(s) is publicly rebuked in a manner that affects the person’s confidence (for full discussion see Chapter Five).

The third constitutional function of the General Council of COP is administrative in nature, to “receive and approve reports submitted by the various organs of The Church.” As the church expands, it also develops organs that support the management of the organisational vision and mission. One such organ is the

437 The Church of Pentecost, Constitution, p. 7
438 Ibid.
439 The COP considers ‘open sin’ to mean any public or private violation of the Bible, church doctrine, or disregard for the church’s authority and leadership. It may also include but is not limited to sexual immorality, marital dissolution, polygamy, visiting ungodly places, etc.
440 Eric Tetteh, interview, on the 29th January 2012 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
441 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 245.
442 The Church of Pentecost, Constitution, p. 7.
Pentecost University College,\textsuperscript{443} which was established in March 2003. The Pentecost University College Council (PUCC) was later constituted and inaugurated on 6\textsuperscript{th} May 2004 at the 10th Session of the Extraordinary Council\textsuperscript{444} meeting that took place on the university’s site in Accra. The idea of the university was mooted among other things to serve as the means to empower students with the principles of Christ and to serve their generation and future ones with uprightness and the fear of God.\textsuperscript{445}

The COP organizational structure does not encourage local policy initiatives and creativity. A close study of the COP suggests a contrast in the exercise of power by the leadership and the place of ministry and spiritual gifts. In the exercise of ministry and spiritual gifts, the church makes room for all and encourages full participation, but in the exercise of ‘power’, the COP does not see the need to take on board grassroots participation. The governance systems and policy framework of the church is an exclusive preserve of the top echelons. This is because; it is “the Executive Council that may recommend policy matters for consideration by the General Council.”\textsuperscript{446}

3.1.2. COP’s Executive Council

The composition of the various Councils and Boards of churches give a clue to the power structures that exist just as in the COP. The formation of their membership

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{443}A thorough discussion on this will be in Chapter Six in our discussion on COP and ICGC commitment to social services.
\textsuperscript{444}Because the General Council meetings in COP are held biennially, when the occasion arises, Extraordinary Council Meetings are held. The COP constitution allows ‘the Chairman or his accredited representative to convene such meetings.
\textsuperscript{445}Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9\textsuperscript{th} of August 2011 at the COP head office in Accra the Greater Accra Region.
\textsuperscript{446}The Church of Pentecost, Constitution, p. 11.
\end{flushright}
varies from church to church though the constituted councils in PC churches are considered to be the ‘supreme authority’. The constitution of the COP for instance considers the Executive Council to be responsible for the administration of the church. The members are:

(a) The Chairman
(b) The General Secretary
(c) The International Missions Director
(d) One Apostle/Prophet/National Head elected from External Francophone Zone
(e) One Apostle/Prophet/National Head elected from other External Language Zones
(f) Four other selected from among the Apostles and Prophets in Ghana.

The COP Chairman is the chair of the Executive Council and GCC meetings. A breakdown of the COP’s Executive Council’s responsibility reveals the established centres of structural power and influence. First, the nine-member Executive Council of the COP drawn from the Apostles and Prophets, with additional members each from the National Heads, from the External Francophone Zone and the External Language Zone primarily function as implementers of policies and resolutions of the General Council. The Executive Council “may recommend policy matters for consideration by the General Council” and at the same time they are called on in cases of emergency to “act for and on behalf of the General Council and report to

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447 In most Pentecostal and Charismatic churches, the executive board is the most powerful organ in the church. In the case of the Charismatic churches with living founders, the boards are chaired by them.
448 The Church of Pentecost, Constitution, p. 10
449 Ibid.
450 Ibid., p. 29.
451 Ibid., p. 10.
452 Ibid., p. 11.
the same for ratification of its said decisions."\textsuperscript{453} However, there had been a proposal to considerably reduce emergency meetings.\textsuperscript{454} Second, the Executive Council helps with the general leadership operations of the church. This is described in the 2010 constitution of the COP, Article 6, and clause 3. It states:

The Executive Council shall be responsible for callings, upgrading, appointments, revocations, dismissals, impeachment, transfers and retirement of Ministers and national office holders of The Church. These functions shall be discharged in consultation with National and Area Heads where applicable.\textsuperscript{455}

In addition to the above responsibilities, the same Council “shall have power to take any or all administrative measures in any matter not otherwise provided for in this Constitution, provided that such measures are not contrary to the fundamental provisions of the Constitution.”\textsuperscript{456}

My observations are; first, the constituted membership of the COP Executive Council is patriarchal in nature. The Council has no woman representative although the COP has a larger percentage of women in membership.\textsuperscript{457} This imbalance of representation has consequences in church policy, thus decision making could be influenced by male dominated views. In as much as a thorough examination of gender roles and practices in COP is discussed in Chapter Four under theological orientation and practices, it would be appropriate to make a brief remark on how the COP’s constitutional provision deals with gender issues.

\textsuperscript{453} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{454} The Church of Pentecost Vision 2013, p. 48.

\textsuperscript{455} The Church of Pentecost, Constitution, p. 11.

\textsuperscript{456} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{457} Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at the COP head office in Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
Articles 20.3.1 and 20.5.1 of the COP constitution give details of the membership of the Women’s Movement Executive Committee and the functions of the Women’s Movement Director respectively. It states, “The Executive Committee of the Women’s Movement shall be made up of the following: (a) One (1) Apostle, Prophet or an experienced Minister as Patron.\(^{458}\) (b) One (1) Women’s Director (c) One (1) Deputy Women’s Director (d) Two (2) Ministers Wives (e) Two other Women.”\(^{459}\) The other clause says concerning the Women’s Director, “She shall prepare the agenda for the Women’s Executive Committee meeting in the absence of the Patron.”\(^{460}\) By these constitutional requirements, it is obvious that there is total structural indifference from COP’s constitutional perspective regarding gender empowerment. The COP gives little space for women to participate in policy formulation and in major national deliberations concerning the church. This is not commensurate with the percentage of women members and their participation in grassroots activities. In my interview with the present chairman of the church, he agreed that women predominantly populate the COP but led by men.\(^{461}\)

Second, the laity has no direct representation in the topmost hierarchy of the church. The only avenue open to lay inclusion is at the discretion of the hierarchy. It writes, “other persons may be invited to attend without voting rights.”\(^{462}\) This indicates members lack decision-making power. The COP has no direct non-pastoral personnel in the administrative decisions of the church. The members of

\(^{458}\) Owing to the fact that the COP does not ordain women to senior positions, an Apostle or Prophets will be a senior male minister who presides over the Women’s Movement.

\(^{459}\) The Church of Pentecost, *Constitution*, p. 74.

\(^{460}\) Ibid., p. 75.

\(^{461}\) Opoku Onyinah, Interview, on the 9th of August 2011 at the COP head office in Accra the Greater Accra Region.

\(^{462}\) The Church of Pentecost, *Constitution*, p. 11.
the Executive Council are the senior members of the clergy of the Church. For example, the General Secretary directly acts as the administrator of the church. Article 13.2 (c and g) of the COP constitution enumerates some of the administrative responsibilities of the General Secretary: “He shall be responsible to the Chairman for the Head Office Administration…He shall report to the General Council on the performance of the Headquarters Administration.”463 The lack of provision for lay inclusion in the top management and administration of the church (the Executive Council) could affect expertise especially in times where none of the top pastoral members in the Council possesses such ability.

The COP also has a decentralised structure broken into Areas, Districts and Local levels. At these levels, the term ‘Presbytery’ is preferred to ‘Council’ as suggested by the COP’s constitution i.e. Area Presbytery, District Presbytery and Local Presbytery.464

3.1.3. COP’s Area, District and Local Presbyteries

The COP is organised into areas, districts, and local in structure. This structure does not necessarily follow Ghana’s political administrative setup in line with regional and district formations. These demarcations have been constructed primarily on the basis of the churches mission presence in a location. As the churches expand, the demarcations are reconfigured. Again, the structure shows the coordinating levels of the church’s hierarchical order. Each of these levels has a governance structure. Take for instance the ‘Area Presbytery’, the COP’s constitution states: “There shall be an Area Presbytery which shall be the co-ordinating and the highest policy-

463 Ibid., p. 33.
464 Ibid., pp. 20-25.
making body in the Area to which the Area Executive Committee shall be responsible.\textsuperscript{465} The Area Presbytery comprises the following:

(a) The Area Head,
(b) The Area Executive Committee members
(c) All Area Movement Leaders, their Assistants, and Chairmen of Area Committees
(d) All District Executive Committee members
(e) Two Deacons’ representatives from each District/Worship Center
(f) Three Deaconesses’ representatives from each District
(g) All other serving Ministers in the Area
(h) All Ministers’ wives in the Area
(i) Retired offers and other persons maybe invited to attend, but without voting rights.\textsuperscript{466}

The constitution of COP requires a committee to be established in every ‘Area’, herein referred to as the ‘Area Executive Committee’.\textsuperscript{467} This committee is administratively in charge of the Area. The ‘Area Executive Committee’ is chaired by the Area Head who is a senior member of the church either an apostle or prophet. In the absence of an apostle or prophet in the Area, an experienced ordained minister is considered as the head of the Area. The other members are the Area secretary who must be a minister, two other pastors, the Area deacon, and two elders. The Committee assumes the regular oversight responsibilities of the Area. It is a microcosm of the Executive Council and functions exactly within the top-down structure as already discussed above.

The Area is subdivided into districts. Each district has a District Presbytery which consists of “the Minister, his wife, Elders, Deacons and Deaconesses in the District.”\textsuperscript{468} It functions as the “highest policy-making body in the District.”\textsuperscript{469} The

\textsuperscript{465} Ibid., 14.
\textsuperscript{466} Ibid., 14.
\textsuperscript{467} Ibid., p. 17
\textsuperscript{468} Ibid., p. 20.
District Presbytery headed by the district minister also decide on matters affecting the welfare of the COP branches in the district, elect the district secretary and the other Executive Committee members in the district, receive and approve reports by the various organs of the COP in the district and approve the district budget.

The district headed by the district minister and other six-member executive committee members serve as the body in-charge of the district. Next to the District Presbytery is the Local Presbytery which directly oversees the local branch of the church.

The local congregations of COP are headed by presiding elders (mainly volunteers) who work with the resolutions of the District Presbytery with the backing of their local leaders. The single responsibility the COP constitution, Article 9, clause 1.2, assigned to the local presbytery is “it shall decide on matters concerning the Local Assembly.” These “matters” do not include policy but the practical aspects of pastoral duties. The COP makes room for lots of spiritual activities at the local level. As part of the church’s five-year action plan, for instance, the church hierarchy encourages the local congregations to allow such spiritual activities at their level. This concern is offered explicitly:

The local assembly is the church’s epicentre for most spiritual life and development activities. God must be brought to where the people are. Ministers and all church officers will be encouraged to allow more spiritual activities to take place at the local level.

469 Ibid.

470 The Executive Committee members are responsible to the district presbytery. The committee takes care of the administration of the COP branches in the district by implementing decisions of the Area Executive Committee and decisions of the Executive Council.

471 The Church of Pentecost, Constitution, pp. 20-21.

472 Ibid., p. 25.

473 The Church of Pentecost, Vision 2013, p. 11.
The emphasis that the church develops spirituality at the local level, as quoted above - *God must be brought to where the people are* - should also remind the hierarchy to allow some modicum of governmental authority and gender inclusion at all levels especially in the National Executive Council.

It is noteworthy to indicate that though the COP follows a hierarchical form of governance, it is not akin to Episcopalian polity in its complete logic, neither it is Presbyterian polity in its governance structure. The COP polity maintains a hierarchical structure as seen by the COP organogram but there are other considerations. The GCC and the EC of the COP wield so much power and authority in the determination of the governance of the church. However, the leadership work is done with wider consultation by the very operational (or administrative) structure of the church. For instance, some of the Area Apostles are also part of the EC by default.\(^{474}\) This operational structure allows for ‘an unconscious devolution of power’\(^ {475}\), not by the hierarchical order it maintains, but rather by the very administrative functioning mechanism of the church, which is consultative in nature, i.e. Area Executive Committee and District Executive Committee (See organogram). It would therefore make it difficult for one to argue in strict sense that Episcopalian or Presbyterian polities are alive in COP. This is because to use episcoal polity as an example, the COP does not have the ‘tightly structured’ authority that bishops are entrusted with in the dioceses and synods in Episcopalian polity. In the COP, the mandate resides with the GCC and the EC.

\(^{474}\) See COP Constitution.

\(^{475}\) I use this phrase (an unconscious devolution of power) to denote a situation whereby an operational mechanism of an organization requires that the various units of a structure work in tandem to maintain a smooth administrative setup although the units are not within the same hierarchy.
Accordingly, the heads (apostles) of the various hierarchical structures are at best administrative agents who exercise governmental authority especially as determined by the GCC and/or EC and they are strictly referred to as apostles or prophets.

3.1.4. Church Membership in COP

There are two categories of membership in COP, adult and children membership. The church admits people to adult membership based on clear evidence of spiritual renewal. Full adult membership status is dependent on one’s exhibiting good Christian character. This is enshrined in the church’s constitution:

Any member who is thirteen (13) years and above and who has accepted the Lord as his/her Lord and personal Saviour and is baptized into the Church becomes an adult member. Continued full membership shall, however, depend on living a blameless life in accordance with the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ and obedience to the rules and conduct of the Church. 476

The COP places great value on Christian discipline. Larbi pointing this out indicated, “the church believes it has a unique identity”. 477 In fact, the ‘Right Hand of Fellowship’ ideology of COP does exclude from membership anyone believed to have gone against the church’s tenets at any given time. The constitution openly declares:

a. Admittance into full membership of The Church shall be by the ceremony of extension of the Right Hand of Fellowship. The Right Hand of Fellowship shall be extended by a Minister or a Presiding Elder during church service.

b. Backsliders who repent and return to Fellowship may also be given the Right Hand of Fellowship within two (2) months. 478

476 The Church of Pentecost, Constitution, p. 96.
477 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 252.
478 The Church of Pentecost, Constitution, p. 96-7.
These provisions in the COP’s constitution also define the ‘condition precedent’ before granting a person the opportunity to return to the fold of the church. Two requirements are necessary for admission to membership. The first requirement is “a clear testimony of salvation/repentance”.479 A respondent testified about his experience before obtaining full membership in the COP. He states:

My interest in joining the church at first was doubted by the presiding Elder because he knew me to be deeply involved in traditional ritual practice. We live close to each other and he wondered if I was indeed a changed person when I first visited the church and indicated my interest to become a member. What the Elder did not know is that Jesus has saved me and forgiven me all my sins and idolatrous lifestyle a few weeks before my first church attendance. 480

Kuvor’s experience brings to the fore the very difficult situation where a claim of a personal experience with Jesus Christ cannot simply be linked with a human instituted measure that qualify for church membership. This is understandable because subjective spiritual experiences are hardly verifiable by human measures. Kuvor narrates his religious experience that led him to become a Christian and joined the COP.

I had a dream that Jesus had come and everybody around me has left me behind. I think they all left to heaven. A voice told me to repent and go to church. Then I saw in my dream people praying like ‘Pentecostals’. I knew then that I was not to join the Evangelical Presbyterian Church which I used to attend when I was a little boy. The conduct of church service I saw was that of the COP that is why I attended their service, but they doubted my sincerity. What they did not know is that I have prayed to God for forgiveness and Jesus has saved me.481

Another respondent tells his story about how the church has helped him focus on values that have brought decency to his family. He asserts:

479 Ibid., p. 97.
480 Komla Kuvor, interview, on the 30th of October 2011 at Sogakope in the Volta Region.
481 Komla Kuvor, interview, on the 30th of October 2011 at Sogakope in the Volta Region.
My life was on gradually declining until I became a member of the church (COP). The discipline required of members of the church kept my family and me on our toes. We endeavour to keep godly lifestyle and we are very happy for that. My church takes spiritual and moral discipline of members very seriously and I am happy my household and I are true members of the church of Pentecost.\footnote{Ato Kusi, interview, on the 13\textsuperscript{th} of November 2011 at Akropong in the Eastern Region.}

Some of the members of the COP believe that one of the church’s impacts on them is the strict moral and spiritual formation programmes. Lydia Dzata concurs and shares similar opinion with Ato Kusi. She maintains:

> The COP influence on my life has been positive. I am certain I would not be where I am if the church has not help me with my spiritual life and relationship with God. Those of us who have been in this church for sometime now can say boldly that the church has enriched our lives in our knowledge of God and Christian responsibility.\footnote{Lydia Dzata, interview, on the 27\textsuperscript{th} of November 2011 at Ashaiman in the Greater Accra Region.}

Apart from Kuvor who objected to COP’s system for admitting members, understandably so because of his previous ritual practice involvement, the church is largely considered by its members to have made very positive impact in their lives. COP members’ responses indicate that belonging to the church have an empowering effect on them especially in the area of their spiritual and moral lifestyles.

The second membership requirement of the COP is “baptism by immersion.”\footnote{The Church of Pentecost, \textit{Constitution}, p. 96-7.} For instance, the constitution of the COP states: “converts who are polygamists shall be baptised but shall not be received into full membership of The Church until they renounce polygamy.”\footnote{Ibid.} A member of the COP wondered why a person might be
considered saved by the church, but refused full membership status because of his polygamous relationship. He noted:

I have always wondered how Jesus Christ may forgive a person, the church also offer baptism and yet the same church refuses him membership. I think that is inconsistent. The polygamist may have to be refused baptism and membership altogether or the church admit him into membership on the basis of confession of Jesus Christ as his Lord. The present church leadership must address this because a person cannot be part of God’s family and be refused membership in the church.  

Kofi Boateng’s comment brings up theological and social issues about church membership especially where conflicts between church missions/membership requirement and cultures crash. There are absolutely a number of people who are already involved in polygamous marriages before coming to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ to join a church. Issues that may sometimes arise include the breakup of families where the church demands a strict monogamous condition for membership. In other cases such as the one indicated by Kofi Boateng, an individual lives with a heavy burden of guilt because of polygamy and sometimes uncertain about his/her responsibilities and benefits from the church. The above differs from requirements for child membership.  

On the part of the children, it is stated, “Children who are below thirteen (13) years of age and have been dedicated by a Minister of the Church become members, but such members shall not be communicants until baptized into the Church.” The church’s attitude on matters relating to membership is directly informed by their theology of spiritual renewal. A person’s moral standing in line with the COP biblical explanation is key

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486 Kofi Boateng, interview, on the 18th of September 2011 at Tema in the Greater Accra Region.
487 The Church of Pentecost, Constitution, p. 96-7.
488 Ibid.
in establishing grounds for Christian identity. The challenge is enormous in a broader discussion of spirituality, morality and salvation as measures for empowerment or disempowerment.

3.2. ICGC’s Governance Structure

The ICGC constitution gives details of the church’s governance structure. In the constitution, the General Church Council (GCC) is the supreme authority of the church. The Council’s membership, functions and powers, voting, meeting times, notices and quorum are clearly stipulated in the constitution.\(^\text{489}\) However church practice is not always in accordance with the constitution. Some of the constitutional provisions are not precisely practiced or implemented in the manner it is given. Some members of ICGC I interviewed have noticed this. One of them, Ebo Mends, expressed this: “there is a break in what the church’s constitution demands and what it is practiced.”\(^\text{490}\) According to Mends, to cite an example, “the inconsistent manner of the General Council meetings as compare to what the constitution demands is clearly a violation.”\(^\text{491}\) Mends was referring to the ICGC constitutional provision in Article 5, clause 3, which reads:

\[
\text{The Council shall meet once a year at such time and place as the previous Council meeting shall have determined. If for any reason it becomes impracticable to meet at the time or place fixed, the presbytery shall decide the place and time of the meeting.}\]


\(^{490}\) Ebo Mends, interview, on the 16\textsuperscript{th} October 2011 at Cape Coast in the Central Region.

\(^{491}\) Ebo Mends, interview, on the 16\textsuperscript{th} October 2011 at Cape Coast in the Central Region.

\(^{492}\) International Central Gospel Church, \textit{Constitution}, p. 9.
Mends draws attention to the fact that there had been times, for instance 2011, when no General Church Council meetings were held. This affirms Werner Cohn assertion:

Any discussion of this topic [church polity] must first take account of the large gap that can exist between the nominal governance of a group, what the group and its leaders believe the governance is, and the actual arrangements of power and influence.  

Thus, this section follows the church’s stipulated structures as expressed in the constitution and also analyses it in line with its practice. As such, an organogram based on the ICGC’s constitution is drawn to show the flow of authority chain of offices of the church and their functions.

Organogram of the International Central Gospel Church

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494 See Appendix 8 for the details of the various organs under each of the offices (councils), Committees and Boards.
3.2.1. ICGC’s General Church Council

The General Church Council (GCC) of ICGC is composed of:

The General Overseer, General Secretary, members of the presbytery, representatives of the Ministerial Association of the church as determined by the presbytery, representatives of each of the various National Committees and Support Ministers as determined by the Presbytery and representatives from the laity of Local Assemblies as determined by the Presbytery.\(^{495}\)

A close examination of the ICGC GCC representation presents a mixed situation. The quota for representation of the various national committees, support ministries, institutions in ICGC and the local assemblies is determined by the Presbytery and communicated to the various groups and organs through the executive head office. After the quota is given, the various organs and branches select their own delegates based on their allocations. The selective process is then made at the local church level or committee level that makes inclusive representation in gender and social status. For example, the summary of delegates for the GCC conference 2012 is presented in the table below:\(^{496}\)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>District/Other Location</th>
<th>Dist. Supervising Ministers</th>
<th>Area Supervising Ministers</th>
<th>Pastors/Ministers</th>
<th>Lay Leaders</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

\(^{495}\) The International Central Gospel Church, *Constitution*, p. 7.  
\(^{496}\) International Central Gospel Church *Circular* from the office of the Deputy General Secretary, head office, on the 11\(^{th}\) July 2011.
<table>
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<tr>
<td>Accra West</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>15</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sakumono</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>H/O staff/ Committees</td>
<td></td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overseas Churches</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>159</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In ICGC, both the clergy and laity are involved in the decision-making at the general church council level and have equal voting rights as shown by the above table. The promotion of gender inclusiveness is also encouraged and it is based on merits and capabilities.\(^{497}\) For example, Rev. Mrs Patience Addai, serves on the executive committee of the Ministerial Association of the church. Again, the church administrator is a woman, Mrs Lily Bonney.\(^{498}\) This substantiates my earlier point for gender inclusiveness of the ICGC. An interview with the deputy general secretary\(^{499}\) suggests a fair ratio of gender and lay participants in previous general council meetings.\(^{500}\) This is due to the structure of the church at the local level in the decision-making and policy formulation processes. The authority structure of

\(^{497}\) Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18\(^{th}\) August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.

\(^{498}\) Lily Bonney, interview, on the 21\(^{st}\) September 2011 at the ICGC head office at Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.

\(^{499}\) Morris Appiah, interview, on the 18\(^{th}\) January 2012 at the ICGC head office at Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.

ICGC, as we may see later, gives room for the branch churches to be run on local initiative (the Local Church Council).

The General Church Council of ICGC plays an oversight role. Among other responsibilities, the Council acts as:

…the authority for the review and determination of any decision taken by any committee or institution set up by the Church and to exercise any other powers granted it under the provisions of this [ICGC] Constitution.  

A close analysis of the provisions under the functions of the ICGC Council suggests that the GCC acts as a regulatory framework. In the exercise of its duty, its focuses more on the establishments of “institutions for the furtherance of the aims and objectives of the church.”

Institutions such as Central University College (CUC) and Central Bible College present their annual reports as enshrined in the constitution. The GCC also receives and approves reports submitted by various organs established by the church.

The ICGC constitution also mandates the GCC to organise elections and approve appointments of top office holders in the church hierarchy such as the General Overseer, the General Secretary and other senior members. Other officers include, the Church Auditor and Heads and Board Members of Institution established by the ICGC. However, the GCC has not been able to discharge all of its responsibilities. For instance, the constitutional arrangement for the tenure of office by members of the presbytery has not been followed. Presently, all the members of the presbytery

501 Ibid., p. 9,10.
502 Ibid., p. 8.
503 International Central Gospel Church, Constitution, p. 8.
are ‘practically’ permanent members in office.\textsuperscript{504} There is no record in the ICGC’s history where elections were organised to appoint presbytery members as stipulated in the church’s constitution since the start of the church in 1984.\textsuperscript{505} The serving senior officers (presbytery members) of the church, since their appointments, have remained in post with some serving over two decades. This is at variance with the constitutional provision under Article 14 which states:

Subject to Article 14.1 of this Constitution, and at the first meeting of the Council on the coming into effect of this Constitution [8\textsuperscript{th} February 2012], one-third of the members of the Presbytery, if their number is not a multiple of three, then the number nearest one-third, shall retire from office.\textsuperscript{506}

The cited constitutional provision (Article 14) has not been enforced though there had been General Church Council meeting subsequent to the promulgation of the constitution. In addition, the constitution gives the presbytery much discretionary power. To cite an example, the constitution of ICGC is full of phrases such as, “as determined by the Presbytery”,\textsuperscript{507} “as shall be specified by the Presbytery”,\textsuperscript{508} “on the instruction of the Presbytery”,\textsuperscript{509} etc. These are in connection with the appointments and selection of representatives to form groups, association, committee and boards serving in the church, a situation that makes possible abuse of power and office especially where the ICGC constitutional arrangement of the tenure of office for the presbytery members is not followed. Thus the hierarchy

\textsuperscript{504} Members of the current Presbytery have served over two decades. Practically there is absolute silence about the implementation of the constitutional provisions that determine how long an individual holds his membership on the Executive Board.

\textsuperscript{505} Kojo Sallah, interview, on the 6\textsuperscript{th} September 2011 at Tema in the Greater Accra Region.

\textsuperscript{506} International Central Gospel Church, Constitution, p. 12.

\textsuperscript{507} Ibid., p.7.

\textsuperscript{508} Ibid., p. 21.

\textsuperscript{509} Ibid.
(presbytery) could be so entrenched and in that situation use the office for self-serving purposes.

The present General Overseer and the founder of the church likewise is appointed as leader for life by the constitution. His uninterrupted stay in office as the head of the church is stated:

Notawithstanding anything in this Constitution, Rev. Dr. Mensa Anamua Otabi, Founder and General Overseer of the Church at the time of the coming into force of this Constitution, shall maintain his position as General Overseer of the Church until his death, resignation, retirement, or proven incapability to perform the functions of the General Overseer of the Church.  

The ICGC believes the vision of its leader must be protected hence the indemnity. However, the church has not fully considered the implications of appointing Otabi as a life-time leader of the church. The routinization of charisma coupled with the patronage-client phenomenon of PC leaders seems to be the greatest motivation for such practice by the church leaders. The indemnity clause is common in most of the PC church constitutions that have living founders. The exceptions in Ghanaian PC church history are: the founders of the Christ Apostolic Church (CAC), Apostle Peter Newman Anim, COP’s founder James McKeown and Eastwood Anaba of Fountain Gate Chapel (FGC) headquartered in Bolgatanga in the Upper East Region of Ghana. Anim was ousted as the leader of the church in August 1957, McKeown handed over the leadership of his church

511 Alex Boatchway, interview, on the 4th May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region.
513 McCauley, ‘Africa’s New Big Man Rule?
514 Larbi, Pentecostalism, pp. 126-127.
to local leadership, F.S. Sarfo in 1982⁵¹⁵ and Anaba relinquished his General Overseership to his associate, Clement Anchaba in 2010 and later formed Eastwood Anaba Ministries as an itinerary ministry.

Another function of the GCC under the ICGC constitution is the power to appoint and remove “heads and board members of institutions established by the church.”⁵¹⁶ Again, the GCC has the “power to sectorise the entire church, both local and international, and make rules and regulations for effective administrative supervision.”⁵¹⁷ Other responsibilities include elections, schedule for meetings and tenure of officers.

Nevertheless, the ICGC system of governance leaves room for decentralization of the churches. There is some degree of autonomy for governance at the local level. Thus, branch churches initiate policies at local level. For example, local churches raise funds for their projects and run their budgets, local churches on their own establish school projects, charity activities, etc. The Head Office is generally responsible for administrative and supervisory work.

### 3.2.2. ICGC’s Executive Council

The ICGC Executive Board mostly referred to as ‘the Presbytery’ by the church has as its primary responsibility “matters requiring attention between the meetings of the [General Church] Council and, in general, administer the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Church.”⁵¹⁸ By the ICGC constitutional arrangement, “The Presbytery

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⁵¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 204-205.
⁵¹⁷ Ibid.
⁵¹⁸ The International Central Gospel Church, *Constitution*, p. 10
shall be the highest executive body of the Church."\textsuperscript{519} The Membership of the Presbytery includes The General Overseer who is elected by the GCC for a term of five years subject to a renewal of another term (with the exception of Otabil who has constitutional indemnity to remain at post till death, personal retirement, ill health or any form of incapacitation). By the constitution of ICGC, the general overseer is deemed to be the leader of the church and takes “precedence over all other officers and members of the church.”\textsuperscript{520} Again, he presides at all Presbytery meetings. The General Secretary is directly responsible for the administrative Head Office of the church. By the established constitutional order, the other members who serve on the presbytery should include seven ordained pastors and two laypersons approved by the GCC.\textsuperscript{521} Once again, this constitutional provision is not implemented since laypersons are presently not represented on the presbytery.\textsuperscript{522} There are extended Executive Council meetings where the Presbytery exercises discretion to bring in experts to make contributions on specific issues. However, information gathered so far from key church officers and my personal knowledge of the situation as an insider, suggest that the lay representation recommended by the GCC in the formation of the Executive Board is not yet applied in the organisation due to restructuring the church’s chain of authority. Thus the new proposals in the

\textsuperscript{519} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{520} Ibid., p. 14.
\textsuperscript{521} Ibid., p. 10.
\textsuperscript{522} Lily Bonney, interview, on the 21st September 2011 at the ICGC head office at Miotso in the Greater Accra Region. Mrs. Bonny sits in presbytery meetings by virtue of her role as the administrator of ICGC and a recorder of the presbytery minutes.
constitution that was circulated but not promulgated during the 2010 GCC held at Miotso on the Central University College campus has not yet been implemented.523

2.2.3. ICGC’s Region, District, Area and Local Councils

The ICGC is organised in regions, areas, districts, and local levels. The church’s mission stations and church planting policy influence this arrangement. It does not flow with the geo-political administrative structure of Ghana. For example, Kumasi district’s supervising minister oversees in addition to the Ashanti Region, the three Northern Regions of Ghana. These demarcations have been constructed primarily because of the churches mission presence in a location. As the churches expand, the demarcations are reconfigured. By the ICGC constitution, the first level next to the presbytery in the hierarchical order of the organisational structure is the Regional Council.524 However, this exists only as a constitutional provision, there is no such structure in practice presently. The probable reason may be ICGC’s inability to expand its mission field particularly in non-urban centres. Apart from the regional capitals especially in the middle and southern part of Ghana, ICGC churches are mainly located in urban and semi-urban areas.525 Generally in Ghana, the Charismatic churches, unlike the classical Pentecostal churches, are mainly urban centred.

The ICGC constitution similarly demarcates the Regional into districts. It states:

523 The decision of the GCC was that the Executive Board should act on behalf of the GCC by inserting specific clauses identified by the body into the document (Constitution) and has it promulgated at that level. In the succeeding year 2011, ICGC General Church Council did not sit thus the issue has not been made known to members of the GCC.

524 International Central Gospel Church, Constitution, pp. 28-29.

525 A review of General Church Council reports of 2007-2010 show the spread and development of ICGC branches mainly in the cities and the semi-urban centers of Ghana.
Each District of the Church shall be composed of a number of Local Assemblies in the same area as the Council [GCC] shall from time to time determine… A District shall be supervised by an ordain Minister appointed by the Presbytery, who shall be called the District Supervising Minister.  

The ICGC system of church administration puts emphasis on the local level. The governance of the churches in the district is more on a supervisory role. The primary function of the District Supervising Ministers (DSM) “is to review the state of the work of God in each Local Assembly, and to make necessary recommendations for improvement.”  

The ICGC constitutional arrangement for the district pastor and the District Committee states:

In each District there shall be established a Committee which shall advise and assist the District Supervising Minister in the administration of the district and the development of the work of God through the Local Assemblies in the District.

Yet there is another governance structure, the level between the district and the local, which is the ‘Area’. The usage of the term ‘Area’ differs in terms of designation and function from the COP treatment of the word. In ICGC, the Area is “a geographical zone made up of a cluster of Assemblies.” In the same vein as the district, an ordained minister who is usually appointed by the ICGC Presbytery supervises the Area and works closely with a committee dubbed ‘the Area Committee’. The entire church is built on the strength of the local assemblies which function with the Local Church Council in the management of the church.

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526 International Central Gospel Church, Constitution, p. 27.
527 International Central Gospel Church, Constitution, p. 28.
528 Ibid., p. 27.
530 Ibid.
The research covering all ICGC Districts and Areas in Ghana so far shows that there are no functional District and Area committees as recommended by the church’s constitution.\textsuperscript{531} Respondents and senior church official interviewed could not explain this gap. However, the ICGC Local Church Council structures are very effective in running the churches. ICGC is operational at the local management of its churches. The constitution mandates local assemblies to take major decisions in the general administration of the church. The constitution states:

There shall be set up a Local Church Council which shall be made up of the Pastor(s) and duly appointed Deacons(esses) of the Local Assembly. The Local Church Council shall be the policy formulating organ of the Local Church and shall meet at least, once a month.\textsuperscript{532}

The evidence on the ground suggests a greater lay participation with ICGC congregations in the governance of the local churches.

The ICGC church polity in general may be considered as a blend of Congregational and Presbyterian polities. It can hardly be seen in view of a ‘tightly structured’ or Episcopalian polity because it is not constituted in a system of a ruling body of clergy who are ordered in ranks.\textsuperscript{533} It maintains an order of governmental structure as seen under Section 3.2.1. and 3.2.2. that allows both the pastors and lay-leaders (such as deacons) to be part of the governance of the church. The constitution of the church makes provision for non-pastoral representatives on both the GCC and the presbytery levels. It must also be noted that the functions of the GCC and EC as provided by the constitution of the church make it unlikely to be considered strictly a Presbyterian or Congregational polities. For most Charismatic churches in Ghana

\textsuperscript{531} Ibid., pp. 26-28.
\textsuperscript{532} Ibid., p. 24.
including ICGC, they are pastor-led with active support of the church leaders who are not ordained reverend minister but serve in volunteering and lay capacities as deacons and deaconesses. I have provided further explanation of how the governance system of the churches functioned under Section 3.4.1.

3.2.4. ICGC’s Church Membership

The Charismatic churches including ICGC, consider being ‘born again’ as the basic requirement for admission into the body of Christ which is explained as a personal spiritual encounter with Jesus Christ.\(^{534}\) They see the church as a ‘soul clinic’ which embraces a wide range of people to become part of Christ’s family. They are liberal in enforcing moral conduct as compared to the rigid requirements exhibited by the classical Pentecostals such as the COP. The Charismatic churches usually come along with admonishment and encouragement for new converts and immediately offer water baptism.\(^{535}\) The theology here is that, sufficient grace is given for gradual ‘dehabituation and rehabituation’\(^ {536}\) before Christian character is formed. They may require such persons to enrol in their basic discipleship training programmes run by the church but at the same time in a very practical way welcome a regular attendee to membership status.

The ICGC’s theological perspective of who the New Testament believer is vividly presented as:


\(^{535}\) Ibid.

\(^{536}\) The term ‘Dehabituation and Rehabilitation’ is used here to mean a gradual shedding off process of old lifestyle inconsistent with the Christian message and the developing of new character that shows traits of a changed individual. Apostle Paul’s message in 2 Corinthians 5: 7 captures the notion presented; “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (NIV translation).
People everywhere and for all time who believe in the Lord Jesus and have received and profess Him Lord over their lives [sic] have been called out from a world and life of sin and now belong as members of God’s family or household through Jesus Christ.537

The idea of belonging to God’s family is emphasized and has very strong connotation of acceptance. It gives a sense of immediacy in one’s association with God. This has an underlying empowering notion that gives hope regardless of the individual’s status in all aspects of life. Ebo Mends assents:

Membership in a church like ICGC inspires hope for a determined person to face life effectively. Because, I find in the church other members who are determined to live godly and spiritual. This encourages me to also press toward the mark of good Christian virtue which the church teaches in the Adult Believers Class. Other topics such as belonging to God’s family, the power of God to overcome Satan, sin, challenges, and the rest have become very helpful to me. The teachings of the church bring transformation. I attended Methodist for years but was never taught to understand myself as a Christian, a member of God’s family.538

Ebo Mends reflection goes beyond church membership in a charismatic church like ICGC, it also reveals the anchoring elements that strengthen the followers. The idea of belonging to God’s family is basic but have far reaching consequences which members leverage on for their day to day success in both spiritual and temporal endeavours. The charismatic believers’ thoughts on his or her authority over Satan and his cohorts, power over sin, success and prosperity in one’s undertakings are all empowering components that emanate from being part of a church. Kate Aba Whyte, an ICGC respondent, buttresses this same idea. She has this to say:

I am constantly empowered by the word of God as a member of this church. The very first day I visited, I found out that this is a place where my desire to grow in God and live a fruitful Christian life is

538 Ebo Mends, interview, on the 16th of October 2011 at Cape Coast in the Central Region.
assured. I moved my brother here from our previous church and we are both doing well in our spiritual and social life. Constantly attending church services and enrolling in the membership class is indeed a great privilege for self-discovery. I am a proud member of this church (ICGC) because I feel strongly accepted in God’s kingdom. 539

My review of the various submissions by respondents in ICGC indicate that charismatic church members follow the idea of a successful church on the basis that, first, the members are made to feel empowered to face life in all its comprehensiveness. Second, members of the churches clearly identify their union with Jesus Christ as a source of hope that endures till eternity, and finally, as Janet Adjei a respondent of ICGC shares, social class systems are of less consequence in membership considerations. Her views are noted:

I am happy the church does not discriminate against people on the basis of gender and social class. We are all people of God and this is strongly emphasized. All one is required to do is attend the basic membership class organized for those who want to attain membership. I am glad I did and this has strengthened my confidence as an accepted member of the church. 540

It is also worth noting that most members interviewed attest to the fact that charismatic churches have strong sense of mission for personal transformation. One of the words some members of ICGC used to express the church’s impact on them is the term ‘transformation’. Two examples are noted. The first is a personal experience of a respondent in ICGC who pleaded anonymity because of her past life shows significant influence of the church’s discipleship efforts toward her members. A testimony is given:

My association with the church has brought great transformation to my life. I was a street girl for a long time. As a result, I struggled

539 Kate Aba Whyte, interview, on the 6th of May 2012 at Secondi in the Western Region.
540 Janet Adjei, interview, on the 25th of September 2011 at Abossey Okai, Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
through after becoming born again. The tendency to go back into old lifestyle was so strong. The teachings of the church have helped me develop new understanding and strength to overcome my moral weakness. I give thanks to God. I now help other in the same situation I once found myself. By God’s grace I am able to help them overcome their moral weaknesses.\textsuperscript{541}

The second is an ICGC member who works as a medical officer at the 37 Military hospital in Accra. She attests:

My life has totality been transformed. I joined the ICGC in the 1990s and since I have never desired to leave the church. This is a church that gave me more than religious identity, it helped me to have a complete life in Jesus Christ. I have developed an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ and that to me is the greatest assert I have.\textsuperscript{542}

These are personal thoughts that buttress the empowering effect of the church on membership. Membership in charismatic churches is therefore considered in a more pragmatic way than provisions enshrine in churches’ constitutions for the pride of a religious tradition. This does not imply there are no constitutional or regulatory formats for membership in these churches. For ICGC, the constitutional provisions, which inform admission to membership, include: the Confession of the Lordship of Jesus Christ over one’s life, completion of the church’s membership orientation course, and availability for baptism by immersion in water.\textsuperscript{543} After these are done, the prospective members are expected to complete and submit Church membership forms to the Local Pastor, and sign a membership covenant. The Local Pastor then issues a Church Member certificate, after which the individual is admitted into full membership and is expected to honour his/her financial obligation to the church. This includes the payment of first fruits (or tithe) and other financial commitments.

\textsuperscript{541} An anonymous respondent in the ICGC.

\textsuperscript{542}Caroline Ladzekpo, interview, on the 24\textsuperscript{th} of August 2011 at 37 Military Hospital, Accra in the Greater Accra Region.

\textsuperscript{543} The International Central Gospel Church, \textit{Constitution}, p. 30.
The member at this time is encouraged to participate fully in the church’s programmes and activities.

The ICGC’s stress it’s committed to raising model Christians. The church’s vision says, “Since the Church is made up of people, the ICGC’s vision is to build New Testament believers to be eloquent witnesses of God’s manifold wisdom through their life and conduct.” Thus, the church is focused in helping believers (members) develop spirit-controlled life-styles, gaining knowledge in God’s word, persist in personal and corporate prayer, develop vibrant attitude for passionate worship and be committed to Christ and the church.

3.3. Leadership Designations of COP and ICGC

The official designation of the churches needs some clarity. Both COP and ICGC place importance on official ministry titles. The COP is strict in its usage as is the ICGC. This comes from the irregular uses of titles by some church leaders, especial freelance pastors. This for instance became a topical issue in Ghana. In November 2009, the then pro-vice chancellor of the University of Ghana, Professor Kwesi Yankah, raised this in his address during the 50th Anniversary celebration of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences. He intimated the “devious use of academic titles” in Ghana and bemoaned that some pastors were culprits in this embarrassing trend. He stressed:

Of late the title, “Reverend” soon after its use, has quickly attracted the Doctor, Dr, to render the honoree a “Reverend

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544 International Central Gospel Church, Connecting with God’s Family, p. 12.
545 Ibid.
546 This was reported in some of the major networks in Ghanaian media. See, Joy FM webpage report at www.myjoynoline.com. accessed on the 30th November 2009.
Dr.,” or the like. A close look would sometimes reveal that none of the titles has been properly earned.

The usage of ecclesiastical and academic titles in COP is regulated. Ministerial titles denote one’s level of authority in the church. The highest ministerial level in hierarchical order is as follows: the office of the Apostle or Prophet\(^{547}\) followed by Pastor, Elder and Deacon(ess). The COP also confers titles such as Evangelist on people whose devotion and callings to preach are recognised. Such people serve either as full-time or part-time in the ministry of the church. With the exception of the titles of Elder and Deacon(ess), the rest are usually full-time ministers authorized by the state to carry out other ministerial ordinances.\(^{548}\) An Elder whose title is prefixed with the word “Presiding” is normally in-charge of a local congregation and serves directly under a district pastor. A Deacon(ess) provides support in the church and usually is given the opportunity to lead prayer, worship or a specific ministry.

The pastoral designation in ICGC broadly speaking consists of three categories of ministers namely: Reverend Minister (Pastor), Licensed Minister and Certified Minister. A Reverend Minister is a pastor who has four years post probationary ministry experience, and has distinguished him/herself morally in line with ICGC ministerial code. He is authorized by the state which enables him/her to carry out ordinances in addition to the normal preaching and teaching duties. He also chairs the Local Church Council ensuring the planning and performance of all aspects of

\(^{547}\) The usage of the title Prophet is not self-imposed but is conferred by the church hierarchy after one has clearly demonstrated a proven ministry.

\(^{548}\) Ghanaian law requires religious functionaries who administer ordinances i.e. marriage, baptism, burial serves, etc. to be authorized by the Register General on behalf of the state.
Licensed and Certified Ministers may be limited in the execution of ministerial duties. Usually, they work in other vocations while serving in part-time pastoral work. Such persons usually have received minimal pastoral training as lay ministers to assist in the work of God. They work in close association with a senior minister who provides help and direction.

Under ICGC constitution, Deacons(esses) “are persons who serve under the guidance of the Local Pastor to share with him[or her] concerns for the total needs of the Local Assembly.” Their selection and the rational for their work is vividly captured in the ICGC constitution:

Under the direction of the Local Pastor and with the approval of the Local Assembly, Deacons(esses) shall be appointed to stand in support of their Pastor, encourage and advise him to carry out the work of God for the Assembly.

3.4. Leadership

The effective management of the churches essentially requires a competent administrative structure for governance and an able leadership which is our focus of this section. The role of the pastor as the head of the church portrays him/her as a symbol of authority especially in PC churches. Pastoral work especially in Ghana assumes more than delivering a homily and performing other regular religious activities. It is all encompassing, touching on vast areas of community and individual lives. The discussion here is focused on four key items that emerged as concerns during the fieldwork. These include the pastoral leadership disposition

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549 The International Central Gospel Church, Constitution, p. 25
550 Ibid.
551 Ibid., p. 26
which is reviewed under ‘Patrimonialism’ and/or ‘Pastocracy’, the pastoral mindset, leadership and capacity building and the PC churches future leadership.

3.4.1. ‘Patrimonialism’ and/or ‘Pastocracy’

Having shown the various levels of authority structure that exist in the churches, the COP and ICGC also establish how persons of authority apply this in pursuit of their work and the objectives of their organisations. I have chosen the terms ‘Patrimonialism’ and/or ‘Pastocracy’ to help review the conduct of leadership, power and influence. I am aware that the terms Patrimonialism and Neo-Patrimonialism are mainly used in the fields of sociology, and politics (governance and democracies). The term neo-patrimonialism has also been applied in the discourse of economic policy and processes in the African context. However, I adopt the two (Patrimonialism and Pastocracy) in relation to our discussion on religious polity and leadership.

Patrimonialism as a concept was popularised by Max Weber to represent a practice of the establishment of traditional domination. The term is a derivative of the word ‘patriarchy’ and connotes an idea of a scheme where power is entrusted in the hands of a particular person or persons to the exclusion of others. Restating the

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concept of power, Anne Pitcher et al present Weber’s definition as; “the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests”\textsuperscript{556}

Weber presents two structures of authoritative power and control. The first form of patrimonialism is an arranged top-down order. In principle, the COP by its leadership structural arrangements epitomises this. The Executive Council wields authority by which the various hierarchies follow in a bureaucratic way. The ICGC system resonates with Weber’s second form of patrimonialism. This is also top-down but its method is on supervisory level. We have already established the fact that the ICGC operate a decentralized governance structure. Local Councils are headed by the pastor(s) in the various assemblies. The pastor or his/her representative has a constitutional mandate to initiate and implement policies for the local church with no intrusion from a higher authority as long as the policies are consistent with the ideals of the denomination. Therefore, local churches initiate their own projects, focus their ministry appropriately for their situation and run their own budget.

In the context of the church, both forms of patrimonialism have their merits and demerits. The former, where legitimate authority is exercised from a central location through hierarchical order gives the following advantages. First, it promotes doctrinal sanctity and uniformity but at the same time resist reforms. The COP is renowned for this. The church’s position on set practices is clear and various organs respond accordingly. The second benefit is closely connected to the first. This has to do with the exercise of pastoral ministry/spiritual gifts in

\textsuperscript{556} Pitcher et al. “Rethinking Patrimonialism and Neopatrimonialism in Africa”, p. 126.
conformity with established ministry protocols. The COP again is accredited with rigorist conduct. The Charismatic churches on the other hand are perceived to be disorganized and sometimes careless with the practice of pastoral work and the administration of ministry gifts.557

The third advantage directly relates to staff welfare and accountability. Office holders, both pastoral and non-pastoral are directly remunerated from a common fund managed by the head office. Pastoral benefits are distributed across the board and pastors rotated. By these processes, pastors develop the orientation as servants-leaders ready to serve in different locations. This contrasts with most Charismatic churches. This is part of the reason why charismatic Christianity in Ghana thrives in the urban centres where pastors see the benefits of ministry trappings558 as proof of ministry success increasingly encouraged by the prosperity gospel.

The other patrimonial structure, which is practiced by ICGC, is a liberalised system. However, the general overseer as well as his pastors at the local branches assumes the stature of patrimonial leaders with absolute authority. It is out of this I apply the term pastocracy. I use the term (pastocracy) to mean the exercise of ‘lawful’ authority in an absolute sense by reason of a pastoral position. In the ICGC context, power flows directly from the leader (the general overseer) at the general organisational level. Sometimes such an exercise of authority surpasses what the constitution stipulates. In the same manner, the local pastors too exhibit similar tendencies. The ICGC constitution grants that, “A Pastor shall in particular… as chairman of the Local Church Council ensure the planning and execution of all

557 Gifford, Ghana’s New Christianity.
558 Ministry trapping here relate to material benefits, financial rewards, social status and internationalism.
aspects of church work and activity.”^559 Though the minister is expected to work with other persons such as the deacons/deaconesses at the local branch level, he is entirely in-charge of the running of the day-to-day administration of the local church. The pastor has tremendous power and usually loyalty is prized over other elements such as competence. As a result, the pastor becomes a local ‘patrimonial ruler’ free from the untoward influence of ‘powers that be’ in the hierarchy thus ensuring the free exercise of pastoral and spiritual gifts. This system of church polity may have its downsides, however, it avoids ‘democratic pretensions’^560 in the entire organizational setup. Werner Cohn’s usage of the phrase, (democratic pretensions) imply, “Such groups [that] practice democratic control by their members on paper, and it is actually a small coterie of leaders [in the hierarchy] that makes decisions.”^561

The second merit that the decentralised church polity has over the other is the rapid promotion of developmental programmes at the local level. This enables the ICGC to spread its church and development projects rapidly especially in the urban and semi-urban parts of Ghana.^562 Local churches initiate school projects, charity support system and sponsorships of members and non-members in education and health care without recourse to headquarters support and approval.^563 This can be contrasted with the COP where similar projects require collective support to be

559 The International Central Gospel Church, *Constitution*, p. 25.
560 The ‘democratic pretension’ in church polity is in line with the usage of the term by Werner Cohn, Professor Emeritus of Sociology, University of British Columbia, in his work, “When the Constitution Fails on Church and State: Two Case Studies.” *Rutgers J. Law & Relig.* 6, 2004.
561 Cohn, “When the Constitution Fails on Church and State”, p. 29.
562 Lily Bonney, interview, on the 21 September at ICGC head office at Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.
563 Morris Appiah, interview, on the 18th January 2012 at ICGC head office at Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.
accomplished. One of these is described in COP’s *Five-Year Vision* document seeking to develop infrastructure for the church:

> The church needs an international cathedral, a very spacious place of worship, or giant auditorium which can accommodate national and international functions. Presently, the Sophia McKeown Memorial Temple at La, which was used for these purposes, though upgraded, is still too small for such occasions.  

Like the COP local churches are able to undertake some projects, those undertakings are not of the same size as those found in ICGC branch churches due to bureaucratic tendencies regarding budget approvals and availability of funds at local level in COP. Local churches in ICGC generate their funds at local levels and initiate their own projects.  

Another advantage of the decentralised governance system of the local churches is the flexibility to carry out reforms and innovate. This generates new dynamics to counteract ‘institutional gridlock’ and keep up with trends that runs parallel with societal development. This can serve both positively or contrary to norms and values. A cursory observation of these reforms and innovations in churches is seen for instance in the appropriation of media technologies by the Charismatic churches including ICGC. Asamoah-Gyadu advances this in his characterization of the Charismatic churches. He indicates among others:

> Innovative uses of modern media technologies such as interactive internet websites and the use of power-point in preaching; Extensive and evangelistic uses of media for advertising religious programs and mediating religious services and supernatural power… The preaching of a Christian message that directly addresses contemporary concerns of upward mobility; seizing social, political and economic opportunities; and the application of certain social

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and biblical principles for the realization of success in this life.\textsuperscript{566}

There are wide implications to the innovative uses of media technologies as posited by Asamoah-Gyadu. On the one hand, it injects vitality and creativity into church services, which makes members keep in touch with the activities of the church, and they are constantly informed about church developments. Conversely, it also breaks down the personal touch that exists among individuals and groups due to over reliance of such technologies. In the context of leadership structures, the phenomenon has far reaching consequences in the development – both spiritual and physical - of churches. This leads to multiple allegiances of members because sometime they affiliate with more than one church. The consequence is that some church members never take responsibility of what happens (about the governance practices) in their local parishes to demand responsibility and accountability of their leadership. As such, both expression of patrimonial forms of leadership present opportunities and challenges alike. It sometimes manifests in pastoral leadership orientations that may be desirable or undesirable.

3.4.2. Leadership Orientation and Practices: A ‘Survivalist Mind-Set’?

The classical Pentecostals such as the COP started primarily with the marginalised in society. The social group they reached were not the rich, the very well educated, and the powerful people. The COP reached people at the bottom of society. The Charismatic churches such as the ICGC on the other hand appealed to younger people and middle class people because their ministry was predominantly focused in the secondary schools and the universities. Over the years both strands, COP and

\textsuperscript{566} Asamoah-Gyedu, “Taking Territories and Raising Champions, p. 12.
ICGC, have attempted to further develop. This situation has naturally influenced the way leadership has evolved in these churches.

ICGC presents a set of elements that influence directly or remotely in the shaping of Charismatic Christian leadership in Ghana. This can be looked at in two respects. First, the leadership focus of ICGC as a denomination and second, the influence of ICGC leadership and commitment in Christianity in Ghana and the broader society. The ICGC’s has for its mission statement is ‘raising leaders, shaping vision and influencing Society through Christ.’

This statement seeks to communicate their primary assignment in achieving the ICGC’s vision, which is, “To establish the House of God through the development of Model New Testament Christians and Churches.” By this vision, ICGC seeks to make itself an “authentic channel for God to express His purpose and plans to mankind as well as the body which best shows forth His wisdom and glory in the entire universe.”

The founder and general overseer on the occasion of ICGC’s 25th Anniversary celebration at the Ohene Gyan sports stadium, reminded his church in particular and the churches in Ghana in general, of the need for a more vibrant and focused leadership in the churches. Otabil in his sermon strongly called for the church and its leadership to be ‘generationally minded’ meaning pastors and leaders of the churches should look beyond their present interest (and needs) and focus more on the next generation. Subsequent to this, ICGC organised a church leaders’ conference at ICGC Christ Temple in the Greater Accra region in 2008 towards the

567 International Central Gospel Church, ‘Connecting with God’s Family’, p. 23.
568 Ibid., p. 11.
569 Ibid.
25th ICGC anniversary celebration that was addressed by Otabil. In this meeting, he challenged the church leaders and the pastors on leadership issues. The address was focused on the need to change the ‘survivalist mind-set’ of church leadership. By Otabil’s explanation, survivalist mind-set is a condition where people “see their work only as a means of earning a living.” He calls on the ICGC to ‘think generationally’ which he considers is the church’s major challenge. Otabil declares, “it is what we do deliberately, consistently and in a focused manner for the future, that is what we have to be concerned about.”

The leadership of many Charismatic churches in Ghana have over time been perceived by some adherents and the public in Ghana to have developed instincts for survival due to socio-economic challenges. The Charismatic churches especially evolved during a period of socio-political and economic difficulties. A brief history of the depressive social and economic period of the nation will offer a context for this discussion.

The later part of 1970s through to mid-1980s were years that saw the development of the Charismatic churches in Ghana. These same years were challenging times coupled with severe turmoil on the social, religious and political landscape of the nation. Historically, this was a period in Ghana when the nation was fraught with political insecurity, after successive coup d’etats deepened the woes of Ghanaians. Prior to Tuesday 15 May 1979, all the military insurgency and coup d’etats proved disastrous in the nation but rather accelerated the process of economic malpractices

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572 Ibid.
573 Ibid.
574 Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity*, p. 1-19
and state sponsored corruption with the emergence of *kalabule*. These social evils were the pretext for the first *coup d’état* of Flt. Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings. As Mike Oquaye wrote:

> Whereas there had been complaints and some sporadic expressions of discontent dotted in all parts of the nation, and many had condemned military misrule; and whereas various institutions and corporations had gone on strikes to get better pay and conditions of work in the face of inflation; the first direct political challenge to military rule and a positive call on the soldiers to get out of politics and return to barracks came from the lawyers of Ghana, latter backed by other professionals and supported to its logical conclusion by the students of institutions of higher learning and colleges.

From the religious front, looking at the scenario that precipitated the social, economic, political predicaments among others in such deplorable condition, people became more anxious to find security at all cost. Others developed survivalist instincts. The Charismatic movement at this point appeared as a credible alternative to the political and economic misrule. Their messages were sharply focused on supernatural intervention for solutions. Larbi, rightly pointed this out:

> The aftermath of the evangelical/charismatic renewal in the 1960s and the 1970s saw the development of new independent Pentecostal churches, some becoming huge churches in less than a decade from their emergence. This movement emerged within the economic and social difficulties in the country. The message of these churches is a focused reflection of the economic and social realities of the time. Some of them carry their messages in the socio-economic realm to the realm of liberation theology.

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575 ‘Kalabule’ is a term commonly used to describe a high level of corruption through hoarding.


577 Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, p 89.
It was at this time that fellowships and Bible study groups started transforming into large churches.\textsuperscript{578} An example of this is the archbishop Nicholas Duncan Williams Church, Action Chapel International, which became one of the early Charismatic churches in 1979. The evolution of the Charismatic churches at the period coupled with the prevailing conditions that overwhelmed the nation at that time developed into a state of survival. Although the socio-political and economic conditions of that era have now changed, the survivalist mentality is ingrained and is often obvious in the leadership of some of Charismatic churches. It is within this context that Otabil addressed his pastors. According to Otabil, pastors including those of ICGC are not excluded from the survivalist mind-set.\textsuperscript{579} Many pastors have as a result of this, nurtured a more private and personal ambition. He states:

When we [pastors and church leaders] preoccupy with our living conditions, salary, welfare, upkeep in everything we do, the church we choose to plant, the places we choose to pastor, everything we do is so that we will survive even if it is strategically nonsensical but grant survival for us today we do it. If that become the mind-set the future will judge us harshly.\textsuperscript{580}

The discussion here takes cognizance of Ogbu Kalu’s\textsuperscript{581} refutation in attributing major consequences within Charismatic Christianity in Ghana solely to socio-economic and political dimensions as Paul Gifford\textsuperscript{582} seem to have done. Gifford did not acknowledge other vital factors such as religious orientations, the sense of divine mission with its accompanying enthusiasm and others as we may observe later in the next chapter. The overriding interest in this section is to establish how

\textsuperscript{578} Asamoah-Gyadu, \textit{African Charismatics}, pp. 96-131.

\textsuperscript{579} Mensa Otabil. \textit{Laying the Foundation for the Next Generation. Pastor’s Workshop (Audio CD), 2\textsuperscript{nd} April, 2009.}

\textsuperscript{580} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{581} Kalu, “Yabbing The Pentecostals, p. 3-16

\textsuperscript{582} Gifford, \textit{African Christianity; Ghana’s New Christianity}. 
religious, social, economic and political factors have developed and shaped leadership propensities in accomplishing mission especially with regard to the churches practices.

3.4.3. Pastoral Leadership and Capacity Building

Some practitioners and scholars have expressed concerns regarding the lack in developing leadership capacity in PC Christianity.\(^{583}\) According to the statistics provided in the introductory segment in chapter one, PC Christianity command the majority presence of Ghana’s Christianity. Larbi was unwavering in his view over a decade ago:

> The Pentecostal movement will have to seriously address itself to the need for education for empowerment. Both classical and neo-Pentecostal [charismatic] need to equip themselves so that they will be able to tell their own story, about how God moved among their forefathers in times past, and how He continues to move among them today. They need to be empowered to be able to tell the effect of that move on their faith and practice.\(^{584}\)

The COP has come to the realization of Larbi’s admonition and has embarked on leadership capacity building. The church has sponsored a number of their ministers for further training in both local and foreign universities. Key beneficiaries include the immediate past chairperson of the church, Apostle Dr. Michael Ntumy, the third African Chairman of the COP and the first clergy to obtain a doctoral degree in the church.\(^{585}\) Apostle Dr. Opoku Onyenah, the present chairman,\(^{586}\) graduated in 2002

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\(^{583}\) Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, p. 448

\(^{584}\) Ibid.

\(^{585}\) Emmanuel K. Larbi, the first president of Central University College and alumni of the University of Edinburgh obtained his doctoral degree in 1995. Larbi, originally a member of the COP switched to join ICGC because of lack of corporation on the part of COP to offer him sponsorship for his doctoral degree. ICGC granted him the offer thus his association with the church. Larbi has since join COP again after a meritorious service with ICGC.
with a doctoral degree from the University of Birmingham, UK. The General Secretary, Apostle Alfred Koduah, is pursuing a doctoral degree in pastoral studies with the University of Ghana. Several other pastors at different levels in the COP’s hierarchical structure have been admitted in graduate and doctoral programmes. The pursuance of advance degrees by the pastoral leadership is in line with COP’s policy in pastoral development.

The 39th General Council report reveals a rapid injection of capital in the development of the pastoral and administrative staff of COP. The COP report covering 2010 to 6th May 2011 shows that sixty new ministerial applicants were trained and duly commissioned at the Faculty of Theology and Missions (FTM) of the Pentecost University College (PUC) in 2010. In the 2011 academic year, an additional fifty-five pastoral candidates were enrolled in FTM. In addition to this, sixty pastors were also enrolled to pursue a Bachelor of Arts degree in theology on a special programme (School of Theological Education by Extension [STEE]) set up by the church with PUC. Seven ministers who were sponsored by the church graduated in 2010 with Master of Arts (MA) degree in Religious Studies and one Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.) in Religions at the University of Ghana (UoG). Eighteen other ministers graduated with Master of Arts in Mission Studies at the Akrofi Christaller Institute of Theology, Missions and Culture (ACITMC), with another eleven ministers currently on their graduate studies there. Two other

586 Apostle Dr. Opoku Onyenah took over the leadership from Apostle Dr. Ntumy on the August 31, 2008.
587 Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9th of August 2011 at the COP head office in Accra the Greater Accra Region.
588 The 39th General Council Meetings of the Church of Pentecost Report, Accra on Friday May 6, 2011, pp. 30-32.
589 Ibid.
ministers, Pastor Dan Walker and Pastor Dela Quampah pursued their doctoral programmes at the University of Birmingham, UK. The former fully completed his course while the later is awaiting his *viva* as of the time of the General Council report.  

The development of intellectual capacity among the COP pastors has come to the notice of members of the church. However, members of the church are divided in their views regarding the situation. Some respondent are particularly pleased with the progress made so far. Some of their views are presented:

> After the chairmanship of Prophet Yeboah, the church has embraced an intellectual approach in addition to the usual spiritual leadership in governing our church. This new way of leadership considers the dependence on the Holy Spirit very important, as it has always been, but has also allowed a constructive intellectual and theological approach which has even brought modifications such as the dress code reforms.

John Sam’s observation underscores the reforms the COP has adopted in the pastoral development and leadership training. Michael Ativor a respondent of the COP concurs:

> Look at the training of our pastors now, it was never the case until very recently. I am not surprised at all because the church now has a university. Our pastors must be trained to take care of the leadership of our academic institutions and the church as well. I am so glad we now have pastors who have PhDs and master’s degrees leading us. This encourages many pastors and members of the church. As a result, the future of the church is strengthened.

The views of Sam and Ativor emphasize the COP determination to address the previously held view by scholars such as Larbi that PC leadership do not have the

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590 This report was presented by the Chairman of the Church of Pentecost, Apostle Dr. Opoku Onyinah during their 39th General Council Meetings at Sowutuom, Accra on Friday May 6, 2011, Pentecost University College campus.

591 John Sam, interview, on the 18th of September 2011 at Tema in the Greater Accra Region.

592 Michael Ativor, interview, on the 13th of May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region.
intellectual capacity to address the many challenges that confront them. In showing how this challenge is addressed, Apostle Koduah, the immediate General Secretary of the COP shows the present leadership opinion:

With the development of intellectual capacity, the church is poised to be more effective in its pastoral role. We now encourage pastors of our church to develop intellectual capacity because it is relevant for effective pastoral work. Pentecostals were looked at in the past as anti-intellectuals. That must change; I am the general secretary of the church but still pursuing my PhD. 593

Notwithstanding the move of the COP to develop intellectual capacity of their pastors, some of the members remain skeptical and caution against the church becoming cerebral. Their concerns were voiced out:

We have seen how the orthodox churches rely more on their intellectual theology than on the Spirit of God when they started boasting with their ‘Rev. Dr’ titles. This affected the work of God because they were not relying on the Spirit of God. That is why God raised us to become His witness. We have to be careful we do not end up the same way like those churches otherwise all that we have criticized them for will turn on us. 594

Love Kissi apprehension is also voiced out by another COP respondent, Dominic Mensah. Mensah’s worry is the fear of their pastors loosing their spiritual effectiveness, and not necessary an abhorrence of knowledge or intellectual improvement. He states:

It is good to go to school and be able to speak well, but the dangers are also there. Let us cherish our spiritual heritage and not allow anything to disturb it. Pastors need to hear from God and that is the most important part of their work. I want a pastor who will tell me what God is saying and not a pastor who is ‘book-long’. 595

593 Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9th of August 2011 at the COP head office in Accra the Greater Accra Region.
594 Love Kissi, interview, on the 13th of May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region.
595 Dominic Mensah, interview, on the 9th of October 2011 at Cape Coast in the Central Region.
In the case of ICGC, some members of the church hold the opinion that the church has not done enough to develop capacity especially with the pastoral leadership. Some pastors are still uncertain about the role of Daniel Institute (formally Central Bible College where pastors are trained). Their argument is that:

The Daniel Institute idea, as inherited from Central Bible College, so far has proved inadequate to meet the challenge for training in advance degrees. At best, it satisfies the need to replenish the pastoral stock with young and energetic people who may serve God. It does not address the need to develop capacity to meet the theological and ethical challenges of the present and the future. I am not convinced at all if a church like ICGC is preparing its pastors for future pastoral challenges.596

Contrary to the opinion of a number of pastors in ICGC as expressed above, the non-pastoral members of the church hold the view that their pastors possess enough intellectual capacity. Kwabina Anderson suggests:

Otabil has trained his pastors very well. They speak well, preach effectively and have the balance to judge well on issues of the spiritual and non-spiritual. My pastor Rev. Mrs. Patience Addai demonstrates this in abundance and I have met other ICGC pastors as well with the same spirit and competence.597

Kwabina Anderson’s view is also supported by Rita Wilson:

Comparing ICGC pastors and those of my former church [name withheld] I think they are way ahead. They have modeled after their leader Pastor Otabil and so far given good account of themselves. I hope they keep developing just at Pastor Otabil has shown overtime.598

The disparity in opinion between some pastors and members of the church as shown in the quotes were as a result of members’ inadequate understanding of the

596 Interview with an anonymous pastor in ICGC.
597 Kwabina Anderson, interview, on the 6th of May 2012 at Secondi in the Western Region.
598 Rita Wilson, interview, on the 16th of October 2011 at Cape Coast in the Central Region.
pastoral challenges in theological training since the needs of members have not been focused mainly on theological issues but rather day to day concerns of life. The ICGC’s investment into pastoral development remains minimal. All the officers and pastoral team who have acquired advanced degrees have done so on their own except this present researcher.\(^{599}\) Two conditions account for this; the absence of elaborate policy for pastoral development in education and the lack of willingness on the part of the pastors to take a break from their present post to pursue further education. The ICGC is now formulating a policy for pastoral human development especially for advance studies.\(^{600}\) Few pastors show interest in self-development.\(^{601}\) This is mainly due to a gap in organizational structure in the church which maintains a *status quo* that tends to be a reward for the local pastor. One ICGC pastor indicated, “appraisals and grading are not effectively done thus pastors have no motivation in developing themselves because it is of no consequence.”\(^{602}\) A respondent, Kojo Sallah, believes the inward tendency for pastors and their quest to hold on to their branch churches is responsible for their reluctance to seek advanced education.\(^{603}\) The ICGC does not operate a pastoral transfer system as in the COP.\(^{604}\) Pastoral transfers do occur under special circumstances. The common situation had been either to fill a (preferably) vacant position, usually by promotion, or moving a pastor for misconduct.

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\(^{599}\) My *Master of Philosophy Degree* (MPhil.) with the University of Ghana was self-sponsored. Under special arrangement, ICGC head office raised a partial sponsorship package for the Ph.D. programme with the rest being borne by my local church.

\(^{600}\) Kwesi Sampong, interview, on the 18\(^{th}\) January 2012 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.

\(^{601}\) Lily Bonney, interview, on the 21\(^{st}\) September 2011 at the ICGC head office, Miotso, in the Greater Accra Region.

\(^{602}\) Interview with a pastor of ICGC who pleaded anonymity.

\(^{603}\) Kojo Sallah, interview, on the 6\(^{th}\) of September 2011 at Tema in the Greater Accra Region.

\(^{604}\) The ICGC Constitution is silent on the transfer of pastors and other church officers.
In a workshop held for ICGC pastors in April 2009, it became known that of over two hundred pastors present, none was under thirty. This the general overseer (Otabil) described as ‘startling’ because it is a sharp contrast of a movement that depended on young pastoral leadership from its inception. Many of the present leadership including the general overseer, Otabil, and the members of the ICGC presbytery assumed pastoral leadership roles at the age between twenty to twenty-four years.\footnote{Mensa Otabil founded the International Central Gospel Church at age twenty-four and has since remained ICGC’s general overseer.} The consequences is obvious, the Charismatic church is not growing with its numerical advantage and strength. Arguably, the lack of needed investment into pastoral leadership development and the disinterest of most young pastors to seek further education is the greatest disempowering conduct of the Charismatic churches in Ghana. A median age of pastors in the ICGC is around forty-one years.\footnote{Information obtained from the ICGC Head office as a follow up to the policy discussion of the new direction in the recruitment of pastoral staff in the church.} The implications of the above statistics suggest a decline of leadership development for the future in ICGC comparative to the median age of pastors two decades ago.

The COP on the other hand has shown great commitment in the development of leadership. The immediate past and present chairpersons of the COP have given indications of the church’s departure from heavy reliance on the old leadership of ministry experience alone to a preference for a leadership hierarchy with solid education, ministry experience and spiritual sensitivity.\footnote{The Church of Pentecost, Vision 2013, pp. 18-23.} The leadership has mapped out an action plan for this, which includes the upgrading of the ‘new entrants’ ministerial training to two years and opportunities given to those who
want to pursue advanced degrees “to enhance their education and ministry.”\textsuperscript{608} The COP has also stated in their policy document to “identify and sponsor at least five ministers who can pursue M.Phil and/or Ph.D. degrees in Theology and other disciplines.”\textsuperscript{609} Opportunities have also been created for senior pastors refresher courses. The purpose is to “meet our current needs”\textsuperscript{610} as in the COP. The policy even makes provision for pastors of the church who are about to retire. It noted, “Systematic programmes will be implemented to get all ministers who have, at least, more than five years before retiring from the ministry to have the basic knowledge in the use of computers.”\textsuperscript{611} This drive from the COP is also balanced with ministerial and spiritual development with the proposal by the Executive Council. The objective is to conduct “Apostolisation”.\textsuperscript{612} The result is seen in certain doctrinal reforms,\textsuperscript{613} administrative restructuring and some other transformation that is on-going in COP.

3.4.4. The Churches and Future Leadership

From the above analysis on pastoral leadership and capacity building, over the next twenty-five years, no pastor in ICGC would have served in pastoral ministry and gained the experience the present leadership have at the same age bracket when they started the church. The ICGC is gradually losing it future leadership capacity which invariably will affect its future survival. Otabil admits that it is a “cycle of

\textsuperscript{608} Ibid., p. 18-19.
\textsuperscript{609} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{610} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{611} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{612} By the COP understanding, ‘Apostolisation’ is a process where two or more Apostles and Prophets team-up in ministry with the aim to impart ministry gifts to other minister lower in rank.
\textsuperscript{613} COP under the leadership of Apostles Dr. Ntumy and Dr. Onyenah have revisited the subject of Women’s head-covering and other doctrinal and liturgical controversies that had previously lived in the church.
suicide.”614 Again, Otabil acknowledges that, “no matter how old you are if your ministry experience is shallow, you are shallow.”615 This state of affairs is not exclusive to ICGC. It cuts across the entire spectrum of Charismatic churches in Ghana. Though this researcher had not conducted any study on the other Charismatic churches in Ghana, from general observation regarding these churches, and also from discussions from scholars such as Larbi, Gifford and Asamoah-Gyadu, arguably, ICGC is generally considered elitist among the Charismatic churches in Ghana.

As a result of this, ICGC has initiated a policy to recruit young tertiary graduate to be trained in theology and Christian ministry. The age limit for such recruits is pegged to twenty-five years and they are to be given specialised training in the newly developed Daniel Institute (formally Central Bible College)616 solely for ICGC ministers.617 But it does not address other structural challenges as in the transfer of ministers and a thorough policy programme for the pastoral development especially in advanced education. The COP on their part has prepared for this thoroughly with their five years vision for ministerial training and development.

3.5. Financial Administration

The COP and ICGC have tithing/first fruit618 and free-will offering as their major and regular source of income. The ICGC uses the term ‘First Fruits’ to represent the

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614 Otabil, Laying Foundation for the Next Generation.
615 Ibid.
616 The Central Bible College (CBC) here has no continuity with the old Central Bible College which was converted to Central University College (CUC) in 1997. To avoid any confusion in identity, and to expand its programmes, it has now been named ‘Daniel institute’.
617 The Deputy General Secretary strongly emphasized this in my interview with him.
618 The usage of the term, ‘First Fruits’ by the ICGC does not line-up with the biblical practice of the concept in the Old Testament. From a practical point of view, it shows everything that is associated with tithing in Ghanaian charismatic Christianity.
practice of tithing. It is not clear why the church preferred the term first fruits to tithing, interviews with some ICGC church officials could not offer any theological explanation for the practice.\textsuperscript{619} The ICGC usage of the term is probably based on the emphasis on ‘free-will offering’ aspect of ‘first fruit’ instead of the term ‘tithing’ which is deemed an Old Testament legal obligation as taught by some churches in Ghana.\textsuperscript{620} But the practice of first fruits in ICGC suggests biblical tithing rather than first fruiting which originate from the Old Testament practice of giving the first and the best to God as an acknowledgement for his providence.\textsuperscript{621} I will therefore refer to the term tithing as including first fruit.

Tithing is enshrined in the churches constitutions and every \textit{bona fide} member who receives income is expected to practice this act of giving. The COP’s constitution asserts categorically:

\begin{quote}
We believe in tithing and giving of free-will offerings towards the cause of carrying forward the Kingdom of God. We believe that God blesses a cheerful giver (Gen. 14: 18-20; Mal. 3: 3-10; Mt. 23: 23; Ac. 20: 35; Heb. 7: 1-4; 1 Cor. 16: 1,2; 2 Cor. 9: 1-9.\textsuperscript{622}
\end{quote}

The ICGC also derives church finance from “freewill offerings, first fruits, pledges, other financial contributions from members and other income generating activities of the church. Donations, bequests made in cash or kind.”\textsuperscript{623} The theology regarding this practice is manifold. First, it is presented as an honour to God in

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\textsuperscript{619}Patience Addai, interview, on the 4\textsuperscript{th} May 2012 at Secondi in the Western Region.
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\textsuperscript{620} There is a great contention, theologically, on the relevance of tithing under the New Testament regime by some churches i.e. Church of Christ, etc. Thus, PC churches in Ghana such as COP states clearly their theological position on the practice of tithing as part of their tenant of faith.
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\textsuperscript{621} Scriptural passages usually cited include; Proverbs 3: 9-10; Exodus 34: 26; Leviticus 23:9-14.
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\textsuperscript{622} The Church of Pentecost, \textit{Constitution}, p. 3.
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\textsuperscript{623} The International Central Gospel Church, \textit{Constitution}, p. 33.
\end{flushright}
appreciation of his provisions. The thinking behind this is expressed by a respondent:

By honouring God, He honours you in return. It is a practice that has brought me God’s favour and I entreat everyone to respect it. My experience with God concerning financial blessings is as a result of my regular payment of first fruit.624

Second, the tithe is seen as an act of faith to induce divine blessings. Charles Mensah has this to say:

It is good to pay your first fruit. I always dare God to prove Himself according to His word. He has been faithful. By giving I receive more of His blessings. My hands are blessed because God blesses me and my work.625

The primary motivation of the acts of giving to God and the church in PC churches are rooted in their teachings and personal experiences. The members testify of God’s favour and goodness because they are taught to exercise faith towards God to receive his favour and blessings. The passages mentioned in the above quotations (i.e. Malachi 3:3-10, etc) are applied in the biblical teaching and preaching of the pastors. The modes of collection of these monies differ in the churches. In COP, the members are asked to drop the money in the offering bowls in the course of the service. It is usually enveloped but some still present their tithes without the envelopes. In ICGC, each tither is given a number, which becomes his membership number in the local assembly. The rational here is not only for the purposes of accounting but to track each member’s involvement and faithfulness in the

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624 Elizabeth Quarshie, interview, on the 20th November 2011 at Ashaiman in the Greater Accra Region.
625 Charles Mensah, interview, on the 6th May 2012 at Secondi in the Western Region.
discharge of their financial obligation to the church. These monies are collected and sent to the bank.\textsuperscript{626}

Both churches have stipulated financial procedures. The COP operates a centralised financial system from their executive headquarters. Thus, all branches within Ghana pay 60\% of their income into this account. It is then disbursed based on the various budgets allocated to the various branches and projects. The other 40\% is distributed in the following manner: 10\% to the Regional account, 10\% to the District account and another 10\% into a pool kept under the head office for the sole purpose of infrastructure development such as church buildings. The remaining 10\% is left for the local assembly for its expenditure.\textsuperscript{627} In the ICGC system, all income is sent to the bank as required by the financial management procedure. It states, “all payments received shall be promptly recorded and deposited in a bank account which shall be opened, kept and maintained in the name of the Church,”\textsuperscript{628} the Local Church Council then manages the funds based on the projects and ministry requirement which is not directly subjected to the approval of the headquarters administration. What is required is for the Local Church to send 20\% of the total tithes received for the month to a pool termed The Common Fund. This money is managed by the headquarters and is used fund missions, organisational projects, administrative expenses, etc. of the organization from the headquarters.

From the practices of the COP and ICGC, it is significant to note that a member of the church is not entitled to claim any contributions, be it tithes or any of the offerings, from the churches on ceasing to be a member. However, while the person

\textsuperscript{626}William Oweredu, interview, on the 21\textsuperscript{st} September 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region. Mr. Oweradu is the head of finance and budget in the ICGC head office.

\textsuperscript{627}Kusi Yiadom, interview, on the 3\textsuperscript{rd} May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region.

\textsuperscript{628}The International Central Gospel Church, \textit{Constitution}, p. 33.
is still a member, the churches are obliged to remain committed to the members. Such interventions come through a welfare system in the churches.

The COP and ICGC have church audit systems that ensure financial accountability. The popular opinion held by many people, member and non-members, is that these two churches and a few others have ensured the judicious and accountable use of the ‘Lord’s money’ and other resources placed in trust of the leadership of the churches. Yiadom reiterated this view:

I have watched my church [COP] closely and I think it does well on the matter of judicious use of fund. So far I am convinced that the two churches [COP and ICGC] have shown financial credibility in the midst of many financial scandals among the newly established churches.\footnote{Kusi Yiadom, interview, on the 3rd May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region.}

Others such as Kojo Sallah support this position. The common public opinion among church and non-church folks in the nation are mainly negative when it comes to the usage of fund in the churches especially with the newer PC churches led by individuals who are self-styled prophets. Thus views from respondent in COP and ICGC remain significant. Sallah was full of praises in his estimation of the usage of church funds in ICGC. He maintains:

I do not have any reservation on the use of church’s finances. It appears the integrity of ICGC has been intact so far because various measures have been established to ensure that moneys are not wasted but properly accounted for.\footnote{Kojo Sallah, interview, on the 6th September 2011 at Tema in the Greater Accra Region.}

Regardless of the positive impressions expressed above by some members, others are still suspicious\footnote{J. E. Ameyaw. “Kudos, Internal Audit.” \textit{Pentecost Fire}, Accra: Pentecost Press Ltd, issue 149, 2008, p. 3.} that the PC churches are not fully accountable to their fold.
and thus measures are required from the agents of state to hold them in check. The General Secretary of COP was clear on this, he states:

Today, there are some church leaders who use trickery, manipulations, intimidations and even hypnotism to get money from innocent and unsuspecting church members. For such people, the Christian ministry is a gold mine that has to be exploited by smart people. It is, therefore, no wonder that some church leaders have entered the ministry only to acquire wealth. They will do whatever it takes to get wealth by any means – fair or foul. Such people are seriously disturbing the church because their activities are giving the church a bad name before the general public.632

To forestall financial infractions in these churches, the COP and ICGC audit divisions embark on periodic audits. For instance, in the year 2008 during the 20th anniversary of the Internal Audit Department of the COP, Prophet J. E. Ameyaw, a senior minister in the church reiterated that the church must institute measures “to safeguard the Church’s assets.”633 He again requested that the COP “design efficient internal controls and to identify and manage risks.”634 The audit team overtime had been recommended “for enhancing the corporate image of the church by ensuring financial discipline at the local, district, area, and national levels of the church.”635

The ICGC uses a two-pronged approach to ensure financial probity in the organization. The church offers training for its staff on financial management and procedures.636 The church’s auditor is also mandated by the ICGC constitution to

633 Ameyaw, “Kudos, Internal Audit,” p. 3.
634 Ibid.
635 Ibid.
“audit the accounts of all Local Assemblies at least once every year.” Thus, the church sets up internal audit units that visit all branches from time to time to ascertain the churches conformity to procedures. This is followed up with the services of independent audit consultants. For the past four years, Forbes Consults Int. has been the regular external auditors.

Because of regular financial checks, members of the churches feel encouraged by the state of affairs in the financial management which has led to an increase in giving. This was the popular view held by many of the respondents in both churches and even non-Pentecostal-charismatic people this researcher spoke to during the fieldwork. They felt COP and ICGC management of the churches, including the finances, is better than many other PC churches. Some even felt the government should learn sound financial practices from the churches studied. John Sam for instance, was forthright on this:

Those of us who believe in helping the work of God and the poor are always encouraged when we see the resources, including money, we give to the church is properly used. What I see in this church (COP) keeps encouraging me to support the work of God.

A case in point was the COP astronomical increases in total income surplus. The chairman’s report in the 39th General Council meetings reveals that, “the Church realized a total income surplus of 10.5% over the budgeted figure. In comparison with the previous year, there was an increase of 36.61%.” It is significant to note

637 The International Central Gospel Church, *Constitution*, p. 34.
638 William Oweredu, interview, on the 21st September 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
639 Many of the respondents who hold this view are within the middle class bracket and professionals. The others who are in the low-income bracket attributed this largely to divine providence.
640 John Sam, interview, on the 18th September 2011 at Tema in the Greater Accra Region.
641 The Church of Pentecost, 39th *General Council Meetings Report*, p. 29.
that this increase occurred in the general atmosphere of economic decline. Ghana experienced significant currency depreciation and high price hikes in basic consumables during the same period. The COP and ICGC proved very resilient in their finances. As a result, the churches were able to channel resources to other sectors and projects that engender empowerment. The two universities; Central University College (CUC) and Pentecost University College (PUC) are clear examples.

3.6. ECUMENISM

The PC churches in Ghana are broadly organised into two main ecumenical bodies, the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council (GPCC) and the National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches (NACCC). The GPCC was founded in 1969 as a fellowship of a few churches under the name Ghana Evangelical Fellowship. It held its first meeting on 3rd March in the same year at the Assemblies of God Church in Adabraka in the Greater Accra region. GPCC now has a widespread representation throughout Ghana. Greater Accra is split into two zones – Accra and Tema. GPCC presently has 184 Pentecostal and Charismatic churches as members in the following distribution; Accra 121, Tema 15, Ashanti region 13, Western region 17, Eastern region 8, Brong Ahafo region 4, Central region 2 and Volta region 4. All the major classical Pentecostal churches, Apostolic Church – Ghana, The COP, Christ Apostolic Church International,

642 The Council of Independent Churches (CIC) is not considered to have a strong impact on the general Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity in Ghana. Whereas the Council for African indigenous Churches (AIC-Ghana) has been excluded for definitional purposes as indicated in the background to the study.

643 Information on the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches accessed on the Internet portal of gpccghana.org on the 4th of June 2012.
Assemblies of God, the Foursquare Gospel Church, etc. are all members of this body.

The COP has been a major partner and influence in the development and growth of the GPCC. The church (COP) also plays a frontline role. For example, Rev. J. E. Paintsil of the COP served as the vice chairman of the first executive under the chairmanship of Rev. J.K Gyan-Fosu. The current thirteen-member executive is headed by the chairman of COP, Apostle Dr. Opoku Onyinah as their president and Apostle Samuel Yaw Antwi also a member of the COP as the General Secretary. In a broader sense, the GPCC had played an invaluable and pivotal role in two major areas - religious and socio-political life in the nation. On the religious front, the body has fostered good relationship between member churches, formed effective networking with other religious and non-religious bodies, and espoused benchmarks in ethical, doctrinal and attitudinal principles in Christian ministry. On the socio-political aspect, the GPCC has engaged in educational promotion towards democratic governance and embarked on peaceful campaigns. The objective is to diffuse political tensions and negative tendencies such as political intolerance and agitations that may have catastrophic effects. One such undertaking is ‘PLUS GHANA’ project. The methodological approach had been the use of the pulpit to preach the ideals of the body, organization of prayer meetings and church services at regional levels and the effective use of the media to disseminate information.

644 The GPCC has a number of times work in collaborated with other ecumenical bodies and religious groups such as the Ghana Peace Council, Christian Council of Ghana, Ghana Catholic bishops’ Conference, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, Office of the National Chief Imam, Federation of Muslim Councils, Council for African Indigenous Churches and the NACCC.

645 PLUS is an acronym for Peace, Love, Unity, and Stability. It is a campaign for peace toward the 2012 general political elections in Ghana.

646 Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9th of August at the COP head office, Accra, in the Greater Accra Region.
Some of the Charismatic churches are members of both GPCC and NACCC. For example, Charles Agyin Asare’s Word Miracle Church International and Sam Korankye Ankrah’s Royal House Chapel International fall within this group. This makes it difficult to clearly identify and assess the rationale for membership. On the converse, ICGC do not belong to any of the Christian ecumenical bodies in Ghana at present. From an ideological standpoint, ICGC is not averse to ecumenism since its leader and founder, Otabil, had in the past spearheaded the formation of one of the earliest ecumenical fellowships.³⁴⁷ Again, ICGC in the late 1990s applied for membership to the Christian Council of Ghana. The later has not responded to the request without giving any reason. In the recent past ICGC had expressed fraternal commitment to churches on special occasions – both Pentecostal and mainline churches.³⁴⁸ For example, the church sent representatives to attend the General Synod of the Presbyterian Church in 2009 and 2010 on invitation.

Larbi has argued that the lack of such ecumenical fellowship among Charismatic churches in the past is due to “parochialism...[and] inward looking tendencies, suspicion and mistrust [which] are rife among the leadership.”³⁴⁹ Larbi’s opinion cannot be entirely sustained in the present situation though that had been the reflection in the time of his research. My analysis suggests a lack of ideological basis premised on the ICGC’s philosophy of ministry. This is the major factor in the church’s decision to stay out of the existing PC ecumenical arrangement. The general overseer and the senior ministers of the ICGC have individually courted personal relationships based on ministerial fraternity with the other leading figures

³⁴⁷ Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 449.
³⁴⁸ Lily Bonney, interview, on the 21̊ September 2011 at Miotso ICGC head office in the Greater Accra Region.
³⁴⁹ Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 449.
of the PC churches. A case in point is Otabil’s personal commitment to invite Rev. Eastwood Anaba of Fountain Gate Chapel and Rev. Dr Robert Ampiah-Kofie of Global Revival Church each year prior to the Greater Works Conference. Again, Otabil’s close association with Rev. Ransford Obeng of the Calvary Charismatic Centre (CCC) in Kumasi to speak in his annual Destiny Summit attests to this. Many have envisaged great ecumenism in Pentecostalism because of the emphasis on common practices and beliefs such as the emphasis on pneumatology, rather than differences in ministry emphasis.

3.7. Conclusion

Pentecostalism in Ghana has shown that it does not lack the gravitas as a movement to effect transformation in different spheres in society. What is not yet clear is its capacity to establish good church governance structures, systems and institutions that ensure equity and effective use of mechanisms for empowerment. Nonetheless, discussions above have indicated that the COP and ICGC have given clear indications that PC Christianity in Ghana is moving to develope structures. For instance, these churches have clearly outlined and defined their administrative and organizational power. They have effectively created a hybrid and cross-sessions of polity which has given them leverage in executing their missions. They have also created leadership types that may have ambivalent appeals yet are practically effective. Bengt Sundkler reviewing the patterns of leadership of Ethiopian and

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651 Apart from Assemblies of God Church who practice a modified congregational type of Church Government, it is very difficult to attribute any of the defined church polity i.e. Episcopal, Presbyterian, Hierarchical or Congregational systems of church polity to any of the Pentecostal-charismatic churches in Ghana.
Zionist churches in South Africa perspective pointed out how indigenous type
churches make use of familiar idioms to accomplish their agenda.\textsuperscript{652} I do not
suggest here that the PC churches in Ghana are cast in the same mould as the
African Indigenous churches (AIC).\textsuperscript{653} However, I admit they share largely some
common traits in worldview, function and appeal in redefined forms.\textsuperscript{654}
The argument that PC churches hold promise of gender equality as suggested by
Ogbu Kalu\textsuperscript{655} and Brigid Sackey\textsuperscript{656} needs serious scrutiny. The indications for
gender inclusivity cannot be dismissed in these churches in general ministry
participation, but by their history and present formations as enshrined in church
constitutions and other church manuals, the classical Pentecostals in Ghana with the
exception of the Assemblies of God church give a different indication. We have
seen how the COP sideline women in the church hierarchy. On the contrary, the
Charismatics churches do not use theological arguments to block women
participation in ecclesiastical duties \textit{per se} as seen in the COP. However,
pragmatically, the influence and impact of women leadership in policy remain a
façade even in churches like ICGC that grant women the right to pastoral leadership
and ministry. PC Women’s groups within the COP and ICGC are allowed to
operate in the church but more in a limited role. The COP Women’s movement and
the ICGC women’s group, the Precious Vessels of Virtue (PVV), are at their best


\textsuperscript{653} For classification and typology of African Indigenous Churches (AICs) see, Harold W. Turner.

\textsuperscript{654} Kalu, \textit{African Christianity}.

\textsuperscript{655} Kalu, \textit{African Pentecostalism}.

when operating among their own, the women, but have restricted function and impact in the larger church bodies in influencing policy.

Finally, the context of our discussion provides varieties of governance systems and structures of churches because of tradition and doctrinal perspective. These churches, COP and ICGC, have evolved for many reasons. They have not only revitalised Christianity in Ghana but have also added to the human development index of the nation in promoting social values and the establishment of institutions. PC Christianity in Ghana has disseminated religious ideology that remains critical in the assessment of empowerment.
CHAPTER FOUR
THEOLOGICAL ORIENTATIONS AND PRACTICES

4.0 Introduction

The different expressions and manifestations of PC churches have invited different scholars to examine Pentecostal theologies. This chapter looks into specific beliefs and practices that are key concerns from the data collected during the field research in relation to empowerment and/or disempowerment. Since the research focus is specifically on issues of empowerment and disempowerment in Pentecostalism in Ghana, it does not review general theological themes that are not directly applicable to this study. The objective is to underscore the sources, varieties, and impact of theologies and practices on individuals, religious communities and the Ghanaian society. This chapter maintains a structure that discusses particular beliefs and practices of COP and ICGC under the same sub-themes except gender roles and practices where separate treatment is given to the churches. This approach highlights the similarities and contrasts of such beliefs and practices of the churches.

PCs generally have a variety of theological perceptions that deserve scrutiny. Attention must be paid to various brands of PC Christian expressions. In Kelly Chong’s review of David Martin’s work, he acknowledges the complexities that exist in compartmentalizing Pentecostalism.657 Chong indicated:

the picture he ultimately offers us of contemporary Pentecostalism is that of an effervescent religious movement primarily of the third world, thriving in the context of increasing cultural and religious pluralism, global capitalism, and rapid urbanization.658

657 Martin, Pentecostalism.
Chong’s review precipitates the following questions; first, to what extent do we argue that Ghanaian PC theologies have been influenced or perhaps more appropriately been shaped by the cultural and religious context of its host as suggested by Ogbu Kalu?\textsuperscript{659} Second, do we also subscribe to the suggestion by other scholars such as Steve Brouwer, Paul Gifford and Susan Rose that the theological backbone of Pentecostalism in Ghana is ‘global capitalism’?\textsuperscript{660} Or third, perhaps we should concur with Emmanuel Larbi and J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu postulation that Pentecostalism in Ghana gains its relevance by negotiating the adverse conditions of living including the rapid urbanization and its attendant effect in the Ghanaian social landscape.\textsuperscript{661}

Undoubtedly, the nexus between religio-cultural, socio-economic and political forces exist in Ghana, giving impetus to Pentecostalism to thrive. Hence, the description that PC Christianity is ‘context specific’ warrants a theological examination to establish models of specific theological themes emphasized in the churches that promote empowerment and/or disempowerment.

### 4.1 Pentecostal-Charismatic Theological Idiom

The theological language of PC believers in Ghana reveals their belief, perception, expectation, and more importantly their experience of the divine. The theological idiom can best be revealed in the prayers, songs, testimonies and even ‘catch phrases’ of most PC followers. It may also include the medium of everyday

\textsuperscript{659} Kalu, \textit{African Pentecostalism}, pp. 65-83.


\textsuperscript{661} Larbi, \textit{Pentecostalism}, pp. 328-329; Asamoah-Gyadu, \textit{African Charismatics}. 
expressions, albeit informal, that encapsulate the devotee’s encounters and experiences, or sometimes their hope in the divine.

Most of the PC believers I interviewed in the COP and ICGC, leaders and members alike, seemed to have an awareness of the supernatural in their reflections and practices that is succinctly expressive in ‘theological parlance’.\textsuperscript{662} Jones Offei of the COP submits:

\begin{quote}
We declare what we believe. Our prayers are potent because it is filled with God’s word. It is in our prayers that one sees the power of God greater than the enemy’s power and God always honour our prayers. I remember very well how I use to struggle with people in my dreams. I knew it was not of God, so I declared days of fasting and prayers and from that time it has stoped. This shows how great our God is especially when we fast and pray.\textsuperscript{663}
\end{quote}

Offei’s narration explains the religious experience of the PC believer and how that informs their day to day reflection of life. The narrative also depicts the mode of engagement especially with the declaration and emphasis of God’s word to mitigate negative life accurances. Another COP respondent Victoria Opare expresses similar experience:

\begin{quote}
I have seen great manifestations of God’s power in worship. The demons run away and people are set loose from demonic bondages. That is the greatness of God in worship and that is why we sing and worship God with passion the way we do.\textsuperscript{664}
\end{quote}

The worldview of PC members takes spiritual experience seriously as suggested by Offei and Opare. Life is explained by spiritual means and therefore both leaders of the church and members who testify of their experiences encourage activities that

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{662} I coined the term ‘theological Parlance’ to denote the casual and loose usage of catch-phrases or spiritual jargon in conversations among Pentecostal-Charismatic believers.
\item \textsuperscript{663} Jones Offei, interview, on the 13\textsuperscript{th} November 2011 at Akropong in the Eastern Region.
\item \textsuperscript{664} Victoria Opare, interview, on the 13\textsuperscript{th} November 2011 at Akropong in the Eastern Region.
\end{itemize}
promote spiritual manifestation. Other respondents in ICGC also share Offei and Opare religious viewpoints. They include Angela Gamena and Samuel Payne whose comments are presented respectively:

I am a charismatic believer because I believe in the works and manifestations of the Holy Spirit. I pray, I bind, I loose because in doing that I exercise my God given authority over satanic powers. I always see results and that encourage me to keep praying and worshiping God to overcome the powers of darkness.665

Samuel Payne agrees:

Our worship and songs of praise express our heart and our understanding when it comes to God. When we sing about the greatness of God is because we know he is great and expect him to do great things for us. I do not miss the opportunity to worship God because that assures me that he is on my side and I am fully protected by his power.666

The underlining elements are manifested again in congregational worship, personal conversation, ‘prophetic declaration’, and other spiritual acts that are indicative of their collective or individual spiritual self-understanding. Kwesi Dickson was right in his conviction:

theology may be done at more than one level. There is the level at which reflection upon one’s faith may not issue in the expression of one’s thinking in coherent language. The reflection may be done in song, or in prayer, in action or in mediation.667

Kwesi Dickson’s reflection gives a theological explanation of the African PC churches engagement in theological initiatives that resonate with their day-to-day fears, hopes and encounters. This is what Mircea Eliade considers as ganz andere – “all that goes beyond man’s natural experience, language is reduced to suggesting

665 Angela Gamena, interview, on the 16th October 2011 at Cape Coast in the Central Region.
666 Samuel Payne, interview, on the 6th May 2012 at Secondi in the Western Region.
by terms taken from that experience.”⁶⁶⁸ PC theologies incorporate elements of customs, beliefs and experiences uniquely attributable to the people. In fact, this essence of every religious manifestation includes beliefs, ritual (practices), and experience is a major explanation of religious reality.⁶⁶⁹ William James on his part explores the influence of abstract perception on belief to establish the reality of the unseen. His conviction was that: “religion is full of abstract objects which prove to have an equal power.”⁶⁷⁰ Mercy Amba Oduyoye in assessing the missionary gospel and indigenous African religion brought attention to the role of beliefs and experience in creating a relevant theology. She states:

it is evident that the missionary religions together with modern technology have proved inadequate to our needs. Since the old appears unable to stand on its own and the new by itself is proving inadequate, we should expect some creative syncretism to develop in Africa.⁶⁷¹

Oduyoye’s observation and prediction of “creative syncretism” give impetus to Pentecostalism in Africa to flourish.

4.2. Pentecostalism: Theology/ies of ‘Creative Syncretism’

Scholars have argued that African PC Christianity exhibits continuity and discontinuity with traditional religion.⁶⁷² This understanding informs to a large

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extent the thought and life of the PC churches. It also has far reaching consequences that affects their theologies, beliefs and practices. The relationship between the traditional religious knowledge and experience in the African religious setting and the new revelation and experience in Christ is critical in understanding the African Christian worshipper.\textsuperscript{673}

The vital question to help unravel the extent and influence to which the primal imagination affects these churches is encapsulated in the following: First, to what extent does PC Christianity in Ghana employ traditional religious worldviews in negotiating felt and aspirational needs? Second, do PC believers dislodge and supplant the old - as in traditional religious orientations and culture, or perhaps do they find in Pentecostalism a ‘dynamic equivalent’ to previous religious and cultural orientations and experiences? These are questions that would help establish the sources of influence with their continuity and/or discontinuity, and religious worldview of the African PC Christian which invariably help shape the theologies of empowerment or otherwise. Karla Poewe discussing the character of Pentecostalism admits, “In the non-West, by contrast, the emphasis has tended to be on indigenization, contextualization, and cultural reconstruction.”\textsuperscript{674}

Leaders of the PC churches themselves are aware of the role the primal imagination plays in the construction of local theologies and practices within the churches. In an interview, the chairman of the COP asserts:

\textsuperscript{673} Bediako, \textit{Jesus in Africa}, pp. 4-18.

Primal religion forms the basis for Pentecostalism. Wherever there is Pentecostalism, primal religion strongly contributes to it, so no doubt in Ghana it is one of the reasons for the growth.\footnote{Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at the COP head office, Accra, in the Greater Accra Region.}

He added explicitly:

You see continuity where there is dependence upon spiritual power, but here the dependence is on the Spirit of God but hitherto it was thought that it was the gods. You see continuity and discontinuity. Devotion to gods – the primal gods – the tutors that they were under but now they depend upon God.\footnote{Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at the COP head office, Accra, in the Greater Accra Region.}

The point Opoku Onyinah establishes is that the primal religion offers the religious mainstay of African PC theologies. But this source of religious orientation has been changed to run consistently with the Bible. Thus the dependence upon spiritual power has moved from the traditional gods to the God of the Bible who is proclaimed by the PC churches as superior. We find parallels between contemporary PC beliefs and practices and that of the precursors of Pentecostalism in Africa such as William Wade Harris, Garrick Braide, John Swatson and Sampson Oppong. Other examples in recent times include the ex-archbishop of Zambia, Emmanuel Milingo and the former moderator of the Evangelical Presbyterian church of Ghana, Noah Dzobo, whose activities in contextualizing Christianity in the African religious experience has received scholarly attention.\footnote{Larbi, \textit{Pentecostalism}; Kalu, \textit{African Christianity}; Emmanuel Milingo. \textit{The World in Between: Christian Healing and the Struggle for Spiritual Survival}. London: Hurst, 1984; John Parratt. \textit{Reinventing Christianity: African Theology Today}. NJ: Eerdmans, 1995; Meyer, \textit{Translating the Devil}.}

The notion of ‘spiritual power’ in the thinking of the African traditional religious setting have created the platform for PC Christianity emphasis on the power of God through His Holy Spirit to find expression amongst most Africans. The vehicle that
conveys African religious thoughts remain the same but the drivers have changed. In the words of Opoku Onyinah, “dependence upon traditional gods has changed to dependence on the Spirit of God.” What remains constant here is the medium – ‘the spirit’. Negotiation in ‘the spirit’ therefore is major in the discussion of theologies of empowerment PC practices such as exorcism, healings, spiritual warfare, prayer, etc.

The affinity between ‘the spirit’ and indigenous culture serves as a stimulus in contemporary PC beliefs and practices to meet very practical needs of the people.

Mensa Otabil stated emphatically:

The Pentecostal movement has been prominent because in Ghana the Pentecostal faith seem more rooted in the indigenous culture of the people, and therefore could speak to the people in a more intimate and personal way. It spoke to the felt needs of the people, it also spoke to the aspirational needs of the people and promised safety, especially for most Ghanaians who are constantly aware of spiritual forces that can hinder their growth and their progress.

Otabil’s proposition expands the discussion on ‘the spirit’ to a more general dialogue on indigenous culture. Three issues emerge out of his assessment of the relationship between indigenous culture and a PC ministry. First, he asserts the ‘shared-affinity’ between indigenous culture and PC worldview. Second, he pointed out the relevance of PC philosophy of ministry in addressing specific felt needs and aspirational needs within Ghanaian society. Third, he emphasizes the promise of an effective ‘spiritual counterbalance’ PC churches offer in a world perceived to be hostile spiritually. Once again, the (spiritual) power dynamics comes to the fore.

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678 Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office, Accra, in the Greater Accra Region.

679 Ellis and Haar, Worlds of Power, pp. 49-66.

680 Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18th August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
The shift from the indigenous sources of power to the PC ‘spiritual package’ to deal with perceived or real spiritual agents becomes concrete. Otabil is of the view that:

The Pentecostal message of the power of Christ, the authority of the name of Jesus, the authority the believer has himself as a child of God over spiritual forces, over demonic forces is a very empowering thought that counterbalances the society’s fear of witchcraft and forces perceived to be inimical to progress.  

Some scholars have deliberated on the relationship that exists between African indigenous religions and African Pentecostalism in general. Allan Anderson had acknowledged this complementarity and gives a perspective:

Indeed, in many religions of the world, and especially in African religions, a major attraction for Pentecostalism has been its emphasis on healing. In these cultures, the religious specialist or ‘person of God’ has power to heal the sick and ward off evil spirits and sorcery. This holistic function, which does not separate the ‘physical’ from the ‘spiritual’, is restored in Pentecostalism, and indigenous peoples see it as a ‘powerful’ religion to meet human needs.

Every religion coexists with the prevailing culture. Arguments to buttress this can be drawn from all the Abrahamic religions – Judaism, Islam and Christianity. Discussions encompassing this could be stretched to embrace many other religions in the world. Lamin Senneh aptly made this point:

Culture is progressive and very dynamic and you can make the same argument for Christianity in general and what it did when it went to various cultures. In Europe, Latin America, wherever it went, it work with what people believed. Because God is everywhere, so God is not limited to any geographical space. In every culture there is a witness of God.

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681 Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18th August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
682 See, Kalu, African Christianity; African Pentecostalism; Bediako, Jesus in Africa.
685 Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18th August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
There is a part of the culture that expresses desire for God, a certain understanding of God however incomplete. There is a witness of God already in the culture. African PC Christianity picks on that and takes the people closer to Christ. In that sense, as indicated by most of the respondents during the field research, clergy and laity, I conclude that Pentecostalism in Ghana has reflected the practices and beliefs of the people. However, in a very significant way, as Otabil maintains, “the centrality of Jesus Christ changes everything. The power in the name of Jesus, faith in Christ and what that brings about is very different from the power you get from indigenous faith and belief.” Opoku Onyinah, Alfred Koduah and Mensa Otabil in my interviews with them individually agreed that there are elements in African PC beliefs and practices that express primal religious beliefs. Besides, the classical Pentecostals, particularly the COP, tend to exhibit cultural forms (especially traditional music forms) of African indigenous worship. The Charismatic churches, including ICGC, on the other hand combine foreign components in their music and worship.

Some members of the COP and ICGC see some religious expressions as analogous to traditional indigenous worship. But the core particularities of the Christian faith such as exclusive salvation in Jesus Christ are very clear to them. A former member of the COP noted, “although there are syncretic beliefs that try to mimic old

687 Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18th August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
688 Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18th August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
African beliefs, but there is a very distinctive difference there.” Some members of Ghanaian PC churches admit, “lately there has been developments in PC beliefs and practices which are familiar to indigenous religious styles than the earlier Pentecostal forms in Ghana.” Others believe, “Pentecostalism tilt more toward Christ than affirming already established African beliefs.” The general perception of PC believers is that Pentecostalism in Ghana actually departed from the spirituality of fear, taboos and intimidation that the African or Ghanaian society was used to and has brought them liberty, faith and confidence in Christ. Other theological themes such as salvation, the Holy Spirit, healing, and the parousia require examination within our discussion. These themes are key doctrinal issues in Pentecostalism and may have relevance in the study of empowerment/disempowerment. Some scholars refer to these themes as the ‘four-square gospel’.

4.3. Some Theological Themes in Pentecostalism in Ghana

Central to ‘the Four-Square Gospel’ is Jesus Christ who gives power by the Holy Spirit. This is perceived to be the backbone of doctrinal postulations and practices in PC Christianity in Ghana. In the view of Koduah, “the four-square

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690 Vivian Oduro, interview, on the 22nd April 2012 at Paduasi-Kitasi in the Eastern Region.
691 Samuel Payne, interview, on the 6th of May 2012 at Secondi in the Western Region.
692 Kojo Sallah, interview, on the 6th September 2011 at Tema in the Greater Accra Region.
693 Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18th August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
695 Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office, Accra, in the Greater Accra Region.
gospel preached by the Pentecostals seeks to answer all the aspirations of the people. Jesus Christ is seen as the one who brings the individual sinner back to fellowship with God. This is what is often referred to as being ‘born again’. It is the point when the sinner’s sins are forgiven by God through Jesus and admitted fully into the family of God. For PC’s this is the most important moment in an individual’s life enabling divine virtue and grace to take effect. Hence, most other subjects emphasized by PC are directly related to becoming ‘born again’. Thus, it would be appropriate to discuss ‘the four-square gospel’ in context.

4.3.1. Salvation in Pentecostal-Charismatic Theology

The term born-again is synonymous to salvation in a narrow perspective and is the central message of PC preaching. Both the classical Pentecostals and the Charismatic churches predominantly emphasize living with Christ in a very personal way, which results in a serious reassessment of life and its meaning. The theology behind regeneration from the perspective of PC believers is understood as a response to God through Jesus Christ, acceptance of one’s sins – sins committed by oneself and original sin and total surrender to God through the power of the Holy Spirit. PC members may not be conversant with the classical doctrine of the incarnation, atonement and the others as presented in Western theological thought.

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696 Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office, Accra, in the Greater Accra Region.

697 Individual sinner as explicated by the Pentecostal to mean both original sin (sin inherited from Adam before birth) and the person’s own committed sins).

698 See International Central Gospel Church, “First Steps in Christ”. Brochure. PC believers refer to the biblical passages in Romans 8:1; Colossians 1:1-13; Ephesians 1:7, etc. as an assurance of salvation in Jesus Christ.

699 Nelson Ahlijah, interview, on the 4th of May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region. For further information, see the discipleship manuals of COP and ICGC.
However, their pastors through regular church services and discipleship programmes teach members the meaning of salvation and its implication for their lives. The teaching and preaching on the subject in the various churches, level of emphasis and the packaging of the message in context in the various PC churches may be nuanced. My interest is only to present the concepts and forms by which the COP and ICGC conceptualize their message of salvation. My intent is to analyze subsequently the model of empowerment/disenempowerment, but not to analyse the theology of salvation itself.

The COP’s doctrine of salvation emphasises the spiritual vitalization and eternal hope of the believer. The church has also considerably managed the tension that exists between Western theological forms of salvation and material soteriology, which runs in tandem with the traditional African concept of salvation. The Church’s primary mission concentrates on the saving of the lost to Christ thus directing its core messages and activities to that endeavor. The General Secretary of the COP states:

The COP is committed in bringing people from all places everywhere to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour through the preaching of the

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gospel, the planting of churches and disciplining believers for the work of God.\footnote{Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at the COP head office, Accra, in the Greater Accra Region.}

The mission of the COP in this regard is clearly understood by the members. Adjoa Yehoah Anokye, a member of the COP confirms Koduah’s assertion. She maintains:

\begin{quote}
I am constantly reminded of the need to be saved. The preaching of the church, the training of leaders and the ministry groups are all directed to bring understanding to the need for all to come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. I never forget the emphasis on the scripture, ‘work out your own salvation with fear and trembling…’ our worship songs even show the importance of salvation in the church.\footnote{Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at the COP head office, Accra, in the Greater Accra Region.}
\end{quote}

The salvation message is so pivotal in the teaching of the church as indicated by Anokye. The point that must not be missed is that members of the church are made to personalize the message. By Adjoa’s account, each person is encourage to ‘work out their own salvation.’ Pastor William Wilberforce Adrany buttresses the point:

\begin{quote}
The most important assignment of the church [COP] is about salvation, the souls of men and women, that is why Christ died for us that all may be saved. Whatever we do, whether is preaching, planting churches, etc, it is because we want people to know God and be saved.\footnote{William Wilberforce Adrany, interview, on the 29\textsuperscript{th} October 2011 at Sogakope in the Volta Region.}
\end{quote}

The COP is therefore renowned for her emphasis on salvation and church planting. In 2010, the COP planted on average ten new churches per week in Ghana.\footnote{Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at the COP head office, Accra, in the Greater Accra Region.} This dipped a bit to seven new churches a week in 2011. The COP is a mission-oriented church whose message stresses salvation, deliverance and the believer’s victory in Jesus Christ more than the prosperity gospel. This is a contrast of the Charismatic
churches whose emphasis is on material aspects of salvation in addition to being born-again. This central focus of the COP is reflected in the preaching and teaching, church music and prayer. For example, the emphasis of salvation is related to a life dedicated to Jesus Christ and preparation for the after-life.\textsuperscript{707} Importance is placed on Jesus Christ as saviour, healing and deliverance, the Holy Spirit, avoiding the deception of worldliness and idolatry, bearing the fruits of Christ in everyday life, conversion of souls, mission work and planting of churches. The notion of prosperity for the individual believer is not entirely absent from their thinking, but does not feature prominently.\textsuperscript{708} Thus, the COP admits in relative terms,\textsuperscript{709} that it has had little involvement in social work because of a belief that Jesus is coming soon and all people must come to his saving knowledge.\textsuperscript{710} This emphasis and package of the salvation message is not congruent with most of the Charismatic churches in Ghana.

Salvation in the context of the Charismatic churches in Ghana such as ICGC is usually expressed with the statement of Christ, “I came to give you life and life in abundance.”\textsuperscript{711} The understanding of the Charismatic churches is that, the passage does not refer exclusively to ‘eternal life’, but as a composite of total wellbeing including material well-being.\textsuperscript{712} Thus, ‘eternal life’ is the life that Christ gives

\textsuperscript{707} William Wilberforce Adrany, interview, on the 29\textsuperscript{th} October 2011 at Sogakope in the Volta Region.

\textsuperscript{708} A review of the COP official magazine “Pentecost Fire” from 2007 to date attests to this.

\textsuperscript{709} COP commands a lot of financial, material and human recourses.

\textsuperscript{710} Discussions with members and elders of the church indicated a far reaching expectation of the church’s involvement in social work especially secondary schools, vocational and technical institutes, more health facilities and grand scholarship schemes that will enhance the church’s work.

\textsuperscript{711} Larbi, \textit{Pentecostalism}, p. 312. For instance, prefers the term Abundant Life Gospel to the term Prosperity Gospel. He believes, “the term prosperity gospel as understood by some has some strange ideas that do not seem to predominate in the teachings of the neo-Pentecostals in Ghana.

\textsuperscript{712} Ngong, “Salvation and Materialism in African Theology”.
believers. That life is salvation. And that life – ‘eternal life’ – also relates to redemption and wellbeing. It could be wellbeing spiritually, which means having a right standing with God subsequent to which the believer is empowered and mandated to deal with all forces of negation – the devil and his cohorts. One anonymous respondent, an ICGC congregation member, commenting on her personal experience of salvation quoted the passage from the Bible, “… the Son of God appeared for the very purpose of undoing the devil’s work.” Suffice to say, she could not tell exactly where the passage is in the Bible, yet she knew it was God’s promise to her. For most Charismatic churches including ICGC, salvation incorporates the whole idea of life. This view is well presented by a member of the ICGC who believes:

The Bible tells us the whole purpose of salvation. For us to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, exercise authority over Satan and his agents, have dominion here on earth and get ourselves ready for eternity. That is what I know the Bible teaches about salvation and that is what believers must be concerned with.

The comprehensive outlook of salvation held by most charismatic believers in Ghana revolves around the person of Jesus Christ. Nelson Ahlijah a deacon in ICGC is apt about this. He submits:

Salvation is life, the life that Jesus Christ has brought to us. We receive Jesus, he forgives us our sins, he fills us with his Holy Spirit, after which he expect us to live well on earth before leaving for heaven. That is what the Bible says, ‘he who has the son has life, and life in aboundance’.

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713 See 1 John 3: 8.
714 Nana Amma Ansah, interview, on the 11th September 2011 at Tema in the Greater Accra Region.
715 Nelson Ahlijah, interview, on the 4th May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region.
This shows how members of ICGC (Charismatic churches in general) literally base their faith on biblical verses. J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu has argued that there is a conscious attempt by the Charismatic churches to point to the importance of the Bible in their Christianity.\textsuperscript{716}

The Charismatic church members’ appropriate specific scriptural verses that relate to salvation for their spiritual and physical wellbeing. Such verses relate to healing – physical and spiritual – of all kinds of diseases, it guarantees peace of mind, and it assures the charismatic believers of their protection in a world perceived to be hostile to the improvement of people. It becomes an empowering thought that influences their attitude.

Wellbeing could also mean ‘physical and social wellbeing’. This directly relates to the prosperity. In a quick response to a question posed to a respondent as to how ICGC empowers her, she responded, “the teachings of the church has made me aware that God is interested in the total wellbeing of his children including me.”\textsuperscript{717} She quickly followed-up with a scripture text, “I wish above all things that thy mayest prosper, even as thy soul prospers.”\textsuperscript{718} The prosperity referred to in the above passage as understood by Jennet and other likeminded believers, seem to suggest a holistic blessings of God i.e. spiritual, physical, social, etc. promising to better the lot of the believer in this life and also guarantee eternal rest with God in the hereafter.\textsuperscript{719}

\textsuperscript{716} Asamoah-Gyadu, \textit{Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity}, p. 161.

\textsuperscript{717} Janet Adjei, interview, on the 25\textsuperscript{th} September 2011 at Abossey Okai in Accra in the Greater Accra Region.

\textsuperscript{718} See 3 John 2.

\textsuperscript{719} Caroline Ladzekpo, interview, on the 24\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at 37 Military Hospital in Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
In different ICGC congregations, the understanding of salvation in Christ defines life prospects, which are usually buttressed with biblical text by the leader or minister. The subjects of ‘born-again’, salvation and wellbeing are synonymous. It all has to do with the total welfare of the believer – spirit, soul, and body – of both the present and the future. One of the long-standing ministers of ICGC concurs:

*God expect all facets of life to be transformed from just being ‘born-again’, there should be that kind of transformation in spiritual life, that spiritual life must of necessity impact social life, economic life, perception and outlook of life as Christ want believers to live.*

This underlying theology drives both ministers and congregations of ICGC in their philosophy of ministry, negotiations in spiritual and temporal matters and personal expectations in their everyday life. Consequently, it is difficult to categorize different aspect of life issues as purely spiritual or completely mundane. The spiritual acts on the day-to-day aspects of believers’ affairs.

For most ICGC respondents, the ‘born-again’ subject is directly linked to the believer’s position in Christ - ‘the royal priesthood of all believers’- which invariably connects to the understanding of dominion and its implication for the believer’s everyday life. A member of ICGC has this to say:

*Things are not working, systems have been turned upside-down, the political, financial, economic and social life are all not working because the righteous has not assumed ‘ruler-ship’ through the power of the Holy Spirit.*

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720 Morris Appiah, Interview, on the 18th January 2012 at the Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.

721 The key reference on the subject of dominion by general charismatic believers is taken from Genesis 1:26-28.

722 Caroline Ladzekpo, interview, on the 24th August 2011 at 37 Military Hospital in Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
Becoming born again has to do with something more pragmatic, not only spiritual, but the power of the Holy Spirit significantly permeating all segments of life. In accordance with the explanation of most Ghanaian Charismatic churches, being born again gives a mandate to every believer to enforce God’s will here on earth. It is not only a ‘spiritual status’ obtained to make one a candidate for heaven but to fully exercise the purpose of God which is fully revealed in the Bible as his will.

Out of this understanding comes the ideological bases for teachings on empowerment (spiritual and temporal) and wellbeing – financial and economic prosperity, healings, power over malevolent spirits, the strength and hope to undo ancestral bondages, the blessing of family life and marriage and the rest. Specific Bible passages are used to express support for these needs. The scriptures are interpreted to buttress every claim directly or indirectly consistent within God’s will. This phenomenon predisposes the Charismatic churches in Ghana to ‘Biblical literalism’\(^{723}\) for the simple reason that there must be support to justify what is God’s will and this must manifest in everyday practical life. Because of this, the Bible becomes the major source in establishing the charismatic believer’s mandate and is readily used for various purposes.\(^{724}\) Allan Anderson wrote:

> Pentecostals [and Charismatics] take the Bible as it is and look for common ground in real life situations. On finding these correspondences, they believe that God is speaking to them and can do the same things for them. The Bible therefore has immediacy and relevance to life experiences.\(^{725}\)

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\(^{723}\) Biblical literalism is used here to mean, the explanation, application and appropriation of the Bible in simple terms without due regard to hermeneutical principles such as context, content, etc.

\(^{724}\) For more discussion on the use of the Bible by Pentecostal-Charismatic churches in Ghana see Larbi, Pentecostalism.

\(^{725}\) Allan Anderson. “Pentecostal and Charismatic Theology”, p. 595.
It must be pointed out however that, most Charismatic ministers in Ghana emphasize Biblical teaching. The same exists in ICGC assemblies. For example, Otabil believes he has been called to restore dignity to Africans and by extension, the black peoples of the world. This drives his ministry direction more than any other incentive. He uses his preaching and teaching to articulate his views on ‘black emancipation’ in a very persuasive manner. He firmly believes that the totality of the Christian faith is very empowering. His opinion is that “the ministry and teachings of Jesus Christ speaks to a large extent people who are marginalized, looking for a sense of identity, significance and also make their own contribution to life.” Many in Ghana, including some non-Christians assert that Otabil and his ICGC has made a tremendous impact in society.

Regardless of Otabil’s public image and influence in the ICGC as the founder and the general overseer, ICGC as an organization does not fully reflect certain particularities of Otabil’s ministry ethos. Otabil agrees, “some pastors of the church do not fully see the ministry ideals I try to demonstrate. Some have no clue of what we are dealing with though we try to talk about it.” In Otabil’s view, the problem is the socialization effect on the pastors before their spiritual formation and pastoral calling. This was also noted during my field research where some pastors of

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727 Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18th August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
728 Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18th August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
729 A discussion with one respondent revealed that a Muslim friend testified to him about Otabil’s influence and impact on him and his family through the preaching on TV the “Living Word”. He admitted his business idea was as a result of the preaching of Otabil though he has not met with him before or been to his church.
730 Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18th August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
731 Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18th August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
ICGC showed different ministry characteristics opposed to Otabil’s pastoral ideals in preaching and ministry ethos. For example, one of the ICGC pastors said:

The church operates as a franchise. No doctrinal distinctiveness except Dr. Otabil’s own theology of human dignity and excellence. What we have is just a moral code to regulate the conduct of pastors and our churches but the emphasis placed on various branch churches is largely left in the hands of the individual pastors there.732

The state of affairs as indicated by the ICGC minister reveals a lack of harmony in pastoral practice coupled with unclear theological positions. Otabil admits, his local assembly, ICGC Christ Temple, “plays the role of an experimental church and becomes a prototype of the other ICGC assemblies.”733 As a result, the presbytery of the church (ICGC) in 2011 set up a committee for ‘Church Doctrine and Church Order’ to deal with theological and doctrinal concerns that had not been properly structured.734 This however does not mean ICGC have no clear understanding of basic doctrinal themes.735 Doctrines that have been developed so far purely deal with rudimentary discipleship.736

732 Interview with an ICGC pastor who requested anonymity. For further discussion on this see Chapter Five – Pentecostal-Charismatic Liturgies and their Impact on Empowerment.
733 Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18th August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region. The director of administration, Mrs. Lily Bonney, also attested to the same in a separate interview.
734 Morris Appiah, Interview, on the 18th January 2012 at the Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.
735 The preamble of the ICGC Constitution gives a hint of the church’s doctrinal position. It reads: “We, The International Central Gospel Church having professed our belief in the Scriptures both Old and New Testaments, as the only infallible and authoritative Word of God and the only rule for Christian faith and conduct; having proclaimed our faith in The Trinity, God eternally existent in Three persons, The Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible; The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, being of one substance with the Father, His death, resurrection and ascension into heaven, and his Second coming. And in the Holy Spirit…”
736 Most of the materials were developed by the church to explain doctrinal matters for basic discipleship programme. See the Four-Volume Manual used for the Adult Bible Class (Beginners in Christ, Membership, Maturity and Ministry) published by ICGC in 2005.
4.3.2. The Holy Spirit

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit is the most discussed theme in relation to PC Christianity in Africa especially by scholars such as Allan Anderson, Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, Cephas N. Omenyo, etc. Asamoah-Gyadu has even gone to the extent of concluding that the boom in Pentecostal forms of Christianity is because of the emphasis placed on the Holy Spirit.\footnote{Asamoah-Gyadu, “Born of Water and the Spirit”, pp. 388-409.} The general perception by the PC churches themselves has been that the Holy Spirit is the source of power and spiritual verve.\footnote{Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office, Accra, in the Greater Accra Region.} The dialogue on the Holy Spirit is in two respects: first, the PC churches conception of the Holy Spirit and how that enables them to respond effectively to the issues of life that connect to their everyday need. Second, how their thinking and experience of the Holy Spirit help in fulfilling life aspirations.

The objective here is not establishing theological correctness of ‘pneumatological’ discourse as exhibited by these churches in comparison with the orthodox theological conversations and activities on the Holy Spirit.\footnote{For discussion on Pentecostal Theology, see, Warrington, Pentecostal Theology.}

The Holy Spirit is a characteristic feature of PC churches. There is unison among scholars of the emphasis on the Holy Spirit as the most pronounced emblem of these churches whether in Europe, North America, Asia, Latin America and Africa.\footnote{Walter J. Hollenweger. Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide. Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997; Cox, Fire from Heaven; Martin, Pentecostalism; Allan Anderson. Moya: The Holy Spirit in an African Context. Pretoria, South Africa: University of South Africa, 1991; Kalu, African Pentecostalism; Chesnut, Born Again in Brazil; Assamoah-Gyadu, African Charismatics.} The general impression of PC churches is that the Holy Spirit and his manifestations is what imbues the churches and their membership with spiritual
vibrancy in their operations, whether in praying, prophesying, singing, preaching, conducting exorcism or engaged in any activity spiritual or secular. Even success in non-spiritual vocations of members of these churches is always attributed to the work of the Holy Spirit. He is represented in symbolic forms as the anointing oil and the dove. He is also described as the power of God usually referencing it to the scripture in Acts 1: 8; “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you…” (NIV). The reference to ‘power’ in the passage is explained to mean; ability, authority, right, in connection to the believers position. Both the COP and ICGC emphasize this to connote empowerment.

Both the COP and ICGC have a similar theology of the Holy Spirit. There is not much distinctiveness in the message content – teaching and preaching, the receiving and practicing the gifts of the spirit. Jesus is seen as the baptizer in the Holy Spirit and normally this is believed to take place as a post-conversion experience. But there are exceptions to this post-conversion Holy Spirit baptism notion, the emphasis here by the churches is that such experience is rare.741 The major difference between the classical Pentecostal and Charismatic churches resides in the appropriation and application of the gifts and their administration in the churches. For example, the uses of symbolic elements like the anointing oil, though there is some measure of complementarity across board.

The COP’s major emphasis on the Holy Spirit relates to the acts of healing and deliverance, Christian lifestyle and bearing the fruits and gifts of the Holy Spirit, preaching and teaching on eschatology as a way of evangelization, with less emphasis on the Holy Spirit providing material blessing. Though the COP

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741 Key reference to this could be found in the encounter between Peter and Cornelius the centurion and his family in Acts 10: 44-48.
expresses methods that are analogous to traditional forms of worship as we may see in the next chapter, however, the church’s theology on the Holy Spirit does not connect that with the ideological material wellbeing that exists in African traditional religion. The Charismatic congregations in Ghana have rather been seen to articulate this theology of material soteriology.

The ICGC congregations, just like most Charismatic churches, hold the notion of the Holy Spirit as the prime enabler of supernatural ability. This supernatural ability is always linked to empowerment that spreads across the entire spectrum of life, spiritual and physical. Thus, responding to the Holy Spirit’s infilling effectively gives the individual believer or the church a capacity to negotiate the affairs of this life that confront them daily. By this, the churches claim miracles by the Holy Spirit, they engage in spiritual acts of warfare and exorcism by the same Spirit. The Holy Spirit is used to negotiate the promised succor – healing, marriage, business status, protection, politics and public life issues. Spirituality therefore becomes the de facto route in solving problems of churches and individuals. This tendency is more related to the Charismatic churches than the classical Pentecostals in Ghana like the COP.

My objective is to examine the implications of PC theology of the Holy Spirit and for the practices associated with it. The main concern had been the emphasis on material possessions by these churches by means of spiritual agency, the Holy Spirit. This phenomenon has raised concern among a section of the clergy mainly among the classical Pentecostals. The chairman of COP, for instance, retorted in an interview with me on the topic. He states, “people using religious means to handle
the pressure of materialism is absolutely wrong.” The same disquiet was conveyed by the regional superintendent of the Assemblies of God Church in Takoradi in the Western region. The thoughts of Opoku Onyinah and Francis Wusu Gand are that people use religious means to make money out of the gospel. Some among the membership of the Charismatic churches in Ghana including ICGC churches express ambivalence. Their conviction is affected by what may work for them rather than absolute rejection of the practice of using spirituality to generate financial and material resources. So the practice of ‘sowing seeds’ for financial and material favour is not carefully appraised. The ICGC as mentioned elsewhere does not seem to have theological harmony or a consistent church ethos as at this time. Some of the ICGC branch assemblies’ character and practices are largely determined by the pastors’ in-charge. Thus, the propensity is to use the church’s brand name by reason of Otabil’s credibility. In Ghana this phenomenon is mostly associated with Charismatic churches with living founders. It does not exist in many of the congregations of classical Pentecostals including COP where doctrinal matters are followed rigidly. Of course, the condition is not the same in several regards, issues including age, ministry philosophy, founder’s current vision and positions, just to name a few are all determining factors in pastoral practices. All these elements tend to shape the character and position of the

742 Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office, Accra, in the Greater Accra Region

743 Francis Wusu Gand, interview, on the 3rd of May 2012 at Takoradi Assemblies of God regional office in the Western Region.

churches. The claim that spirituality has been elevated above other things to serve
as a guise for personal aggrandizement especially among the charismatic
congregations. For example, some pastors make claims and give promises that
had to do with the prosperity of congregations in order to demand ‘miracle
offerings’ from them. Some have predicted this will result in a major crisis of
disillusionment leading to disempowerment.

An emphasis on materialistic blessings in this life can result in a neglect of
eschatology and the believer’s eternal hope. The COP considers the Holy Spirit
empowerment of believers as part of God’s eternal plan for salvation. Life, here and
now and hereafter is regarded in terms of relationship with Jesus Christ and a
holistic relevance of Christian experience. The Charismatic churches, including
ICGC, have a way of interpreting ‘God’s work in history’ as more spiritual and
less human effort. Thus, placing a premium on spiritual engagements with the hope
of gaining supremacy that yields very practical results. The claim of faith with the
power of the Holy Spirit is the necessary capital to transact all church undertakings.
By this, ‘prophetic meetings’ are organized with emphasis on the anointing
usually done symbolically with oil to represent the power of the Holy Spirit.

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745 This conclusion is established by this researcher’s personal observation and interactions with the
churches during fieldwork in Ghana from August 2011 to January 2012, and again, April 2012 to
June 2012. The evidence is obvious and would hardly escape any keen observer.

746 Scholars like Paul Gifford have remained critical of the messages and practices of the
Charismatic churches in Africa (especially Ghana) in his books; *African Christianity and Ghana’s
New Christianity*. Others like David T. Ngong, from a theological perspective, have also
independently raised concerns of the view that endorses materialism in the quest for salvation. It is
equally important to point out that other scholars such as Kalu and Asamoah-Gyadu see this
development as enhancing Christianity in context.

747 Alfred Koduaah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office, Accra, in the Greater
Accra Region.

748 I used this phrase to denote a mindset of Charismatic Christianity in Ghana claiming a spiritual
mandate as their terms of reference to impose what is considered the will of God in concrete terms.

749 Prophetic meetings are specially organized Charismatic church meetings focused on the gifts and
the power of the Holy Spirit. The meetings are particularly tailored to deal with difficulties and
problems which are perceived to have a spiritual root.
Members and invitees who attend feel endued and empowered which invariably lessen the burdens of life.

4.3.3. Theology of Health and Healing in Ghanaian Pentecostalism

PC churches in Ghana have concepts of health and healing based on the belief that the Bible guarantees them as covenant blessings. The PC churches stand on the evidence in the scriptures (both Old Testament and New Testament) which give indications of God’s acts in providing health and healing.\textsuperscript{750} The concept of health and healing is generally rife in primal religious beliefs.

In the thinking of traditional African communities, spiritual personalities regulate health and healing activities of people.\textsuperscript{751} In the view of religious people and communities in Africa, the spiritual person must possess the ability to heal. Activities of healing by key African prophets and healing churches have been recorded frequently.\textsuperscript{752} The AICs (both prophet-healing churches and spiritual church) who have been considered as the precursors of PC Christianity\textsuperscript{753} engaged people in the quest of health and healing. Clarke commented on the healing activities of Garrick Braide which reinvigorated faith in spiritual healing in the wake of the influenza epidemic in 1916 in Nigeria, when Western medicine failed


\textsuperscript{753} Kalu, “The Third Response”, pp. 3-16.
According to Larbi the exploits of William Wade Harris in the usage of traditional herbal medicine made effective by spiritual means:

The people were already familiar with the preparation and administration of herbal medicines. In the traditional context it is thought that their potency is derived mainly from the blessings the benevolent spirits bestows on them. It is believed this is effected when the medicine man or the supplicant prays over the herbs. Harris, being familiar with this perspective, intelligently placed the potency of the herbal medicine in the context of prayer to the High God who has been brought nearer to his people. The people had no doubt in believing Harris because he demonstrated the nearness of God through the signs he wrought.

Again, Duncan and Kalu have also reflected on the healing activities of prophet-healing personalities in the context of revival movements and native adoption of traditional and spiritual healing used by some African prophet-type personalities. For instance, they attribute the massive growth and revival in the Christ Apostolic Church in 1928 in Nigeria to the healing gift of Joseph Babalola. The common denominator in all the healing examples already reflected is the religious mindset of the people and the power of God (the power of the Holy Spirit).

This state of affairs resonates with PC churches that also emphasize the gifts and power of the Holy Spirit in the administration of health. What I have indicated so far is to establish the trajectory of health and healing activities by spiritual means which is also emphasized in PC churches in Ghana. I now proceed to establish the elements in COP and ICGC health and healing practices to develop our model of empowerment in subsequent analysis.

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754 Clarke, *West Africa and Christianity*.
757 Ibid.
4.3.3.1. ‘Healing: An Appropriation of Covenant Blessing

The statement, “healing as the bread of the children”, is a statement of Jesus Christ in his interaction with the Syrophoenician woman\(^{758}\) who sought help to make her daughter well. This biblical narrative is familiar to PC pastors and members because it reveals what is referred to in African Pentecostalism as *Covenant Blessings*.\(^{759}\) Both the COP and ICGC congregations use biblical texts to affirm their faith in divine health and healing. This expression of wholeness may be reviewed in two ways. Health is considered as a preservative measure, a condition to prevent physical or spiritual forms of sickness and mishaps that may affect individuals or groups as a result of the covenant relationship with God through Jesus Christ which is appropriated through faith in God’s word and in the power of the Holy Spirit.\(^{760}\) The other, healing, addresses the condition of ill health in the context of the physical or spiritually sick person regaining health through the power of Jesus Christ.\(^{761}\) Both health and healing constitute an element of complete wholeness.

Harvey Cox, expressing his view on PC healing establishes:

> the practice that initially draws most people to these groups, and the one that characterizes them more than any other, is that they offer healing – the ‘making whole’ of mind, body, and spirit. Healing practices are not only integral, but they also often serve

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\(^{758}\) The story of the Syrophoenician woman found in the New Testament (Matthew 15: 21-28 and Mark 7:25-30).

\(^{759}\) *Covenant Blessings* are specific divine items and interventions Pentecostals and Charismatic believers claim as a result of their inclusion in God’s family. Sometimes it is also considered as *Covenant Rights*. But the latter has additional connotations meaning; the legitimacy in the exercise of divine power over acts of evil or elements that work contrary to one’s interest be it spiritual or otherwise.

\(^{760}\) The churches believe that the healing of sickness and diseases is provided for through the work of Jesus Christ. See, Mat. 8: 7-13; Mk. 16: 17, 18; Lk. 13: 10-16; Acts 10: 38; James 5: 14-16.

\(^{761}\) The PC attitude towards the scripture is usually literal. Thus, the biblical passage among others, “Behold, I will bring to it health and healing, and I will heal them and reveal to them abundance of prosperity and security” Jeremiah 33:6 suggests a basis for both divine health and healing.
as the threshold through which new recruits pass into other dimensions of the movement.\textsuperscript{762}

Both the classical Pentecostals and Charismatics churches firmly believe in divine health and divine healing though their emphasis and method to achieve this differ. Their perspective on healing is what Cox refers to as ‘making whole’.\textsuperscript{763} It addresses issues not only of physical ill health but of ‘total wholeness’ – spirit, soul and body. The major scriptural reference most Charismatic churches appeal to is 3 John 2 “Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers (New King James Version).” Again in 1 Thessalonians 5: 23, which reads; “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete.\textsuperscript{764} These are proclaimed in their teaching services, Sunday preaching, during revival meetings, evangelistic services and the celebration of the Eucharist. The impact of the scriptures along with congregational prayers, and the person of God ministering, stirs up faith and the expectation of the congregants who in some regard indicate their readiness to receive the touch of Jesus and the power of God to be whole.\textsuperscript{765} The aspiration for health is considered in both the COP and ICGC as part of the covenant blessings for all believers.

The expression of healings and the means by which they manifest are diverse. An observation made during the field research revealed a twofold approach to healing (it usually goes with deliverance in the COP) activities of the churches and the


\textsuperscript{763} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{764} A collection of scriptural references include Acts 5: 16; Hebrew 7: 25; Romans 8: 11; Isaiah 53: 4-5; 1 Peter 2: 24 are all used to support the belief in and practice of divine health and healing.

\textsuperscript{765} Dominic Mensah, interview, on the 9\textsuperscript{th} October 2011 at Cape Coast in the Central Region.
noticeable result. First, to identify the activities is the *symbolic places* such as the prayer camps, specialized prayer or deliverance meetings or with specified ministries and the *persons of God* believed to be gifted with specialized abilities or ministry. For example, the mention of *Adumfa* and the prophetess Grace Adu\(^{766}\) point to COP and its healing ministry.\(^{767}\) So it is with the creation of the *Solution Center* by the ICGC. Though Otabil is the founder and general overseer of the church, the *Solution Center* of ICGC is a ministry of the prophet Christopher Yaw Annor, a senior minister who serves with Otabil.

Second the *Testimonies* that are told. Testimonies always present an unusual spiritual dynamic that defy the odds, spiritual or natural, in life and stirs up the faith of other members of the same faith community. Testimonies in PC churches have vast influence in determining the effectiveness of the churches. They project sources of superior power that counteract other inimical forces. Thus, the circumstances under which they are presented and the rationale for publication, orally and in print, have tremendous effect. My concern in raising this is to underscore the activities that generate these testimonies and what they are purposely meant to do. This would help establish how the churches empower and/or disempower the audience or devotees. It would also help see how the churches position themselves and their pastors as symbols of divine power. A significant way to study the mode and content of healing is the examination of testimonies by people who have first hand evidence and experience. For example,

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\(^{766}\) For further discussion on ‘Adumfa’ and Prophetess Grace Adu see Larbi, *Pentecostalism*. Other discussion on healing and deliverance places and ministries, see, Asamoah-Gyadu, *African Charismatics*.

\(^{767}\) It must be stated that the COP has formally broken ties with the prayer camp on doctrinal grounds in 2011.
the COP has a section in the church’s official magazine ‘Pentecost Fire’ that publishes the testimonies of people who encounter God. A testimony of Brother Simon Komon, a member of the COP whose son was raised from a ‘near-death’ situation is typical. Portions of his testimony are worth quoting:

He [Baptista, the sick] could not eat or drink anything. He was left alone, drifting slowly towards death. All the family members in Bangui had lost hope. They thought Baptista was going to die. …I called Pastor Popo-Ola right away and told him about my son Baptista. He spontaneously started praying, rebuking the spirit of death in the name of Jesus. After praying for some time, he comforted me with the word of God and asked that I call all the members of our Home Cell to pray for my son. He calmly said that the same God who healed our Elder Jason from stroke would heal my son.\textsuperscript{768}

Komon continued to say:

I received a phone call from my son, Freddy, in Bangui, who was overjoyed when telling me that his brother had been healed and released from the hospital. As soon as he finished telling me about Baptista’s healing, I asked him to invite his little brother to their church so he could learn more about Jesus who heals, forgives and saves sinners. ….Since I joined The Church of Pentecost, I have seen many miracles, and the healing of my son is one of them. May God who established The Church of Pentecost …continue to show His favour so people can see for themselves that this is the living church of God.\textsuperscript{769}

Many Classical Pentecostal churches, especially the COP, share similar testimonies during congregational worship, prayer meetings, cell meeting and individual conversation. For instance, the rationale of Komon’s testimony is manifold. First, it acknowledges the many life experiences including health issues people grapple with which leave them hopeless. Second, such testimonies always point to a person of God as a symbol of power in spiritual mediation process. Third, such testimonies always refer or relate to a place. It may be a church, a ministry, or a meeting.


\textsuperscript{769} Ibid.
Komon’s testimony, he urges his children to go to a specific church “so he could learn more about Jesus who heals, forgives and saves sinners”.\textsuperscript{770} And lastly, such healing testimonies always project the God who is superior and anchor of their faith. Similar testimonies include that of Madam Rosemond Antwi, a trader who was healed of breast cancer followed the same format and revealed the same processes,\textsuperscript{771} and a traditional priest’s child who was brought back to life.\textsuperscript{772} Having examined this and several other church services by COP, it is important to indicate here that the theme of healing is a major ministry activity of the COP. The church clearly has this in their constitution on the section on doctrinal tenets which states: “We believe that the healing of sickness and diseases is provided for God’s people in the atonement…”\textsuperscript{773} Opoku Onynah’s PhD thesis studied this thoroughly. He argued that the Pentecostal type of healing alongside exorcism, as exist in the COP, though performed under the pretext of the Christian faith, is centred on the traditional worldview, and that both the exorcists and their methods have been adopted in COP as their framework.\textsuperscript{774} This could be said to be an empowering model in the church.

The ICGC has awareness of health and healing as well. There is enough suggestion to point to some health activities that portend to support the belief in divine health in a very pragmatic way. The ICGC, raises the consciousness to its members that,

\textsuperscript{770} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{773} The Church of Pentecost, \textit{Constitution}, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{774} For a thorough discussion on healing activities in the COP, see Opoku Onynah, “The Akan Witchcraft and the Concept of Exorcism in the Church of Pentecost”. A thesis submitted to The University of Birmingham for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, 2002.
“much as God’s covenant blessings covers perfect health, it is equally the responsibility of the individual to ensure healthy living.” ICGC has a practical response to this which is shown in major activities on the church’s calendar. Each year the church organizes major health activities including health seminars and physical exercises dubbed ‘Life Walk’. Other programmes that focus on educating the congregants on health related issues include district games for fitness and sporting festivals, health screening campaigns and blood donation exercises. All these activities are geared towards raising the awareness of fitness and health.

Two things have been shown here in addition to the general belief in health and healing. In the COP, faith healing and exorcism is prominent as a specialized ministry. Whereas ICGC responds to healing by stressing on an individual’s conviction and application of scripture. This does not suggest ICGC churches do not conduct healing and deliverance services. They usually invite members in need of healing to move forward during church services to be prayed for and anointed with oil as indicated in James 5: 15. Much as both health and healing exist in their beliefs, the evidence on the ground suggests the emphasis has been more often on divine healing especially by the classical Pentecostal (COP) whereas the Charismatic churches (ICGC) have emphasized both divine healing and health equally.

I conclude that the divine health messages, healing activities, and the testimonies carry empowerment motifs. Omenyo affirms, “healing is understood as

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775 Caroline Ladzekpo, interview, on the 24th August 2011 at the 37 Military Hospital Accra, in the Greater Accra Region.

776 See ICGC diaries of events and activities for the past ten years.

777 The church (ICGC) is highly recommended by the national blood bank in Ghana for consistently mobilizing her members to donate blood to various health facilities in Ghana.
liberation.” The most important of all is the concept of power that serves as the underlying factor in a world seen as having spiritual forces inimical to the progress of people. For example, the Akan in West Africa have a proverb that may be translated into English as; ‘the only way your enemy can ridicule you is not even by death but through the painful experience of sickness’. Thus, in a pragmatic sense and in an experiential way these churches provide people with the courage to live without worrying of the enemy’s onslaught.

4.3.4. The Parousia

The understanding of PC Christians that the end will soon come and all things are bound for destruction has a tremendous influence on them. The idea of the parousia dominated the evangelistic activities of the churches and was also evident in the messages preached especially up to the early 1990s. Some have even argued that the initial drive that promoted evangelistic and local missionary activities other than giving attention to matters of social and political life interest by PC is as a result of the churches belief in the parousia. Because of this, matters that have direct relevance with regard to the socio-politico-economic issues were not within the remit of PC churches as compared to such issues as evangelistic revivals, healing crusades and prayer festivals. In fact, the non-involvement stance in public life issues that characterized Pentecostalism during this period was attributed to their ministry orientation at that time. Francois Wessels best described that kind of condition with the terms dualistic because Pentecostalism appropriates the primal

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worldview, *pessimistic* because the PC message at the time never saw anything positive in this life except for evangelism and winning of souls, and *apocalyptic* because it was the central message of the PC movement that the coming of Jesus was imminent.\footnote{780}{Ibid.}

Wessels further argues that the PC spiritual perception of this life can be referred to as ‘negative’ because it discards the present world in favour of the world to come. Thus, the present world was viewed as having been polluted by evil. He states:

Charismatics do expect the world to become a better place. Where among mainline church, there is a tendency to stress the political and social usefulness of the Christian faith and the relevance of the gospel for this world in which we live, Charismatic Christianity emphasizes the discontinuity between this world and the world to come. A negative view of this world as unredeemable, save for divine intervention seems to leave little room for social and political action, except as rescue acts of compassion or as an instrument to support evangelism.\footnote{781}{Ibid., p.366.}

This theological viewpoint is now almost discarded by Charismatic churches in Ghana due to the emergence of deliverance, prophetic, and power aspects of the prosperity gospel.\footnote{782}{See Emmanuel K. Anim. “Who Wants to be a Millionaire? An Analysis of Prosperity Teaching in the Charismatic Ministries (Churches) in Ghana and its wider impact”. A Ph.D. dissertation submitted to the All Nations Christian College, Hertfordshire, Feb. 2003.} In contrast the classical Pentecostals, especially the COP still emphasises the *Parousia*. This view is collaborated by the General Secretory of the COP:

Unfortunately, our message that Jesus is coming again has been downplayed and is not being properly highlighted in most of our churches. You can see that from various tele-evangelist and their messages. These days who talk about the second coming of Jesus Christ, the millennium, the rapture, the judgments and those things? Many preachers do not highlight that. They only talk about eschatology during funerals.\footnote{783}{Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office Accra in the Greater Accra Region.}
It looks as if the change of focus on the *Parousia* has been global. Harvey Cox noted this phenomenon of the PC congregations around the world:

> My impression, after visiting churches on four different continents, is that today Pentecostals are even more uneasy about this radical vision of the future than they are about speaking in tongues. In most churches today the message centers on the immediate presence and compassionate availability of the Spirit of Jesus Christ as helper, healer, and companion. The expectation that the Lord will come again soon, though it is voiced now and then, seems muted. It surely does not hold anything like the pivotal place it once did.\(^{784}\)

Pentecostalism has assumed a dimension that elevates material success, social status, economic power, by religious means as key determinant factors that give faith significance. In present-day Pentecostalism in Ghana, the promise of fulfilment and empowerment in this life is more prominent than the idea of bliss hereafter.

Overtime, two reactions have taken place regarding the discussions on the *Parousia*. The classical Pentecostals have kept their focus on the need to keep their members reminded about events hereafter (*Parousia*). The COP, for instance have remain resolute, proclaiming end time messages in their national conventions, evangelistic crusades and special gospel campaigns through gospel music.\(^ {785}\)

The Charismatic churches in Ghana including ICGC have kept their focus mainly on the existential requirements of their people. Their preaching is chiefly focused on prosperity, self-development, and material blessings.\(^ {786}\) Their thinking about the hereafter has not changed but it has been relegated to the background. Their message on the eternal hope of the believer is preached on occasions and during

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\(^{784}\) Cox, *Fire From Heaven*, p. 317

\(^{785}\) Alfred Koduaah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office Accra in the Greater Accra Region.

\(^{786}\) See Anim, “Who Wants to be a Millionaire?”
special ceremonies such as funerals. The challenge for the charismatic is how to maintain a balance between the essentials of this life such as material well-being and at the same time remind their followers about the Parousia. The COP has maintained this balance effectively.

4.4. Gender Issues

Gender issues of the PC churches have largely been based on the biblical interpretation regarding the role of women in church and society. The break from practices inimical to women and their empowerment has sometimes been a source of conflict in the church. The classical Pentecostal churches especially those who profess to base their practices on the Bible have shown little vision and commitment in empowering women. The church’s own practices, either informed by their theological standpoint or church tradition so far have not shown much commitment to involve women in leadership. Gender issues in this section review the practices of the COP and ICGC. The focus is on matters emerging from the fieldwork regarding the churches’ commitment to women in ministry.

4.4.1. Gender Roles and Practices: COP

The most striking element any casual observer would acknowledge in the activities of the COP is the visibility of the Women Ministry in the church. However, this does not translate equitably in gender role and practice in the church hierarchy. This segment focuses on issues related to pastoral ministry, in relation to church practices and women empowerment. The others i.e. dress code, segregated seating

Francis Wusu Gand, interview, on the 3rd of May 2012 at Takoradi Assemblies of God regional office in the Western Region.
and dancing arrangements will be examined in chapters five which deal with liturgical forms and reforms.

In the COP, there is dominance of women’s participation in all sections of church services except in the delivery of the homily which is usually the preserve of the elder or the pastor. For instance, one of my research visits took me to the COP district church at Ashaiman in the Greater Accra region. The district minister, Rev. Dennis Amil Nutsugah, in an interview with me emphasized the role women play in the growth and development of the church. Among other things, he emphasized welfare related matters, witnessing (evangelization and soul winning) and other ministry associated works. Several other members of COP in different parts of Ghana confirmed this point. For instance, Comfort Baah noted:

> We are the lifeblood of the church. Without our active participation our church is orphaned. We mobilize the people in the community, we win the souls for the church, we give our time and resources for the work of the Lord, and we take care of the pastors just as Mary and Martha did for Jesus in the Bible.

Comfort Baah’s observation is not an isolated opinion that emanate from the women only. The men including the pastors of the church agree. For instance, Pastor Adranye unequivocally confirms:

> There is no doubt about the role of the women in our church. We appreciate their involvement and their contribution in

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788 In the COP, elders function as pastors. The term is akin to the biblical usage as seen in the New Testament.

789 Dennis Amil Nutsugah, interview, on the 26th November 2011 at Ashaiman in the Greater Accra Region.

790 Interviews and participant observation by researcher in other towns and cities of Ghana include Greater Accra region (Ashaiman Domeabra District; Tema Community seven [PIWC], Accra New Town); Volta Region (Sogakokpe District; Akatsi-Abor; Hohoe District), Western Region (Effia Kuma District; Takoradi District; Sekondi District); Central Region (Abura District, Cape Coast District)

791 Comfort Baah, interview, on the 9th October 2011 at Cape Coast in the Central Region.
invaluable. God gave them to us and we cherish their love for the work of God. 792

This recognition of women’s involvement was also corroborated by the chairman of the COP who reiterated, “the founder (James Makeown) once said, ‘they (women) started the church for him’. ”793 It is important to acknowledge that the COP ‘Women Movement’ is noted for its mobilization activities comparatively to other religious groups in Ghana. 794 The Women Movement comprises all the adult female members of the COP. The Movement is primarily in charge of organizing prayers, charity, workshops and evangelism. It also engages women in developing vocational and employment skills. This group could be said to be the vital nerve of the church’s (COP) welfare department including the pastor’s upkeep. The General Secretary of the COP stated:

One of the most important segments of the church is the women’s department. The reason is that the women have certain special skills, style and grace that the men do not have. Women usually add more life, beauty and colour to the church. Can anybody imagine what the church would look like without the women? Can anybody imagine being a member of a church which is for men only? Even though such a church can operate, it will lack so many things. The fact is that women by their very special nature are special and need to be treated as such. Without them the church would not be complete 795

It should also be said, majority of the congregants in COP, as in most churches in Ghana, are women. Nevertheless, the COP is one of the classical Pentecostal churches that barred women from pastoral leadership. Women’s energies are

792 William Wilberforce Adrany, interview, on the 29th October 2011 at Sogakope in the Volta Region.
793 Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 in Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
794 The evidence on the ground is obvious and overwhelmingly interesting to encourage further research exclusively on the women’s movement and their operations in COP. My remit in this research is limited to structures and their operations that connect or disconnect with the concept of empowerment. For further enquiring, see Larbi, Pentecostalism.
795 Koduah, Who is Disturbing the Church?, p. 198.
harnessed for traditional church activities such as “prayer, evangelism, marital issues and acts of benevolence” but not for pastoral care in any official capacity since deacons and deaconesses do not undertake direct pastoral roles in COP. The highest ministerial leadership platform created for women is the level of deaconess. The reasons commonly assigned for this are ‘church tradition’ and scriptural injunction.

First, there are two dimensions with the discourse on ‘tradition’. Tradition as ‘church order’ bequeathed to the succeeding generation by the early COP leadership. It is not clear whether the founding father James McKeown, and the other leaders who followed him, instituted that. Or most unlikely, the ‘tradition’ is in reference to Ghanaian culture and society. Most of the respondents, clergy and laity, were evasive in providing answers to the practice of women’s exclusion in the pastorate in COP. However, my observation during fieldwork shows that the only prominent woman in COP is the wife of the founder, Mrs. Sophia McKeown, who has a temple dedicated in her honour – Sophia McKeown Temple – at La in Accra.

Second, the allusion to scriptural injunction seems to most people the fundamental reason for the practice of women’s prohibition from pastoral ministry. The two major scriptural passages, 1 Corinthians 14: 34 and 1 Timothy 2:12, have been the key references. The interpretation of these passages together with the choice of Jesus’ all male apostolic selection in relation to church leadership as seen in the New Testament is used as the most compelling evidence. A former member of the

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796 Ibid., p 199.
797 Comfort Baah, interview, on the 9th October 2011 at Cape Coast in the Central Region.
church was highly dissatisfied that such practices still persist. However, others, male and female laity, are indifferent about the practice. Discussions on church hierarchy and gender discrimination against women, regardless of the reasons assigned to the practice, makes it a gray area for the church. A clergyman in the COP who requested to remain anonymous registered his frustration at the lack of reforms that should address such concerns in the church. One can also extrapolate from both clergy and laity that the issue of gender discrimination in connection with hierarchical church leadership in COP has not been opened up for any serious discussion in the churches themselves. Larbi was bereft of any comment on women issues raised above except for a brief generalized commentary on the “Women’s Movement.”

The COP’s formation of theologies and traditions i.e. women’s head-covering, church seating arrangements, dancing regulations etc. had been packaged and presented to both past and present generations of members as a scriptural requirement. These were practices which until recently were important in the churches ethos and practice. It is typically the case of ‘grassroots theology’ because of the historical developments of the church.

4.4.2 Gender Roles and Practices: ICGC

In ICGC there is no doctrinal injunction against the function of female pastors and leaders in the church, just as there is no preference for female ministers and

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798 Vivian Oduro, interview with researcher, Kitasi-Peduasi- Eastern Region, 6th April, 2012.
799 Some members of the clergy, elders,deacons and deaconesses, and ordinary members of the COP shy away or request to remain anonymous in expressing views that question church practice for fear of being reprimanded.
800 See, Larbi, *Pentecostalism*.
801 Ibid., pp. 184-185.
802 For further discussion on the subject (women head-covering and dancing regulation in the COP), see Chapters Five.
functionaries. In most cases, the individual – male or female – is expected to rise in leadership or function as a minister by merit.

Mrs Lily Bonney asserts, in ICGC, “women always want to respond to the call in church to serve as deaconess or as other ministry stewards, but not in pastoral ministry.”Mrs. Bonney (a lay minister who also serves in a full-time capacity as the Director of Administration at the ICGC Head Office) view supports the general notion expressed by most women in churches in Ghana. Caroline Ladzekpo, a medical officer and a lay church worker expressed an opinion:

> Women do not lack the capacity to lead or pastor, what we have not done yet is to avail ourselves to fully get involve in pastoral ministry. I think this is so because we feel our men should lead the way for us to provide the support. It has nothing to do with our inability to do effective pastoral work.

Ladzekpo admission that women indeed play supportive role in the church attest to the fact that cultural practice in Africa still maintains a hold on the church in issues such as leadership. The social orientation on the role of women is not strictly a religious phenomenon. It is generally a social effect that the church has not been able to influence effectively. Rita Wilson was precise in her suggestion that the church has so far proved ineffective in influencing women’s leadership role in churches in Africa. Her thoughts are clear:

> The traditional role of a woman in Ghana, maybe in Africa, does not encourage women to respond to the call to leadership. Perhaps the church has also not done enough to break the cultural hold on some of us. This is not to suggest ICGC does not preach about equality of men and women. It is simply not strongly emphasized to undo the cultural hold on us, but we are

803 Lily Bonney, interview, on the 21st September 2011 at Miotso, ICGC Head Office in the Greater Accra Region.

804 Caroline Ladzekpo, interview, on the 24th August 2011 at 37 Military Hospital in the Greater Accra Region.
very able as we see in some of our female pastors that given the chance we are equally effective as leaders and pastors.805

One does not see many women ministers in relation to pastoral work. There is a huge disparity with male/female pastoral ratio. For instance, the data gathered indicated that by the end of June 2012, ICGC had an overall number of 309 full time and part-time ministers in Ghana. The total distribution of ministers is; 91 ordained reverend ministers, 38 pastors, 146 lay-leaders managing ICGC churches and 34 ordained lay ministers. Out of those, 297 are male and 12 female.806

A further inquiry suggested that out of the 12 female ministers 4 are ordained reverend ministers handling branch churches.807 One of them, Rev. (Mrs.) Patience Addai, serves as a senior pastor’s of ICGC Sekondi in the western part of Ghana and the Area supervising minister (ASM) responsible for all the pastors and churches in the Secondi area in the Western Region. Another, Rev. Pricilla Nketia also serves as the acting Director of Central Bible College.808 The others Rev. (Mrs.) Charlotte Quagraise and Rev. (Mrs.) Rosabella Mensah have all served in the ICGC organization as pastors over a considerable length of time.

Irrespective of the openness and liberal position – theologically and culturally – of ICGC in matters of women’s role and practices, the statistical information presented above gives a perception of gender inequality. Any casual observation of the ICGC congregations’ visited during my field research on Sundays and weekday

805 Rita Wilson, interview, on the 16th October 2011 at Cape Coast in the Central Region.

806 Yaw Biney, interview, on the 21st September 2011 at the ICGC head office in the Greater Accra Region.

807 Information obtained by researcher from Yaw Binney, Head of the Human Resource Department, ICGC Head Office.

808 Central Bible College is the new ministerial training Bible school for ICGC pastoral trainees only. It has no continuity with the old Bible School that metamorphosed into Central University College in 1997.
church services, indicated that women were readily involved in all segments of the
church activities. A discussion of women’s role with the Deputy General Secretary
(DGS) of the church confirmed this observation. He emphatically stated:

In terms of church activities, the women are always more than the
men. And even if you look at people who serve on the committees,
depending on the selection, most of the time the women are always
there and available, supporting, giving their time, resources, their
intellectual capacity to help build the kingdom of God.809

In response to his (DGS) statement, with regards to women’s rise to top leadership
positions in the church, he suggested that as a church there is nothing barring
women’s to rise into leadership, the church consider’s them to be capable of
leadership. In his view, “the difficulty had always been the women themselves and
much of it our societal structures.”810 He further commented:

Women have not always seen themselves in the forefront when it
comes to pastoral ministry. But as a church, the structures and
empowering messages is helping gradually to disengage people’s
mind and understanding about ministry been seen in the line of men
always responding to the call.811

In Ghana, most of the Charismatic churches allow women to participate in pastoral
ministry on doctrinal grounds unlike some of the classical Pentecostal churches like
COP.812 However, the churches that admit women’s involvement in pastoral
ministry and leadership have a disproportionally small number of women leaders.
Again, in most cases, the women do not find themselves at the top, except some of
the wives of the founders and general overseers.813

809 Morris Appiah, Interview, on the 18th January 2012 at the Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.
810 Morris Appiah, Interview, on the 18th January 2012 at the Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.
811 Morris Appiah, Interview, on the 18th January 2012 at the Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.
813 Jane E. Soothill. "The Problem with 'Women's Empowerment': Female Religiosity in Ghana's
4.4.3. Overview of Pentecostal-Charismatic Gender Roles and Practices

Discussions above have brought three major issues to the fore that militates against women in PC churches. These emerged from the respondents in both COP and ICGC, and the textual analysis of primary documents of the churches. First, the view that forbids women positions in church hierarchy and ministry on socio-cultural and doctrinal grounds. Asamoah-Gyadu for instance raised concerns about the exclusivity of male-led PC church leadership. He was emphatic:

There exists a paradox in African Independent Pentecostalism regarding the role of women. Although they may be excluded from the hierarchy of direct political decision-making, their spiritual leadership was affirmed because of their expressive prophetic and healing powers attributed to the presence of the Spirit.\footnote{Asamoah-Gyadu. \textit{African Charismatics}, p. 55.}

This has raised debates among scholars and church leaders. Scholars like Mnkandla\footnote{Maureen Mnkandla. “Religion, Women Development in Africa.” Delanyo Adadevor ed. \textit{Religion and Government in Africa: A Christian Response}. USA: ILF Publishers, 2009.} have argued that the African socio-religious mindset has not deprived women participation in religious affairs in their communities. She suggested three cardinal roles women priests in traditional African settings played: ‘Rainmaking ceremonies are one of the most prominent priestesses’ role, ‘spirit mediums in traditional medicinal practice’ and ‘cleansing’, where upon returning from war or after killing someone, an individual may need cleansing.\footnote{Ibid., p. 233.}

Mnkandla suggests, the scriptural passages in 1 Corinthians 14: 34 and 1 Timothy 2:12 used to subjugate women and force them into subordination is an offshoot of

\footnote{Ibid.}
Western interpretation imposed on African cultural and religious practices. Her opinion is worth quoting:

The reality though, is that it is an aftermath of the introduction of medieval Western Christian notions of women’s inferiority by British colonizers and Christian missionaries, who preached the silence of women in church.\textsuperscript{818}

Second, the view that champions ‘self-empowerment’ of men and women equally over exclusive ‘women empowerment’ programmes. One of the major proponents of this view is the founder and general overseer of ICGC. The ideological position of Otabil and his ministers is that the best thing you give to people – male or female – is “a sense of confidence and education”\textsuperscript{819} in the process of empowerment. He emphatically stated:

I do not believe in men going to empower women – what power do men have to empower women with – it is self-empowerment. Is not anybody empowering somebody. It is putting up something that helps a person to take hold and take charge of their lives.\textsuperscript{820}

Otabil’s assertion is consistent with his general theological thought in God’s work in history with people. Larbi calls this theology ‘evangelical Pentecostal liberation theology’.\textsuperscript{821}

The third view focuses on issues that naturally engage women thus making them either inactive, ineffective or generally disinterested in taking up important roles. Women whose domestic and social functions do not allow them to fully engage in other responsibilities popularly hold this opinion. Many such women are middle aged. They are also educated and professionals in their different fields of vocation.

\textsuperscript{818} Ibid., p. 236
\textsuperscript{819} Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
\textsuperscript{820} Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
\textsuperscript{821} Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 349. For further analysis of Otabil’s theological postulation on Black emancipation, see, Otabil, Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia; Gifford, African Christianity; Ghana’s New Christianity; Kalu, African Pentecostalism.
Their argument does not impinge culture or doctrinal position, but examines the practicality of combining several responsibilities. It must be stated that pastoral work and church leadership in Africa is challenging on several regards. Proponents of this idea therefore always see women’s decision not to engage as a temporary one that depends on an individual’s circumstance. A respondent who also belongs to this category made reference to Rev. Dr. Joyce Aryee, a former minister of state, educationist and a Pentecostal minister.\(^{822}\) The argument that women can only afford to combine certain responsibilities at certain stages of life is self-defeatist for women themselves. Examples of African women who have discharged their duties conscientiously in the prime of their life abound.

Jane Soothill,\(^{823}\) Brigid Sackey,\(^{824}\) J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu,\(^{825}\) and Ogbu Kalu\(^{826}\) are among scholars who subscribe to the notion that Charismatic Christianity has enabled women’s empowerment. For instance, Soothill sees a lot of promise in female empowerment in the role of the Charismatic churches and cited Rev. Christy Doe Tetteh as an example.\(^{827}\) In general, Charismatic Christianity in Ghana has given attention and space to women to function, a situation that can hardly be said of a classical Pentecostal church like COP. Soothill points this out:

“In addition to this emphasis on social status, charismatic discourses on womanhood prioritize ‘Self’ and female individualism in a way

\(^{822}\) Vivian Oduro, interview, on the 22\(^{nd}\) April 2012 at Paduasi-Kitasi in the Eastern Region of Ghana.

\(^{823}\) See Soothill, “The Problem with ‘Women’s Empowerment”


\(^{825}\) Asamoah-Gyadu, African Charismatics.

\(^{826}\) Kalu, African Pentecostalism.

\(^{827}\) Soothill, “The Problem with ‘Women’s Empowerment”, p. 83.
It has been generally established that in Charismatic churches in Ghana including ICGC, women are allowed to exercise responsibility a situation that does not exist in classical Pentecostal churches like COP. This buttresses the point that “newer churches like ICGC prioritize leadership training, to which gender and age is not a barrier.”

4.5 Empowering/Disempowering Elements in Pentecostal-Charismatic Theology

The key themes emerging out of our discourse, the religio-cultural issues, the four square gospel, and gender related theologies, have presented three characteristic features of the theologies of COP and ICGC which could be made to assess the empowering role of PC Christianity in Ghana. First, the discussion establishes a dependence on primal religious influences by these churches. Both COP and ICGC have carefully incorporated elements from within the African religious mindset and culture to develop new means of Christian expressions. I propose to term it the amalgamation of religious appeal. It is a religious philosophy that takes cognizance of established religious orientation to solve practical, concrete, and real (including the spiritual) needs. It is motivated and put into practice primarily by the defined task of a person or group inclination towards a supposed divine vision. The task is inspired by the vision and the vision is placed in a constituency, spiritual,

828 Ibid., p 86.
830 Other scholars may prefer to use the word ‘syncretism’ but this does not express my thinking adequately as it has negative connotations.
temporal or both. Thus the energies, ideologies, and significance are all determined by the divine vision. This is basically what drives COP and ICGC ministries. The stories of James McKeown’s COP and Mensa Otabil’s ICGC attest to this. The theological constructs of both personalities that birth the churches are in direct relationship with the divine vision and their perception of societal needs. This vision had been pursued unflinchingly. The COP has as their vision: “Planting and nurturing healthy churches globally.” The COP has as their vision: “Planting and nurturing healthy churches globally.” 831 ICGC on the other hand vigorously pursue a vision: “to build New Testament believers to be eloquent witnesses of God’s manifold wisdom through their life and conduct.” 832 The pursuance of these visions has introduced particularities of ministry distinctions to empower members. In COP the vision focused on collective or corporate function of the church, which then trickles down to the individual, a stereotype which is typical of Ghana’s communal system. 833 The ICGC’s vision stresses individual development to build the church community. Thus the church’s vision relates directly to the individual member. This accounts for the characteristically human development messages associated with Otabil and his ICGC branch churches.

Second, from the opinion of respondents (members of both COP and ICGC) we may infer that the messages of COP and ICGC as ‘energetic and combative theology of praxis’. However, aspects of the messages too have been looked at as ‘backward’. COP and ICGC, as we have already seen, have been able to negotiate the fear of their members through emphasis on God’s word and carrying out spiritual acts of prayer and exorcism. The projection of Jesus Christ and the power

831 The Church of Pentecost, Corporate Profile, p. 2.
832 International Central Gospel Church, Connecting with God’s Family, p. 12.
of the Holy Spirit as omnipotent in the affairs of his people have a tremendous empowering effect not only in the spiritual life but other departments of life. A segment of people who were captives to traditional religious domination and were intimidated by fear that existed in their thoughts by reason of old religious understanding are now transformed. The central idea here is that life is spiritual and manifested in the physical, thus spiritual supremacy is necessary in establishing victorious Christian life. This, the COP and ICGC have emphasized in their messages be it in their evangelism, Christian discipleship, social affairs, etc. But other issues have been of great concern. For instance, the use of prophecy has become a key contentious factor in the PC churches. It serves as an ambivalent tool, to empowerment, but in some instance, without controversy an agency for disempowerment. The weight of the argument has never been the genuineness and usefulness of the spiritual gift of prophecy in the churches; it has been embraced, encouraged and practiced, but the controversy has always been around the persons of God whose discretion particularly determines the role prophecy plays in the lives of people. That is where the concern has been expressed. The practicing of prophecy sometimes leads people to bondage and fear, becoming a disempowering tool. Stories have been told of persons whose reliance on prophecy and supposed spiritual insight, led to the breaking up of families, committed human rights violations and eventually leading some of their supplicants into disillusionment. The converse is also true. Some members also highly acclaim prophecy to have profited them. To such, prophecy serves as an intervention for deliverance from disaster, from operations of evil elements, and led them to life solutions. In very unambiguous terms, the COP has successfully streamlined the operation of the gift
of prophecy in their churches from my observation of their church practices. In ICGC, Otabil encourages ministers and church members to focus more on developing personal intuition in discerning the leading of the Holy Spirit than overly depending and relying on prophets and prophecies.\footnote{Mensa Otabil. \textit{Ministry}. (Audio CD). Accra: Alter Media, June 15, 2012.}

On the subject of the appropriation of the materialistic forms of salvation, the COP deserves to be singled out for mention in her effort in bringing a balance. The African religious cosmology which sees life in terms of wealth and health in the ‘here and now’ is balanced by thoughts of eternity in the COP’s theology. The church’s practices give expression to Ngong reflection: “the Spirit enables us to place the temporary within on eternal framework so that our vision may not be held hostage by the present.”\footnote{Ngong, \textit{The Holy Spirit and Salvation in African Christian Theology}, pp. 3,4.} With regard to ICGC, the drive to promote individual life development and transformation had led to the capitalization of the ideological concept of ‘health and wealth’ notion.

Issues of gender equity among Charismatic churches have been encouraged, for example, the ICGC has formulated a policy of pastoral recruitment that promotes gender equity. The 2011 pastoral recruit for the Bible school (CBC) presented an equal number of men and women. The COP, like many classical Pentecostals, is yet to show support for gender equity. Elements that sideline women have not yet been given theological attention. The disengagement of women in pastoral ministry and church leadership hierarchy on theological grounds is a disempowering act that discredits an establishment aiming to effect spiritual and social transformation. It stifles potential and sets the agenda for practices inimical to the disempowerment of women in general.
Whereas the COP seeks to redefine the church’s doctrinal issues, the ICGC over twenty-eight years of its existence is now putting together structures to clearly articulate its theology. Some theological discourses and practices in the entire ICGC body had been unclear, some local churches have impaired the distinctive features that characterize Otabil’s philosophy of evangelical Pentecostal liberation theology.\(^{836}\) This development has created indefinable agreement that does not make harmonious theological characterization easy. The ICGC in its present outlook still has strong empowering influence over Ghanaian religious, cultural and social life. The church’s relevance has been its ability to effectively address relevant life-related issues of individual members towards transformation and had given less attention to or perhaps relegated issues without praxis (classical western theology) as nonessential. The church’s mission to raise leaders, shape vision, and influence society through Christ has been its major anchor in Ghanaian society.

Third, it can be argued that irrespective of some theological infractions of Pentecostalism in Ghana the movement has given the gospel inventive characteristics of self-consciousness and awakening to contextualized Christianity. Some African scholars such as Kwesi Dickson,\(^ {837}\) Kwame Bediako,\(^ {838}\) Kofi Appiah-Kubi,\(^ {839}\) Mercy Amba Oduoye,\(^ {840}\) Ogbu Kalu,\(^ {841}\) and others have maintained the need for theology to be done in context. The main reason being that existing Christian expressions came to Africa in Western forms, therefore African

\(^{836}\) Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, p. 349.

\(^{837}\) Dickson, *Theology in Africa*.

\(^{838}\) Bediako, *Theology and Identity*.


\(^{841}\) Kalu, *African Pentecostalism*. 

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Christianity has to be repackaged to take on board the particularities of the people and express it in their particular circumstance. This is what makes the PC message a vital force in settings like Africa because of its adoptable nature.

Otabil, for instance, is of the view that the theological postulation of a people must seek to identify and answer their problems. This includes what people are dealing with. Thus, he asserts:

> From my own perspective the number one challenge of Ghanaians, and maybe to lot of black Africans and to black people, the number one challenge we are dealing with is inferiority complex. A sense of defeat, a sense of dependency, low self esteem that disempower us. So in the midst of plenty we still wallow in poverty. Opportunity knocks but we sometimes feel incapable of accessing it and that situation is a complex. It is influenced by so many factors – historical and contemporary.  

For Otabil and ICGC, what informs the church’s theology is addressing the historical and contemporary challenges of religious, social and political setbacks and PC brand of Christianity is used to engage the social and economic forces. Otabil’s allusion to the historical factors is given: “historical in terms of our own African beliefs about human worth and our ability to control the forces of nature to our advantage.” Otabil’s thinking in theological formulation finds support in Dickson’s statement:

> Theology must be an exercise in relevance; it is to be done in and through concrete life experiences. To put this in another way, to do Christian theology presupposes an awareness, among other things, of the Scriptures as a living word – a word that has power to challenge people everywhere.

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842 Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18th August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
843 Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18th August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
844 Dickson, *Theology in Africa*. p. 20
Members of ICGC consider themselves to receive holistic and relevant Christian ministry through the church. They are firm in their conviction that: “the Bible help to address concrete and spiritual issues of life. A great deal of biblical preaching to help address day to day matters that challenge us and prepare us to tap into opportunities.”

The subject of relevant ministry of empowerment must consider Kwesi Dickson’s assertion: “there are at least three reasons why ‘catholicity’ must not be considered to be the primary goal of theological inquiry at this stage in the history of the development of theological thought.” First, “theology is done most meaningfully in particular settings: the cultural particularity is indispensable because theology is done by flesh and blood.” Second, Dickson is of the view: “this quest for authenticity or selfhood is only at its initial stages as far as the articulation of Christian thought in Africa is concerned.” He said this at the evolutionary stages of the boom in Pentecostalism in the African continent. And third, he stated, “there is no necessary correlation between a number of theologies emanating from different contexts and the breaking up of the church’s oneness.”

The verdict of PC themselves is necessary for consideration:

Pentecostalism have injected new vigor into Ghanaian Christianity and made church more lively than before and they managed to add the African culture into Christianity making it more acceptable by the Africans and Ghanaians for that matter.

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845 Nana Amma Ansah, interview, on the 11th September 2011 at Tema in the Greater Accra Region.
846 Dickson, Theology in Africa. p. 4.
847 Ibid.
848 Ibid. p. 5.
849 Ibid.
850 Alfred Koduah, Interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office, Accra, in the Greater Accra Region.
The theological viewpoints on subjects, of both COP and ICGC present points of convergence and departure within the larger Ghanaian Pentecostal family. It also establishes continuity and discontinuity with the African socio-religious milieu. For instance, salvation package as presented by these churches has made it an empowerment model in dealing with issues in African Christianity. The thrust of salvation becoming a means for achieving identity and empowerment in Pentecostalism is significant for discussion.

It is also not entirely true that African PC Christianity in general has become a ‘dynamic equivalent’ of African traditional religiosity. The central Christological theme of Pentecostalism in Ghana refutes that argument. The historical trajectory of PC Christianity in Ghana reveals the undertaking of two main agenda. First, a quest for contextualized Christianity that acknowledges the African worldview and cosmology, and second, a presentation of holistic Christian ministry that seeks appropriate spiritual understanding in line with felt needs. These undoubtedly point to distinguishing models of empowerment.

Pentecostalism has also created ambivalent feelings in the heart of both admirers and critics. On the one hand, it projects an active God who lives with His people, concern about His people, and acts for His people. On the other hand, it registers questions and doubts about the character of God in terms of disparities in image-bearing notions on gender issues, the exercise of spiritual discretion and a thrust for moral high-tone.
CHAPTER FIVE
LITURGY: FORMS AND REFORMS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter appraises the liturgical forms and reforms of COP and ICGC to establish relevance and impact in contemporary Pentecostalism in Ghana. The study expresses forms and reforms, in general terms, in PC liturgies in areas such as organizations of church service and the content of worship. The discussions show PC spirituality i.e. the use of the Bible, prayer, and spiritual gifts. Other areas of focus include voluntary activities in PC churches with emphasis on lay orientations of church personnel and various ministry groups. This chapter therefore underscores the important aspects of PC liturgical arrangements at local level of the churches, highlights the salient aspects of reforms taking place and shows the impact on members and society.

PC churches build liturgical forms around the theology of worship, exercise of spiritual gifts, and a conviction in the preaching of God’s word and prayer. While these are the principal expressions of PC Christianity, they vary in manifestations. Some of the forms and manifestations are perceived as diverging from orthodox Christian practices. However, other times they are also seen as reforming indigenous Christian faith manifesting in contemporary African society. As the churches continue to exhibit changing forms akin to

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851 Martin, Pentecostalism; Kalu, African Christianity: African Pentecostalism; Larbi, Pentecostalism.
852 Asamoah-Gyadu, Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity.
Pentecostalism in other geographical locations, especially in recent times, they also show sensitive reforms that reconcile changing aspects of society with Christianity in the African milieu.\textsuperscript{855}

5.1. The COP: Organization of Church Worship Service

As part of my fieldwork, I visited the COP at Domeabra in the Ashaiman District in the Greater Accra Region during a weeklong revival programme.\textsuperscript{856} The service\textsuperscript{857} began with corporate prayer led by an elder of the church. The session for prayer was interspersed with singing of Pentecostal choruses well known to members present. These songs were local gospel compositions which declared ‘the majesty of God’, ‘the power of the Most High’ and ‘the faithfulness of a loving God’.\textsuperscript{858} Examples of the songs in the vernacular (Akan) with the English translation listed:

Example 1.

\begin{verbatim}
Nea Owui wo Kalvary sunsum no
Reye anwanwa ‘dwuma
Retu mmonsam, resa nyarewa,
Siw gyata ano, redum gya tumi,
Reka ananafo mpasua nyinaa gu,
Nea Owui wo Kalvary sunsum no
Reye anwanwa dwuma
\end{verbatim}

English Translation:

The Spirit of One who died at Calvary
Is performing wonderful works
Casting out devils, healing the sick
Shutting the mouth of lions, quenching the fiery fire

\textsuperscript{855} Adogame, “Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements in Global Perspective”, p. 500.
\textsuperscript{856} The COP Ashaiman District Revival programme on the 21\textsuperscript{st} to 27\textsuperscript{th} November 2011. My visits were on Wednesday 23\textsuperscript{rd} and Sunday 27\textsuperscript{th} November for participant observation.
\textsuperscript{857} Sunday worship service on the 27\textsuperscript{th} November 2011.
\textsuperscript{858} An observation made during the COP Ashaiman District Revival programme on the 27\textsuperscript{th} November 2011.
Routing out foreign armies  
The Spirit of One who died at Calvary  
Is performing wonderful works

Example 2.

Awurade suo me mu  
Amma manan annwetri  
Se okwan no mu ye sum  
Na matumi anantew wo mu  
Se okwan no mu ye tro  
Na matumi afamu

English Translation:  
Lord hold my hands  
So that I might not slip  
As the road is dark  
That I shall be able to walk on it  
As the road is slippery  
So that I shall be able to scale through.

Acknowledging that these were familiar Pentecostal songs, the worshippers affirm their belief in the power of the Most High God.\footnote{Alberta Kuma, interview, on the 27\textsuperscript{th} November 2011 at Ashaiman in the Greater Accra Region.} Hence, those who rely on God would be victorious at the end of their battles because of the omnipotent power of God that was displayed at Calvary – a symbol of redemption and God’s power.\footnote{Dennis Amil Nutsugah, interview, on the 26\textsuperscript{th} November 2011 at Ashaiman in the Greater Accra Region.}

Again, the import of these songs shows the believer’s victory in life through the reliance on God’s care, protection and guidance. The imagery used in the above listed song is symptomatic of the daily fears of people which is effectively counteracted by one’s faith and association in God. As the songs were sang in worship of God, it also strengthens the believer’s faith to face life. Alberta Kuma, a respondent of the COP in Ashaiman district, emphasized how in countless
occasions she had had the resolve to move on in life in the face of great challenges because she developed a spiritual attitude as she worshiped.\textsuperscript{861}

Other songs were brief eulogies that declare the awesomeness of God. They were sang repeatedly with great enthusiasm. One such song:

\begin{verbatim}
Wo nsa ano nnwuma trontrom wo
Osoro abofo sore wo
W’ahotewfo, yeto dwom se
‘Nhira nka Wo din,
nhyira nka Wo din’
\end{verbatim}

English Translation:

The works of your hand praise you
The angels in heaven worship you
All we Your saint sing that
‘Blessings to Your name,
Blessings to Your name’

These songs are popular among the members of the COP and other Pentecostals in Ghana. They are sung with backing musical instruments such as the keyboard, set of drums, electronic guitars, locally made drums called \textit{conga}, hand clapping, and a set of microphones connected to the public address system for sound amplification.

Worship service at the COP was typical of other classical Pentecostals in Ghana\textsuperscript{862} with enthusiastic dancing in arranged order.\textsuperscript{863} The order of church service followed accordingly: intercessory prayer, choruses, praises and dancing, the giving of testimonies, special time of prayer called \textit{worship}, preaching, offertory (this is accompanied by singing usually by groups in the church), announcements, closing

\textsuperscript{861} Alberta Kuma, interview, on the 27\textsuperscript{th} of November 2011 at Ashaiman in the Greater Accra Region.

\textsuperscript{862} Mainly Christ Apostolic Church (CAC) and Apostolic Church of Ghana (ACG).

\textsuperscript{863} The dancing arrangement is grouped into men and women with each group taking their turn on the dancing floor separately.
prayer and benediction. The total time allotted for the church service is approximately three and half-hours.\textsuperscript{864}

The Ashaiman COP’s arrangement and other activities discussed are typical of other church service arrangements in COP assemblies.\textsuperscript{865} The only exception is the Pentecost International Worship Center (PIWC) originally referred to as the COP ‘English Assemblies’.\textsuperscript{866}

\textbf{5.1.1. Pentecost International Worship Centre (PIWC)}

The COP presents two different liturgical patterns, the regular worship centres of COP local assemblies (as in the case of the COP at Domeabra in the Ashaiman District) and the PIWC. The two are in stark contrast to one another in liturgical arrangement and outlook. The marked distinctions are seen in the dress code and the use of English as \textit{lingua franca} for the church services (selection of songs for the praises and worship and other forms of church music). The PIWC shows more flexibility in their approach to worship and are similar to Charismatic churches.\textsuperscript{867} Larbi sees the differences between the ‘regular’ COP assemblies and the PIWC as a clash of “tradition versus modernity”.\textsuperscript{868} Since the PIWC assemblies are not as numerous as the regular congregations of the COP, the focus of our discussions is on the ‘regular’ COP.

\textsuperscript{864} Information gained through participant observation.

\textsuperscript{865} Onyinah, “Akan Witchcraft and the Concept of Exorcism in the Church of Pentecost”, p. 175.

\textsuperscript{866} Larbi, \textit{Pentecostalism}, p. 201. The Pentecost International Worship Center (PIWC) from its inception was known as the Accra International Worship Centre (AIWC).

\textsuperscript{867} A visit to the Pentecost International Worship Centre (PIWC) on Sunday 20\textsuperscript{th} May 2012 at the Tema Community 7 branch as a participant observer.

\textsuperscript{868} Larbi, \textit{Pentecostalism}, p. 201.
5.1.2. Dress Code

The COP until 2010 was noted for its strict adherence to a dress code during worship. The dress code which forbade women wearing trousers to church and the strict head-covering of women was part of COP’s spirituality. For example, Alfred Koduah, the General Secretary of COP, discussing the types of head-covering in COP asserted, “Those who do ‘full covering’ feel more spiritual and sometimes look down on the ‘partially covered ones.’ The latter group, on the other hand, considers the former group as old fashioned.” Both groups however, agreed that “head-covering is a token of authority [which] … must be made to remain as such.” The controversy surrounding the topic (head-covering) is based on the interpretation of the scriptural passage in 1 Corinthians 11: 2-16 where Apostle Paul exhorting the church at Corinth raised the issue of head-covering. Apostle Paul’s question, “Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered?” seem to have been interpreted to mean women “should cover their heads during worship.” Larbi’s discussion of this ‘tradition’ in the COP shows how delicate the issue was in the spirituality of COP:

It is expected that all women from the age of puberty onwards should, without fail, wear head-kerchief at church service. If perchance a stranger enters the meeting with her head uncovered, she is swiftly met with the embarrassing situation of being escorted

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869 Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at COP head office, Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
870 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 203.
872 Ibid.
873 See 1 Corinthians 11: 13b.
874 Koduah, The Woman’s Head-Covering in Church, p. 87.
outside by a deaconess who will immediately provide her with a head covering for that purpose.\textsuperscript{875}

The practice of head-covering persisted in the church until 2010 when the COP’s leadership led by Opoku Onyinah announced that the COP has officially relaxed the strict adherence of head-covering and other dress codes during worship.\textsuperscript{876} Thus, head-covering and women wearing of trousers were rendered optional for all worshipers in the church.

The relaxation of the dress code upset some COP members, especially the older women who continued with the practice and felt COP was becoming liberal on ethical and spiritual issues due to church reforms.\textsuperscript{877} This was so because, some among the COP fold raised the issue of scripture as the basis for enforcing the dress code. Some members, for instance Lucy Kouffie of the COP, subscribed to modest dress as a moral requirement for “true spirituality”\textsuperscript{878}. She maintains:

\begin{quote}
The church has kept its true spirituality until now, why then do we review this? Has God changed the rules for us now? I don’t think so. We must keep what has preserved us up to this day. My fear is that the church will lose its spiritual flavor when we allow worldliness to creep into our worship.\textsuperscript{879}
\end{quote}

Others, to cite Alberta Kuma, felt that the dress code moderated worldliness creeping into the church thus vehemently opposed its relaxation by the leadership of the church.\textsuperscript{880} She states:

\begin{quote}
When churches begin to give in to pressures mounted by people who want to conform to worldly standards of today, they forget
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{875} Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 203.

\textsuperscript{876} Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at the COP head office at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.

\textsuperscript{877} Victoria Opare, interview, on the 13\textsuperscript{th} November 2011 at Akropong in the Eastern Region.

\textsuperscript{878} Lucy Kouffie, interview, on the 13 May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region.

\textsuperscript{879} Lucy Kouffie, interview, on the 13 May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region.

\textsuperscript{880} Alberta Kuma, interview, on the 27\textsuperscript{th} November 2011 at Ashaiman in the Greater Accra Region.
that it leads to spiritual and moral decline. The word of the Lord does not change so the Church of Pentecost should not change its beliefs and practices especially since we have always known that to be a scriptural demand. If we do, our church is bound to suffer decline.881

The debate over dress code reforms in the COP became a heated one in the Ghana especially in the print and electronic media. This was so because the COP was noted for emphasis on moral codes.882 However, Opoku Onyinah maintains “it was the media that created panic over the issue.”883 Indeed the Ghanaian radio and print media escalated the debate on the dress code reforms. For example, three state-owned newspapers (Daily Graphic, The Ghanaian Times and The Spectator) and one private newspaper (Daily Guide) took an interest in the discussion upon the announcement of the COP dress code reforms. The Daily Graphic wrote on its front-page “Pentecost’s New Dress Code Causes Stir.”884 The Ghanaian Times carried the story under the headline “Church of Pentecost Relaxes ‘Morality’ Rules.”885 The Spectator (which is a weekend newspaper) gave it the caption “Ears on Wheels: Do Our Churches Need Dress Code?”886 The Daily Guide on its part presented a cartoon embellished with the theme “Pentecost Change”887 The cartoon

881 Alberta Kuma, interview, on the 27th November 2011 at Ashaiman in the Greater Accra Region.
882 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 203.
883 Opoke Onyinah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office Accra, in the Greater Accra Region.
sought to mock the church and make it appear the COP has discarded its spirituality and moral quality in favour of modernity with its moral laxity.888

The basis for the practice of head covering in the COP remains unclear. Alfred Koduah writes, “Nobody seems to know with certainty how the woman’s head-covering begun in The Church of Pentecost and why it has become such an entrenched practice.”889 Koduah maintains:

> It appears, however, that one thing that has greatly influenced the church’s practices is the contents of three prophecies that came forth in 1931, 1940 and 1948 at Asamankese, Winneba and Koforidua, respectively. This constitutes what has become known to The Church of Pentecost as its covenant with God.890

Koduah is also convinced that “most of the practices of the church have evolved within the context of the Ghanaian experience.”891

It is obvious the COP were inconsistent with the requirement of dress code until the reforms because the PIWC were exempt from any dress code. While the church kept strict adherence in practices such as head-covering and prohibited women wearing trousers, lipstick etc. in the worship centres, the PIWC were free from such moral and religious obligations. It therefore raises the question of church practices, spirituality, religious morality and change.892 Larbi, for instance argued that the establishment of the PIWC “is one of the most radical changes that the church has

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888 The captions on the cartoon ‘colo’ and ‘kronkron ne Ewurade’ in the Akan means, ‘ancient’ and ‘holiness unto the Lord’ respectively, suggesting holiness has been sacrificed for modernity.
889 Koduah, The Woman’s Head-Covering in Church, p. 90.
890 Ibid., pp. 91-92.
891 Ibid., p. 92.
ever gone through." This change is partly what is now permeating the entire fabric of COP with the ongoing reforms on dress code.

5.1.3. Music and Worship

The COP is distinguished for its music especially the choruses used in their prayers, praises and worship of God. Opoku Onyinah writing a foreword to the biography of Eunice Johnson, a renowned song minister of the church, affirmed COP’s contribution of gospel songs as a “means of deepening spirituality in the face of real life situations.” Onyinah also believes that “One of the greatest blessings of the Church of Pentecost is the phenomenon of divine impartation of Spiritual and Prophetic songs which God through diverse ways gives to the body of Christ for its edification, through individual members of the church.” Onyinah was emphatic about COP’s role in deepening spirituality through music in Ghana. He stressed: “The Church has developed a form of worship, especially its songs, which have had an impact on Ghanaian society.”

Members of the church who were interviewed attested to the impact COP composed choruses have made in their lives. For example, Comfort Baah described her experience, “the atmosphere of worship and spiritual music ministration elevates my spirit to be in tune with God.” She continues:

893 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 203.
895 Ibid., p. vii.
896 Onyinah, “Akan Witchcraft and the Concept of Exorcism in the Church of Pentecost”, p. 175.
897 Comfort Baah, interview, on the 9th October 2011 at Cape Coast in the Central Region.
Music and worship bring down the presence of God, and all that one desires is to be in the hiding place of God where the troubles of life melt before his presence. I have had several experiences where I felt life was over for me, but coming to church and joining in the worship brought freshness to my life. The tangible presence of God makes me feel I should continue to hope and live. I have heard the same testimonies with other people in the church.  

Another member of the COP, Adjoa Yeboah Anokye, acknowledges, “I may not be able to remember every word preached from the Bible, but the songs of worship is enough inspiration and experience to keep me in touch with my saviour and life and I always have them in my heart.” Her emphasis noted:

The time of worship is a time of encounter with one’s maker. You cannot have words to express everything but it is a moment one senses God and his touch to heal, deliver, and bless with favour. It is indeed a moment of the divine and power.

These religious experiences resonate with William James’s argument that “religion is full of abstract objects which prove to have an equal power.” The worship and praise choruses have a tremendous effect on the individuals as well as on the entire congregation. For the individual worshipper, the experience gives an ecstatic feeling and consciousness of the supernatural presence, an experience Rudolf Otto termed _mysterium tremendum_. This experience has an empowering effect,

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898 Comfort Baah, interview, on the 9th October 2011 at Cape Coast in the Central Region.
899 Adjoa Yeboah Anokye, interview, on the 6th May 2012 at Sekondi in the Western Region.
900 Adjoa Yeboah Anokye, interview, on the 6th May 2012 at Sekondi in the Western Region.
901 James, _The Varieties of Religious Experience_, p. 54.
902 William Wilberforce Adrany, interview, on the 29th October 2011 at Sogakope in the Volta Region.
903 An observation during fieldwork showed different individual responses during worship. Some worshippers were overwhelmed with the ‘spirit’ and fell prostrate on the floor while congregational worship was in session.
emboldening the worshipper to face life as is seen in Adjoa Yeboah Anokye’s testimony mentioned above.

The COP has mainly developed its theology and practices out of inspirational songs stirred up by individual members of the church. These songs are characterized by spontaneity usually led by one person at a time, eventually all the congregation join in worship and praises, sometimes interspersed with loud prayers. These songs are termed ‘Songs of the Spirit’ or ‘Prophetic Singing’ indicating that the Holy Spirit inspired them to convey a particular message to the church. An observer in a COP congregation may notice the dynamic ways by which these songs influence church meetings. For instance, a person inspired by the Holy Spirit bursts forth with songs while the pastor or elder of the church is preaching. Other times songs were sung before or after a prophecy in a prayer meeting or during congregational worship. The inspiration of these songs in the COP is considered as ‘marked manifestation’ of a ‘spirit filled church service’. In the words of Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, “Corporate worship provides the highpoint for the experience of the Spirit through his manifestations in tongues, prophecies, visions and ecstasies.”

The COP is a big influence on Ghanaian indigenous gospel music production. Key gospel composers and artists include Eunice Francesca Stephanie Addison, Joana

905 Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
906 This observation was made during fieldwork in the local assemblies of the COP.
907 Michael Ativor, interview, on the 13th May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region.
908 John Sam, interview, on the 18th of September 2011 at Tema in the Greater Accra Region.
Ankama and Eunice Johnson.\textsuperscript{910} In contemporary times, others such as Opayin Miraku, Francis Adjei and Cyndy Thompson have produced gospel songs that are used across denominations for Christian worship.\textsuperscript{911} The inspirational songs are also used in praises and worship of God in COP.\textsuperscript{912} Opoku Onyinah, for example, acknowledges Madam Johnson’s contributions “to theology and spirituality in Ghanaian Pentecostalism and Christianity through her prophetic songs.”\textsuperscript{913} Others such as Madan Afua Kuma impacted the history and worship life of the COP “using praise poetry and other literary forms in the appreciation of the transcendent.”\textsuperscript{914} This consistently influences liturgical forms in many churches in Ghana especially in the area of gospel music and spirituality.\textsuperscript{915} The COP worship style takes into consideration the African cultural milieu. The church incorporates elements of local context such as language and musical idiom into its worship. The COP communicates in local dialects or a mixture of the vernacular and English language. Apart from the PIWC which was purposefully set up to attract people “of different nationalities, traditions, and cultures,”\textsuperscript{916} the COP presents a model of Christian worship that is centered on Christ and yet bears African religio-cultural characteristics. Arguably, the COP presents an ecclesiology that is different from Western missionary Christianity and indigenous African

\textsuperscript{910} For comprehensive discussion on this, see, Hayfron, \textit{A Sound from Heaven}.

\textsuperscript{911} The songs of these artists are learnt my churches and incorporated in their music ministries.

\textsuperscript{912} David Nyansah Hayfron. \textit{“The Theology and Spirituality of some selected songs of Mrs. Eunice Johnson of Ghana.”} A Dissertation presented to Akrofi Christaller Institute of Theology, Mission and Culture, Ghana, for the award of Masters of Art degree, 2010.

\textsuperscript{913} Onyinah, “Foreword”, \textit{A Sound from Heaven}, p. viii.

\textsuperscript{914} Hayfron, \textit{A Sound from Heaven}, p. xiv.

\textsuperscript{915} Churches in Ghana, especially the classical Pentecostals and the Charismatic churches, depend to a large extent on the compositions and inspirational songs from the COP for corporate worship.

religions, but truly indigenous Pentecostal in character and form. This character of the COP is an invaluable model. This is because, as J.H. Nketia has noted about African culture in Christian worship, “Africanization of worship might enable the majority of African Christians who […] have not been brought up on western music, for example, to feel deeply when they worship.”\footnote{J. H. Nketia. "The Contribution of African Culture to Christian Worship." \textit{International Review of Mission} 47.187,1958, pp. 266-267.} Nketia however issued a caveat, he did not imply ‘Africanization of worship’ means African Christians should go back and worship their deities,\footnote{Ibid., p. 268.} neither did he mean that “worship must take the exact form by means of which the Akan [as an example] express their continued relationship with their unseen ancestors.”\footnote{Ibid.} What Nketia suggested which runs in tandem with COP’s liturgical pattern is “the use of a more homely means of expressing or ordering the essential aspects of Christian worship so that the African worshipper can understand and feel deeply as he worship.”\footnote{Ibid., p. 271.}

Closely connected to the discussion of the ‘Africanization of worship’ is the argument that the introduction of Christianity in western grab to Africans created a defective ecclesiology, which had consequences for Christological and liturgical representations.\footnote{Lamin Sanneh. \textit{West African Christianity: The Religious Impact.} Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1983, pp. 242-251.} Among those who subscribe to this notion is Dan Antwi who argued:

> There is no gainsaying that African Christianity today has suffered somewhat from a defective ecclesiology due mainly to the fact that early missionary Christological hermeneutic was contextually defective. Had it not been the fact that a highly conditioned Christology formulated in Europe, was made to respond to specific
situations and peoples of Africa, African Christianity might have been different. No thought was given to the African religio-cultural response to the Christological question: what is Jesus Christ for the African? As it is, a defective Christology produces a defective ecclesiology. Without any consideration of local notions, the patterns of the Church presented has [sic] continued to be different and foreign.  

The fact that the COP takes seriously different local settings within the African milieu and has developed either consciously or unconsciously culturally appropriate worship, makes it highly valuable. The ‘consideration for local notions’ as said by Antwi remains empowering in the church’s bid for self-realization. Nketia has also noted, “the problem of indigenizing Christian worship rests with African Christians who have an insight into the Christian faith and a sympathetic understanding of the problems of worship in their own changing society.” The COP’s model of worship could perhaps be a source of inspiration for Christian worship in African churches. Since the practice of worship is related to the religious experiences of prayer, it remains valuable to explore this as vital component in COP’s liturgy.

5.1.4. Prayer

Prayer and the operation of spiritual gifts are very visible features of COP’s spirituality. The church’s theology of prayer is expressed in two forms: first, the operation of prayer camps founded by the church or operated by recognized

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members of the church with the blessing of the COP.\footnote{Onyinah. “Akan Witchcraft and the Concept of Exorcism in the Church of Pentecost”, pp. 252-258.} Prophet Martinson Yeboah, the third chairman of the COP for instance is purported to have said that the prayer camps were “gifts to the COP.”\footnote{Ibid., p. 255.}

The other expression of prayer in COP is the practice of prayer as part of worship in church meetings often in the form of intercessory, supplication or a prayer vigil. Asamoah-Gyadu, refers to this as COP’s “praying culture.”\footnote{Asamoah-Gyadu, “Pentecostalism and the Missiological Significance of Religious Experience in Africa Today: The Case of Ghana ‘Church of Pentecost’, p. 41.} He indicated that the COP “taught the principle of ‘praying through,’ of continuing a vigil before the Lord until they had the impression that the prayer was being answered.”\footnote{Ibid.} Onyinah summed up the essential role of prayer in the COP indicating, “the foundation of the church was by prayer, it developed through prayer and continue to prevail by reason of prayer.”\footnote{Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office, Accra, in the Greater Accra Region.} This agrees with Larbi’s assessment that “Everything within the church necessarily begins and ends with several minutes of prayer. “Mass prayer” is practiced by the church because it is believed the first century church practiced this.”\footnote{Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 257.} In addition, the responses of both pastors and members of the church I interviewed suggest the COP operates with an orientation of ‘spiritual combat’.\footnote{‘Spiritual combat’ means an active engagement with the forces of darkness perceived to work against the interest of believers.} The idea of demonic powers, life challenges, sickness and moral
failures (sins of all kinds) draw COP members into ‘power encounters’ which feature in the prayers, choruses and emphasis of particular scriptural passages.  

Onyinah’s earlier comments that “the foundation of the church was by prayer, it developed through prayer and continue to prevail by reason of prayer” show the significance of prayer in the COP ecclesiology. This is important because his perspective enriches the discussion with his firsthand experience of the pastoral practice in COP as an ordained pastor since 1976 in the church and an academic who has researched extensively on his own church, the COP. Onyinah further remarks:

although COP has not yet intellectually systematised its faith and practices in theological categories, these are echoed in its normal church activities such as in worship through songs and preaching, at conventions and movements’ meetings; the members carry these along orally.

What Onyinah sees as spiritual experiences expressed through oral means, Kwame Bediako termed “reflective theology.” This expresses the day-to-day reflections of spiritual encounters through prayers, songs, and other forms of spiritual activities of believers. The narratives of Christian Afua Gyan (also known as Afua Kuma, or

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932 See 2 Corinthians 10: 3-6; 12: 7-10; Ephesians 6: 10-20.
933 Onyinah, “Akan Witchcraft and the Concept of Exorcism in the Church of Pentecost”, p. 20.
934 Opoku Onyinah’s works, academic and pastoral, has tremendously impacted Pentecostalism in Ghana. As an academic his research for the award of doctoral degree from the University of Birmingham, UK, in 2002 expanded discussion on the topic “Akan Witchcraft and the Concept of Exorcism in the Church of Pentecost.” He has also written on other topics related to Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity in Ghana. As a pastor, Onyinah pioneered the Pentecost International Worship Center (PIWC) which started reform in the COP. Kingsley Larbi has acknowledged this in his work, Pentecostalism, p. 201-204. Onyinah was also the past rector of the Pentecost University College (PUC) and presently the chairman of the COP and the president of the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council (GPCC).
935 Ibid., p. 184.
936 Bediako, Jesus in Africa, p. 8.
the “grassroot theologian”) a member of the COP has brought attention to this.\(^{937}\)

Adrian Hasting vividly said:

> It is in the vernacular prayer, both public and private, both formal and informal and in the spirituality which grows up from such experience that the true roots of an authentic African Christianity will most surely be found.\(^{938}\)

Closely associated with the issue of prayer and religious experience is the observance of strict church discipline.

### 5.1.5. Moral Conduct and Church Discipline

The constitution of the COP presents a threefold reason for church discipline, it writes: “We believe that the purpose of Church discipline is for the glory of God, purity of the Church, and the spiritual benefit of members.”\(^{939}\) This has been expanded to mean church discipline “serves as a warning to the congregation and also averts reproach upon the name of Christ and for the transgressor; especially, that he/she may repent and be saved.”\(^{940}\) The COP constitution gives offences that attract discipline. They include:

(a) Habitual visiting questionable places [such as, discos, bars, etc.]
(b) Falling into open sin
(c) Embracing or spreading false doctrine
(d) Divorcing wife or husband
(e) Marrying more than one wife
(f) A sister getting married to a married man
(g) Disobeying and showing disrespect to the authority of the Church at any level
(h) Practicing immorality\(^{941}\)


\(^{940}\) Ibid.

\(^{941}\) Ibid.
The list presented in the COP constitution is not exhaustive. Writings of Larbi and Onyinah show other practices that the COP frowns upon. These include “laziness and misappropriations of funds”\(^{942}\) as well as *abisa* (consultation of shrine/oracles) and other forms of idolatry.\(^{943}\) Any infringements of COP beliefs or members who are found to be associated with any of the listed practices are severely sanctioned. The sanctions vary depending upon the seriousness of the offence committed.

Leaders and members of the COP found culpable:

(a) May be publicly rebuked  
(b) May be suspended from taking an active part in all Church programmes and activities  
(c) Shall not partake of the Lord’s Supper  
(d) Shall not minister or witness on the platform of the Church, etc.  
(e) May be removed from office  
(f) The Office of Elder, Deacon or Deaconess may be revoked by the appointing authority  
(g) In extreme cases, an offending member/officer may be excommunicated from the Church by the Executive Council on the recommendation of the Area Head and the Area Executive Committee\(^{944}\)

The procedure for sanctioning an offending officer or member of the church resides with the Area/District/Local committee appointed to perform such disciplinary duties.\(^{945}\) For example, the leadership of a local assembly or their appointed representatives may invite a member of the church who acts immorally for interrogation. When the allegation is confirmed, the member is brought before the congregation and his or her sins read out to all present. After that, the ‘sinner’ is made to sit on a special designated chair that is painted black with the inscription

\(^{942}\) Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, p. 204.  
\(^{943}\) Onyinah, “Akan Witchcraft and the Concept of Exorcism in the Church of Pentecost”, pp. 115-117.  
\(^{945}\) Article 9.1.2. of the COP Constitution mandates the Local Presbytery to “decide on matters concerning local Assemblies.” See, The Church of Pentecost, *Constitution*, 2010, p. 25.
‘discipline’. The culprit is asked to sit on the ‘discipline chair’ at all times during church meetings until the expiration of the term for the discipline, usually six months. During this time of discipline, the individual is not expected to partake of any activity of the church including dancing, stepping forward to give offering, or engaging in any form of service in the church.

The COP constitution also makes provision for a member who is unhappy about his/her discipline. In this situation, the individual shall have a “right of appeal in all cases of sanctions.” The constitution grants that “The appeal shall first be made to the District Executive Committee, then to the Area Executive Committee and, finally, to the Executive Council of the Church, where applicable.” After the appeal, a decision is taken to review the earlier decision or sustain it depending on the merits of the case. A member who is unhappy about the outcome of the appeal may “resort to proceedings outside the Church to redress issues or grievance within the Church only after exhausting the laid down procedures of the Church.”

The COP’s beliefs influences church discipline: first, collective responsibility to maintain the purity of the church. Larbi argued, “it is believed individual sins do not just affect the offender but could also bring God’s judgment upon the church as a whole.” A respondent agrees:

946 Members of the COP are familiar with the ‘discipline chair’ which is usually termed ‘the black stool’.
947 This narration is known to all members of the COP and was confirmed by many of the respondents during my interviews.
949 Ibid.
950 Ibid.
951 Ibid.
952 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 254.
I am aware that individuals could serve as obstacles to our blessings when they do not live according to the word of God yet join in our worship. They drive away the angels of God, the blessings and favour of the Lord. As a result, we are all denied divine favour and goodness that is why the church must keep its spiritual and moral standards and deal with erring members.953

The motivation for the deciplinary practice in the church may therefore be said to be a collective responsibility. The same way the church believe individuals can attract the blessings of God to the church and its members, much the same way as it is believed, an errant members may serve as an obstacle to a collective blessings of the church and its members.

Second, it is believed an individual who sins and does not allow the church’s correction becomes vulnerable to demonic manipulations.954 Such a person, a respondent claims, “becomes worse and is eventually destroyed.”955 The scriptural reference is quoted, “…whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.”956 Thus, the church’s disciplinary action is deemed as restoring and protecting the erring member from spiritual destruction.

Notwithstanding the intentions of COP to protect and save culprits from spiritual and moral degradation, issues have been raised regarding how discipline is carried out in the church. Some members expressed disapproval of the approach to discipline. For example, a respondent is of the view that “discipline has always been carried out in inhumane ways.”957 She narrates how her friend committed abortion for fear of ridicule in the church because she was part of the singing group.

953 Eric Tetteh, interview, on the 29th January 2021 at Tema in the Greater Accra Region.
954 Jonas Offei, interview, on the 13th November 2011 at Akropong in the Eastern Region.
955 Kofi Bentum, interview, on the 9th October 2011 at Cape Coast in the Central Region.
956 See, Ecclesiastes 10: 8b (King James Version).
957 Victoria Opare, interview, on the 13th November 2011 at Akropong in the Eastern Region.
In the process, the friend lost her life. Such an experience, she says, “disregard the individual’s dignity and respect.”\textsuperscript{958} Dominic Mensah considers church discipline in COP as punishment that fails to reform offenders. The crux of his argument is that “after the humiliating announcement of the ‘sinners’, subsequent to the ‘black stool’ experience, no other conscious effort is put in place to help the person develop strength for change.”\textsuperscript{959} Notwithstanding the limitations of its discipline of members in the COP, the church has a reputation for maintaining high moral standards in Ghanaian society. Asamoah-Gyadu has reiterated this: “The COP is noted for its uncompromising holiness ethic and high moral standards.”\textsuperscript{960} In light of this the COP should consider revising aspects of the disciplinary process that subject erring members to public ridicule, this could be done by specialized counseling methods that could help reform culprits.

5.1.6. Volunteerism

The COP is a ‘grassroots church’ which unilizes voluntary support in its activities for church growth and development.\textsuperscript{961} This support is mainly expressed through lay leadership i.e. the Elders, Deacons and Deaconesses. Others include leaders in departments such as music groups, protocol officers normally referred to in COP as ushers and Home Cell group leaders. These groups demonstrate a high degree of commitment that accounts for the growth of the church as indicated in Chapter One, Table Four. Out of twenty-five people interviewed, fifteen (60\%) were voluntary

\textsuperscript{958} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{959} Dominic Mensah, interview, on the 9\textsuperscript{th} of October 2011 at Cape Coast in the Central Region.

\textsuperscript{960} Asamoah-Gyadu, “Pentecostalism and the Missiological Significance of Religious Experience in Africa Today: The Case of Ghana ‘Church of Pentecost’, p. 46.

\textsuperscript{961} Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 197.
church workers distributed across the categories mentioned. Their motivation for volunteering is twofold: personal faith in Jesus Christ and the religious tradition inherited from the forebears of the church. Each of the respondents affirmed this in my interviews with them.

In the COP, an Elder handling the pastorate as leader-in-charge of an assembly is called a presiding Elder, working with a team of lay workers he oversees a local church. The presiding Elder reports to a district pastor who is a full-time ordained pastor of the church. This organizational structure encourages active lay participation in the undertakings of the church. It also allows volunteers to express their spiritual gifts and leadership. Larbi traces the root of this leadership practice:

McKeown’s major contribution in the development of the church was his ability in providing leadership, defining the priorities of the church in terms of evangelism…His role as a leader was that of a facilitator. The actual growth of the church has become possible as a result of the evangelistic efforts of his followers, old and young, literates and illiterates, rich and poor, men and women. The hierarchical form of government being followed by the church was adopted through a consensus by the local leadership and McKeown. This is in consonance with traditional patterns of leadership.

Another factor that inspires voluntarism and facilitates the spiritual and social growth of members of the COP is the Home Cell programme. The Home Cell constitutes a smaller group of the members of the church usually up to twenty-five members in a particular location who meet periodically to discuss the Bible and

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962 The Elders, Deacons and Deaconess had a conviction that voluntarily working for the Lord is a “calling” which is directly rewarded by the Lord himself when one remains faithful. Thus, one’s appointment to such an office serves as a great motivation to serve more diligently.

963 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 204.

964 Members of COP treasure the opportunity to serve because of the understanding that such activities in church induce divine blessings and favour.

965 Presiding Elders are unpaid leaders in the COP who are experienced in the work of the Lord because of their continuous service in the house of God. They work fulltime in other establishments outside of the church.

966 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 204.
pray. They also attend to the needs of one another to ensure the wellbeing of every member of the unit.\textsuperscript{967} The Home Cell groups’ idea demonstrates the sense of belonging that resonates with John Mbiti’s classic axiom: “I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am.”\textsuperscript{968} This has an empowering effect because it engenders the sense of community.

Another volunteering group in the COP whose particular contribution deserves mention is the student association (Pentecost Students and Associates-PENSA).\textsuperscript{969} PENSA partly influenced the transformation of the COP identity as student volunteers ushered in a segment of society who found it difficult to associate with the COP. Larbi has noted:

> The vision of PENSA was to encourage true discipleship and responsible church membership of those scholars of the church who, by dint of their education, could not find room in the programmes and activities of the church.\textsuperscript{970}

PENSA continues to disciple students especially in the universities and the polytechnics in Ghana with tremendous success.\textsuperscript{971} By May 2011, PENSA’s membership across the campuses stood at 45,291, with sixty-two PENSA groups inaugurated.\textsuperscript{972}

Volunteerism is also expressed in COP evangelistic efforts especially during conventions and revival programmes.\textsuperscript{973} The church mobilizes the energies of her

\textsuperscript{967} Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office Accra in the Greater Accra Region.


\textsuperscript{969} For a discussion on the evolution of Pentecost Students and Associates (PENSA) see Larbi, \textit{Pentecostalism}, pp. 197-201.

\textsuperscript{970} Larbi, \textit{Pentecostalism}, p. 199.

\textsuperscript{971} The Church of Pentecost, 39th \textit{General Council Meetings Report}, pp. 35-36.

\textsuperscript{972} Ibid., p. 36.

\textsuperscript{973} The conventions and revival programmes are organized at various levels of the church i.e. National, Area, District and Local.
members especially the Movements, Ministries and Fellowships i.e. the Witness Movement, Pentecost Youth Ministry, Pentecost Men’s Fellowship and the Women’s Movement. For example, the Witness Movement is open to all members of the church because of its core functions:

(a) To carry out EVANGELISM, i.e., preaching, witnessing, winning and discipling souls
(b) To encourage church members to participate in the full programmes and activities of the Church and to further expose them to the various ministries within the Church
(c) To afford the members of the Church the opportunity to plan and organize programmes and activities for evangelism in villages, towns and cities

COP’s success in the rapid spread of the church can be attributed to voluntarism which comes about as a result of the mobilization efforts and effective networking among leaders, groups (such as the choir, ushers, prayer department and evangelism) and members, and more importantly the cooperation of the various movements, committees and fellowships within the church. The COP is a church that gets every member to play a part in its vision. Christine Leonard therefore concludes that in COP, “Every member counts sharing their faith as their own responsibility – not just the leaders.”

974 The Church of Pentecost, 39th General Council Meetings Report, pp. 32-36.
975 The Church of Pentecost, Constitution, p. 50.
976 The statistics presented in the 39th General Council meeting of COP suggest a membership growth in the following: 5% growth in the children membership as against 4.9% in the previous year; 8.7% growth in teenage membership as against 10.9% in the previous year; and 3.9% growth in the adults membership against 2.9% the year before. An interview with the past General Secretary, Apostle Alfred Koduah, revealed that COP planted ten churches per week in 2010.
977 Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
5.2. The ICGC: Organization of Church Worship Service

The ICGC follows a liturgy arrangement that is typical of Charismatic churches. The distinctive features of the church service follow in this arrangement: intercessory prayers which usually take about fifteen minutes. A very expressive praise and worship segment accompanied by a live band with full set of electronic musical instruments follows this. The praise and worship normally take about forty minutes. Once in a month, about ten minutes is given to the dramatic arts ministry (chorography team) to perform during Sunday worship service. The chorography team comprises of young talented members of the church whose presentations are based on biblical narratives. After this section, different song ministrations, mostly the church choir and/or a performing gospel artiste then take their turns while the ushers pass baskets around for the main offerings to be collected as the congregation remain in their seats. This takes approximately fifteen minutes. Then comes the time for preaching which Charismatic Christians in Ghana termed ‘word ministration’. The preacher’s total delivery (including different forms of ministration i.e. ‘prophetic declaration’, prayer and sometimes singing) is usually around forty-five minutes. A second offering specifically designated ‘church project offering’ is taken, followed by weekly announcements, closing prayer and benediction. The average time allotted for each Sunday morning church service is between two hours and two and half hours depending on the discipline of the pastor in time management and is not necessarily the advertised time for church service. In general, church services in ICGC assemblies do not go beyond two hours thirty

980 Once a while some pastors’ claim that the Holy Spirit has not finished with his work and so the service remains in full session until a particular form of ministration is over. However, this is not a regular feature in ICGC.
minutes on Sunday mornings. This is a departure from the church’s original practice. Larbi noted, “In the early days, the Sunday meetings were very lengthy. The service began at 9 am and finished at 4 pm.” The ICGC also run midweek church services (Bible Teachings and prayer services). This takes place on Tuesday or Wednesday between 6:30 pm and 8:15 pm.

There are other striking features in ICGC liturgy. The places of worship whether rented or owned, are well decorated. ICGC branches that meet in their own ‘temple’ furnish the church with state of the art equipment for church services. The church services are well ordered with the seats, altar, and equipment finely arranged. The voluntary workers especially the ushers and choristers are uniformed and the coordinator for the church service oriented with good customer care skills. The theology behind the elaborate arrangements is that “the majesty of God is beautiful and as it is in heaven so shall it be on earth.” The church services are conducted in English even in some of the rural communities in Ghana.

5.2.1. Charismatic Spirituality

The spirituality of ICGC, like other Charismatic churches in Ghana, is primarily revealed through the religious experiences and spiritual gifts of the leader of the

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981 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 338.
982 ICGC calls their church edifices temples.
983 This was particularly noticeable during my fieldwork visits to ICGC churches across the southern part of Ghana.
984 Priscilla Naana Nketia, interview, on the 20th September 2011 at Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.
985 Priscilla Naana Nketia, interview, on the 20th September 2011 at Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.
986 All the churches visited conducted the church services exclusively in the English language.
987 The term “Spirituality” in this discussion embraces the practice of worship (Bible preaching, prayer and singing), spiritual gifts and other religious experiences considered as sacred.
group or movement. However, as the group develops and attracts others to share in its vision, diversity emerges. Thus, it becomes difficult to characterize fully the ethos of the church exclusively by the leader’s charisma as the church grows.

A study of the spirituality of the ICGC therefore may include the key themes that are emphasized in the day-to-day spiritual quest, both formal (through church services) and informal (through Testimonies and Personal devotion) of believers. These themes are also features of Charismatic Christianity and may include; the Bible, prayer, spiritual gifts, and church music. In addition to the examination of liturgical forms and reforms for the purpose of empowerment are the themes of individual commitment and moral discipline.

5.2.2. The Bible

The ICGC believes “The Scriptures—both Old and New Testaments – as the only infallible and authoritative Word of God and the only rule for Christian faith and conduct.” So, the Bible is stressed as the very word of God. ICGC also affirms it is “committed to the holistic preaching and demonstration of God’s plans and purposes for all mankind as revealed in the Holy Scriptures.” The church therefore refers to itself as “an Evangelical, Bible-believing, Charismatic Christian

988 See, Sundkler, Bantu Prophets in South Africa.

989 The many secession that took place in the early development of Pentecostalism in Ghana attest to this. A case in point is the standoff between Peter Newman Anim and James McKeown in search of deeper religious experience and interpretation of the bible. For example, Anim’s concept of physical healing was mainly through prayer and excluded orthodox medicinal practice whereas McKeown admitted orthodox medication was not inconsistent with the Bible. This led to the separation of Anim and McKeown, which subsequently developed into the Christ Apostolic Church, headed by Anim and the Church of Pentecost led by McKeown. For further explorations, see, Larbi, Pentecostalism.

990 I have indicated in Chapter Four the differences in theological emphasis in Otabil pastoral ministry and some pastors in ICGC.

991 International Central Gospel Church, The Vision, p. 15.

992 Ibid., p. 13.
The phrase ‘Bible believing’ is noteworthy as it shows how the ICGC defines itself. This designation, Asamoah-Gyadu intimates:

help to define contemporary Pentecostals against their historic mission forebears, who were perceived as either neglecting biblical teachings or diluting the biblical message to suit the liberal lifestyles of their members and their indifference to such truths as the experiences of the Holy Spirit.  

In ICGC, “believers are encouraged to emphasize the scriptures in their daily experiences.” Such emphasis is seen in the rhetoric, prayers and declarations they make on daily basis. It is believed that the ‘spoken word’ that echo what the Bible says changes life circumstances. Nelson Ahlijah affirms:

The word of God in the mouth of the believer is powerful. We pray with God’s word. We bind and loose with God’s word. We prevail in all our challenges with God’s word. We cannot leave the word of God aside and live as believers. For example, my experiences as a child of God all these years have taught me the power in the word and I always apply it just as it is.

The literal declaration and emphasis of the word of God by Charismatic Christians has been termed by Ogbu Kalu as “Standing on the Word.” A mark of a successful believer, to use a respondent’s expression, is “a child of God who operates with God’s word by faith and apply same in the situations of this life.”

As a result, God’s word is used as an instrument for transformation in everyday life. The use of the Bible to mediate every day’s concerns of the believer has been noted by Andre Corten and Ruth Marshall-Fratani who maintain the “notion of

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993 Ibid.
995 Nelson Ahlijah, interview, on the 4th May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region.
996 ‘Spoken word’ is a phrase used by Charismatic believers to mean the declaratory words in line with the Bible or sometimes biblical quotations spoken directly to affirm one’s faith.
997 Nelson Ahlijah, interview, on the 4th May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region.
999 Ebo Mends, interview, on the 16th October 2011 at Cape Coast in the Central Region.
transformation has been broadened to include the possibility of material change in
everyday life.”

The crux of their argument is that:

Biblical verses mixed with popular self-help discourses exhort converts to identify the sources of their frustration and suffering and embark on a process of continual self-overcoming. The image of salvation at the heart of this process increasingly means upward mobility and personal success.

The title, “Living Word” used by ICGC for devotional material and for Mensa Otabil’s preaching on various radio and television networks in Ghana demonstrates further the transformative idea ascribed to the word of God. The notion “Living Word” conveys the dynamic power in God’s word in meeting people’s needs.

The ICGC maintains that, the authority of the Bible places moral responsibility on believers. The word of God is emphasized to admonish members into righteous living. This was exemplified when in 2011, ICGC declared “Righteousness” as their annual theme.

The reason for the theme, according to Otabil, “is to draw the attention of the members of the church to go back to biblical standards of morality expected of every believer.” Otabil decried the low standard of morality among Christians in Ghana that resulted in church scandals. He stressed, “the Bible must be exposed properly to the members so they take

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1001 Ibid.
1002 ‘Living Word’ is the radio and television broadcasting title used by Mansa Otabil in reaching the masses by his preaching.
1003 Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18th August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
1005 Mensa Otabil, meeting with ICGC pastors for the declaration of the theme of the year for 2011 at Elmina in the Central Region. Audio CD, December 2010.
1006 Ibid.
responsibility for their Christian lives and not become vulnerable to wayward pastors who may take advantage of them.”

Similarly, Otabil declared 2012 as ICGC’s year of “Purity”. This was a follow up to the previous year’s emphasis for righteous living. He asserted:

“We’ve had several themes in the past which have acted as guides for us as a church. In 2011, I sensed God calling us to emphasize on righteousness so our theme was ‘Righteousness.’ For 2012, I sense that God still wanted us to walk in the paths of righteousness in a more practical way. I believe God wants us His children to pursue purity in all we are and in all we do. As a result, our theme for 2012 is, ‘PURITY’.

The declaration of ‘purity’ was backed by specific outline and biblical passages.

“There are three areas of purity that God wants us to emphasize”, Otabil declared, “Purity of heart – Mathew 5: 8…purity of thoughts – Philippians 4:8 … Purity of hands – 1 Samuel 12:3.” The biblical passages that usually accompany the themes were meant for emphasis. An example of the 2011 circular from the Deputy General Secretary of ICGC, Rev. Morris Appiah, reads:

During the recent Pastors’ Retreat at Elmina the General Overseer declared Righteousness as the theme for 2011. He encouraged Pastors, Ministers and Lay-Leaders Managing Churches to focus on teaching their congregations on Righteousness and its implications for us as believers and as children of God. He also recommended the Book of Romans as the main biblical text for the year.

Asamoah-Gyadu, for example, has noted the emphasis of the Bible as a core feature in ICGC’s spirituality. He asserts, “the Bible as Gospel [Gospel here recognized as

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1007 Ibid.
1009 In ICGC, the themes of the year come with specific scriptural backing.
1010 Otabil, Purity. p. 5
1011 Ibid., pp. 5-6.
1012 International Central Gospel Church, Circular to all Pastors and Lay-Leaders managing assemblies issued on the 24th December 2010 by the Deputy General Secretary, Rev. Morris Appiah.
the church’s name] was to be at the centre of a new stream of Christianity.”

In addition to the Bible, Charismatic believers also take prayer seriously in their spirituality.

5.2.3. Prayer

Prayer is central in ICGC’s spirituality and this is so because would-be members are taught in the membership and discipleship programmes why and how to pray. Similar to other PC churches, prayer exists in two forms, corporate or congregational prayer and individual or private prayer. Corporate prayers are said in the open for the congregation to participate. Usually, a leader in the church in the absence of a pastor exhorts the congregation with the scriptures and introduces a set of topics to be prayed on. Corporate prayers in the ICGC are exotic and are often expressed as loud, enthusiastic prayers. Again, all church meetings start with corporate prayers and are intercessory in nature. Intercessory corporate prayers are considered as “moments of encounter.” Regularly, parallels are drawn from the biblical text in support of prayer topics. The scriptural text is also supposed to show the power and result of prayer. An example, which is commonly cited, is found in Acts 12:5 “Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was...

1014 Ibid., pp. 36-57.
1015 See International Central Gospel Church, (New beginner’s in Christ; Membership- Growing in Christ; Maturity; and Ministry Manuals). These are the main materials used in the training and discipling members in the church.
1016 A visit to ICGC Holy Ghost Temple during the Thursday Solution Centre prayer ministration attested to this.
1017 The ICGC Sunday and Weekday church meetings shows a liturgical arrangement with intercessory prayers first on the list.
1018 See biblical passages that are normally quoted; Acts 4: 23-31; 5:12-32; 12: 1-19.
offered to God for him by the church.” During intercessory prayer, the leader may also give a testimony or share a true story to buttress and underscore the power of prayer. Testimony, such as that of Lawrence Amissah Ahenkorah, illustrates this:

On the 9th September, 2010 I felt sick and was admitted at a renowned hospital in Tema, a week after I was discharged but my condition did not improve so I went back to the hospital. A day after I was referred to the Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital for further investigations. It was at Korle-Bu Teaching Hospital that I was told I have RENAL FAILURE… My condition was made known to Rev. Edward Kissi… The pastor in our church visited me at hospital and encouraged and prayed with me. Special prayers and fasting were made on my behalf in the church and during church services. And to the GLORY OF GOD, without any DIALYSIS or KIDNEY transplant my creatinine level which was far above the normal started decreasing drastically from:

12,280 > 1,293 > 592 > 334 > 174 > 121 > 104

God who calls out things that do not exist as though they are, fixed a new kidney for me. THIS IS WHAT PRAYERS AND FASTING CAN DO.

Ahenkorah’s testimony demonstrates the conception and appropriation of corporate prayers in Charismatic churches which also connects to healing and deliverance. His particular comment that “special prayers and fasting were made on my behalf in the church and during church services” is significant. From the standpoint of Charismatic believers, corporate prayers bring results. Kojo Sallah agrees:

I believe the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous person is powerful especially when we come together to call on God in our time of need. I wish all people knew the power in our collective prayers. I have seen great move of God during such memnets of prayer.

1021 Kojo Sallah, interview, on the 6th September 2011 at Tema in the Greater Accra Region.
Sallah echoes strongly a spiritual outcome that he has personally witnessed and therefore firmly attests to. Another ICGC respondent Elizabeth Quarshie also supports his observation:

I had my healing in an allnight prayer service. It was a great time of prayer and everyone was actively in prayer. I trusted God and I had a miracle of healing. For years I had lived with very severe back pain. I had it checked several time in the hospital without much relieve. I heard a testimony of someone who was healed by prayer which made me believe my condition could also be healed. Indeed, I have been healed by means of prayer.\(^{1022}\)

Such notable themes (healing and deliverance) in the churches are in themselves a basis for supernatural empowerment which prayer provides. Harvey Cox has noticed this phenomenon and argued that the churches “provide their followers with the weapons of the Spirit they need to fight back against the forces of evil as they manifest themselves in disease and discord.”\(^{1023}\) To effectively deal with such abnormalities, some ICGC assemblies set time apart on Thursdays around lunchtime for praying in a bid to seek spiritual solutions for members who are confronted with diverse life challenges. This meeting is termed \textit{Solution Centre}.\(^{1024}\) Again, for the purpose of spiritual renewal, all ICGC assemblies are mandated to set apart the month of July for \textit{Spiritual Emphasis}.\(^{1025}\) These two examples show how the ICGC uses prayer as an effective element in their spirituality.

\(^{1022}\) Elizabeth Quarshie, interview, on the 20th November 2011 at Ashaiman in the Greater Accra Region.

\(^{1023}\) Cox, \textit{Fire from Heaven}, p. 247.

\(^{1024}\) \textit{Solution Centre} is a praying forum that seeks to deal with specific spiritual difficulties, hence the name. In this meeting, members present pray on their own. However, a pastor or prophet may be assigned to occasionally lead prayer with the people by the direction of the Holy Spirit.

\(^{1025}\) The \textit{Spiritual Emphasis Month} is a month long fasting and prayer scheduled on the month of July each year and observed by every ICGC assembly as part of the calendar of event of the organization.
The ICGC also urges members to practice individual or private prayer as well.\textsuperscript{1026} This is usually in the form of personal devotion which is “an opportunity for a monologue to God.”\textsuperscript{1027} This form of prayer is private in nature and individually focused. People share their experiences to embolden others to emulate the practice of personal prayer life.\textsuperscript{1028}

Essentially, there are three motivations for both corporate and individual prayers in PC spirituality. Firstly, prayer is meant to take care of specific needs – felt and aspirational needs – of believers. The needs may be to satisfy everyday requirements of life or to obtain supernatural help. Asamoah-Gyadu affirms PC form of prayer as “experiential spirituality”\textsuperscript{1029} and attests:

> Prayer is one area in which this difference between Pentecostalism and its older compatriots is evident. In the older liturgical traditions, prayer is read and God is approached through the voices of others in written prayers.\textsuperscript{1030}

Harvey Cox on his part calls it “‘Christian answer’ to specific religious needs”\textsuperscript{1031} All agree prayer proves to be relevant in the religious experience of the Charismatic believer.

Secondly, prayer is used to counter the forces of negation. The concept of ‘the spiritual’\textsuperscript{1032} in African cosmology makes prayer a key feature in religious beliefs and experiences of the people. Larbi discussed the need for ‘cosmological balance’

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{1026} Mensa Otabil “Living Word” devotion guide incorporate daily prayer points.
\bibitem{1027} Warrington, \textit{Pentecostal Theology}, p. 214.
\bibitem{1028} Charles Nsiah, interview, on the 11\textsuperscript{th} September 2011 at Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.
\bibitem{1029} Asamoah-Gyadu, \textit{Contemporary Pentecostal Christianity}, p. 39.
\bibitem{1030} Ibid.
\bibitem{1031} Cox, \textit{Fire from Heaven}, p. 247.
\bibitem{1032} The ‘spiritual’ here is directly related to the African Worldview of reality. See, Margaret Field. \textit{Search for Security}. London: Faber and Faber, 1960, p. 6.
\end{thebibliography}
within the African religious milieu.\textsuperscript{1033} The thrust of his argument is that “The forces of evil are always at work against human beings in order to prevent him from enjoying abundant life, or fulfilling their \textit{nkrabea} (destiny).\textsuperscript{1034} Larbi therefore suggests, “The central focus of the religious exercises of \textit{homo sapiens} is therefore the harnessing of power inherent in the spirit force for his or her own advantage.”\textsuperscript{1035} This understanding is not exclusive to PC Christians, many Africans have religious experiences which suggest such spiritual conflict.\textsuperscript{1036}

Thirdly, ICGC, and in general charismatic churches use prayer to spur believers into greater devotion and Christian service. Prayer becomes a \textit{stimuli} for the manifestation of spiritual gifts which also engenders believers’ participation in the service of God as they operate in the gifts of grace. Asamoah-Gyadu calls this the “democratization of Charisma.”\textsuperscript{1037}

\textbf{5.2.4. Spiritual Gifts}

Arguably, the most popular attribute of Charismatic Christianity is the dependence and operation of spiritual gifts.\textsuperscript{1038} Scholars who have studied Charismatic Christianity have come to conclude, “being empowered also means the recovery of pneumatic gifts and their dynamic functioning among the community of believers.”\textsuperscript{1039} The word \textit{charismatic} is a derivative from the Greek word

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[1033] Larbi, \textit{Pentecostalism}, pp. 7-8.
\item[1034] Ibid.
\item[1035] Ibid., p. 8.
\item[1036] See, Milingo, \textit{The World in Between}; Meyer, \textit{Translating the Devil}.
\item[1038] See, Omenyo, \textit{Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism}.
\item[1039] Ibid., p. 159.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
charismata which means gifts of the Spirit or gifts of grace. Hence, Charismatic Christianity distinguishes itself by the emphasis it places on spiritual gifts. I have mentioned earlier that ICGC refers to itself as ‘an Evangelical, Bible-believing, Charismatic Christian Church.’ This reference denotes the church’s consciousness in its status as Charismatic, meaning, its belief in the gifts of the Spirit. As a result, the ICGC teaches that the set of spiritual gifts mentioned by Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 12: 8-10 are still relevant and necessary for today’s effective Christian living. Members of the congregation share their religious experiences; they tell how the gifts of the Spirit influenced the outcome of life events. Elizabeth Quarshie notes:

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are so important for the believer today. Some of us moved from the orthodox churches because we yearned for the gifts of the Spirit to improve on our lives and also know what the will of the Lord is in every situation of life. This is so important to me because I must live by God’s will.

The indication here is that, “the Holy Spirit through a word of knowledge, prophecy or spiritual discernment prompts believers to avoid dangers and satanic traps.” There are other claims by members of ICGC that by the endowment of spiritual gifts, supernatural works such as praying for the sick to be healed, winning souls for Jesus Christ, destruction of demonic hegemonies are made possible. Christian voluntarism is also regarded as effective when one is endued with the

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1041 Alex Botchway, interview, on the 4th May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region.
1042 Elizabeth Quarshie, interview, on the 20th November 2011 at Ashaiman in the Greater Accra Region.
1043 Elizabeth Quarshie, interview, on the 20th November 2011 at Ashaiman in the Greater Accra Region.
1044 Nelson Ahlijah, interview, on the 4th May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region.
Holy Spirit and uses spiritual gifts.\textsuperscript{1045} Thus, “despising spiritual gifts and the Word”\textsuperscript{1046} is considered a wrong attitude which destroys the work of God.\textsuperscript{1047} The function of spiritual gifts in ICGC is essential because, as Asamoah-Gyadu has pointed out about African Charismatic Christianity, “in practice it cannot be separated from their soteriological goals.”\textsuperscript{1048} As a result, members of the church are taught to fervently desire spiritual gifts.\textsuperscript{1049}

Charismatic Christianity in Ghana has also demonstrated the downside of the operation of spiritual gifts.\textsuperscript{1050} The subjective nature of spiritual experience has led to some degree of abuse leading to distrust, pain and the manipulation of people who may be in dire need of help. Because the gifts are not only expressed during formal church meetings, members or leaders who claim to possess such spiritual abilities have in some instances violated the trust reposed in them by abusing unsuspecting people. As a result, some members of ICGC do express disquiet about agents of the spiritual gifts. Kwabina Anderson maintains:

\begin{quote}
I wish everyone understands the proper administration of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. I do not doubt the effectiveness of it in the life of the believer. However, I know of a situation where prophecy divided a family. The beginning of trouble between a husband and a wife was as a result of a prophecy. From that time onwards, I am so careful how I take prophecy and other so call divine directions.\textsuperscript{1051}
\end{quote}

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\textsuperscript{1046} International Central Gospel Church, \textit{The Vision}, p. 25.
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\textsuperscript{1047} Ibid.
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\textsuperscript{1048} Asamoah-Gyadu, \textit{African Charismatics}, p. 159.
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\textsuperscript{1049} International Central Gospel Church, \textit{Connecting with God’s Family}.
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\textsuperscript{1050} There are those who do not encourage the functioning of spiritual gifts because they have been witnesses of the abuse of spiritual gifts or victims in one way or the other. Two people who pleaded anonymity during field research told their stories of how a brother was swindled due to a prophecy. The other person also narrated her experience where she suffered sexual abuse.
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\textsuperscript{1051} Kwabina Anderson, interview, on the 6\textsuperscript{th} May 2012 at Secondi in the Western Region.
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A respondent, Janet Adjei, whose personal experience is given to support the misuse of spiritual gifts, felt disillusioned about persons who claim to be gifted by God especially those in the PC churches. She recounts her experience:

I followed a friend to a fellowship where a prophet told me I would die unless he fasts and prays for me. I was afraid so I agreed. After some days of prayer, he started making advances toward me. He told me he love me and want to marry me although he is married. It was at that point I got to know he is not genuine.  

As a result of the abuse and misuse of spiritual gifts, the ICGC teaches its members to test the credibility of the gifts of the spirit and more importantly those who operate the gifts.

5.2.5. Worship

Worship in Charismatic Christianity is spontaneous and an engaging experience. Keith Warrington describes it as “an act of private and corporate praise of God.” Worship may also be considered in a broader perspective. This is seen in the ICGC annual theme declared for the year 2013 – “Our Year of Worship.” The declared theme (Worship) came along with a long citation that was recited by the entire congregation during church convocations especially on Sunday morning in all assemblies. The declaration reads:

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1052 Janet Adjei, interview, on the 25th September 2011 at Abossey Okai in the Greater Accra Region.
1053 Yaw Binney, interview, on the 21st September 2011 at ICGC head office Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.
1054 Warrington, Pentecostal Theology, p. 219.
1056 The ICGC calls such citations “Prophetic Declaration” and they are reviewed annually to suit the theme of the year.
O come, let us worship the Lord. Let us bow before God our Maker. He is our Lord, and we are the sheep of His pasture. My soul magnifies the Lord; My spirit rejoices in God My Saviour. O Lord, My God; early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You. I will praise My Maker while I have breath, and in the congregation I will declare His Majesty. Today, I join the angelic hosts to proclaim “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!” You are worthy O Lord. Great and marvellous are Your works; Just and true are Your ways. Your name is as ointment poured forth. You are the Eternal God. The All-Sufficient One. The Lord Most High. You are King of the Universe; the Sustainer of Life. You are Glorious in Holiness, Mighty in Works. My Redeemer, My Deliverer, My Healer, My Provider. Lord you are good and your mercies endure forever. From the rising of the sun until it’s going down. The name of the Lord shall be praised. Let the nations exalt the Lord. Then the earth shall yield her increase; He crowns the year with His Goodness. My cup overflows. I have set the Lord before me. Therefore I shall not be moved. I will say continually, “Let the LORD be magnified, Who has pleasure in the prosperity of His servant.” The Lord is the portion of my inheritance In His light I see light; at His feet I find peace. I am yours Lord, totally yours. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with all Spiritual Blessings. In heavenly places through Christ. Now To The King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, The Only Wise God, Be All Majesty, Dominion, Glory And Power Forever And Ever. Amen.  

A study of the declaration shows four motifs of worship. These are perhaps the dominant ideas of worship in ICGC. They are; the extolment of God, divine providence, the believer’s life of dedication and service to God, and the proclamation of the awesomeness of God. Most of the songs of adoration for the praise and worship of God carry these themes. The ICGC, like many Charismatic churches in Ghana, incorporates different music forms in their worship. It ranges from the western forms of gospel music to the locally composed Pentecostal gospel repertoire. Recently, ICGC has introduced orchestral music and hymnals in its liturgy, a reform that is worth discussing.

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5.2.6. Church Music

Gospel music is a key feature in Charismatic Christianity.\textsuperscript{1058} Paul Gifford for instance refers to music in ICGC as “a crucial part of the service.”\textsuperscript{1059} The addition of two genres of church music i.e. symphony orchestra and church hymnals, previously unassociated with Ghanaian Charismatic Christianity is significant.\textsuperscript{1060} This is the very first time a Charismatic church in Ghana has incorporated hymns and orchestras into its liturgy.\textsuperscript{1061} The orchestra group is called The Accra Symphony Orchestra (ASO).

ASO was founded in May 2012 with Mensa Otabil as the chief patron.\textsuperscript{1062} The orchestra operates with 36 instruments, these are two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets in B flat, two bassoons, two French horns in F, three trumpets in B Flat, two trombones, four 1\textsuperscript{st} violins, four 2\textsuperscript{nd} violins, four violas, two cellos, two doubles basses, six voices.\textsuperscript{1063} The size of the orchestra is expected to increase to seventy-five different musical instruments and instrumentalists by 2014. The objective of the ASO is to develop a fully-fledged symphony orchestra by 2016 of approximately 140 instrumentalists and singers.\textsuperscript{1064}


\textsuperscript{1059} Gifford, “Ghana’s Charismatic Churches”, p. 245.

\textsuperscript{1060} Ghanaian Charismatic church music has predominantly taken the form of American gospel music style and some incorporation of local gospel genre. For further discussion on this see Gifford, Ghana’s New Christianity.

\textsuperscript{1061} See Appendix 10.

\textsuperscript{1062} The Accra Symphony Orchestra performs at ICGC Christ Temple as part of the musical teams that operate in the church. It also performs on convocations of ICGC.

\textsuperscript{1063} This information was given by Pastor Comfort Dede Amanor, an aide to Mrs Joy Otabil and a pastor of ICGC Christ Temple.

\textsuperscript{1064} Ibid.
The vision of Otabil is to develop ASO to become a genre of music that speaks in the African idiom. This type of music, according to Comfort D. Amanor a pastor in Otabil’s Christ Temple, is purposed to be rooted deeply in the classical foundations of traditional and neo-traditional Africa music. Otabil’s conviction for this musical project is patterned after the works of Béla Bartók, the Hungarian whose works make use of folk tunes. Amanor cites Otabil:

Why can’t we too create artistic works for the symphony orchestra based on our natural resources and musical ideas bequeathed to us by our ancestors through tradition?

Presently, the Christ Temple branch of ICGC alone has this arrangement. However, other branch churches have also started restructuring their music teams to follow suit.

The other development, the hymnal groups, mainly perform church hymns and local tunes. In ICGC assemblies this is a major liturgical reform in the church. Allan Anderson’s observation that Pentecostalism adapts more easily to a culture “where pluralistic religious environment is the norm” is demonstrated in the ongoing reforms carried out in ICGC. Like many Charismatic churches in Ghana,

1065 Ibid.
1068 Information given by Pastor Comfort Dede Amanor on 7th February 2013, ICGC Christ Temple.
1069 Mensa Otabil heads this ICGC local assembly.
1070 Christ Temple of ICGC is always the pacesetter in introducing liturgical reforms in ICGC
1071 These hymns are the regular Christian hymnal associated with the Mission churches i.e. the Methodist, Presbyterian, etc.
1072 These are traditional choruses.
the ICGC, remains very entrepreneurial in ‘Pentecostal-Charismatic reforms’. As the church incorporates new activities such as the ASO, it reviews the old to suit contemporary forms of worship. There is great complementarity of different contemporary liturgical forms, this perhaps is the result of network and interactions between the ICGC and other international ministries and religious personalities the leaders of the church associate with mainly those in the Americas and Europe. Such platforms and networking include conferences and other international religious meetings such as the Greater Works and Destiny Summit conferences organized by ICGC annually.

The Greater Works conference and Destiny Summit are annual convocations organized by ICGC at the end of July’s fasting and prayer and the end of November every year respectively. The aim of the programmes is “to help individual believers to develop their full potentials.” It is also intended to be “a platform for a major spiritual and mental re-orientation [for] transformation, renewal and empowerment.” The conference host, Otabil, presents speakers who are Africans with transnational links in Christian ministries, they include, Pastor Mathew Ashimolowo of Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC) London, Bishop Tudor Bismark of Jabula- New Life Ministries International, Zimbabwe, Bishop Mike Okonkwo of The Redeemed Evangelical Mission (TREM) Nigeria. Conversely, the majority of the speakers for the Destiny Summit are non-

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1074 Most of the reforms that are carried out from time to time, the other Pentecostal Charismatic churches follow suit. An example of this is the ‘annual themes’ declaration which most PC churches have now adapted.
1075 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 344.
Africans. For the 2013 summit, Dr. Samuel Chand, Dr. Mike Murdock, and Pastor Randy Morrison were the main conference speakers. Dr. Leonard Lovett of Oral Robert University, who has a long association with Otabil, has previously been a conference speaker.

These influential pastors also return invitations to Otabil and other ICGC ministers to participate in their conferences. An example is the *International Gathering of Champions* organized each year by Pastor Matthew Ashimolowo in London around August. These conferences are accompanied with other forms of church ministries especially music and protocol services. For instance, Israel Houghton with his team ‘New Breed’ were the main guest song ministers during the 2011 *Greater Works* conference. The rehearsals with the host church choirs have the potential to effectively bring about synergies for exchange of musical ideas. The result of these exchanges is partly responsible for the liturgical reforms in ICGC.

**5.2.7. Voluntarism**

The ICGC depends immensely on church volunteers and lay ministry to grow, maintain and develop the churches. As part of the church’s strategy, a

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1077 The only exception is Rev. Ransford Obeng, the founder and General Overseer of Calvary Charismatic Center, headquartered at Kumasi in the Ashanti Region of Ghana.
1078 Dr. Samuel Chand is a pastor, leadership consultant, and an academic in the United States.
1079 Dr. Mike Murdock is an international conference speaker and has a prolific TV programme on most international networks i.e. Daystar, INSP (TV network), and The Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN).
1080 Pastor Randy Morrison originally from Trinidad in the West Indies and presently a resident of the United State is the pastor of the *Speak the Word Church International* in the US.
1081 Dr. L. Lovett is a Professor of Religion and Society, Oral Robert University, subscribes to Otabil’s Afrocentric ideals and wrote a foreword to his ground-breaking book *Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia*.
1082 Information accessed on KICC website (www.kicc.org.uk) on the 13th January 2014.
1084 This is a regular practice for guest artists to collaborate during church conferences.
1085 See International Central Gospel Church, *The Vision*. 
programme is developed to systematically grow and orient new members of the church in the areas of personal spiritual development and active lay ministry. This is seen in the Adult Bible Class (ABC) programme which is a four-stage teaching programme i.e. *New Beginners in Christ, Membership* (connecting with God’s family), *Maturity Class* and finally *Ministry Class*. This programme is formulated to be progressive, which ensures that by the time members complete, they are expected to join a department, ministry or a group in the local church.\(^{1086}\)

The groups, ministries and department are smaller units which specialize in particular services in the running of the church. Ministry portfolios in ICGC include: *Protocol Departments* which include ushers, security, traffic control, altar servers, hospitality, janitorial, and greeters. *Music and Arts Ministries* comprise choir, band, orchestra, sound technicians, performing arts (chorography) instrumentalists and soloists. *Prayer and Counseling* merges the works of intercessors, evangelism groups, follow-up teams and 24 hour telephone ministry. *Child Care Development* is made up of children’s service facilitators, Gospel Club and Talent Development,\(^{1087}\) and *Covenant Family Ministry*. There are other teams whose expertise requires professional training such as finance and administration department. Their work encompasses handling of cash, finance and economic planning, projects and development and the information desk.\(^{1088}\) Voluntary church workers are a huge percentage of the church’s population. For example, as of 2012, ICGC Christ Temple had over eight hundred voluntary church workers in

\(^{1086}\) See The International Central Gospel Church. *Adult Bible Class Manuals*.

\(^{1087}\) Nana Amma Ansah, interview, on the 11 September 2011 at Tema in the Greater Accra Region. She heads the Children Ministry in ICGC Resurrection Temple, Tema Community 21 branch.

attendance on Sundays.\textsuperscript{1089} They work in harmony as teams and are neatly networked towards the fulfillment of the church’s goals. Gifford noted the disposition of the church volunteers in ICGC and concluded:

The whole service is remarkably professional: logistical feats of organizing back to back services for such numbers, and of taking offerings during them, are accomplished by armies of stylishly uniformed ushers. The church’s myriad activities are advertised, financial matters are disclosed, including the takings of the previous Sunday.\textsuperscript{1090}

From the ICGC’s formative years, the various groups have facilitated the growth and development of the church. They also help one another to identify their gifts and talents, to have the opportunity to express talents, draw support, and encourage each other. Church voluntarism and lay orientation in Charismatic Churches is highly encouraged by the pastors. As Asamoah-Gyadu noted:

One of the most significant theological features of this movement is its radicalisation of the biblical idea of universal priesthood so that, unlike the Sunsum Sorè and traditional mission churches, the leader is in principle only a first among equals.\textsuperscript{1091}

5.2.8. Church Discipline

In ICGC, church disciplinary matters are in two categories: pastoral disciplinary and non-pastoral disciplinary. Under Pastoral disciplinary issues, the presbytery appoints an \textit{ad hoc} committee to probe all allegations. The committee’s function is twofold:

(1) Investigate all cases of Pastoral misconduct and submit recommendations to the Presbytery which decides on the appropriate sanctions.

\textsuperscript{1089} Mensa Otabil. “The Church and Social Transformation” (Audio CD). A presentation made during 1\textsuperscript{st} National Forum organized by the African Forum on Religion and Governance (AFREG-Ghana), 19\textsuperscript{th}-21\textsuperscript{st} July 2011.

\textsuperscript{1090} Gifford, “Ghana’s Charismatic Churches”, p. 245

\textsuperscript{1091} Asamoah-Gyadu, \textit{African Charismatics}, p. 96.
(2) Counsel offenders where necessary in conjunction with the offenders Supervising Minister.\textsuperscript{1092}

The cases the committee has handled have been in relation to negligence of pastoral duty, sexual immorality and financial mismanagement.\textsuperscript{1093} When an allegation is proven, the offender is suspended for a period ranging from six months to one and a half years depending on the attitude of the offender through the disciplinary and restoration process and also the gravity of the offence.\textsuperscript{1094} There were occasions were some offenders have been cautioned or warned depending on the seriousness of the case. In extreme situations a few offenders have been relieved of their post, especially where they have continued to repeat previous offences.\textsuperscript{1095}

Non-pastoral offenders are deemed to have committed any of the under-listed offences:

- Sins which give public offence e.g. immorality including but not limited to adultery and fornication, rape, theft, irresponsibility towards members of the nuclear family, misappropriation of funds.
- Improper conduct, such as drunkenness, quarrelsome behavior, cruelty, laziness, conjugal strife, harsh behavior to relatives and others.\textsuperscript{1096}

Other offences relate to church order and the propagation of false doctrine. The constitution declares such offences:

- Disobedience to the Order and Discipline of the Church;
- Dissemination of a Doctrine contrary to established standard of doctrines of the Church;
- Taking the Church, its members or any of its officials to Court of Law on civil matters involving the Church without exhausting the procedures for dealing with such cases in the Church.\textsuperscript{1097}

\textsuperscript{1092} International Central Gospel Church, \textit{General Church Council Meeting Report on National Committees}. Accra: DPI Print, November 2006, p. 32.
\textsuperscript{1093} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1094} Kojo Sallah, interview, on the 6\textsuperscript{th} September 2011 at Tema in the greater Accra Region.
\textsuperscript{1095} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1096} International Central Gospel Church, \textit{Constitution}, p. 31.
Any member of the ICGC found culpable of any of the above is sanctioned. The procedure for non-pastoral discipline sanction takes place at the local church level.\textsuperscript{1098} The local pastor of the assembly where the offending church member fellowships, constitutes an \textit{ad hoc} disciplinary committee to look into the specific offence. The disciplinary committee investigates the matter and submits a report to the Local Church Council.\textsuperscript{1099} “The Local Council meets with the culprit and discloses the findings to him or her after which the appropriate sanctions are applied.”\textsuperscript{1100}

The ICGC constitution is silent on any appeal process. However, the practice of the church suggest pastors and members reserve the right to challenge any findings they consider erroneous by writing to the presbytery in the case of pastoral discipline, or the local church council for members who seek redress.\textsuperscript{1101}

The motivation for discipline in ICGC is fourfold: first, to encourage the life of holiness and good moral conduct. ICGC teaches that becoming “born again” makes one right with God but holiness is a constant endeavor of the believer in daily relationship with God and one another.\textsuperscript{1102} The ICGC statement of faith affirms “the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the believer is

\textsuperscript{1097} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1098} Morris Appiah, interview, on the 18\textsuperscript{th} January 2012 at the ICGC head office, Miotso in the Greater Accra Region. Rev. Appiah is the Deputy General Secretary of ICGC and handles most of the pastoral issues.
\textsuperscript{1099} Morris Appiah, interview, on the 18\textsuperscript{th} January 2012 at the ICGC head office, Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.
\textsuperscript{1100} Morris Appiah, interview, on the 18\textsuperscript{th} January 2012 at the ICGC head office, Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.
\textsuperscript{1101} Morris Appiah, interview, on the 18\textsuperscript{th} January 2012 at the ICGC head office, Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.
\textsuperscript{1102} Patience Addai, interview, on the 4\textsuperscript{th} May 2012 at Secondi in the Western Region.
enabled to live a holy life.” Second, the discipline of members becomes a deterrent to others and discourages moral flaws. Third, it is believed that “disciplining culprits in the church uphold God’s glory and the lack of it becomes a risk for God’s judgment on the entire church.” The final view regarding the purpose of church discipline is related to the restoration of the erring believer. The greatest threat to church discipline in ICGC had to do with the perceived discriminatory approach by which such functions are carried out. A respondent who requested anonymity narrated an incident where a senior pastor was constantly shielded from his wrongs. His opinion is that “such discriminatory stance leaves everyone scandalized and disillusioned because power is made to look right and not principle.” Other members interviewed felt there was a lack of objectivity in the way disciplinary issues are handled. To another, “trust is compromised when people are pronounced guilty without sufficient evidence to punish them in the church.” Thus, the issue of discipline in ICGC becomes uncertain in its general effect on individuals and the congregation. However, consciousness for moral uprightness and church discipline in ICGC, as Morris Appiah argued, “demonstrate clearly what the church believes is the will of God to be done and what ICGC accepts to be proper.”

1104 Kojo Sallah, interview, on the 6th September 2011 at Tema in the Greater Accra Region.
1105 Morris Appiah, interview, on the 18th January 2012 at the ICGC head office, Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.
1106 An ICGC Pastor who pleaded anonymity.
1107 Rita Wilson, interview, on the 16th October 2011 at Cape Coast in the Central Region.
1108 Gifty Anderson, interview, on the 6th of May 2012 at Sekondi in the Western Region of Ghana.
1109 Morris Appiah, interview, on the 18th January 2012 at the ICGC head office, Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.
5.3. Conclusion

A comparative assessment of the liturgical forms and reforms of the COP and the ICGC has presented similarities and dissimilarities as highlighted in the findings and discussions. Even with the similarities, the level of emphasis varies. Taking for instance the organization of church services and time management, both churches have consciously made improvements from previous time allocations for the same church meetings. Again, we find similarities in PC components of spirituality such as the belief in the Bible as the supreme authority of the believer and prayer as the source of spiritual power. The similarities show that the COP and ICGC are close in their beliefs and practices. However, the choice of church music (worship and praise) and the conceptual understanding of spiritual gifts show diversities.

Whereas the COP maintains its preference for local choruses and in the same vein encourages members to seek “the original songs of the Church”, the ICGC has shown openness in the adaption of an ‘all inclusive’ approach to church music. On spiritual gifts, the COP reserves a special place for Prophets and Apostles considering Ephesians 4:8-11 listing as a hierarchical arrangement in addition to the other nine spiritual gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12. The ICGC does not treat any of the spiritual gifts in Ephesians 4:8-11 and 1 Corinthians 12 as superior to the other. Rather, as Asamoah-Gyadu has noted about Charismatic Churches in Africa, the Spirit bestows on the believer, especially those who are called to lead, the anointing.

1110 The Church of Pentecost, 39th General Council Meetings, May 2011, p. 45.
1111 Omenyo, “Man of God Prophesy Unto Me, p. 36.
Major dissimilarities that exist between the two churches’ liturgical forms worth noting are: in COP, the idea of the vernacular as a preferred lingua franca in church services inspires the church to have a strong attachment in the spiritual experience of the local cultures and communities.\(^\text{1113}\) The example of Afua Kuma remains relevant for African ecclesiology and theology. The COP rigorist approach to moral enforcement has marked it as a serious church in Ghanaian society and has further validated the church’s spirituality. The church has also shown that it has the capacity to effect needed adjustments. The example of the relaxation of the dress code is significant in the COP’s recognition of necessary societal changes. What the COP is yet to come to terms with, however, is the need for an ‘open door’ approach for the church and its members to fraternize with other believers and churches.\(^\text{1114}\)

The ICGC on the other hand encourages innovative and dynamic forms of church ministry. The church creates synergies and networking with other believers and churches. However, the ICGC by choosing to use the English language as the main, and in most cases the only medium of expression in its liturgy, ignores a segment of society who cannot be part of its experience of God. Again, from the feedback provided by the members of the church, the ICGC must engender trust and moral clarity, not only in the matter of disciplining ‘some’ but be seen to be just in applying necessary sanctions to all as it may be required by the disciplinary code of the church.

\(^{1113}\) Bediako, *Jesus in Africa*, p. 7-19.

\(^{1114}\) Asamoah-Gyadu, “Pentecostalism and the Missiological Significance of Religious Experience in Africa Today: The Case of Ghana ‘Church of Pentecost’, p. 46.
Notwithstanding the downside of the churches conduct, the efforts of the COP and the ICGC have shown the growing influence of Pentecostalism in Ghana which continues to contribute to liturgical forms of PC spirituality in Africa.
CHAPTER SIX
SOCIAL POLICY AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

6.0. Introduction
This chapter focuses on the themes of social policy and human development in the activities of COP and ICGC. The discussions embrace the churches’ orientation on social issues in the delivery of social services and human development goals. The context is the contemporary developments within PC Christianity with references to COP and ICGC. Brief background information is given on the role of the Mission Churches in Ghana to show the part the church in Ghana\textsuperscript{1115} has played and continues to play in social policy and human development programmes and to provide a backdrop for our discussion. Definition of the concepts of social policy and human development are briefly reviewed in the context of PC Christianity.

The objective for this chapter is twofold; first, to review the various social initiatives of the COP and ICGC through social activities and human development agenda, and second, to assess the modalities by which the churches engage in social policy and human development programmes.

6.1. The Church in Social Policy and Human Development in Ghana
The mission churches in Ghana (Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, etc.) are recognized to have played tremendous role in the provision of social services and human development in the nation\textsuperscript{1116}. These services include the development of primary and secondary schools, teacher training colleges, training in agriculture and

\textsuperscript{1115} Mission or historic churches here refer to the churches established by missionary agency of the Roman Catholic, Methodist, Presbyterian, African Methodist Episcopal Zion, etc. These were mostly founded in the 19\textsuperscript{th} Century Gold Coast, now Ghana.

vocational and technical skills development. Examples of some of the schools are, Mfantsipim (Kwabotwe) and Wesley Girls’ High School established by the Methodist Church, Aggrey Memorial Zion Secondary School established by the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Foundation, St. Augustine’s College and Holy Child School founded by the Roman Catholic and Adisadel College founded by the Anglican Church. These were examples of educational institutions pioneered by the mission churches. This development, as Hubert Quest ascertained, shows clearly that the mission churches in Ghana have been “significant instruments for the human-resource and socio-political development.” The educational, agricultural, trade, etc. interventions spearheaded by the European missionaries must be located within the understanding and scope of mission conceived as a means towards civilization. In addition to the educational initiatives listed above, the churches have also played an advocacy role. The Roman Catholic Church (RCC) and churches under the Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) have demonstrated concern regarding public policies and social development. Since the independence of Ghana in 1957, the RCC, through the Catholic Bishops Conference (CBC), had drawn successive governments’ attention to issues of social improvement and social equity. This has been done mainly through issuing of

1118 Ibid., p. 271.
1120 The Christian Council of Ghana was founded on 30th October 1929 as a result of a union of five churches: African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church; Anglican Church; Ewe Presbyterian Church (now Evangelical Presbyterian Church); and Wesleyan Methodist Church (now The Methodist Church, Ghana). The Council membership now stands at sixteen churches and two Christian organizations.
pastoral letters, communique, press statements, and dialogue.\textsuperscript{1121} Thus, these churches have acted as religious lobbyists. The orientation of the CBC in such matters has been noted:

We believe that man is man precisely because he is spiritual and of flesh at the same time. We, therefore, consider it our prophetic mission also to promote, in as far as it is possible, justice, security, peace and love in our country. We contend that politics is not outside our domain, neither is economics or agriculture, culture or science and technology. They all deal with man and we are committed to the cause of man.\textsuperscript{1122}

Arguably, the work of the mission churches in social policy and human development is a continuation of the work of missionaries especially from Europe and America who sought to extend the churches’ works in education, healthcare, agriculture, etc. The churches they established i.e. Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Anglican, etc. were also involved in social policy. For example, Rt. Rev. Dr. Paul Fynn, the past chairman of the CCG responding to the issue of poverty in the Council’s press conference in Accra on Thursday 29\textsuperscript{th} December 2005 said, “fighting to eradicate poverty is one of the yardsticks by which Christ measures our faithfulness to his message.”\textsuperscript{1123} The CBC search for social equity led to the formation of The Dialogue and Advocacy for Good Governance (DAGG).”\textsuperscript{1124} The DAGG is a programme of the church under the direction of the Bishops’ Conference purposely organized to promote social interest and good governance

\textsuperscript{1121} A compilation of pastoral letters, communique, and press statements had been published in Ghana as \textit{Bishops Speak Volumes I & II}, directed by the National Catholic Secretariat.


\textsuperscript{1123} The Christian Council of Ghana press conference addressed by the chairman, Rt. Rev. Dr. Paul Fynn, on Thursday 29\textsuperscript{th} December 2005 in Accra. This was also reported by the Daily Graphic, Friday 30\textsuperscript{th} December 2005 edition.

through research, training, advocacy and the empowerment of citizens to influence public policy choices for equitable development in a democratic environment. The DAGG initiative was established in April 2007 to “enhancing good governance from a faith-inspired perspective.” Furthermore, “DAGG is based on the principles of the social teachings of the RCC, especially the aspects that deal with ‘life and dignity of the human person’ and ‘preferential option for the poor and vulnerable.’”

The CBC and CCG dialogued with various governments since the first republic of Ghana and this has influenced many social interventions. These include, the passage of the Disability Act, the full implementation of the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE), and acted as an arbitration organ during industrial stand-offs between government and labour unions, etc. In Gifford’s opinion, the CCG rates very high in their contribution to social policy, advocacy and human development by their consultative and participatory approach on social...

1125 Joseph Bangu, interview, on the 25th June 2008 at the National Catholic Secretariat, Centenary House, Accra. This was during my previous research for Master of Philosophy Degree, submitted to the University of Ghana.


1128 The Parliament of Ghana passed the Persons with Disability (PWD) bill on 23rd June 2006. It gives the disabled, estimated at 10% of Ghana’s population, the same rights as the country’s able-bodied citizens in Ghana’s constitution.

1129 The FCUBE is enshrined in the 1992 constitution of the Republic of Ghana offering all children of school age to enroll without any financial contribution or payment of fees. For further discussion, see, Kwame Akyeampong. “Revisiting Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) in Ghana.” Comparative Education 45.2, 2009, pp. 175-195. The Council campaigned alongside the National Educational Council in Ghana on the 18th August 2005 at the Accra International Press Centre. They called on the New Patriotic Party government to fully effect the educational policy of the nation as enshrined in the 1992 Ghana’s Constitution. The thrust of their argument was that, Article 38 of the 1992 Constitution guarantees the implementation of the FCUBE.
issues. The PC churches on the other hand have been criticized for doing little in social and human development. Thus the need to study these churches (COP and ICGC) in relation to their social involvement.

6.2. COP Social Policy and Human Development

The COP is well-known for its work of evangelism, prayer and church discipline. Asamoah-Gyadu has noted this and writes, “The COP is also a praying church ... It is a very common sight in COP assemblies to find scores of members frequently gathered for mass prayers.” This character of COP gave less consideration to social and human development aside from the training of pastoral staff and lay ministers until the beginning of the 1980s. Larbi, a member of the COP and a scholar of Pentecostalism was unsure whether COP had social policies prior to the early 1980s. He maintains that social services and human development programmes were not features within COP’s ministry emphasis until the then government brought pressure on secular groups and religious bodies to think about social development. According to him:

This pressure from the military regime was not because of any corrupt practices, as was the case with certain secular agencies; it was felt certain churches were not contributing to the material development of the nation in spite of their enormous material wealth.

The point worth noting is that, the COP was previously well-known for its core pastoral work and evangelism. It was not until the early 1980s when the church

established Pentecost Welfare Association (PENTWAS) and later the Pentecost University College in 2003 to take care of material development of society. These two establishments are therefore significant in the COP organizational outlook.

6.2.1. Pentecost Social Services (PENTSOS)

The Pentecost Welfare Association (PENTWAS) was established by the COP to organize, facilitate and deliver the social programmes of the church. PENTWAS was registered with the Department of Social Welfare and the Association of Private Voluntary Organization (PVOs) in 2000. The objective of PENTWAS is noted in the COP Corporate Profile document which outlines the policy guideline as:

The Church’s quest to provide education, health facility, relief services, and to address social needs among its members and the communities in which it operates led to the formation of the Pentecost Welfare Association (PENTWAS) in 1980. Until the formation of PENTWAS, the COP social interventions such as vocational training, health care and other supports for members was always perceived by the church as ‘social gospel’. However, the establishment of PENTWAS led to the development of policy for social action. The church then set up a board to facilitate its social policy agenda which also led to the change of name to Pentecost Social Services (PENTSOS). This is also stated in the COP constitution:

The General Council shall maintain a unit of the Church which shall fulfill the social/charitable mission of The Church. It shall be

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1133 The Church of Pentecost, Corporate Profile, p. 25.
1134 Ibid.
1135 The concept of ‘social gospel’ here is interpreted by the Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in Ghana as part of the church’s responsibility as indicated in Matthew 24: 34-36. Until the early 1980s, the churches did not explain social interventions as part of social policy for national development but rather as a religious duty.
known as PENTECOST SOCIAL SERVICES, hereinafter called “PENTSOS.”\textsuperscript{1136} The COP constitution further endorsed a nine-member board by the Executive Council with the approval of the General Council to facilitate the objectives of PENTSOS.\textsuperscript{1137} The membership of the board comprises of a chairman who must be an apostle or a prophet, one minister of the church, an educationist, an agriculturist, a medical practitioner, a social worker, a lawyer, the PENTSOS Director and one woman.\textsuperscript{1138}

Article 31, clause 31.2.2 of the COP constitution outlines the functions of the Pentecost Social Services. This is presented in full:

(a) To be responsible to the General Council through the Executive Council for the initiation, promotion, development and management of social services and projects of The Church.
(b) To promote the active involvement of members of The Church in social services in their communities
(c) To advise The Church in matters relating to social services in the country
(d) To represent the interest of The Church in all social service-related functions as the need arises
(e) To serve as the technical consulting body for all social projects initiated by The Church at all levels
(f) To liaise with other non-governmental organizations and donor/aid agencies and other Christian donor organizations in matters relating to support for PENTSOS projects through the office of the Chairman
(g) To perform such other social assignments as the Executive Council may delegate or assign.\textsuperscript{1139}

The new orientation of the church seeks to serve social needs, engage members of the church, appraise national social concerns and foster collaboration with other

\textsuperscript{1136} The Church of Pentecost, Constitution. See also, The Church of Pentecost, 39\textsuperscript{th} General Council Report, p. 111.
\textsuperscript{1137} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1138} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1139} Ibid, p. 112.
organizations in pursuit of similar objectives. The chairman of the COP, Opoku Onyinah, strongly affirmed the church’s drive to accomplish the social concerns of the COP in satisfying both members and the general public’s social needs. He asserted in an interview with me when I sought to find out how the COP improves people’s living conditions? He retorted: “through our teaching sessions and occasionally invite other resource personnel with great expertise to deal with how people could have improved lifestyle.”\textsuperscript{1140} He continued: “our social network is very strong. We bring people together, network one another, connecting business people, linking them to one another, offering help, counseling at all levels.”\textsuperscript{1141} Onyinah however admitted that the COP has not been effective on social policy especially on a large scale within Ghanaian society. Nevertheless, Onyinah indicated that the COP has helped members of the church and has put together measures to make the church more effective in social activities.\textsuperscript{1142} In a separate interview, the General Secretary, Alfred Koduah emphasized:

> The Church of Pentecost has helped many ‘nobodies to become somebodies’. The fact that the church through the Lord is winning lots of souls means that we are reducing crime in society, making families’ better – irresponsible husbands have now become responsible. The church’s emphasis on family life, we have saved lots of marriages that would have collapsed. Many bad people have now become good people.\textsuperscript{1143}

Onyinah’s focus on the COP’s role in the provision of social help and Koduah’s reflections on social interventions show different models of social help that exist in

\textsuperscript{1140} Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at COP head office, Accra in the greater Accra Region.

\textsuperscript{1141} Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at COP head office, Accra in the greater Accra Region.

\textsuperscript{1142} Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at COP head office, Accra in the greater Accra Region.

\textsuperscript{1143} Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP Head Office, Accra.
Some of the members of the COP I interviewed agreed with both positions. For instance, a member of the church was full of appreciation for the church’s charity work. An example as indicated was the donation of hospital items including ambulances to health institutions. Another respondent of the COP admitted “the church’s teaching ministry has opened my eyes and helped me to develop skillset so now I can fend for myself without relying on anyone.” An elderly woman who had been a member of COP for over three decades, Madam Lucy Kouffie, confirmed that “the last ten years of the church has seen rapid sensitivity of the leaders to social needs of members of the church.” She affirmed, “the church has helped the poor, paid the school fees of needed students, and help some of the members to develop skills in vocational and technical trades.” By these responses, the COP has demonstrated consciousness to meet the social needs of its members. However, as Koduah admitted “Pentecostals have not done so much as expected in the past because of the philosophy that Jesus is coming soon.” This underscores G. Francois Wessels’ view that the absence of PCs from socio-political activism is because of their “dualistic, apocalyptic and pessimistic worldview.

Notwithstanding the COP’s absence from social developmental work in the past, the church now expresses growing awareness and practical involvement in members’ social needs. The four-fold objective of PENTSOS include:

1144 Lydia Dzata, interview, on the 27th November 2011 at Ashaiman COP, Gt. Accra Region.
1145 Kofi Bentum, interview, on the 9th October 2011 at Cape Coast in the Central Region.
1146 Madam Lucy Kouffie, interview, on the 13th May 2012 at Effiaakuma-Takoradi COP. Western Region.
1147 Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP Head Office, Accra, Gt. Accra Region.
(a) to provide capacity for sustainable livelihood for the poor, neglected and marginalized; (b) to mobilise funds outside the Church for efficient and effective implementation of its plans; (c) to create awareness of the social services programmes of the Church; (d) to foster cordial relations with government and non-governmental organisations with like-minded vision.\footnote{The Church of Pentecost, Corporate Profile, pp. 25-26.}

The members of the COP corroborate the recent effort of the COP to fulfill the above objectives. Out of the twenty-five COP respondents interviewed, only one took exception to the COP achievements in social service.\footnote{There is an overwhelming acknowledgement among the respondents that the COP has been rebranded and retooled for social action in order to execute the church’s vision in all sectors of ministry including socio-economic activities.} Kusi Yiadom disagrees with the majority of the respondents on the basis that “the church should allocate more of its financial resources to the welfare needs of members.”\footnote{Kusi Yiadom, interview, on the 3rd of May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region.} He continued:

\begin{quote}
I want to see the church becoming more interested in the developmental needs of the members. The great financial resources must be used in setting up centers for skills training and other useful ventures. That is how the church can empower its members.\footnote{Kusi Yiadom, interview, on the 3rd of May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region.}
\end{quote}

As part of COP’s effort in meeting social needs in the church, the Executive Council members led by the chairman (Opoku Onyinah) periodically took special measures in meeting specific groups. An example was the first quarter-scheduled meetings on the 18th January to 20th March 2012. The meeting was aimed at different groups in the COP. They included, widows, spouses whose partners are living outside the country, spouses whose partners are not in the church, singles, parliamentarians, actors and actresses, musicians, media personnel, chiefs and queen mothers, house helps, artisans, unemployed, driver mates, casual workers
and business people. The chairman of COP (Opoku Onyinah), and the General Secretary (Alfred Koduah) in different interviews substantiated this. The overriding interest for the meetings was to reach the various groups and offer direction, counseling, and material help based on each groups needs.

6.2.1.1. PENTSOS Projects

The COP through PENTSOS established projects in pursuance of their social policy. The first was a secondary school in Kumasi in the Ashanti region of Ghana. This was later closed down because of difficulties. According to Koduah, “it took the church a long time to come back to social work.” However, the COP has developed a more extensive social service network than any other Pentecostal or Charismatic church in Ghana. An appraisal of the PENTSOS report delivered during the 39th General Council Meetings held on Friday 6th of May in Sowutuom-Accra, on the Pentecost University College premises points to this. This report shows that the COP as of May 2011 established 71 primary and secondary schools with a total number of 23,823 pupils/students and 1,242 teaching and non-teaching staff. The COP by that same period saw a rapid expansion in the health sector of the church’s social services. The church had a total number of 7 health institutions

1153 Opoku Onyinah, Interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office, Accra, Gt. Accra Region. The details of all the appointment was on a document entitled, ‘The Church of Pentecost – General Headquarters. Chairman’s Detailed Itinerary for 2012 (Revised).

1154 Opoku Onyinah, Interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office, Accra, Gt. Accra Region; Alfred Koduah, Interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office, Accra, Gt. Accra Region.

1155 Alfred Koduah, Interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office, Accra, Greater Accra Region.

1156 The general observation of Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in Ghana shows clearly that many of these churches have limited programmes for social work. The challenge is creating structures for the programmes. See, Gifford. Ghana’s New Christianity.

1157 The Church of Pentecost, 39th General Council Meetings Report, p. 40.
with a staff of 245. The total workforce for PENTSOS institutions alone stood at 1,487 by the end of May 2011. Some statistics about the activities in the health institutions of COP is given:

Patronage of services of the Church’s health institutions in the 6 Clinics and the Pentecost Hospital continued to increase due mainly to improved quality of care and the National Health Insurance Scheme. The total Pot-patient Attendance for the 7 institutions increased from 126,051 in 2009 to 154,062 (i.e. 22% increase). Out of this, the Pentecost Hospital, Madina, handled 48%, the Tarkwa Pentecost Clinic 22% and the other 5 Clinics handled the remaining 30%. The number of supervised deliveries also increased from 2,857 in 2009 to 2,972 in 2010 i.e. 4% increase.

In addition to education and health, the COP has Gender, Development and Relief Services divisions that operate under PENTSOS. This unit is a recent formation to expand the social service delivery objective of the church. The same unit has initiated an agenda for the implementation of the Pentecost Credit Union programme for economic empowerment with the training for managers and other staff who would take up the responsibility to sensitize members of the church. In summary, PENTSOS has shown commitment in six given areas which operate under it – the Pentecost Schools, Educational Support Schemes, Pentecost Health Services, Economic Empowerment, Disaster Prevention and Opportunity for Development units.

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1158 The Church of Pentecost, 39th General Council Meetings Report, p. 40. Apostle Alfred Koduah also corroborated this in an interview with him during my field research on the 9th August 2011 at COP head office, Accra, Gt. Accra Region.
1159 The Church of Pentecost, 39th General Council Meetings Report, p. 40.
1160 Ibid., p. 41.
1161 Ibid.
1162 Ibid.
1163 Ibid.
6.2.2. Pentecost University College (PUC)

The Pentecost University College (PUC) is a non-profit tertiary institution
established by the COP. The main objective for setting up the PUC is to “produce
world-class human resource to meet the demands of the country’s development
through dissemination of knowledge, quality learning, research and training.”
Its key objective is to provide high-level graduates who will “meet the needs and
challenges of the fast-changing world.”
PUC developed from an already existing Bible School (The Pentecost Bible College) that was used for the training of pastors
and lay-ministers of the church. The then president of the Republic of Ghana, Mr. J.
A. Kuffuor, inaugurated PUC on May, 2003, during the 34th Session of the General
Council meeting of the COP held at the Sowutuom. This was followed by an
induction a year later at the 10th Session of the Extraordinary Council meeting
presided over by the then Chairman, Apostle Dr. Michael Ntumy. The National
Accreditation Board (NAB) endorsed the PUC. The university college (PUC) has
been affiliated to the University of Ghana since November 2004.

The PUC presently has three faculties and a graduate school. The faculties consist
of, Faculty of Theology and Mission (FTM), Faculty of Business Administration
(FBA) and Faculty of Engineering, Science and Computing (FESAC). Each
faculty has a number of departments under it with different academic programmes.


\[1165\] Pentecost University College. *Pentecost University Statutes*, 2013, p. 44.

\[1166\] The Church of Pentecost Vision 2013, p. 37.

\[1167\] The Pentecost University College Brochure, 2013

\[1168\] Ibid

\[1169\] Ibid.
For example, the FTM has the following department and academic programmes respectively: *Department of Theology & Religious Studies* offers Bachelor in Theology and Diploma of Higher Education in Theology. *Department of Mission & Church History* offers Bachelor in Mission Studies and a Diploma of Higher Education in Mission Studies. *Department of Practical Theology* runs programmes in Bachelor in Pastoral Studies and Diploma of Higher Education in Pastoral Studies. Others include, *Department of Theological Education by Extension* and *Department of Christian Music & Worship*.

The Faculty of Business Administration has five departments, namely; *Department of Accounting*, *Department of Human Resource Management*, *Department of Marketing*, *Department of Banking & Finance* and *Department of Communication*. Most of these departments run bachelor degrees, diplomas and other professional certificate awarding programmes. The FESAC has two departments presently: *Department of Information Technology* and *Department of Mathematical and Actuarial Sciences*.  

Being a Christian university, the chancellor, Opoku Onyinah affirms, the COP is “concerned with ensuring virtues such as excellent academic performance, ethical values and integrity are observed by faculty, staff and students.”  

This complements the statutes that established the PUC stating, the university is “to provide sound Christian-based tertiary/higher education to raise upright and effective leaders to serve the Church and the nation.” The COP never misses an opportunity to emphasize the ‘Christian-base’ and quality education the PUC is 

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1170 *Pentecost University Statutes*, 2013, p. 44.  
1171 Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office in the Greater Accra Region.  
1172 *Pentecost University Statutes*, 2013, p. 8.
supposed to deliver. This is because the Ghanaian public, at this time, bemoans the falling standard of education and morality in educational institutions. A respondent, Kofi Boateng, made this point bluntly:

Hardly a term or semester passes without a scandal or social vices been reported in places of higher learning in Ghana. The universities, polytechnic and other schools have all demonstrated that present-day education is not concerned about moral uprightness. That is why our churches must get involved in establishing more universities to raise a new breed whose learning and moral conduct can be marched together. The churches are the hope for the development of human resources for this nation.\footnote{Kofi Boateng, interview, on the 18\textsuperscript{th} September 2011 in Tema in the Greater Accra Region.}

Bentum’s observation has also been noted in a generalized way by Samuel N. Woode, a professor of Public Administration in the University of Ghana, in his work \textit{Values, Standards and Practices in Ghanaian Organisational Life}. He expressed the moral flaws and contradictions that undermine organizations and institutions within the generality of the Ghanaian situation. He asserted:

The rhetoric of most organizational men and women would have us believe that the pursuit of excellence is their object; that anxious to succeed they always seek out the best candidates; that advancement is based on performance; and that contracts and purchases are made with an eye on value-for-money. Yet with an ear to the ground, none can doubt nor deny that contradictions and irrational behavior occur in organisations.\footnote{Samuel N. Woode. \textit{Values, Standards and Practices in Ghanaian Organisational Life}. Accra: Asempa Publishers, 1997, p. 21.}

To avert the present moral decadence in public administration and the low standards of higher education,\footnote{Eugene H. Amonoo-Neizer has discussed some of the challenges confronting universities in Africa. He has asked for various reforms to be carried out to revitalize the universities. For further reading, see, Eugene H. Amonoo-Neizer. "Universities in Africa—The Need for Adaptation, Transformation, Reformation and Revitalization." \textit{Higher Education Policy} 11.4, 1998, pp. 301-309.} the churches have taken the initiative, developing institutions of higher learning. They have also incorporated values into formal
learning and expanded opportunities for people with ambition to find ways for self-development. The PUC therefore is seen as relevant institution for human development. The COP conviction therefore is to make education holistic.\textsuperscript{1176} The PUC has two objectives, to develop the future leadership of Ghana and to make education a tool for inculcating Christian principles into the country’s human development agenda.\textsuperscript{1177}

### 6.3. ICGC Social Policy and Human Development

In ICGC, social policies and human development programmes are expressed through Central Aid, which is a “human development-oriented NGO, designed to help every individual develop their spiritual potential, intellectual capacity, social sensitivity and moral uprightness needed to become very useful citizen.”\textsuperscript{1178} This notion is summed up in ICGC’s ‘Ministry Philosophy’: “practical Christianity, human dignity and excellence.”\textsuperscript{1179} This is further explained:

ICGC operates on the working understanding of a holistic lifestyle. That is, we believe that God is the God of the Natural and the Spiritual as well as the Visible and the Invisible. In man, God joined together the spirit and the body to create the manifestation of His likeness and image. If God is comfortable joining the natural and the spiritual together, then we believe that “What God has joined together, let no man (or church) put asunder.”\textsuperscript{1180}

The consideration for ‘holistic lifestyle’ is seen in the preaching and teaching, decisions for social policies and actions, projects, and the many social interventions

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\textsuperscript{1176} Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at the COP head office in the Greater Accra Region.

\textsuperscript{1177} Alfred Koduah, Interview, on the 9\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at the COP head office, Accra, Greater Accra Region.


\textsuperscript{1179} International Central Gospel Church, \textit{The Vision}, p. 12.

\textsuperscript{1180} Ibid.
\end{flushleft}
as we may find in our discussions below. ICGC believes “Christianity is not a myth or fable but a practical, pragmatic and enjoyable life ordained by God for all mankind to experience His goodness.”\footnote{1181}{Ibid.} The understanding here is that the human being is created by God and as such deserves to be treated with honour and respect.\footnote{1182}{Ibid.}

The dominant idea in the church’s message is twofold: Identity as attested to in Otabil’s book \textit{Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia}\footnote{1183}{Otabil, \textit{Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia}. For an explorative work on this, see also, Van Dijk, "Beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, pp.163-189; van Gorder, "Beyond the Rivers of Africa, pp.33-54.} and Productivity (the development of human potential) again in Otabil’s \textit{Four Laws of Productivity}.\footnote{1184}{The summary of Otabil’s thinking on work, productivity and wellbeing is contained in Genesis 1:28 and is in relation to the purpose of humankind. This reveals God’s intention for creating humankind and the fourfold responsibilities: (a) Be fruitful, and (b) multiply, (c) replenish the earth, and (d) subdue it and have dominion. Otabil shows that this is the crux of human responsibility and productivity.} Larbi concludes that Otabil’s Four Laws of Productivity\footnote{1185}{Mensa Otabil. \textit{Four Laws of Productivity: God’s Foundation for Living}. Tulsa, Oklahoma: Vincom Inc., 1991.} reflects “the human resource development and motivation …that has preoccupied the theological reflections of Otabil since 1986.”\footnote{1186}{Larbi, \textit{Pentecostalism}, p. 353.} Gifford appraises both of these works and ICGC ministry ethos and ends with the conviction that “For those in the position to avail themselves of these opportunities and resolve to rise above their circumstances, this church [ICGC] encourages ambitions and goals, gives direction and discipline, fuels the desire to get ahead.”\footnote{1187}{Gifford, \textit{African Christianity}, p. 82. For further discussion on Gifford’s reflection on this, see, \textit{Ghana’s New Christianity}, pp. 113-4.} Gifford’s reflection is made at a time of socio-economic difficulties in Ghana, with the many interventions from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Thus, Gifford considers the ICGC
pastoral work relevant to the social and developmental needs of the nation.\textsuperscript{1188} Otabil’s recent preaching and teaching echo the same sentiments that illustrate the deep-rooted ambition for people’s wellbeing. For instance, his new writings and publications, \textit{Pathways of Success}\textsuperscript{1189}; \textit{Go Borrow Vessels}\textsuperscript{1190} and \textit{The Dominion Mandate}\textsuperscript{1191} reflect a firm commitment to human productivity as revealed in his earlier work \textit{Four Laws of Productivity}. It is this same orientation that undergirds ICGC’s social services and human development programmes mainly through Central Aid.

\subsection*{6.3.1. Central Aid Projects and Other Social Services}

Central Aid developed from the ICGC Educational Scholarship scheme, which was inaugurated at the Trade Fair Centre on the 29\textsuperscript{th} December 1988.\textsuperscript{1192} Central Aid is founded to develop people and communities in which they live to improve living conditions.\textsuperscript{1193} A nine-member board made up of seven males and two females currently leads it. A full time staff coordinates the day-to-day functions from the ICGC head office building on the Central University campus in the Greater Accra region.\textsuperscript{1194} Central Aid has a fivefold mandate:

(a) Educational grants and scholarships– to provide financial

\textsuperscript{1188} See Gifford, \textit{Ghana's New Christianity}.


\textsuperscript{1192} Alexander Boatchway, interview, on the 4\textsuperscript{th} May 2012 in Takoradi, the Western Region.

\textsuperscript{1193} International Central Gospel Church, \textit{Central Aid}, p. 2.

\textsuperscript{1194} Yaw Binney, interview, on the 21\textsuperscript{st} September 2011 at Miotso in the Gt. Accra region. Until the appointment of a new coordinator, Mr. Binney acted as the coordinator in charge of the Educational Scholarship Programme. He also works as the Human Resource Manager in ICGC head office.
support to brilliant but needy students.
(b) Relief and Development – To provide varied support services to communities that are affected by disaster.
(c) Community and Social Development – To engage in development projects that will raise the standard of living for underprivileged communities.
(d) Advocacy – To provide community awareness programs that will address the challenges facing our society.
(e) Career Guidance and Counseling – To provide career guidance and counseling.\textsuperscript{1195}

The First objective of Central Aid is to offer educational bursaries and scholarships. This is targeted towards brilliant but needy students. Larbi noted this educational input:

In 1989, an ICGC scholarship scheme was set up to aid poor but able students to acquire secondary and vocational education. It is also projected that, as and when facilities become available, ICGC would embark on some vocational and technical schools.\textsuperscript{1196}

Presently, Central Aid is known to be the second largest educational scholarship provider in Ghana after the Government of Ghana scholarship scheme.\textsuperscript{1197} The scheme seeks to increase the number of scholarships. In a meeting held on the 21\textsuperscript{st} May 2011, the Board set its key objectives to add to the number of scholarships by a hundred percent at secondary school level. The Board also decided to provide full sponsorship to students to pursue science/engineering degrees, and build community libraries in deprived communities.\textsuperscript{1198} The total number of scholarships provided from 1989 to 2000 was 501.\textsuperscript{1199} The testimonies of some of the beneficiaries are noted. First, Margaret Adjei (University of Ghana):

\textsuperscript{1195}International Central Gospel Church, \textit{Central Aid}, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{1196}Larbi, \textit{Pentecostalism}, p. 346.
\textsuperscript{1197}Yaw Binney, interview, on the 21\textsuperscript{st} September 2011 at Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.
\textsuperscript{1199}International Central Gospel Church, \textit{Central Aid}, p. 4.
I lost my father during my primary school days, but by the grace of God, I went through J.S.S. [Junior Secondary School] and S.S.S. [Senior Secondary School] level, things became more difficult for my mother although she did her best to sustain my education. I thought I was abandoned to my education till a relative introduced me to the ICGC scholarship programme. I quickly applied and without any obligation, I became a beneficiary.

The scholarship came at the right time, which improved my studies. It enabled me to pass out successful and now I have been admitted to the University of Ghana, Legon. In fact, it has been real to me that God works in mysterious ways and he is indeed the father of the fatherless.1200

The second testimony from Ebenezer Okra (Ghana Institute of Journalism):

A cousin showed me an advert in the press, inviting needy students to apply to be considered for scholarship awards. This was at a time I was bothered by how to get financial support to sail through my education successfully. Since I was not a member of ICGC, I was not sure I would be given the scholarship. If there is any doubt concerning the genuineness of the criteria in awarding the scholarship, I am clear testimonial evidence.1201

The third testimony from John U. Nlenkiba:

I sponsored myself from J.S.S [Junior Secondary School] from 1989-93 which was a great problem for me. By faith, I was admitted to Bimbilla Secondary School in 1994. When conflict broke between Nanumbas and Konkombas in the same year the ICGC awarded me the scholarship, my village was burnt down, together with my belongings thus making me a displaced student. I fled here to Accra to search for admission as a displaced student and gained admission to Wesley Grammar School as a day student. The ICGC did not abandon me. I continued to enjoy the scholarship till I completed S.S.S. [Senior Secondary School].1202

The testimony from C. Mawuko-Yevugah (University of Ghana):

I came from a very humble background and until this ‘Divine intervention’, the future of my education looked really bleak and hopeless. The assistance given to me by ICGC has been of immense benefit. I must put it on record that the scholarship greatly saved me

1200 International Central Gospel Church, Central Aid, p. 4.
1201 Ibid.
1202 Ibid.
from all financial difficulties at school and provided me the needed atmosphere to concentrate on my studies. It is also my hope that we would not forget Central Aid in future, and that we would offer our ‘widow’s mite’ to sustain the fund for the benefit of other disadvantaged brethren.\textsuperscript{1203}

The beneficiaries of Central Aid scholarships, attested to the contribution the scheme has made to their development. By their testimonies they seemed empowered as a result of the educational opportunity given. At the time the testimonies were taken, each of the recipients of the scholarship had made progress to the next stage of their educational pursuit, some to university and others in professional training institutes. For instance, Margaret Adjei and C. Mawuko-Yevugah were enrolled in the University of Ghana for their degree programmes and Ebenezer Okra was admitted to read Journalism in the Ghana Institute of journalism. The testimonies of the beneficiaries buttress the ICGC commitment that people should be helped to attain their highest educational potential regardless of their personal life predicaments.\textsuperscript{1204} Otabil, had the personal experience of loosing both parents as a teenager, he went through hardship out of which he developed “deep compassion for the needy youth, whose educational attainment could be hindered because of financial constrains.”\textsuperscript{1205}

Besides the provision of scholarships by Central Aid, ICGC in 2012 set up an education board dubbed ‘Central Education Directorate.’\textsuperscript{1206} The objective is stated:

Our educational vision is a learning milieu where the principles governing the visible and invisible world perfectly interact, in uninterrupted harmony, in an environment that promotes nothing

\textsuperscript{1203} Ibid., p. 5.  
\textsuperscript{1204} Mensa Otabil, Interview, on the 18\textsuperscript{th} August 2011, at the ICGC head office in the Greater Accra Region.  
\textsuperscript{1205} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{1206} Yaw Binney, interview, on the 21\textsuperscript{st} September 2011 at Miotso in the Gt. Accra region.
less that an uninhibited discovery of every element of God’s world, that lofty position from which preparing humanity to have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth happens as God intended it to be.\textsuperscript{1207}

Looking into the educational vision of ICGC, it follows that the church’s view on education is to provide opportunities for developing human potential. This harmonizes with the teaching of the church on productivity as mentioned above. The current statistics indicate that the overall ICGC educational facilities are as follows: 12 early childhood schools, 18 basic schools, no secondary school yet (though the General Overseer made a public pronouncement during its 25\textsuperscript{th} Anniversary at the Accra Sport Stadium that ICGC would build model Senior High Schools across the political regions of Ghana)\textsuperscript{1208} and one private university, Central University College.\textsuperscript{1209}

Central Aid also provides relief support services to communities that are saddled with challenges such as disaster, lack of clean drinking water, provision of basic amenities and other relief duties. In fulfillment of their work, Central Aid engages the Social Action Committee (SAC) of ICGC Christ Temple for the implementation of some of their programmes.\textsuperscript{1210} The ICGC Christ Temple, the headquarter’s church where Otabil is the head pastor, established the SAC. This does not directly come under the administrative structure of Central Aid. However, it works in conjunction with it to execute the social programmes of Central Aid due to its


\textsuperscript{1208} Mensa Otabil. Generational Thinking (Audio CD 25\textsuperscript{th} Anniversary). Accra: Alter Media, March 2009.

\textsuperscript{1209} Yaw Binney, interview, on the 21\textsuperscript{st} September 2011 at Miotso in the Gt. Accra region.

\textsuperscript{1210} Divine Amegashie, Interview, on the 20\textsuperscript{th} November 2011 at Accra in the Gt. Accra Region. He is the Administrative and Human Resource Manager of ICGC Christ Temple
enormous capacity in raising funds and experience in the discharge of its duties.\textsuperscript{1211} The SAC has been responsible for the operational planning of the social interventions and developmental programmes such as ‘Lifewalk’.\textsuperscript{1212} The ‘Lifewalk’ events, is an ICGC health and fitness programme organized each year to sensitize members on health related matters. The first was organized in March 2005 with the aim of promoting the health and physical wellbeing of members of the church.\textsuperscript{1213} It is also used as a platform to raise funds for social services in line with ICGC social policy arrangements. Lifewalk has also generated funds for the implementation of the church’s social policies. This has been acknowledged:

Through Lifewalk and other special events organized by ICGC, funds are generated internally by the church to support the social development of our communities and nation at large. Some of the major social intervention projects recently undertaken by the church include:

- The construction of a 50-bed two-storey fully furnished boy’s hostel for the Osu Children’s Home.
- The provision of twenty (20) boreholes fitted with hand-pumps for nineteen (19) underserved communities in the Ga West Municipal Area.\textsuperscript{1214}

ICGC through the SAC supports health delivery in Ghana. Presently, the church financially supports the children’s cancer unit of the Department of Child Health of the Korle-bu Teaching Hospital with a donation of seven thousand Cedis every

\textsuperscript{1211} Divine Amegashie, Interview, on the 20\textsuperscript{th} November 2011 at Accra in the Gt. Accra Region.

\textsuperscript{1212} See chapter 4 under section 4.3.3.1. where I discussed the Lifewalk programme of the ICGC.

\textsuperscript{1213} Divine Amegashie, Interview, on the 20\textsuperscript{th} November 2011 at Accra in the Gt. Accra region.

Lifewalk is organized for ICGC congregations in Accra and Tema metropolis. In recent times, other ICGC branches outside of Greater Accra region have also embraced the concept and embarked on similar activities in their various regions. This has given the event a national character and it has therefore become a major activity on the ICGC annual calendar. The Lifewalk covers an average distance of 18 kilometers through selected major streets in the capital with an estimated number of about 8,000 participants comprising children, youth, adults and the elderly.

\textsuperscript{1214} International Central Gospel Church, ‘Greater Works’ Brochure. July 2011, p. 25.
month. This programme has been going on since 2010 when it was officially launched.\textsuperscript{1215}

Scholars, religions practitioners,\textsuperscript{1216} and the general public have noticed some of these social interventions and acts of charity from ICGC. Gifford notes:

Since the mid 1990s, the church’s NGO Central Aid has been assisting good causes – for a cardio-thoracic unit, the physically handicapped, breast cancer, the blind, and in 1998 even Trokosi women … Central Aid has also throughout the 1990s given scholarships worth over 200 million cedis to 500 outstanding but needy students, many of them Muslims.\textsuperscript{1217}

The ‘good cause’ alluded to by Gifford also includes the construction of a boy’s hostel at the Osu children’s home in Accra. This was preceded by the periodic engagements of the Women’s Ministry of ICGC – Precious Vessels of Virtue (PVV) support for the orphanage. PVV visits were mainly arranged for the donation of food and sanitary materials to the orphanage until a direct appeal was made for the church to assist in the provision of a boy’s dormitory to ease the accommodation challenges of the Home.\textsuperscript{1218} As a result, ICGC invested an amount of Two Hundred Thousand Cedis into the construction of the boy’s dormitory.\textsuperscript{1219} Otabil on The 28th November 2005 did the sod cutting for the construction of the two-storey boy’s hostel and the project completed on October 2006. The hostel was

\textsuperscript{1215} Divine Amegashie, Interview, on the 20th November 2011 at Accra in the Gt. Accra region.

\textsuperscript{1216} Francis Wusu Gand, Interview, on the 3rd of May 2012 at the Assemblies of God (AG) Regional office, Takoradi in the Western Region. Rev. Gand is the Regional Superintendent of the AG Church.


\textsuperscript{1218} Divine Amegashie, Interview, on the 20th November 2011 at Accra in the Gt. Accra Region.

\textsuperscript{1219} Ibid.
officially handed over to the Department of Social Welfare on 26th February 2007.\textsuperscript{1220}

In addition to the offer of scholarships and the donation of the hostel, ICGC on November 2008 lunched a ‘Clean Water Project’ as part of the church’s commitment to some selected Ga rural communities in the Greater Accra region.\textsuperscript{1221}

The areas which benefitted include: Atoman, Kokoman, Aborborlodzi, Pobiman, Sapeiman, Onyaben, Ayikai Doblo Jeda, Achiaman, Atsiato, Ayawaso, Abiorman, Wozoammitkope, Kuntunse, Achiato No. 2, John Teye, Mieso, Magbo, Xedagbiukope and Aborkope.\textsuperscript{1222} All nineteen communities were served with a mechanized borehole with hand fitted pumps.\textsuperscript{1223} The Ghana Health Service (GHS) lauded the projects because those communities were declared buruli ulcer endemic areas with frightening statistics of depreciating health conditions.\textsuperscript{1224}

\textbf{6.3.2. Central University College}

The ICGC started Central University College (CUC) in 1997 as a non-profit tertiary institution after an existing Bible School, Central Christian College (CCC), was transformed into a fully-fledged university college. The CUC then became the second private university in Ghana after Valley View University (VVU) owned by the Seventh-day Adventists. CUC growth in terms of physical infrastructure, faculty development, and marketability of students has been phenomenal and has

\textsuperscript{1220} International Central Gospel Church \textit{Greater Works}. Accra: DPI, July 2011, p. 30

\textsuperscript{1221} Divine Amegashie, Interview, on the 20th November 2011 at Accra in the Gt. Accra Region.

\textsuperscript{1222} Divine Amegashie, Interview, on the 20th November 2011 at Accra in the Gt. Accra Region.

\textsuperscript{1223} Divine Amegashie, Interview, on the 20th November 2011 at Accra in the Gt. Accra Region.

\textsuperscript{1224} Divine Amegashie, Interview, on the 20th November 2011 at Accra in the Gt. Accra Region.
dominated the list of private university rankings in Ghana. The University operates in various campuses spread across Accra. Its administrative office is located on the permanent ultramodern campus situated at Miotso about forty-five kilometers from the center of the city of Accra. CUC is composed of a School of Theology and Missions (STM), Central Business School (CBS), Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS), and School of Applied Sciences (SAS). The university currently runs MBA programmes as well STM is organized into four Schools, namely, Department of Biblical and Church Historical Studies, Department of Church Administration, Christian Education, and Family Counseling, Department of Systematic and Practical Theology, Department of Practical Ministry and Department of Graduate Studies. STM runs Bachelor and Master (Master of Arts and Master of Philosophy) degree programmes. The School’s objective is to train leaders and personnel for institutions, church organizations and the general society. The focus of the training is stated as:

Training is geared towards the moulding of minds and hearts to approach situations and circumstances with a critical, dissecting and constructive spirit. National, societal, church life and direction, as well as international issues, are brought to bear on the pursuit of the academic goals of the department.

The CBS was started in 1997 when the Bible College was upgraded into the university. It was initially known as the School of Business Management and Administration (SBMA). This was changed to reflect the expansion, the new focus

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1225 2007 Annual Report presented by Professor Victor Gadzekpo, president of CUC, to the General Church Council (GCC) of the ICGC at Miotso, CUC Campus, in the Greater Accra Region, p. 101.


1227 Ibid., p. 13.

1228 Ibid.
and vision of the School.\textsuperscript{1229} It currently has six departments that offer Bachelor of Science programmes. They are, Department of Accounting, Department of Finance, Department of Human Resource Development, Department of Management and Public Administration, Department of Marketing and Department of Agribusiness management.\textsuperscript{1230} The CBS also runs the Master of Business Administration (MBA) programmes in Finance, General Management, Marketing and Human Resource Management.\textsuperscript{1231} CBS currently accounts for about 70\% of the total student population of CUC.\textsuperscript{1232} In the view of Kojo Sallah, arguably, “the CBS is one educational outlet in Ghana whose product has turned out great business people, most of them young dynamic and entrepreneurial.”\textsuperscript{1233} Sallah’s statement reflects the focus of the School: “The School has remained relevant to national development by training young people to fill much needed business, administrative and entrepreneurial positions in the country.”\textsuperscript{1234} As part of the expansion of the CUC, two schools were added to the university. They are, the School of Applied Sciences (SAS) which currently has six departments comprising, Department of Architecture, Department of Civil Engineering, Department of Nursing, Department of Physician Assistantship Studies, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences and the Department of Information Technology.\textsuperscript{1235} All of these programmes are limited to the bachelor degree level. The aim of the School is to train “well-grounded and well-rounded

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1229}Ibid., p. 33
\item \textsuperscript{1230}Ibid.,
\item \textsuperscript{1231}Ibid., p. 34.
\item \textsuperscript{1232}Ibid., p. 33.
\item \textsuperscript{1233}Kojo Sallah, interview, on the 6\textsuperscript{th} of September 2011 at Tema, in the Greater Accra Region.
\item \textsuperscript{1234}Central University College, \textit{Central University Annual Report 2012/2013}, p. 33.
\item \textsuperscript{1235}Ibid., p. 126.
\end{itemize}
health professionals, architects and engineers who can meet the challenges of our time and serve as a positive influence on our society.”\textsuperscript{1236} The other, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) offers “programmes that emphasizes practical and career-oriented approaches to the dissemination of knowledge.”\textsuperscript{1237} It comprises five departments i.e.: Department of Economics, Department of English, Department of French, Department of Environmental Studies and Department of Communication Studies.\textsuperscript{1238} These departments combine with other schools and faculties in the university to provide flexibility in choice of career alternatives for students.\textsuperscript{1239} The Faculty also has one unit (Vision and Legacy Unit) and one institute (William Ofori Atta Institute of Integrity). The Vision and Legacy Unit came into existence during 2007/2008 with the purpose to “promote the university’s core values of Faith, integrity and Excellence through teaching and research.”\textsuperscript{1240} The unit runs programmes that are university-wide Life Development courses.\textsuperscript{1241} The Vision and Legacy unit also works in collaboration with the Chaplaincy to help with the moral formation and spiritual development of students. The thinking is that life is holistic thus morality and spirituality must not be separated from intellectual development.\textsuperscript{1242} Kalu, for instance, has noted the university’s emphasis on practical Christian values, the promotion of human

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{1236} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1237} Ibid., p. 82.
\textsuperscript{1238} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1239} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1240} Ibid., p. 111.
\textsuperscript{1241} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1242} Charles Nsiah, interview, on the 11\textsuperscript{th} September 2011 at CUC Chaplaincy Office, Miotso, Greater Accra Region.
\end{flushright}
dignity and excellence as a hallmark of CUC.\textsuperscript{1243}

In consonance with the university’s vision of developing ethical professionals through academic training, the William Ofori-Atta Institute of Integrity was formed in September 2011 and formally launched in April 2012. Its objective is:

…to enhance the scale of integrity and the quality of leadership and governance in Africa as a means of reducing poverty and fostering social development on the continent.\textsuperscript{1244}

The institute is named after one of the prominent nationalist leaders in the Gold Coast (now Ghana) who was part of the ‘Big Six’ acknowledged to have led the struggle for independence from the British colonial masters.\textsuperscript{1245} Ofori-Atta is also revered as a devout Christian and an astute politician. These traits are what depicts the institute’s character which students are expected to model.\textsuperscript{1246} The programmes offered by the William Ofori Atta Institute include, Executive Master’s in Leadership and Governance, M.Phil./Ph.D. in Political History, and Certificate in Leadership and Governance.\textsuperscript{1247} The Institute is set to inspire a cadre of young and energetic leaders in various social spectrums in African nations who uphold moral values and Christ-centered leadership.\textsuperscript{1248}

CUC’s development seems very rapid with its academic programmes consistently

\textsuperscript{1243} Kalu, \textit{African Pentecostalism}, p. 128.

\textsuperscript{1244} \textit{Central University Annual Report 2012/2013.} Central University College, Accra, 2013, p. 118.


\textsuperscript{1246} \textit{Central University Annual Report 2012/2013}, p. 118.

\textsuperscript{1247} Ibid., p. 119.

\textsuperscript{1248} This has been a key object in Mensa Otabil’s preaching especially his message entitled “Generational Thinking”, delivered during ICGC 25\textsuperscript{th} Anniversary celebration at the Accra Sports Stadium 1\textsuperscript{st} March 2009.
expanding and a raising student population. The 2004/2005 report presented at the ICGC General Church Council gave a total student population of 2,637. Eight years later (2012/2013), the student population rose to 9,500. The statistics accentuate Kalu’s point of view that “The collapse of morality in state institutions has coincided with the Christian responsibility to regain a voice in a fundamental area of national life.”

The growth and development of CUC can be attributed to three key factors; first, in principle the university promises sound moral formation. This is incorporated in the academic curriculum with courses such as moral formation taught. Second, the spread of campuses across the city and the flexibility in accessing education – regular, evening and weekend courses and programmes which make it worker-friendly. And finally, the high employability rate due to market-driven academic programmes they offer.

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1249 My personal observation during a fieldwork visit to the new campus at Miotso in the Greater Accra Region shows rapid expansion of infrastructure. The nearby communities such as Prampram and Dowenya which I was told used to have rural setting eight years ago have been affected by the location of the university with their socio-economic benefits.


1252 Kalu, African Pentecostalism, p. 128.

1253 The Vision and Legacy Unit of the university offer university-wide courses including, Character Formation, Principles of Leadership and Career Ethics. These courses are compulsory and professionals with high moral pedigree teach them.


1255 Nana Amma Ansah, interview, on the 11th August 2011 at Tema in the Greater Accra Region. Nana Amma Ansah, a group human resource manager of Enterprise Group of companies, was convinced the private universities were turning out a lot of good young professionals for various industries.
6.4. Social Policy, Human Development Index and PC Churches

The concepts of social policy according to Richard Titmuss is analogous to social administration, social services, social welfare, welfare states, etc.\textsuperscript{1256} The concept (social policy) can also be enlisted in themes such as social justice and social equity.\textsuperscript{1257} As an academic concept, social policy has been defined in various ways. “Social policy is seen to be beneficent, redistributive and concerned with economic as well as non-economic objectives”.\textsuperscript{1258} Hartley Dean, a professor of social policy of London School of Economics, asserts, “Social policy entails the study of the social relations necessary for human wellbeing and the system by which wellbeing may be promoted or, for that matter, impaired.”\textsuperscript{1259} Unlike Titmuss who developed three contrasting models for examining social policy,\textsuperscript{1260} as distinctive measures for making choices, Hartley emphasizes ‘wellbeing’ instead of ‘welfare.’ His conviction is that the object of social policy is “to maximize people’s chances of a good life”\textsuperscript{1261} thus his preference for the term ‘wellbeing’ instead of the fashionable usage of ‘welfare’ in social policy discourse. According to Dean, the focus on ‘being’ points to ‘the essence of lives’ whereas the ‘fare’ (as in welfare) shows ‘the goings and doings.’\textsuperscript{1262} The COP and ICGC emphasis on wellbeing programmes – spiritual (prayer rituals for instance) and provision of schools, healthcare, etc - for

\textsuperscript{1257} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1258} Ibid., p. 145.
\textsuperscript{1260} These were, \textit{The Residual Welfare Model of Social Policy}, \textit{The Industrial Achievement-Performance Model of Social Policy}, and \textit{The Institutional Redistributive Model of Social Policy}. Titmuss indicated “These three models are, of course, only very broad approximations of the theories and ideas of economists, philosophers, political scientists, and sociologists.” For further reading, see, Richard Morris Titmuss. \textit{Social Policy}. London: Allen & Unwin, 1974.
\textsuperscript{1261} Dean, \textit{Social Policy}, p. 12.
\textsuperscript{1262} Ibid, p. 1.
their members and society clearly demonstrate social policy intentions of the churches. The issue for consideration is, to what extent does social policy (as seen in the PC churches) play a role in the promotion of human development? And how does the meaning of Human Development Index (HDI) makes sense within indigenous epistemologies of progress and development?

The United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) defines the Human Development concept in its Human Development Report (HDR) 1990 as “a process of enlarging people’s choices.” This includes “living a long and healthy life, being educated, and having a decent standard of living.” The key components in the definition relate to health, education and wellbeing. Farhad Noorbakhsh explains the components and means of measuring Human Development Index (HDI) as:

Life expectancy at birth is selected to measure the longevity, knowledge is represented by a measure of educational achievement based on a weighted sum of adult literacy rate and mean years of schooling (up to 1994) with access to resources being measured by an adjusted real purchasing power parity GDP per capita.

The first Human Development Report introduced a new way of measuring development by combining indicators of life expectancy, educational attainment and income into a composite HDI. The HDI created a single statistic to serve as a frame of reference for both social and economic development. The HDI sets a minimum and a maximum for each dimension, called goalposts, and then shows where each country stands in relation to these goalposts. Afe Adogame for instance

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1264 Ibid.

has argued that using the HDI parameter is assessing human development is both revealing and blurring.\textsuperscript{1266} His argument is centred on the fact that religion and development, though two “ambiguous phenomena, yet we can map their creative interaction and intricate interconnectedness.”\textsuperscript{1267} As such, the two (religion and development) have a common objective, especially in the African context. Thus, interpretation for development must not be located exclusively within socioeconomic indicators for measuring development as suggested by Noorbakhsh.\textsuperscript{1268} This is because the African and/or PC epistemologies of human development is conceived in holistic terms which include religious elements that engender wellbeing such as prayer, teaching and activities that promote morality, health, etc. In this regard, religion could be seen as development, and development as religion. Such a concept of religion as development and conversely development as religion serves as a means to measure and understand hitherto underplayed cultural and symbolic aspects of development or to the resistance to development.\textsuperscript{1269} In contexts such as Africa, religion becomes an all-inclusive category under which the idea of development and the specific activities undertaken in the name of development can be subsumed.\textsuperscript{1270}

In addition, the churches operate Non-governmental organizations (NGO) and/or Faith Based Organizations (FBO)\textsuperscript{1271} such as Pentecost Social Services


\textsuperscript{1267} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{1268} Noorbakhsh, "A Modified Human Development Index," p. 157.

\textsuperscript{1269} Adogame, “African Christianities and the Politics of Development from Below.”

\textsuperscript{1270} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{1271} The terms Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) and Faith-Based Organization (FBO) are used here to denote organs within the churches that carry out social services and human
(PENTSOS) in COP and Central Aid in ICGC. The components of Human Development i.e. longevity, good education and wellbeing are recurrent themes in churches including COP and ICGC. They are also expressive in the churches’ quest to satisfy the needs of their members and society. For instance, the support for health care services, building of health facilities, provision of good drinking water and campaigns for health and fitness programmes. Other social interventions include payment of bursaries and scholarships, building schools, and in recent times, as observed by Joel Carpenter, the establishment of universities. These social services are the COP’s and the ICGC’s main social interventions which deserve to be mentioned in addition to their faith activities such as prayer rituals, etc.

Taking into account the setting of the churches, especially noting the background of converts the COP and ICGC attracted in the inception of the respective churches (see pages 148-149), one can argue that these churches have shown significant improvement in social and human developmental agenda. This is against the backdrop that the early members who joined the churches did not have the financial resources and educational training to help with the initial development of the churches’ human and social programmes. It took a considerable length of time for the churches to gradually develop their own in education, business, public life etc. through the teaching of God’s word by the pastors. Mensa Otabil for instance

developmental needs such as Pentecost Social Services (PENTSOS) for the COP and Central Aid for ICGC. Thus, NGO is defined as an accredited organization which operates without governmental funding or formed based on profit based as in businesses. FBO is also explained as a religious group or sub-group whose activities and services are carried out based on religious beliefs.

1272 Carpenter, “New Evangelical Universities: Cogs in a World System or Players in a New Game?”

1273 Opoku Onyinah, Interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP Head Office at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
has commented about the difficulty the church had to go through in the initial stages. He recalls the history of the church indicating the fact that only one person had a Bachelor’s degree in the early days when he started the ICGC, the rest of the converts were all young people who had come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Similarly, Larbi gives indication of how the COP developed. The historical details so far points to the fact that the leaders of the PC churches developed their church organization with converts who themselves were looking for meaning to life. They did not have the advantage to develop their churches with the crème de la crème in the Ghanaian society as the historical mission churches did. They started from the scratch and gradually built their establishments. This partly account for the reason why the PC churches is shaped by the founders’ perspective on religio socio-politico and economical issues.

6.5. Conclusion

The COP and ICGC engage in social action and human development programmes as a result of their spiritual convictions, moral obligations, and what they consider as their ‘mission’. With the COP, social programmes also “exemplify Jesus Christ as portrayed in the gospels, who fulfills spiritual, physical and social aspirations of people.” For instance, the Five-Year Vision document of the COP states:

The primary concern of the church is to represent Christ, who meets spiritual, material and social needs of the people. Consequently, the Church’s services to society in the areas of education and health will be given special attention. These demonstrations of God’s love

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1274 Mensa Otabil, Interview, on the 18th August 2011, at the ICGC head office in the Greater Accra Region.
1275 Larbi, Pentecostalism, pp. 175-205.
1276 Opoku Onyinah, Interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP Head Office at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
to society will also be used as a platform for evangelism (Matt. 25: 34-35, Acts 4:34-35; Acts 6:1-2; Acts 11: 28-30; 1 Tim. 5: 3-5; Gal. 2: 10; Isa. 10: 1-3). In allocating resources to PENTSOS the church carries out its functions and effectively accomplish its goals. This objective is given in the COP Vision 2013:

PENTSOS will be empowered to continue to support community initiated development programmes. Their activities will include schools, health services, economic empowerment, disaster prevention and management, relief services, educational support schemes and equitable distribution of resources and opportunities for development.

The future objective of the COP is suggested in the church’s developmental agenda. They include, expansion of health facilities, establishing a counseling center for HIV/AIDS, building model Senior High Schools (SHS), and the building of youth centres. As a policy direction, local and district churches of COP are tasked to identify and meet the welfare needs of the members of the church. Thus, districts, area and local assemblies are to raise fund for the educational and health needs of their congregants.

ICGC on the other hand, pursue social services with the aim that “they should serve as engines to move the message of salvation and be able to influence society as our mission state.” In a report presented to the ICGC General Assembly on the 18th of September 2007, Otabil outlined the church’s human development objective for the future. This composed of an instruction to the pastors and leaders of the

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1277 The Church of Pentecost, Vision 2013, p. 37.
1278 Ibid.
1279 Ibid, p. 38.
1280 Dennis Amil Nuutsugah, interview, on the 26th November 2011, at Ashaiman in the Gt. Accra Region.
1282 Ibid., p. 10-11.
churches “to work towards the holistic development of the congregations.”\textsuperscript{1283} To explain this, Otabil emphasized, “we should begin to deliver messages that challenge our congregations to equip themselves to improve their economic and social wellbeing as they grow spiritually.”\textsuperscript{1284} He continued:

\begin{quote}
We must begin to seriously explore ways of strengthening our capacities in wealth creation if we want to be able to carry not only the gospel, but also be seen to support development projects that take our people out of disease, hunger and poverty. We also must start looking at projects and programmes that bring positive changes in our communities.\textsuperscript{1285}
\end{quote}

Otabil’s admonition, as revealed in the above quote, shows ICGC’s orientation in seeking to improve the welfare needs of people. Thus, the conviction is “establishing educational and other commercial ventures that are commensurate with our faith and practice.”\textsuperscript{1286}

This background is what precipitated the setting up of SAC which has become another avenue by which ICGC carries out its social programmes in conjunction with Central Aid. The SAC still facilitates social contributions such as donations to the Osu Children’s Home orphanage, monthly contributions to the Cancer Unit of Korle-bu Teaching Hospital, Lifewalk, and the Clean Water projects. ICGC local churches are also instructed to set apart monies meant for local assemblies to undertake social services. By policy, all ICGC local churches are to hold an end of year programme dubbed, ‘Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh’. The proceeds of the programme are used for a local community project decided on by the local

\begin{footnotes}
\item \textsuperscript{1283} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{1284} Ibid., p. 11
\item \textsuperscript{1285} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{1286} Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
assembly. Some ICGC local churches use this resource to provide community projects such as street lighting, donations to orphanages, construction of drains, hospital renovations, blood donations to the national blood bank at Korle-bu, etc.

Both COP and ICGC have shown tremendous interest in engaging in social services and human development in Ghana. The setting up of PUC and CUC by these churches is significant in the development of the nation. It also demonstrates the commitment of these churches as development partners of the nation. However, both COP and ICGC have not been able to directly engage and influence social policies at the governmental level as their counterparts i.e. Catholics and the mission churches do. The reason may be the lack of capacity as suggested by Larbi. However, both churches (COP and ICGC) do not lack the needed orientation and resolve to embark on social action. As stated earlier under section 6.1, the older churches especially those under the umbrella of the CCG and the CBC have demonstrated a capacity to take on the various governments and their agencies directly on social policy issues. Gifford rightly acknowledged:

Whereas the Ghana Bar Association and the Association of Recognised Professional Bodies could not hold out against the hegemonic instincts of the PNDC, the Christian Council and the Catholic bishops generally succeeded ‘in maintaining their autonomy and integrity in the face of government hostility’.

The COP and ICGC are gradually and consciously engaging with their members who may serve as agents to influence social policy on a governmental level. For

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1287 Morris Appiah, interview, on the 18th January 2012 at Miotso, ICGC head office, in the greater Accra Region.

1288 Lilly Bonney, interview, on the 21st September 2011 at the ICGC head office in the Greater Accra Region. Mrs. Bonney is the Head of Administration, ICGC head office.

1289 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 447.

example, fifteen COP members were parliamentarians in the Fifth Section of Ghana’s Fourth Republican Parliament. These are from both the ruling National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the opposition New Patriotic Party (NPP). The COP has therefore decided “to hold periodic meetings with the fifteen parliamentarians to influence political decisions on national policies.” Koduah admitted, hitherto “no such thing has been done except that previously the church emphasized on evangelism as primary to any other responsibility to society.” Nevertheless, the COP and ICGC social supports systems that take care of the needs of their own and their community, concern for health and educational institutions have been remarkable. Their members attest to this and it is also part of the reason why they have endeared themselves to the public as contributors to social development.

1291 Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at COP Head Office, Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
1292 Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at COP Head Office, Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
1293 Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at COP Head Office, Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
1294 A number of respondents from the COP and ICGC associate themselves with this. The include; from COP: Aba Mensah, interview, on the 9th October 2011 at Cape Coast in the Central Region; William Wilberforce Adrany, interview, on the 29th October 2011 at Sogakope in the Volta Region. From the ICGC: Elizabeth Quarshie, interview, on the 20th November 2011 at Ashaiman in the Greater Accra Region; Kate Aba Whyte, interview, on the 6th May 2012 at Sekondi in the Western Region.
CHAPTER SEVEN

POLITICS AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

7.0. Introduction

This chapter examines the COP and ICGC activities in public life during the regimes of Ghana’s Fourth Republic, namely John Rawlings, John Kuffuor, John Atta Mills and the present John Dramani Mahama’s administrations (1992-date). However, relevant historical antecedents will be referred to.

This study interrogates the concepts of politics, democratic processes and civic engagement by PC churches in Ghana. The discussions include the COP and ICGC political engagement in elections, the churches political orientations and activities, and the churches’ ‘prophetic role’ as part of a civil society group. The references to the mission churches experiences in public life in Ghana serve as background information. This may also help make clearer patterns in church-state interactions in Ghana’s public life.

The terms ‘political orientation’ or ‘political theology’ are used interchangeably to imply the churches religio-political ideologies in public life engagements. ‘Political Theology’ in this work differs from the usage of the term by Carl Schmitt. Again, the use of the singular terminology, ‘political orientation’, may be inaccurate because PC engagement in public affairs is expressed in varied forms and ways. I therefore employ the plural term, ‘political orientations’.


7.1. The Church and Ghana’s Fourth Republic

Two issues occupied the attention of the Ghanaian public prior to the first presidential and parliament election in the Fourth Republic: the transition from a military government to a democratic regime, and peaceful (before, during and after) democratic presidential and parliamentary elections. It had been speculated prior to the first election in the Fourth Republic that Ghana would experience political turbulence as had happened in other West African nations like Liberia and Sierra Leone. As a result, the Catholic Bishop’s Conference (CBC) in Ghana issued three different statements in 1992 on the transition to the Fourth Republic. The first statement was a proposal by the Catholic Church issued on the 8th April 1992 expressing concerns on some issues regarding the transition to constitutional rule. The issues were: national reconciliation, the transitional provisions, timetable for the return to constitutional rule, the referendum, the presidential-parliamentary elections and the disarming of the revolutionary cadres. The second statement issued on

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1297 Fierce attacks and attempted assassinations on political leaders are common in Ghana's political history. The most famous was the bomb blast at Kulungugu on the 11 August 1962, which threatened the life of Ghana's first President Kwame Nkrumah. Violence between supporters of rival political parties becomes intense close to elections.

1298 Liberia at this time was going through civil war and most of its citizenry had sought refuge in Ghana. It was obvious people of all walks of life in Ghana understood the danger to the peace and tranquility in Ghana by the mention of Liberia in the clearest possible way. The political situation in some parts of West Africa i.e. Sierra Leone had also become unstable with examples of civil war atrocities shown on the national television. The public became interested in demanding their political rights, sometimes aggressively but with great exercise of caution.


1300 The Bishops brought up major areas of differences between their proposals and the proposals of the PNDC government in terms of the method for the transition. The Bishops for instance, called for the disarming of revolutionary cadres. The Bishop Conference felt the existence of paramilitary organs would be used to intimidate opponents to enable the rigging of the election to Rawlings’ advantage. This was perceived as potential grounds to spark off electoral strive. The concern of the bishops was not only the disbanding of the cadres, but also for them to be disarmed. Much of the violence and the shedding of blood that took place during the PNDC regime was linked to their activities. The bishops therefore advised that only the Armed Forces and Police Service be officially authorized to have the right to bear arms. This was the proposal of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference signed and issued by Rt. Rev. Frances Anani Kofi Lodonu on the 8th April 1992. It expressed the concerns of the church in line with peaceful transition.
the 11 July 1992 urged all politicians and (the PNDC) government to avoid any actions or utterances that did not promote national unity, reconciliation and harmony but rather tend to create rancour, bitterness and resentment. As the 1992 election drew closer, again, the bishops called on all the citizens of Ghana, especially the church, and impressed the need for non-partisanship of the church in order for their neutrality as agents of peace and unity not to be compromised. The bishops also called for a special week of prayer from 25th October 1992 and also asked the clergy and other leaders of various churches to preach on peace, tolerance and forgiveness at all services.

The Christian Council of Ghana (CCG) also held joint conferences with their Catholic counterparts and issued joint communiqués. The direction for the joint conference was mainly on activities regarding public-life issues and not on other doctrinal discussions. The CBC and CCG asked Ghanaians to uphold the virtues of peace and unity as the 1992 election passed without any large-scale violence. They stated: “we, in our prophetic role, would like to emphasis more than ever before, to all politicians and our Fourth Republican Government, the need to work even harder to ensure lasting peace and stability, unity and love.” The CBC and CCG in 1996, 2000, 2004 and 2008 continued to call for political tolerance, fairness and

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1302 “A Call to all Citizens: The Election of President and Parliamentarians for the Fourth Republic” A Communiqué issued by the Ghana Catholic Bishops’ Conference and Head of the member-churches of the Christian Council of Ghana at their annual joint meeting held in Accra on Wednesday, April 28, 1993 in *Ghana Bishops Speak*.
1303 A joint meeting held in Accra on Wednesday, 28th April 1993 by the Catholic Bishops’ Conference and the Christian Council of Ghana.
1304 Ibid.
peaceful elections.\textsuperscript{1305}

The PC churches also campaigned for peace alongside the mission churches efforts. From the inception of the Fourth Republic (1992 to 2012) the PC churches engaged in prayer and called for a peaceful election rather than issuing communiqués and pastoral letters.\textsuperscript{1306} Individual PC church leaders also claimed to speak ‘the mind of God’ based on their spiritual convictions.\textsuperscript{1307} Paul Gifford describes these spiritual interventions\textsuperscript{1308} in response to elections and public life related issues as “implicit politics.”\textsuperscript{1309} Gifford however was silent about the COP political response and also excluded Otabil in his diatribe against the Charismatic churches political role in Ghana.\textsuperscript{1310} Birgit Meyer has also suggested that PC churches “play a minor role” in public life.\textsuperscript{1311} This necessitates the need to interrogate the role of the COP and ICGC responses and activities in Ghana’s public life.

7.2. The COP

The appointment of Prophet Martinson Yeboah, the chairman of the COP from the 1988 to 1998, by President Rawlings to serve as a member of the Council of State

\textsuperscript{1305} See, Tettey, “Ecclesiastical Leadership in State Governance. The Study of Church and State in Ghana’s Fourth Republic.”

\textsuperscript{1306} Samuel Ofori Kwakye, interview, on the 22\textsuperscript{nd} of April 2012 at Paduasi-Kitasi in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Many respondents interviewed also hold a strong view that the prayers of the PC churches especially during elections averted election related challenges in Ghana.

\textsuperscript{1307} This usually expressed as prophecy, visions, and other forms of spiritual intuitions. It is usually a revelation of an impending danger to be averted or the political candidate likely to emerge as winner in election.

\textsuperscript{1308} Prayer vigils by Duncan-Williams’ Christian Action Faith Ministry International (CAFMI), Agyin Asare’s Word Miracle Church (WMC) now Perez Chapel, Sam Korankye Ankrah’s Royal House Chapel International (RHCI) and Salifu Amoako’s Alive Chapel.

\textsuperscript{1309} Gifford, Ghana’s New Christianity, pp. 172-176.

\textsuperscript{1310} Ibid., p. 175.

from 1992 to 1996, brought about a new level of interaction between the COP and the State. Although the appointment was made in Yeboah’s personal capacity, as the chairman of the COP, it brought new ways of engagement between the COP and the state. Yeboah’s selection to the council of state therefore marked a significant development of political engagement in the COP. This is because, until Yeboah’s appointment, the COP engaged in political affairs mainly by providing support through intercessory prayers to the nation. Based on Yeboah’s appointment and subsequent developments, Larbi for instance argues, “The Pentecostals, however, have moved from the era of political passivity to the era of direct political involvement” suggesting that the COP has awakened to their political responsibilities. It is noteworthy to consider the phrase Larbi used, “direct political involvement”, because it does suggest there had been other indirect forms of political activism. Larbi does not imply Pentecostals are irrelevant in public life, rather he acknowledges the new form of engagement hence his view that “Pentecostals now play important roles in the politics of the nation.” Michael Ntumy, the fourth chairman of COP at the 32nd Session of General Council Meeting of the church held at Koforidua supported Larbi’s assertion:

We have maintained our traditional non-partisan position, supporting the government of the day with our prayers and occasional courtesy calls, though as individuals, members of the church have their own political inclinations.

1312 Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office in Accra the Greater Accra Region.
1313 Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office in Accra the Greater Accra Region.
1314 Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 430.
1315 Ibid.
1316 Michael Ntumy, Address delivered on the 32nd Session of General Council Meeting of the COP held at Koforidua in the Eastern Region on the 30th March 2000.
The viewpoint of Ntumy about COP political engagement has also been reiterated by his successor, Opoku Onyinah, the current chairman of the COP. Onyinah declares the COP political orientation: “We believe that Christians should get involved in politics. But the church should not get involved in partisan politics.” The statements of Ntumy and Onyinah express the COP’s political position. The COP’s political stance, as revealed in Ntumy’s speech, could not be described as a ‘non-interventionist’ political approach. It rather shows the mode of engagement the COP had had with successive governments. Again, Onyinah’s call that “Christians should get involved in politics” further strengthens the argument for an active COP’s political orientation. COP respondents have also expressed their wide-ranging opinions during fieldwork.

### 7.2.1. COP Political Responses

The COP respondents showed overwhelming support for the church’s political attitude. However, some respondents also cautioned against the COP becoming partisan if caution is not exercised. A respondent asserts, “Our church is politically neutral but contributes to the political development of the country by advising the leaders of the country especially those who are members of COP to be guided by their Christian principles.” Another member of the COP interviewed maintains, “The Bible entreats believers to stand in the gap for our nation, we do not support parties as a church, but support the national cause with our constant prayers that is why the eyes

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1317 Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.

1318 Some respondents expressed the fear that the COP could be drawn into partisan politics if the church did not maintain clear neutrality.

1319 Dennis Amil Nutsugah, interview, on the 26th November 2011 at Ashaiman in the Greater Accra Region.
of the Lord is still upon Ghana. Without believers praying Ghana would have been destroyed.\textsuperscript{1320} The perception of other members of the COP regarding the church’s political behavior is given, “The churches role in Ghana’s politics is positive. We, the COP, are very much involved in the political development of Ghana. We help keep the peace of the country, diffuse political tension by our prayers and ask God for progress for this land.”\textsuperscript{1321} The political task of members of the church is founded in the conviction that “Our national anthem is prayer, it shows that the foundation of this nation is established on prayer. Nobody can take this contribution from the church for granted. We do other things but our Christian message and prayers have kept this nation.”\textsuperscript{1322} Again as another respondent affirms, “Our contribution to governance in Ghana is enormous, we campaign for peace, unity and progress. We fast and pray so that God in his goodness will visit our land. Our pastors are also involved in other national assignments and we always support them to succeed because Ghana is for all of us and not only for the politicians.”\textsuperscript{1323}

The views of the respondents reveal perceptions in mobilizing social and religious capital for political action. They are; first, the use of inclusive language. The responses shown above are expressed in either “our” or “we”. It shows clearly that the members of COP associate themselves with the political process that the larger institution (COP) engages. For instance, Robert Putnam and Kristin Gosshave have argued that participatory attitude and formal or informal associations are vital components in social (political) capital. Putnam and Gosshave state:

\textsuperscript{1320} Adjoa Y. Anokye, interview, on the 6\textsuperscript{th} May 2012 at Sekondi in the Western Region.
\textsuperscript{1321} Love Kissi, interview, on the 13\textsuperscript{th} May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region.
\textsuperscript{1322} Ato Kusi, interview, on the 13\textsuperscript{th} November 2011 at Akropong in the Eastern Region.
\textsuperscript{1323} Komla Kuvor, interview, on the 30\textsuperscript{th} October 2011 at Sogakope in the Volta Region.
Early research on social capital concentrated on formal associations for reasons of methodological convenience, so it is worth emphasizing here that associations constitute merely one form of social capital. Informal associating (say, family dinners) may be more instrumental than formal associations in achieving some valued purposes.\footnote{Robert Putnam and Kristin Goss have. “Introduction” in Robert D. Putnam eds. Democracies in Flux: The Evolution of Social Capital in Contemporary Society. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 10.}

Second, the level of awareness the respondents have about the COP engaging in politics was noticeable. The COP members understood the political issues at stake and seem to appreciate the COP for its role in public life. The third component relates to the appropriation of prayer as an alternative mode of engaging in political practice in Ghana. This practice had received criticism from Gifford,\footnote{Gifford, Ghana’s New Christianity. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 169.} however, in the view of the COP members, the prayers of the church accounts for the relative peace and political progress in Ghana.

### 7.2.2. Political Networking

The COP mostly works together with the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council (GPCC) concerning civic and political activities.\footnote{Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the head office of COP, Accra in the Greater Accra Region. Apostle Opoku Onyinah is presently the president of the GPCC succeeding Apostle Dr. Michael Ntumy also the past chairman of the COP.} The history of their collaboration dates back to 1969 when GPCC was formed as an umbrella body of the Pentecostal churches with the name Ghana Evangelical Fellowship (GEF).\footnote{Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches Pamphlet. GPCC, Accra, 2012.} The founding churches of the GPCC were: The Apostolic Church (now The Apostolic Church-Ghana), The Church of Pentecost (COP), Assemblies of God Church (AG),
Eliem Pentecostal Church (EPC), and Christ Apostolic Church (CAC).\textsuperscript{1328} GPCC now has a total of 184 Pentecostal and Charismatic churches across Ghana. Opoku Onyinah, who is also the chairman of the COP, now heads the Council.\textsuperscript{1329} The Council has become very active in social and public engagements since the appointment of Michael Ntumy the past president and chairman of the GPCC and COP respectively.\textsuperscript{1330} Francis Wusu Gand, the regional superintendent of the Assemblies of God Church corroborated the effectiveness of GPCC under Ntumy’s leadership. According to Gand, “GPCC in recent years have become very formidable for socio-political activism.”\textsuperscript{1331}

The collaboration between COP and the GPCC has been prominent in the areas of election related advocacy programmes and various civic duties jointly carried out. They include advocacy for political participation, peaceful elections (before, during and after elections), and peace building after the 2012 election petition case at the Supreme Court of Ghana.\textsuperscript{1332} The GPCC has also been involved in the organization of the National Thanksgiving Services with other Christian bodies such as the Catholic Secretariat, the Christian Council of Ghana and the National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches (NACCC).\textsuperscript{1333} The GPCC employed a number of activities to promote peace during the 2012 presidential and parliamentary

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\textsuperscript{1328} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{1329} Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at the head office of COP, Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
\textsuperscript{1330} Apostle Dr. Michael Ntumy became the president of the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council in 1998 to 2008. This coincided with his tenure of office as the chairman of the COP.
\textsuperscript{1331} Francis Wusu Gand, interview, on the 3\textsuperscript{rd} May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region of Ghana.
\textsuperscript{1332} Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council, Press Statement. “Election 2012 Superme Court Verdict: A Victory for Multi-Party Democracy”, issued on the Monday 2\textsuperscript{nd} September 2013 and signed by Apostle Samuel Yaw Antwi (General Secretary) and Apostle Dr. Opoku Onyinah (President).
\textsuperscript{1333} Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 430.
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electioneering campaign in Ghana. Prominent among the activities are the “PLUS Ghana” project and a number of public rallies.1334

7.2.2.1. “PLUS GHANA” Project

The “PLUS GHANA” project was a campaign for peaceful general elections in the lead up to the 2012 presidential and parliamentary polls in Ghana. This campaign was carried out by the GPCC in conjunction with the COP and public institutions.1335 “PLUS” is an acronym for Peace, Love, Unity and Stability, which were the main goals of the campaign. The “Plus Ghana” project was a non-partisan approach to highlight the many issues that threatened the peace of Ghana.1336 The 2008 election had been marked with some degree of violence and political acrimony. The GPCC felt that a proactive approach was needed to avoid a repetition of previous disorder and promote the stability of the nation. This has been noted:

GPCC have identified a number of election-related problems and challenges that need to be effectively addressed solely on the basis of promoting peace, unity and stability in Ghana before, during and after elections with a maximum sense of urgency and immediacy.1337

The Council therefore developed a three-prong approach in pursuit of their goal. These were: Training, Education and Development (TED) of voters, an observing and monitoring role in the 2012 elections, and advocacy in advancing the cause of

1334 See, Keynote Address by the President of the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council in collaboration with the office of the National Chief Imam on the occasion of one-day Peace Rally at Bawku on Saturday, 30th June 2012.
1335 Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the head office of the COP in the Greater Accra Region.
1336 Alfred Koduah, interview, on the 9th August 2011 at the COP head office in Accra the Greater Accra Region.
Ghanaian women, youth, disabled and prisoners. The aim was “to galvanize their members into socio-political action” as the election drew near.

The GPCC with their large membership and their spread across the country adopted the following methods in their peace campaigns: first, the use of the pulpit in sensitizing people about peaceful elections. Eric Tetteh, a member of the COP, shows how significant this new consciousness of political awareness has been notable in the church. He noted:

The Church of Pentecost sustained move toward the sensitization of members was very effective for political awareness and action. This is the first time I have seen my church in great political consciousness. All Pentecostal and Charismatic churches must emulate this example.

Again, Tetteh’s submission suggests an awakening desire of the PC churches in public life issues. His admission that this is the first time the COP has been seen to be active in the political process of Ghana must not passed unnoticed. It is a new development that marks a departure of how the PC churches have been reviewed which is quite significant. Second, the GPCC held non-and-inter denominational meetings at regional capitals for peace appeals, prayer meetings. And third, organizing musical concerts, exchange of ideas and opinions with political and religious leaders and dispatching ‘peace representatives’ to local communities.

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1338 Ibid.
1339 Ibid.
1340 Eric Tetteh, interview, on the 29th January 2012 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
1341 Michael Ativor, interview, on the 13th May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region. Many of the respondents attested to the numerous approaches adopted by the GPCC in their campaign for peaceful elections. As a participant observer, I noticed some of the public educational shows. Some of these programmes were telecasted on the Ghana Television as new items during the early part of the 2012 electioneering campaign.
line with the commitment to peace in Ghana, the GPCC staged peace rallies especially in the northern parts of the country noted for political violence.\textsuperscript{1342}

\textbf{7.2.2.2. Peace Rallies}

Bawku, a multi-ethnic and multi-religious metropolis is a border town in the Upper East of Ghana noted for perennial conflict and violence was a major concern for peacemakers in Ghana.\textsuperscript{1343} Christian Lund indicates that the source of the conflict is multi-dimensional which makes a solution challenging.\textsuperscript{1344} As a result, a joint military and police patrol is positioned to maintain control. The Ghana News Agency (GNA) reported:

\begin{quote}
As part of measures to beef up security in the Bawku Municipality and its environs towards election 2012, the security apparatus are embarking on daily route marches in the municipality to create awareness of their presence. The exercise aims to inform the people of the security readiness to combat crime and protect lives and property in the area.\textsuperscript{1345}
\end{quote}

It was under these conditions that the GPCC on the 30\textsuperscript{th} June 2012 embarked on a peace rally. Their goal was to raise awareness in the municipality for the inhabitants to give peace a chance. This had become necessary because Ghana was then a few

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\textsuperscript{1342} Some of the flash-points for violence in Ghana are in the northern parts of the country. For instance, Bawku in the Upper East Region, Dagbon in the Northern Region to cite some examples. Most of these conflicts are chieftaincy based but later take religious and political forms that make the resolution complicated. For further discussion, see, \textit{Ghana Bishops Speak} vol. 11, p. 87. \textit{A communiqué issued by the Catholic Bishops Conference at their plenary assembly held at Denu from 3\textsuperscript{rd} – 12 July 2002}; Elom Dovlo “The Engagement of Muslims and Christians in Post-Independence Ghana". \textit{Journal of African Christian Thought} Vo. 7, No. 2; Dzodzi Tsikata and Wayo Seini, “Identities, Inequalities and Conflicts in Ghana”, CR\textit{ISE}: Working Paper, Nov. 2004.


\textsuperscript{1345} \textit{Ghana New Agency} news report on the 2\textsuperscript{nd} October 2012.
\end{flushright}
months away from the presidential and parliamentary elections. The salient part of GPCC message noted:

…we recognise it is part of our God-given mandate, to lead our institutions and communities to stem the incidence of violence, and mitigate the impact of such violence on individuals and communities. Hence the GPCC, in collaboration with other religious bodies… aiming at achieving this through our PLUS Ghana programmes. We intend to do this through:
1. Educating people [on]… Political campaigns, Voting and counting of ballots, declaration of results; and Post-election transition.
2. Negotiating with political party leaders to be responsive to the issues of insults, which could breed conflict, violence, war, blood-letting and draw our dear country back...
3. We appeal to our teeming young members to learn to respect the rule of law…
4. We encourage you to cultivate the culture of tolerance in your homes and families, neighbourhoods, towns and villages, constituencies, districts and indeed the whole country...
5. We call on the Media to endeavour to be very circumspective in their reportage, since your role is also central to either the success or failure of our electoral process.
6. We encourage the state security agencies as they do always to continue maintain law and order without fear or favour...

The peace rallies, as we find in the case of Bawku, shows the PCs engaging in civic and political responsibility. There were claims that the churches collaboration with the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) boosted the confidence of the electorate. The intended result was to increase voter turnout. The Ghana News Agency reported the predicted polling numbers, “the NCCE has predicted a higher voter turnout for Election 2012 and called on all stakeholders to marshal the

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1346 An address by the President of the Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council in collaboration with the Office of The National Chief Imam on the occasion of one-day Peace Rally at Bawku and its environs on Saturday, June 30, 2012.
1347 The National Commission for Civic Education is a constitutional mandated body created to facilitate among other things, to formulate, implement and oversee programmes intended to inculcate in the citizens of Ghana awareness of their civic responsibilities and an appreciation of their rights and obligations. See, Constitution of the Republic of Ghana 1992, Article 233, for the functions of the commission.
1348 David Noble Brister, interview, on the 3rd May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region of Ghana.
necessary operational requirements to manage the high inflow of electorates on Election Day.” It is still unclear whether the PC churches participation in voter education and peace campaigns brought about the high polling numbers. The statistics are imprecise though election observers report: “The mission observed a high voter turnout in all the visited polling stations. There was a noticeable high turnout of women and youth in most visited polling stations who were enthusiastic to vote.” What is certain about the 2012 election however, was the GPCC volunteered enthusiastically in the campaigns across the nation.

7.2.2.3. Aftermath of Election 2012

The outcome of Ghana’s 2012 general election brought a new challenge for the maintenance of peace in the country. The opposition NPP raised concerns about the electoral results that had declared NDC John Mahama the president-elect claiming a number of irregularities and unconstitutional practices had taken place. The NPP went to the Supreme Court of Ghana for arbitration of the electoral dispute seeking the court to overturn the result in favour of their candidate Nana Ado Danquah Akufu-Addo. The judges of the Supreme Court on the 29th August 2013 made their final decree of the matter upholding the decision of the electoral commission that the election of John Mahama was legitimate. This brought renewed political tension in the country, thus the GPCC issued a press statement calling on all the political

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1351 The GPCC worked in conjunction with state and non-state actors in their peace campaigns. Some of the institutions that collaborated are the NCCE, Federation for Muslim Council, local government assemblies and other religious bodies.

parties involved in the dispute and their members to accept the verdict of the Supreme Court. Part of their statement read:

We also wish to commend all Ghanaians for embracing the peace messages put out by the various state and non-state actors which contributed to prevent electoral violence after the Supreme Court verdict... We urge all political parties and citizenry to work at promoting inclusive dialogue, political tolerance and mutual respect in order to enhance public confidence in the institutions responsible for electoral management and law enforcement in Ghana. We, as a Council assure Ghanaians that we shall contribute to the reform process that would be initiated by the Electoral Commission.\textsuperscript{1353}

The GPCC’s pledge to help undertake the needed reforms once again shows the Council’s commitment to civil engagement and responsibility for the attainment of national peace and stability. These public engagements were combined with joint intercessory prayers and musical concerts for peace building.

7.2.2.4. Public Intercessory Prayers

Generally, the GPCC/COP use intercessory prayers as a tool for political engagement.\textsuperscript{1354} This approach has been a significant part of their political action.\textsuperscript{1355} Intercessory prayers become a “political praxis”\textsuperscript{1356} by which political outcomes are influenced. Spiritualizing politics is not limited to the GPCC and other PC churches, politicians and political parties also do this. The run-off to the 2012 elections in Ghana presented heavy patronage of such spiritual/political displays. The incumbent candidate, NDC’s John Mahama, campaigned with the message that “God has


\textsuperscript{1354} William Wilberforce Adrany, interview, on the 29\textsuperscript{th} October 2011 at Sogakokpe in the Volta Region.

\textsuperscript{1355} Gifford criticizing PC churches for contributing little in politics. He claims PC churches political resolve thrives on spiritual transformation but not in the constructive transformation of state and society. See Gifford, Ghana’s New Christianity, p. 169.

\textsuperscript{1356} Kalu, African Pentecostalism, p. 219.
determined his presidency” whereas the opposition NPP candidate rallied behind the message “the battle is the Lord’s” quoting 1 Samuel 17: 47, with a subtitle “AMEN!” on campaign billboards.¹³⁵⁷ These illustrations demonstrate the uses of the spiritual by which prayer remains essential in Ghana’s political life. Ogbu Kalu maintains a positive position on the spiritual input in politics by the PCs. He states, “Pentecostal political theology and practice reflect its responses to African political culture.”¹³⁵⁸ Thus the concept of worldview becomes a driving force in public life issues.

A PC worldview does not merely establish a system of cognitive beliefs, but it explains the maintenance of cosmic balance in all endeavours of life. As John Mbiti suggests, in the African context life in general is explained in a religious sense. Nothing happened by chance, events are caused and life in general is attributed to the spiritual or mystical causation.¹³⁵⁹ The understanding that we live in an ‘intentional world’ informs the churches in their political approach. Issues of life including ‘the political’ are therefore dealt with by spiritual means. As Horton implied, religion is used in almost everything, to ward off, to protect, to control events of this life,¹³⁶⁰ hence the spiritual dimension is perceived as that which control the everyday occurrence of life. As a result, prayer becomes an instrument for active political engagement. Accordingly, the GPCC’s ability to deal with issues as suggested by respondents, including that of the state, economy, socio-political practices by prayer remain an active process.

¹³⁵⁷ These campaign messages were mounted on giant billboards, posters, flyers, radio jingles, etc. See Appendix 9.
¹³⁶⁰ See Horton, Patterns of Thought in Africa and the West.
7.3. The ICGC

The political tone of ICGC, according to Kwesi Sampong a pastor of ICGC, has mainly been the voice of Otabil’s political concerns declared often through his preaching and public statements. ICGC has no formal ecumenical relationship neither has the church developed structures for socio-political activities.\(^{1361}\) This is usually the case with Charismatic churches in Ghana. It also underlines the reason why issues pertaining to PC political engagements are mainly focused on the leaders and not the entire church. For example, Gifford’s discussions about the PC churches have mainly been focused on ‘personality representation’ rather than a ‘collective representation’ of the life of the church.\(^{1362}\) This also shows the influence the leaders of the PC churches have, not only over their members but also in the larger society within which they operate.\(^{1363}\) It seemed, perhaps, ICGC political theology as demonstrated so far is subsumed in Otabil’s political orientation. A respondent decried, “One wonders if the church has a political position aside what Otabil thinks and says.”\(^{1364}\) The tone of some of ICGC members corroborates the anonymous pastor’s views. For instance, a respondent expressed his view:

\[
\text{The political thought of the church is mainly Otabil’s. His passion to see the nation transformed always urges him to speak for us because he is on top of the issues. I think he is the right person to}
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\(^{1361}\) Kwesi Sampong, Interview, on the 18\(^{th}\) January 2012 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.

\(^{1362}\) Gifford discussed Otabil in a ‘representative capacity’ in his books; *African Christianity* and *Ghana’s New Christianity*, an approach different from what he used in discussing the Catholic Church and churches under Christian Council of Ghana in the same literature. Apart from a brief introductory remark that the ICGC represents, Gifford then focuses on Otabil as if he is the embodiment of ICGC. This signals what I mean by ‘personal’ or ‘representative’ capacity. Equating the General Overseer of a church, regardless of how important he might be, raises crisis in the church’s constitution. The ICGC constitution sets out clearly the authority structure of all officers and does not make an individual an embodiment of the church.

\(^{1363}\) See Asamoah-Gyadu, *Taking Territories and Raising Champions*.

\(^{1364}\) An anonymous pastor of ICGC interviewed on the question of ICGC’s political impact in state governance.
The above view serves as a proposition of the political tone of the ICGC in its present formation. Some respondents concur with Charles Nsiah. However, others take exception of the view that Otabil’s political opinion must remain the representative view of the church.

7.3.1. Political Tone

On the question of the empowering role of ICGC in politics in Ghana, respondents were varied in their opinion. The responses are as follows: “ICGC has come of age, there is a clear political response from the church through what Otabil preaches.”

Another declared:

We all know our pastor [Otabil] is a secret NPP member, maybe no more secret member but open member, but prophet Annor gives support to NDC because president Mills is a good man and wants the nation to become better in fulfillment of his “Better Ghana” agenda.

The two comments show the differences of opinion members of the ICGC hold. Samuel Payne’s assertion had been a rumour amongst the ICGC fraternity for sometime. Prophet Christopher Yaw Annor, a founding member of ICGC and one of Otabil’s leading ministers, associated publicly with President Mills until the president’s death in 24th July 2012. The Prophet Annor maintained a high public association with the late president Mills with occasional visits by the president to

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1365 Charles Nsiah, interview, on the 11th September 2011 at Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.
1366 Ebo Mends, interview, on the 16th October 2011 at Cape Coast in the Central Region.
1367 Samuel Payne, interview, on the 6th of May 2012 at Sekondi in the Western Region.
1368 For a full discussion on the value of ‘Rumour’ in African Christianity, see, Ellis and Haar, Worlds of Power.
1369 The anonymous pastor mentioned earlier during an interview confirmed this to me.
1370 Samuel Payne, interview, on the 6th of May 2012 at Sekondi in the Western Region.
the ICGC Holy Ghost Temple, where Prophet Annor works as the pastor-in-charge. Indeed, some members of ICGC perceive Otabil to be sympathetic toward the NPP for which reason he criticizes the NDC government. Other viewpoints from ICGC respondents corroborate the differences in opinion. An anonymous lay leader asserts, “When NPP is in power, Otabil preaches in support of the government as God-ordained administration. But when NDC comes to power, Otabil becomes a political teacher to the nation stressing all the malfeasance of the government.”

Another respondent noted, “Both politicians and pastors are not sincere with us. They say the nice things, but never practice anything they say. I do not care about who comes to power, its God who takes care of us all.”

Other members of ICGC maintain, “Hmmm, politics! I do not think pastors should be part of it. It is a dirty business. God is our leader but I will pray for political leaders.” And, “What the church has to do is to pray for the president and his cabinet if we want a peaceful and prosperous nation. Because the Bible says, ‘God rules over the affairs of men’.”

Another viewpoint of a respondent that shows differences in opinion is noted:

Pastors, yes they do their best to influence political view apart from leading us to pray for the nation. The church must also invest in people who want to do politics so they can directly influence political decisions.

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1371 An interview with a lay-leader in the ICGC who requested to remain anonymous on political views.
1372 Rita Wilson, interview, on the 16th October 2011 at Cape Coast in the Central Region.
1373 Elizabeth Quarshie, interview, on the 20th November 2011 at Ashaiman in the Greater Accra Region.
1374 Gifty Anderson, interview, on the 6th of May 2012 at Secondi in the Western Region.
1375 An interview with a pastor in the ICGC who requested to remain anonymous on political views.
Significantly, some ICGC church members who were earlier in favour of being quoted eventually became cautious about revealing their identity in connection with their political opinions. This shows the sensitivity members of the church attach to politics and how unsure they are about ICGC political neutrality. However, other respondents sought to debunk claims that Otabil is an ‘opposition pastor’. Such respondents were more explanatory, seeking to interpret Otabil’s teachings on leadership and democratic governance positively. A member of ICGC presbytery, Alexander Boatchway, elaborated:

ICGC political responsiveness is a dicey issue. Our leader used to be very vocal, I would not say political. He was vocal on political issues … and in Africa some of these discussions are not clear. You may be commenting on an issue that is social and somebody gives political implications to that. People who misunderstood him branded him with certain political colours and for him to disabuse that kind of thinking had to draw back a little.\textsuperscript{1376}

Commenting on the same issue, Mrs. Lilly Bonney, the head of administration of ICGC, asserted, “the practice of ‘political branding’ of people is a strategy to ward off voices of reason in Ghana’s political discourse.”\textsuperscript{1377} She further expounded on it:

There had been times the General Overseer had been branded as opposition. At that time, depending on who is in power and what is been commented on, speaking against negative practices in public attract labels. The moment you do that, they believe you are sitting with the other party which makes it a bit difficult to continue to speak. The political environment itself does not help hold healthy debates. The moment you speak against an issue, which is supported by one group, and then they brand you as an enemy.\textsuperscript{1378}

The views of respondents’ present a number of issues. First, ICGC political theology seem unclear to some members. Perhaps some church members may not be too clear

\textsuperscript{1376} Alexander Boatchway, interview, on the 4\textsuperscript{th} of May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region.
\textsuperscript{1377} Lilly Bonney, interview, on the 21\textsuperscript{st} September 2011 at Miotso ICGC head office in the Greater Accra Region.
\textsuperscript{1378} Ibid.
about the collective responsibility of the church’s position on socio-political affairs. It may also mean some members privilege their personal political interest above their commitment to ICGC. Any of the suppositions reveals a gap in sensitization programmes for socio-political activism. “The last time the church organized a political awareness programme was in 1992.”\textsuperscript{1379} Larbi noted:

In 1992, the church organized what was called “The Political Awareness Week” during which a public forum was organized for the representatives of the various political parties in the country to present their manifestos to the ICGC audience. This is believed to be the only such public forum created for the political parties in the country. A similar arrangement was made for the two leading political parties in the country on 26 October 1993 under the theme: \textit{The Ghanaian Dream: Our Hopes and Aspirations}. It was felt that since the political parties were saying basically the same thing, it would be important for them to meet in order to explore ways and means in which the two parties could cooperate to make this dream a reality. \textsuperscript{1380}

ICGC mostly attracts middle class upwardly mobile people.\textsuperscript{1381} For example, most of the respondents interviewed who had reservations about Otabil’s alleged political affiliation fall within this category.\textsuperscript{1382} Those who provided explanation on Otabil’s political engagements seem older.

Second, ICGC collectively has not developed the capacity in dealing with pertinent public life issues. The church has human resource potential but this has not been coordinated and structured to respond to pertinent sociopolitical issues. As a result, the leader of the church (Otabil) becomes the prime voice in ICGC’s political response as claimed by a member of the presbytery; “It is going to be difficult to

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[1379]{Kwesi Sampong, interview, on the 18\textsuperscript{th} January 2012 at Miotso in the Greater Accra Region.}
\footnotetext[1380]{Larbi, \textit{Pentecostalism}, p. 346.}
\footnotetext[1381]{Gifford, \textit{Ghana’s New Christianity}; Kalu, \textit{African Pentecostalism}, p. 187.}
\footnotetext[1382]{The demographic information was on age and social class. This was made by observation because no age information was received from respondents.}
\end{footnotes}
have other political opinions representing the church when you have the founder as
the leader who has a very strong presence in the nation.”

This is probably part of the reason some political activist readily attack Otabil and ICGC.

7.3.2. Political Attacks and Reactions

My previous research indicated that Otabil political responses resented some
practices of the NDC government before the 2000 presidential and parliamentary
elections in Ghana. While some criticized Otabil for being overly socio-political
in the pulpit, others like Gifford commend his approach. Toward the run-up to the
2000 election in Ghana, Otabil assigned himself a role to educate the electorate to
make informed choices with regard to the election of the president and
parliamentarians. He dealt with the subject of leadership extensively on one of the
popular Accra based radio stations, Joy FM-99.7 MHZ every Sunday morning.

As a result, an anonymous editorial was published in the state-owned newspaper The
Daily Graphic opposing Otabil’s political suggestions. By way of response, some
media houses heavily criticized Otabil for meddling in national politics. He responded through the same newspaper with the caption ‘Dr. Otabil replies
critics...’:

1383 Alexander Boatchway, interview, on the 4th of May 2012 at Takoradi in the Western Region.
1384 See, Tettey, “Ecclesiastical Leadership in State Governance: The Study of Church and State in
Ghana’s Fourth Republic.”
1385 Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 27th April 2008 at Christ Temple, Accra, in the Greater Accra
Region. In this interview Otabil insisted he has not changed from commenting on important national
issues just as he used to do previously. He concluded that the two régimes (Rawlings and Kufuor)
took two different responses and approaches to his messages.
1386 Gifford, African Christianity, pp. 79-111.
1387 Otabil’s discussions and preaching on leadership embodied issues of governance and politics.
1388 Yaw Binney, interview, on the 21st September 2011 at the ICGC head office, in the Greater
Accra Region.
Dear Sir, as our nation seeks the way forward, it is important that our national conversation be open to the possibility of expanding the options and alternatives available for informed choices to be made by the people.

I am aware that all citizens of this country may not share my views. However, I consider it part of my Christian and civic responsibilities to submit my thoughts on how this nation, which we all dearly love, will see better days.1389

Otabil’s response brought great disquiet to the ruling NDC fearing they may lose some Christian votes especially those from PC members. The situation calmed down after the run-up to the 2000 elections with the electoral defeat of NDC.1390 This is why Gifford maintains, “Otabil has begun to introduce very different consideration.”1391 Gifford argues:

Otabil was the only charismatic pastor heard by this writer to raise issues of power and authority in a way that could be handled in a social science course, understanding political systems as man-made, and the president as a political functionary rather than God’s vicegerent.1392

Just as Otabil serves on national boards and closely engages politicians in the course of his pastoral duties, he does not rely on self-seeking politicians who may require his approval for their private ends.1393 Hence Otabil was perceived and infamously tagged as an “Opposition Pastor” during Rawlings’ regime.1394 However, he

1390 Vincent Asiseh, interview, on 21st February 2007 at Tema in the Greater Accra Region. Mr.Asiseh was then the sitting Press Secretary of the NDC during the period. This information came up for discussion in my previous research.
1391 Gifford, African Christianity, p. 88.
1392 Gifford, Ghana’s New Christianity, p. 175
1393 An interview with Otabil brought this up. See, Tettey, “Ecclesiastical Leadership in State Governance: The Study of Church and State in Ghana’s Fourth Republic” p. 45.
1394 In a strikingly similar situation in Kenya, the KANU government in the second Nyayo era put the church leaders into an “opposition category”. See, Gideon Githiga. The Church as the Bulwark against Authoritarianism. Nairobi: Uzima Press, 2001.
continued insisting “it is his God given responsibility to provide direction and leadership that will help the nation develop in ways acceptable for the good of all.”\textsuperscript{1395} This attitude is constantly demonstrated in his thought-provoking preaching and teaching. Gifford noted:

Much of this [Otabil] preaching was genuinely original. It was also bold, not because Otabil was confronting a repressive NDC government, but because in many places he was saying the unsayables. At times he has even had his own congregation gasping… He did not directly attack the NDC, but in passing could allude to the actions of government officials in a tone of voice indicating complete incredulity or total contempt.\textsuperscript{1396}

The build-up to the 2008 election again brought fresh political attacks on people perceived as sympathizers of the governing NPP. Otabil was thus enlisted among people supposed to be on a “hit list”.\textsuperscript{1397} Two newspapers in Ghana reported this: first the state-owned newspaper,\textsuperscript{1398} and later a privately owned newspaper.\textsuperscript{1399} The first publication was close to the main elections for both the presidential and parliamentary elections. The second publication was issued before the second round of the presidential election.\textsuperscript{1400} For the first time, the ICGC through its head office issued a circular entitled “Special Prayer for General Overseer” to all ICGC churches in Ghana.\textsuperscript{1401} The \textit{Circular}, cited below:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{1395} Mensa Otabil, interview, on 27\textsuperscript{th} April 2007 at ICGC Christ Temple, Accra in the Greater Accra Region during my previous research.
\item \textsuperscript{1396} Gifford, \textit{Ghana's New Christianity}, pp 132, 133.
\item \textsuperscript{1397} It was rumoured that the “hit-list” were people who were targeted by political agents to be hounded down.
\item \textsuperscript{1398} \textit{The Daily Graphic}, Saturday 13\textsuperscript{th} September 2008.
\item \textsuperscript{1399} \textit{The Daily Guide}, Monday 15\textsuperscript{th} December 2008.
\item \textsuperscript{1400} See, 1992 \textit{Constitution of the Republic of Ghana}, article 63 Section 3, p. 48 which demand over 50\% of the casted ballot.
\item \textsuperscript{1401} Morris Appiah, interview, on the 18\textsuperscript{th} January 2012 at the ICGC head office, Miotso in the Greater Accra region.
\end{itemize}
It has come to the notice of the Church leadership and now is in the public domain … that the life of the General Overseer is being threatened. Though we do not know the source of this information, those behind the plot and for what reason, we do not want to take such matters lightly and therefore are sharing the information with you all. As a Church our strength and weapon is PRAYER AND THE WORD OF GOD. We are therefore entreating all assemblies to pray for the General Overseer and his family for God’s protection and covering. As the man who upholds the vision of the Church it is our duty to bear him up in prayer in such times.

In the book of Acts 12: 1-19, when King Herod killed James the brother of John, and he saw that it pleased the Jews, he sought to kill Peter also. The Church prayed fervently to God for Peter, and God sent His angel to deliver him.

As a Church we must be alive to our responsibilities, seek to protect our leader, and should not sit down till the devil attacks before we begin to wail.

We believe that God is with us and when the Church prays things happen. We therefore call upon all pastors and assemblies to offer continuous and fervent prayers for the safety and preservation of the General Overseer’s life, that of his household and the Church.

Thank you All
May God be with us and protect us all.\textsuperscript{1402}

The circular reveals among other things the approach by which ICGC sought to combat political attacks on Otabil. The words, \textit{strength} (spiritual and political) and \textit{weapon} (prayer and the word of God) reveal the spiritual/political orientation of ICGC. Ruth Marshal in her book \textit{Political Spiritualities} has articulated this practice. She contends:

Born Again political rationalities, and the terms in which power, redemption, sovereignty and other political themes are staged in its practices and profession of faith, stubbornly resist the distinction between sacred and secular we have come to take for granted in Western societies and the categories of analysis we deploy to understand them.\textsuperscript{1403}

\textsuperscript{1402} ICGC Head Office Circular, “Special Prayer for the General Overseer” issued on the 16th December 2008 to all Pastors/Ministers/Leaders/Assemblies by the Deputy General Secretary.

ICGC’s response to the threat to the General Overseer shows the interface between spiritual beliefs and ‘the political’ as underscored by Marshall’s argument. She shows that the limits placed in the dominant approaches to the study of religion and politics “cannot be explained purely by cultural differences or the lack of “fit” between Western theory and the non-Western practice.”

There was yet another development which explains my earlier suggestion of lack of capacity and structure in ICGC’s arrangement for political engagements. The 2012 political campaign became heated with issues of education at the centre of the political campaign messages. The NPP was campaigning with the promise of free basic and secondary school education whereas the NDC was campaigning for expansion and improved quality of basic and secondary education. The NDC sought to win the argument over their opponent the NPP published to the wider Ghanaian public aspects of Otabil’s preaching to denigrate the NPP’s message. The underlining assumption for this action perhaps was to send signals that Otabil, a NPP sympathizer was against the NPP’s campaign message. Again, it drew ICGC and Otabil into mainstream political discourse. Three different responses emerged from ICGC. The first was a press release signed by the senior associate minister, Rev. Kofi Okyere, on 30th October 2012. The press release was entitled Pastor Mensa Otabil and the Educational Debate. This is presented in full:

> Our attention has been drawn to a series of publications and tape, which has been widely circulated as pastor Mensa Otabil’s reaction to the ongoing debate about education. We wish to submit the following:

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1404 Ibid., p. 4.
1405 See, *NPP Campaign Manifesto, 2012*.
1406 See, *NDC Campaign Manifesto, 2012*.
Pastor Otabil has not made any recent comment on the current debate on various educational policy alternatives. Neither has he expressed open support for any party’s position on the matter. The tape being circulated is a collection of thoughts edited from a message shared by Pastor Otabil several years ago and pieced together to create the impression that he is taking a stand on the current political debate on the issue of education.

Pastor Otabil agrees with the constitutional provision that every Ghanaian child is entitled to and the state must provide Free Compulsory Basic Education beginning from preschool to the Senior High School level. However each parent must take responsibility for the academic growth and quality of education that their child receives.

Pastor Otabil hopes that all Ghanaians will be challenged to focus on the financial empowerment of the average citizen as a long-term solution to the pro-poor policies being espoused by the various stakeholders in sectors like education, health and housing.  

The press release stirred up several issues among ICGC members and the general public. Some of the prominent issues include; who mandated Rev. Okyere to sign and present the press release? Why the deafening silence of the ICGC presbytery in responding to the political challenge? In addition to these questions, most people who discussed the matter on radio felt there was not sufficient material in the press release to counteract the NDC’s arguments.  

With all the unanswered questions on the minds of people, the presbytery of ICGC issued a pastoral letter to all pastors and ICGC churches. It was dubbed, **Pastoral Letter from The Presbytery to All ICGC Churches on Recent Political Developments in the Nation.** Part of the statement included:

> For the past 28 years we have been led by a man of impeccable integrity and strength of leadership...Pastor Otabil has always preached within the context of hope, encouragement, self-belief and

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1408 The discussion became public, appearing in both print and electronic media. ICGC members became interested and wanted to understand the issues in detail. This was noted by reason of the radio call-ins and materials circulating in the social media.
personal responsibility… The International Central Gospel Church has always remained politically neutral in providing spiritual oversight to our members all over the world who belong to different parts of the political spectrum. The leadership of ICGC has noted with deep concern, recent attempts aimed at compromising that neutrality and forcing our pastor and the Church into partisan politics. We refer particularly to the unauthorized use of Dr. Otabil’s voice for adverts and the activities of certain political functionaries who have used every available medium to insult our pastor and seek to tarnish his hard-earned reputation. We find this totally unacceptable… The Presbytery, pastors, and entire leadership of ICGC wish to submit the following in the light of these developments:

1. We call on all political actors to refrain from the unauthorised use of Pastor Otabil’s name, image and person for partisan political adverts.
2. We further demand a retraction and an apology from all those who have incessantly insulted our General Overseer without provocation for simply asking to be left out of politics.
3. Declare a period of fasting and prayer for Dr. Otabil, the Church and the nation…
   We wish to assure Dr. Otabil of our love and unflinching loyalty and pledge to stand with him every step of the way. We also wish to express our appreciation to the numerous Christian leaders and groups who have come out to condemn these unfortunate developments. We finally want to assure the whole world that we are standing together as one in defending our spiritual inheritance.
   Thank you and God bless you all.

Sign
Rev. Morris Appiah (For the Presbytery).

The presbytery’s intervention did not change the situation and the political attacks did not stop. At this point, three major interventions were made. First, Otabil personally addressed a press conference stating:

My pulpit is not for partisan politics. That explains why when various political leaders visit our church, we acknowledge them without giving them the platform to address the congregation. For the past eighteen years, I have used the medium of radio and television to bring a message of hope, inspiration and empowerment to people…

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1409 Rev. Morris Appiah. “Pastoral letter from The Presbytery to All ICGC Churches on Recent Political Developments in the Nation,” Office of the Deputy General Secretary, ICGC, 9th November 2012, Accra.

Otabil’s strongly affirmed, “I am a pastor. I am not a politician. I am not standing for any political office. I am not a member of any political party.”\textsuperscript{1411} His burden for calling for the press conference was that, as he put it, “My voice and sermons have been sampled, spliced and manipulated to appear to take a political position on a very heated political issue. I have also been made to appear as taking a stand against one political group or the other.”\textsuperscript{1412} Otabil interpreted the misrepresentation as a violation of his person and his integrity. In the words of Otabil, “This is defamatory. This is unethical. This is criminal. This is malicious. This is Machiavellian. This is evil.”\textsuperscript{1413}

He then made an appeal:

\begin{quote}
I call upon all people of faith – Christians and Moslems, Pastors and Imams – to demand for righteousness, justice and fairness in our national discourse... I kindly call upon the President of the Republic to rise up and speak on the issue. With all due respect, sir, although you may not be aware of these developments the perpetrators of these blatant acts of impunity are largely affiliates and surrogates of your party.\textsuperscript{1414}
\end{quote}

Characteristically, Otabil ends his press conference with an appeal to God to decide on the issue. Thus, he submitted:

\begin{quote}
Today, I come as a simple pastor. I do not have the machinery of state behind me. I do not have the police force or the military detachment to defend me. I do not have serial callers or a media machinery to spin my story. All I have is the God whom I have served over the years. He is my strength and fortress. It is to him that I commend this matter.\textsuperscript{1415}
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{1411}{Ibid.}
\footnotetext{1412}{Ibid.}
\footnotetext{1413}{Ibid.}
\footnotetext{1414}{Ibid.}
\footnotetext{1415}{Ibid.}
\end{footnotes}
Second, some senior members of the clergy in Ghana issued a statement calling for the end of Otobil’s vilification.\footnote{1416} Among other things, they noted the following:

Since the press conference by Pastor Otibil last Monday, the ensuing discourse on various media platforms has largely been in intemperate and uncomplimentary language. Moreover, media advertisement with pastor Otibil’s voice have continued playing on various networks, suggesting that he is involved in partisan political debates. We call on the Education Watch and all other sponsoring agencies and media houses to withdraw all form of political adverts with pastor Otibil’s voice with immediate effect. We further call for an immediate cessation of the unwarranted insults of Pastor Otibil…\footnote{1417}

It was after the above message was issued that the communication director of the John Manama 2012 campaign, Hanna Tetteh, released a press statement distancing the president Mahama from the advertisement containing sermons of Otibil.\footnote{1418} At this time, the Ghanaian public started reacting in response to the call of some highly respected clergymen in Ghana referred to as ‘the eminent clergy’. For example, the Editor –in Chief of the \textit{New Crusading Guide} newspaper, Abdul Malik Kweku Baako said, the communication’s director attempt to distance the president from the Otibil’s tape account was untenable and reveals the hypocrisy of the Mahama’s administration.\footnote{1419} Otibil, undaunted about the attacks, delivered his sermon the Sunday after his press conference, entitled, “Your Vote.”

\footnote{1416}The eminent church leaders who intervened included, the presiding bishop of the Methodist Church, Ghana, Most Rev. Professor Emmanuel Asante, the founder of the Fountain Gate Chapel, Rev. Joseph Eastwood Anaba, the founder and General Overseer, Rev. Dr. G. Kisseh, the founder and General Overseer of Global Revival Ministries, Rev. Dr. Robert Ampiah-Koufie. Others were Rev. Andy Yawson, Rev. Eric Kwapong, Rev. Wisdom Dafeamekpor and Bishop Matthew Addae-Mensah.

\footnote{1417}This statement was submitted by a section of Christian Ministers and leaders on the 15th November 2012, four days after Otibil held his press conference.

\footnote{1418}Hanna Tetteh, Communication Director for John Mahama 2012 Campaign.

7.3.3. “Your Vote”: Otabil’s Civic/Political Education

The press conference generated heated debates in Ghana’s electronic and print media. This focused attention on Otabil’s church on the following Sunday the 18th November 2012. Otabil admonished his church members at ICGC Christ Temple to be thoughtful of the candidate they vote for during the 2012 general elections.

The crux of his sermon was twofold; first, to educate his congregation about their sovereign rights as voters. He stated, “it is important for us as Christians to understand what it is to have a vote and how to properly use your vote.” He added, “any time you go to an election to vote, you are making a covenant… In a democracy, God does not elect leaders people do … the people elect and God recognizes because God has instituted human authority.” The import of his message revolved around their Christian responsibilities and their commitment to God. He noted:

For Christians, democracy is a majority rule. For Christians, theocracy is God’s rule. So how does the Christian function in theocracy and democracy at the same time? That is going to be the conflict of every Christian and we have to constantly pray and seek the will of God in this matter.

The sermon was centred on the reasons for voting, responsibility of voting and the result of voting. The second motivation for his sermon was to call on Christian

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1420 The media houses preempted reports that Otabil was going to respond for the second time to the political issues.
1421 There were rumours on most of the radio stations in Accra prior to the Sunday the 18th November 2012 that Otabil was going to respond to the NDC’s attack on his person.
1423 Ibid.
1424 Ibid.
1425 Ibid.
specifically “whom to vote for in 2012 elections.” Otabil appealed to the electorate to vote for their “dreams and aspiration…beliefs and values…best interest of the nation.”

A parallel example is revealed in the role played by the church leaders in Kenya during President Moi’s regime. The one sided parliament lost its influence and gave its support loosely to the president. Church leaders like Manasses Kuria, Archbishop Gitari, Bishop Muge, Rev. Njoya, Bishop Okullu and Bishop Ndingi Mwana a’Nzeki used their sermons to spell out the social and political dimensions of the gospel.

ICGC may seem to have the right political message through Otabil, but the church has no structures to undertake effective political advocacy. Because the church has no ecumenical affiliation, the ‘political heavy-weights’ easily isolate Otabil and antagonize him in almost every election year in the fourth republic i.e. 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012. The role of ‘the eminent clergy’ as an example came to ‘save’ Otabil and ICGC from further blistering political attacks. The CCG supported Otabil and rebutted the attacks on him. However, the GPCC and NACCC as ecumenical associations were noticeably quiet. This development is perhaps timely to remind churches of the need for associational support in undertaking civic and political advocacy.

7.4. The ‘Prophetic Action’

According to Robinson Cavalcanti, “prophetism involves both denunciation and constructive proposal; it is determined by the Kingdom and speaks for the Kingdom

1426 Ibid.
1427 Ibid.
1428 Githiga, *The Church as the Bulwark against Authoritarianism*, p. 92
in the world, as it struggles against the anti-kingdom.”\textsuperscript{1429} Cavalcanti’s definition suggests identifiable roles the church is expected to play in society. Thus “speaking for the Kingdom” may include moralizing actions of governments, social justice, seeking the rights of people, gender equality, spiritual renewal, etc. Contending the “anti-kingdom” could also be social such as removing the barriers of unjust social systems involving racial factors and socio-economic injustices in global trading. It could also be political imply dealing with despotic regimes and unjust political maneuverings. J. Kudadjie and R. Aboagye-Mensah maintain:

> The church must allow the Holy Spirit to work through it so that it becomes the voice of the voiceless. It must take up the case of members of society who are not highly placed or who are under-privileged. It must stand alongside the poor and the needy. The Church must advocate for the formulation and establishment of policies, measures, and laws that remove social injustice and their very root causes, and which make for human progress.\textsuperscript{1430}

Kwesi Yirenkye argues that the mission churches in Ghana continuously and conscientiously exercise this duty.\textsuperscript{1431} Dzodzi Tsikata and Wayo Seini agree, “Christian church leaders were among some of the more vocal critics of the government.”\textsuperscript{1432} Gifford also credits the Catholic Church in Ghana to have attained a quality of leadership in her relation with the state that no other church can match.\textsuperscript{1433} He also applauds the CCG to be “the most impressive Christian Council in


\textsuperscript{1432} Tsikata and Seini, “Identities, Inequalities and Conflicts in Ghana”.

\textsuperscript{1433} Gifford, African Christianity, p. 64
sub-Saharan Africa.” The prophetic actions of these churches attract scholars like Gifford. Comparatively, Gifford is not enthused about the GPCC and the NACCC’s contributions. He however commended individual PC pastors such as Otabil whom he considers to have made contributions to public life discourse. The general notion however is that, PC shy away from issues in the public domain. Their main approach, as discussed by Gifford and Meyer in the Ghanaian context and Ruth Marshall and Rosalind Hackett in the Nigerian situation, has been to see every event as having spiritual undertones. Okullu also observed in the Kenyan situation, “essentially, many governments in Africa regard the Church as their praying department, existing to give them divine sanction and to legitimize their decisions.” Kalu has argued against the notion that ‘spiritualizing politics’ is negative. Ellis and Ter Haar have also reasoned that religious ideologies have enough potential for political transformation. The spiritual actions such as intercessory prayers are hardly seen as having any positive political effect to bring about expected political outcomes by Gifford. Prophetic action, arguably, from African churches perspective can never be separated from the religious worldview as we have seen from COP and ICGC. Ntumy’s declaration that “we support the government of the day with our prayers” and Otabil’s passionate appeal to “the God whom I have

1434 Ibid. p. 72
1435 Paul Gifford was mostly silent about the input of these ecumenical bodies of the Pentecostals and Charismatics.
1438 Ellis and Haar, Worlds of Power.
served…to him I commend this matter,” show how the spiritual worldview influences political actions. This is not only associated with the PC churches. For example, the Catholic bishops “called for a special week of prayer” and the CCG communiqué for member churches to fast and pray for the nation further strengthens the argument of how ‘the spiritual’ serves in political engagement. Ogbu Kalu, for instance argues that prayer may be a form of a political praxis. Kalu affirms:

The import of this paradigm is that affairs of the earth can be changed through prayers. Political dissent and action can be pursued on one’s knees, not only by carrying placards; in fact, the “worn knee” approach is considered more effective and salutary because it seeks the will of God on earth and gives the battle to the Lord.  

Kalu’s viewpoint resonates with the perspective of Stephen Ellis and Gerrie ter Haar. The crux of matter remains that, “Religious ideologies, after all, deserve to be examined just as much as secular ideologies, since both represent ways in which people view the world.”

Second, prophetism is supposed to deal with injustices that characterize dictatorial and oppressive political systems. The key biblical references for this are taken from Luke 4: 18, 19, Micah 2: 1-3; 6:8. These passages bring out God’s attitude towards the abuse of humanity. Gitari sees the church in Kenya as having been involved in ‘the prophetic ministry of judgment’. Judgment means that the Church constantly reminded the people of the standard of righteousness and justice which

1441 Githiga, *The Church as the Bulwark against Authoritarianism*, p. 195
alone exalts a nation. From the prophetic witnessing of the Kenyan church cited, we can draw parallels with the constant tensions, for instance, between Otambil and ruling governments in Ghana.

But PC churches have been accused of failing this duty. They have been termed *apolitical* because they are perceived to have an aversion to politics. Elom Dovlo stated unequivocally:

> Christianity in Ghana has for sometime been in a dilemma about active Christian participation in party politics. The normal attitude of most Christians especially Pentecostals and those belonging to the Independent African Churches is apolitical. Yet they normally supported the government of the day on the scriptural basis that all governments exist by divine authority.

Dovlo however was quick to observe the change when Elder Kwabena Darko of the Assemblies of God Church and an accomplished businessman declared his presidential aspiration on the ticket of the National Independent Party (NIP) in the 1992 election in Ghana. Notwithstanding the new development in PCs political activities, some scholars still see them as *religious escapism* claiming they have a tendency to seek relief from spiritual sources in solving political issues. Prominent among such scholars is Gifford. His observation is that PC Christianity’s attitude towards public life could be explained with the terms *enchanted* and *biblical approaches*. Gifford seems skeptical about these churches political orientations thus blame the lack in their ability to develop intellectual capacity to confront wayward political systems. His observations are noted:

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1443 David Gitari “Church’s Witness in Seeking Just Structures”. Githiga, The Church as the Bulwark against Authoritarianism, p. 195.


1445 Ibid.

1446 Gifford, Ghana’s New Christianity, pp. 161-162.
...It could be said that it is the mainline churches that have challenged Africa’s dictators; the newer evangelical and Pentecostal churches that have provided the support.\footnote{Paul Gifford ed. *The Christian Churches and the Democratization of Africa*. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995, p. 5.}

Gifford also declares:

Thus in all sorts of ways many [Pentecostal and\footnote{Gifford does not assign different political roles to the classical Pentecostals. It is therefore appropriate to inclusively discuss them with the Charismatic churches.}]\footnote{Gifford, *Ghana's New Christianity*, p. 169} charismatic churches, though concerned with national issues, contributed little to debate on modern government. They tended to spiritualise or moralise issues out of the mundane plane on which political issues have been most fruitfully addressed.\footnote{Gifford, *Ghana’s New Christianity*, p. 169}

What Gifford implied has been expressed in other term such as ‘political spirituality’\footnote{Marshall, *Political Spirituality*, p. 136.} and ‘political quietist’.\footnote{Because the PCs make little or no noise about political debate the tendency is therefore to describe them as ‘Quietist’. Quietism is a term associated with a Christian belief within the Roman Catholic Church connected with Miguel de Molinos, later by François Malaval and Madame Guyon that was declared as heresy by Pope Innocent XI around 1687. The ‘Quietist’ practiced ‘contemplation’ over ‘meditation’, intellectual stillness over vocal prayer, and interior passivity over pious action in an account of mystical prayer, spiritual growth and union with God.\footnote{Marshall, *Political Spirituality*, p. 2.} Marshall, *Political Spirituality*, p. 2.} Ruth Marshall discusses a similar situation in Nigeria where she finds ‘spiritualizing politics’ difficult to be reconciled “with more classical political forms of representation and action.”\footnote{Marshall, *Political Spirituality*, p. 2.}

There had been further arguments that PC churches political behaviour is correlated with their origins and the inherited political orientation from the parachurch movement they evolved from.\footnote{See Samuel Brefo Adubofuor “Evangelical Parachurch Movement in Ghanaian Christianity: 1950 – Early 1990s.”. For further discussion see James Anquandah Can the Church be Renewed? Experience of an African Independent Church. *The Ecumenical Review* 31, pp. 252-260. The parachurch organizations, Ghana Evangelical Society (GES); the Hour of Visitation Choir and Evangelistic Association (HOVCEA); Youth Ambassadors for Christ Association (YAFCA); Nation Evangelistic Association (NEA); Scripture Union (SU), and the University Christian Fellowship, Full Gospel Men Fellowship and Women Aglow. Apart from the SU most of these groups evolved around 1960s and early 1970s.} Samuel Adubofuor’s research had been the main
source of information on the evolution of the PC churches from the parachurch movements. Adubofuor noted:

The operations of the parachurch movements had no significant political fall-out. Political involvement was not a prominent feature of mainstream Ghanaian evangelicalism. In general terms the Ghana evangelicals exhibited a conservative political attitude that reflects Jesus teaching in Mark 12: 13-17, amplified by Paul in Romans 13:1-7, which advocates submission to the political authority – the state, together with submission to God.1454

The argument about linkage in origin can hardly be sustained because of the diverse experiences that relate to the origins of the PC churches. For instance, the COP did not have any continuity with parachurch movements. Their evolution was in a totally different age and context from many of the Charismatic churches as discussed by Larbi.1455 PCs are also negotiating new religio-political space. This negotiation deserves brief discussion as it connects to the churches public role.

7.5. Negotiating the ‘Uncovered Space’

I coined the term ‘uncovered space’ to express the concessions that take place among religious and political leaders based on their interest especially in public life issues. The PC churches are negotiating the ‘uncovered space’ in socio-political life in Ghana. The ‘uncovered space’ is in direct reference to the appeal religious personalities bring in shaping and influencing key political actors in their performance as they seek and/or function in public office. The example of Pastor T.B. Joshua’s influence on the late president (John E. Atta-Mills) of Ghana1456 and other political and business tycoons is a reflection of how spiritual power is packaged

1455 Larbi, *Pentecostalism*.
1456 President Atta-Mills made several public appearances in T.B. Joshua’s church and also admitted that he had no apology in associating with Pastor Joshua.
in negotiating social status, economic power and political space in African Christianity. The perception that ‘spiritual power’ has great influence in the process of negotiation. Thus religious leaders are consulted because of their perceived knowledge or insight into the spirit world. This development has direct consequences on political activities. It may have positive outcomes in advocacy, but it can also compromise the church’s prophetic actions. The risk lies in the politics of patronage. Agents of political authority use religious means to do mass mobilization much as the religious people also use spiritual power to negotiate political interest. Religio-political interactions take place at different levels. Gaining political power therefore depends on the favour religious personalities bestow of people seeking such position.

My discussion about COP and ICGC has shown that beyond the level of spiritualizing politics, these churches pragmatically participate in democratic processes such as public elections, peace building, civic education, etc. The PC churches also respond to political issues whether on corruption, civil strife, or containment of political power. These activities are what legitimize the churches as civil society groups.

7.6. The Church as part of Civil Society

According to Larry Diamond, “Civil society is an intermediary entity, standing between the private sphere and the state.” In the view of Diamond, civil society “provide ‘the basis for the limitation of state power, hence for the control of the state

Diamond however excludes ‘inward looking group activity – spirituality’ from the concept. This makes his view of the concept inappropriate for our context. However, by his description of the functions of civil society, we could apply it in our study. He noted:

Civil society is also a vital instrument for containing the power of democratic governments, checking their potential abuses and violations of the law, and subjecting them to public scrutiny. Indeed, a vibrant civil society is probably more essential for consolidating and maintaining democracy than for initiating it.

Diamond’s concern over abuse of power by democratic governments had been reiterated by Abraham Akrong who shares similar opinions with regard to the strengthening of democracy in Ghana. Akrong sees as problematic the overwhelming concentration of power in the hand of government. Akrong’s emphasis lay in the building of democratic institutions where the people will ensure that no one is marginalized from the political process. Thus, he prescribes the formation of democratic grassroots groups which include the key PC churches and leaders as civil society groups. We have already seen in this study the partnership between state institutions and church institutions. For our particular purpose, we focused on the GPCC working partnership with NCCE and electoral commission in the run-up to the 2012 election. We also find the example of Otabil serving on the National Peace Council (NPC). Otabil is also an active member of the Institute of Economic Affairs

1459 Ibid., p. 7.
1460 Ibid., p. 5.
1461 Ibid., p. 7.
(IEA), the body that organises national political debates in Ghana. Presently Opoku Onyinah serves on the NPC. The COP and ICGC have shown some efforts by their leadership in public duties, however the churches must also pay heed to Kwasi Yirenkyi suggestion:

In the absence of viable structures of justice in many African countries that are struggling to evolve new democratic systems, the church claims to speak for the silent majority. It also calls on its adherents to participate in the political process to help create just social structures.

It is widely discussed that some of the forms of democracies run in African countries lend themselves to abuse by the political party in power. This has always brought the church to counteract political authorities. Ghanaian political history provides chronological records of this in John Pobee’s works. Akrong’s writing also endorsed the role of CBC and the CCG as “instructive examples of how we can lay the foundations for a democratic culture in Ghana”. He continued, “we need more groups like the [Ghana] Bar Association to form a kind of watchdog group over the abuse of power in government and the protection of individual rights against governmental encroachments”.

1463 Otabil was a host of the IEA programme for the 2012 presidential candidates debate. This was telecasted live on the Ghana Television and state and private radio stations. The print media also reported the event.
1464 Opoku Onyinah was among those appointed by President John Evans Atta Mills in 2011 to serve in the NPC.
1467 Pobee, Kwame Nkrumah and the Church in Ghana 1949 -1966; Religion and Politics in Ghana: A Case Study of the Achempong Era.
1468 Akrong, “The Challenges of the Fourth Republic and Democratic Culture in Ghana”, p .48
1469 Ibid.
7.7. Conclusion

The PC churches role in public life has proved to be relevant. First, in addition to spiritualizing politics, these churches have demonstrated that they have the orientation to carry out their duties as partners in democratic governance. Second, the PC churches, have defined their own terms of engagement in an audacious manner that place them as vital forces in any socio-political consideration. Their great numbers potentially make the pulpit a powerful instrument for socio-political transformation. However, the PC needed to develop a capacity to deal with public life issues. Nichols expressed this in the social transformation of America:

In calculating the intellectual preparations for the American Revolution, it should be remembered that the clergy were normally the best educated men in the community, at least in New England, and that the pulpit was still the strongest influence in public opinion…

Third, the example shown by the COP in particular, in their coordinated civic and political campaigns with other religious and non-religious groups signifies a greater impact to influence political outcomes.

Finally, the church’s function as civil society group would become significant in the development of democratic principles in Ghana if only their members and the public can attest to their neutrality in dealing with issues of governance. So far, some of the followers (members and non-members) of PC churches doubt the churches’ political neutrality. The prophetic voice of the PC churches, as a result, is compromised. Such a situation does not augur well for the unity of the churches themselves and their political impact on the nation.

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CHAPTER EIGHT
CONCLUSION

8.0. Introduction

This thesis sought to interrogate components of individual and group empowerment and/or disempowerment in Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in Ghana. The thesis explored the beliefs and practices of the COP and ICGC in Ghana. Attention was given to internal structures of polity and leadership, particular theological beliefs and practices and church liturgies that promote or hinder empowerment in individuals, groups and society. Activities involving church ministries and church projects in social policy and human development, politics and civic engagements were also examined.

The thesis established how PC churches create social, religious/spiritual and cultural capital for empowerment and/or disempowerment by exploring major undertakings of the churches’ everyday pastoral work and church activities that influence social, religious, economic and political affairs of individuals, the church and society. This raises questions of how and to what extent PC churches’ function as instruments of empowerment? What methods do the churches employ in the activities focused on empowerment? As a result, the study interrogates the practices and outcomes of the PC churches especially what they offer disempowered and needy church members and society.

This concluding chapter therefore presents discussions and conclusions that shows the patterns, parallels and divergences of the two churches (COP and ICGC) in their ministry ethos. The section also highlights the contributions the research has made to the study of contemporary PC Christianity in Ghana and suggests themes for further studies.
8.1. Discussions and Conclusions

My review of the previous works in the study of Pentecostalism in Ghana mainly by Elom Dovlo, Emmanuel K. Larbi, Paul Gifford, Cephas N. Omenyo and J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu show the methodological approach these scholars adopted. In the review of these scholarly works, I noticed some representational gaps particularly in the sample of participants as noted by Ogbu Kalu,\(^{1471}\) I therefore selected respondents that are representative in both the COP and ICGC. Accordingly, respondents were drawn from the clergy and the laity, the leaders of the churches and the followers. This effort privileged the voices of all the participants in the thesis.

The thesis is built around five thematic areas i.e. church polity and leadership, theological orientations and practices, liturgical form and reforms, social policy and human development and politics and civic engagement. These represent the central chapters (chapters three, four, five, six and seven) with each of the themes discussed in the chapters respectively. The findings of the thesis established that the churches carried out their activities primarily as a religious obligation. However, this religious obligation also has implications for the social and political sectors.

Firstly, the core issues raised in the churches’ governance and leadership arrangements present mixed conditions. Both the COP and ICGC maintain leadership systems that allow major decisions in the governance of the churches to be determined largely by the clergy and such arrangements are supported by the churches’ constitutions. Over the years these churches have evolved governance structures that exclude women from the churches’ hierarchy. For example, the

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\(^{1471}\) Kalu, “Yabbing the Pentecostals”, p. 4.
executive councils are made up of male clergy as discussed in Chapter 3.1.2 and 3.2.2. This has been embedded in the constitution of the COP and previous executive bodies of the church have followed it consistently. Despite the COP’s constitution sideling women in the hierarchy, the tenets and provisions in the COP constitution are strictly applied. The Charismatic churches including ICGC have existed for barely three decades and have also developed church constitutions and other statutes. The Charismatic churches, to cite ICGC as an example, have elaborate constitutional provisions that are gender inclusive and involve lay participation. However, there is no evidence pointing to the use of such constitutional provisions. The ICGC on its part is not quite consistent with the implementation of the tenets of its own constitution. The structure required for the governance of the church has not fully been put in place for example the Regional Council discussed in 3.2.3. In addition, the ICGC constitution has clauses that restrict powers to a few individuals in the hierarchy such as the general overseers. This development has come to the attention of some members of the ICGC as indicated in the responses of the respondents. But the members lack the resolve to challenge the status quo. Such individuals (some pastors and members) seem powerless and disempowered to insist on the implementation of the church’s statutes. Issues related to the appointment of office holders such as presbytery members for instance have not been followed as directed by the church’s constitution. Examples have been provided in Chapter 3, Section 3.2. Such practices encourage some leaders to maintain the existing state of affairs and promote ‘democratic pretentions’ of the governance of the church.\textsuperscript{1472} Again, my

\textsuperscript{1472} Werner Cohn, “When the Constitution Fails on Church and State: Two Case Studies.” \textit{Rutgers J. Law & Relig.} 6, 2004, p. 29.
review of scholarly works of Afe Adogame, Robert Putnam and David Halpern in (Chapter 2, Subsection 2.5.1.1.) have shown that such practices over time develop into in-groups within the organization with negative consequences. Such cliques usually affect the social relations in the church. For example, Adogame’s explanation of bonding social capital appears to have ‘social attachment’ within close ranks and antipathy towards those perceived to be ‘outsiders’\textsuperscript{1473} can directly be related to such a development in the church taking the church as a social group. Putman sustains the idea that “by creating strong in-group loyalty, may also create strong out-group antagonism.”\textsuperscript{1474} As such, when members of the church interviewed make observations about church leaders (especially among the Charismatic churches), which suggest a disregard for constitutional provisions in favour of ‘self-styled’ governance practice, it then becomes evident that trust is undermined and members disempowered.

Another difference between COP and ICGC lies with the composition of the Councils. The COP Council narrows leadership to a group of top officials, remarkably Apostles and Prophets who wield tremendous authority in the determination of pertinent administrative issues. Whereas in the ICGC, a marginal consideration for lay membership (yet to be implemented) on the executive council as guaranteed by the constitution gives an indication of the need for representation and inclusiveness.

The findings show differences in the pastoral leadership capacity building in the COP and ICGC. The COP has demonstrated a total departure of relying solely on the directive of the Holy Spirit in the leadership drive of the church. Evidence from

\textsuperscript{1473} Adogame, \textit{The African Christian Diaspora}, p. 104.

\textsuperscript{1474} Putman, \textit{Bowling Alone}, p. 23.
the church’s activities as discussed in Chapter 3, subsection 3.4.3. show the
tremendous budget allocation the COP has put in the training of pastors and other
church officials. This marks a major empowering effort of the COP. The ICGC has
shown some effort in training its pastors, however the Church is yet to demonstrate
a major commitment in investing particularly in advanced theological education for
its pastors. The findings demonstrate the lack of organizational policy in advanced
pastoral education and the indifference of pastoral staff for such endeavours. The
growth of the ICGC has brought about new opportunities and challenges to the
organization and its administration. Thus the ICGC would have to reexamine its
general ministry structure and the training of its pastoral staff.
Secondly, Pentecostalism in Ghana exhibits continuity and discontinuity with
primal religions this serves together as sources and influences to empower and/or
dismember. This has been seen in both COP and ICGC beliefs and ministry
practices discussed in Chapter 4, subsection 4.2. There are parallels and
divergences in the PC spiritual perceptions and conduct that mirror the primal
religious worldview. For instance, the religious orientation common to both the
primal religious adherents and PC churches revolves around the belief in ‘spiritual
causality’. Church rituals and practices by both the COP and ICGC echo strongly
the supernatural control of events and the lives of people. For example, Opoku
Onyinah asserts:

> The current deliverance ministry is not new, but has persisted in
different forms, not only in COP, but also in the history of Ghana’s
religiosity. Its symbols, rituals, methodologies, languages and images
are well rooted in the culture and traditional religions. Therefore, this
ministry needs to be considered within the main structure of the
Church and a proper theological framework introduced. Pushing it to
the periphery may cause it to resurface with varied problems at different times.\textsuperscript{1475}

Onyinah’s admission that ‘\textit{symbols, rituals, methodologies, languages and images are well rooted in the culture and traditional religions}’ shows the religious orientation by which most of the rituals in PC beliefs and practices correlate with the African culture and the traditional religions. Both Onyinah and Otabil agree to the extent that the African religious worldview influences the activities of PC Christianity (see Chapter 4:2). Onyinah believes that the primal religions offer the religious lifeblood of African PC theologies and churches\textsuperscript{1476} and Otabil maintains that the PC faith is “more rooted in the indigenous culture of the people, and therefore could speak to the people in a more intimate and personal way.”\textsuperscript{1477} This is significant because, PC churches ‘demonize’ to a very large extent the indigenous way of worship and even refuse to acknowledge the \textit{Sunsum Soré} (AICs who were perceived to be \textit{neo-African traditional religionists}) as part of the PC family.

The same African traditional religious orientation also connects with the concepts of prosperity gospel preached by PC churches. However, the concept of wellbeing or abundant life (as used by Emmanuel Larbi\textsuperscript{1478} instead of prosperity) in a very fundamental way distanced from \textit{materialistic/prosperity gospel}. Both the COP and ICGC believe in the prosperity/wellbeing of their members. Nonetheless, as David Tonghou Ngong observed in his work "Salvation and Materialism in African

\textsuperscript{1475} Onyinah, “The Akan Witchcraft and the Concept of Exorcism in the Church of Pentecost”, p. 394.
\textsuperscript{1476} Opoku Onyinah, interview, on the 9\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at the COP head office, Accra, in the Greater Accra Region.
\textsuperscript{1477} Mensa Otabil, interview, on the 18\textsuperscript{th} August 2011 at Accra in the Greater Accra Region.
\textsuperscript{1478} Larbi, Pentecostalism, p. 312.
Theology, they do not elevate the message of materialistic prosperity as the most essential in their spirituality. It could therefore be argued that both the COP and ICGC present a religious emphasis that sees positives in the African cultures and religious beliefs. However, the churches are cautious in their approach to the traditional religious beliefs and practices. Third, the liturgical forms and reforms of COP and ICGC show impressive influence in contemporary Pentecostalism in Ghana. The organizations of church service and the content of worship in both churches (COP and ICGC) demonstrate the appropriation of the Bible, prayer, and spiritual gifts as means not only to satisfy religious demands but also to deal with very practical everyday spiritual and material needs of members and society. Voluntarism in the churches’ activities is another area that needs particular mention. Afe Adogame, for instance, maintains, “religious social capital is volunteering, because of its capacity to generate social, cultural and spiritual capital.” The voluntary activities of the COP and ICGC examined in Chapter 5, subsections 5.1.7. and 5.2.4. serve as a major incentive for religious social capital not only for the churches, but also for society through the churches’ accomplishments that directly benefits society. Voluntarism, as a religious belief in PC churches also serves as religious social capital that empowers individual members of the churches not only for inclusion as members of the churches but in a more significant way engenders hope that they will be rewarded by God for serving him. As Asamoah-Gyadu noted, “One of the most significant theological features of this PC movement is its radicalisation of the biblical idea of

universal priesthood so that ... the leader is in principle only a first among equals.”

Thus the lay participation in the running of the COP and ICGC activities produces both individual good and the collective (group) benefits as well. For example, the various volunteers in the churches have facilitated the growth and development of the PC movement. Members also have identified their gifts and talents as they participate in groups and this has led to the benefits of individuals and groups. Notwithstanding the good side of religious social capital, scholars such as Corwin Smidt have suggested that religious social capital is “self-serving” in nature, promoting only the religious groups to which one belong.

The data presented and discussed in Chapter 5 suggests that both COP and ICGC mobilize religious social capital not only for their benefits but also to help society especially the vulnerable and needy. Walter Hollenweger has noted aspects of PC liturgical benefits in particular and has concluded:

Pentecostal liturgy has social and revolutionary implications, in that it empowers marginalised people. It takes as acceptable what ordinary people have in the worship of God and thus overcome ‘the real barriers of race, social status, and education’.

Fourth, The COP and ICGC, in addition to their religious commitment to prayer, promotion of moral conduct, etc., also place importance on the delivery of education and healthcare. The churches (COP and ICGC) as seen in Chapter 6, subsections 6.2. and 6.3. have built primary, secondary and tertiary educational establishments and health facilities such as clinics to support health delivery in Ghana. The motivation for the COP and ICGC for these undertakings is primarily

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1481 Asamoah-Gyadu, African Charismatics, p. 96.
religious, however, the churches also consider wellbeing and human development programmes as part of their responsibility. I have therefore argued in Chapter 6, subsection 6.4. that the UN Human Development Index (HDI) that considers human development paradigm with a single statistic to serve as a reference for both social and economic development by measuring development with combining indicators of life expectancy, educational attainment and income into a composite human development is inadequate. My point of view draws support from Afe Adogame’s position that the HDI parameter assessing human development is both revealing and blurring.\textsuperscript{1484} Adogame maintains that religion and development, although binary phenomena, yet have their “creative interaction and intricate interconnectedness.”\textsuperscript{1485}

In this regard, religion and development in the African milieu, as I have argued have a common objective. This is because the concept of human development in Africa is considered an all-inclusive activity, which comprises religious components that stimulate wellbeing such as prayer, teaching and undertakings that support morality, health, etc. As such, the COP and ICGC activities that remain in the remit of religion i.e. prayer, promotion of morality, charity and support systems such as payment of bursaries and scholarships etc. could be considered as aspects of development. These all-inclusive activities could be classified as cultural and symbolic aspects of development. The COP and ICGC engagement in social action and human development programmes are based on the churches’ convictions and moral obligations.


\textsuperscript{1485} Ibid.
Finally, I maintained that the COP and ICGC have had diverse responses to civic and political issues in Ghana in Chapter 7. The COP for instance has always acted in collaboration with the GPCC in engaging governments on public life issues. The COP with the GPCC has demonstrated leadership in building networks beyond the Christian ecumenical bodies in Ghana i.e. NACCC and the CCG to include other non-Christian religious groups such as the Office of the National Chief Imam and non-religious groups such as the National Commission for Civic Education. I argued in Chapter 7, subsection 7.2.2. that these networks were used mainly for the peace campaigns as seen in the PLUS Ghana Projects, Bawku peace rallies, courtesy calls on politicians and their political parties, etc. The COP through GPCC remains the key participant among the Pentecostals and Charismatics in the promotion of civic and political education due to its spread across the regions of Ghana. The COP’s numerical advantage as the biggest denomination in Ghana coupled with the volunteering spirit of its members 1486 makes the church significant in the civic and political development of Ghana.

The ICGC approach to civic and political matters has mainly been the effort by the founder and general overseer of the church Pastor Mensa Otabil. This approach as we find in Chapter 7, subsection 7.3 has invited political attacks directed at Otabil. The approach has also created some doubts by some ICGC members about Otabil’s political neutrality in his civic and political education and appeals. However, Otabil remains firm in his conviction in civic education and political discourse in Ghana’s public life issues. The most significant in recent times is the series of teaching on “Your Vote” during Sunday worship services in the run up to the 2012 elections.

The COP and ICGC are also involved in public intercessory prayers for Ghana especially during the periods for presidential and parliamentary polls in addition to the peace campaigns, rallies, courtesy calls, etc. The difference between the two churches (COP and ICGC), however, is that the COP collaborates with the GPCC while ICGC maintains individual congregational intercessory prayers by its churches. Both churches sensitize their members and the public to remain tolerant in the face of political provocation by politicians with their prayers and calls for peaceful democratic and political activities for the nation. So far, the PC churches’ function as civil society has made some gains for the development of democratic values in Ghana. The prophetic voice of the PC churches has shifted from seeing the churches as politically indifferent.

In conclusion, this study shows the present developments i.e. life, thought and practices of the COP and the ICGC and by extension Pentecostalism in Ghana. Examples are given to show how existing practices have been reformed in addition to the new developments that have evolved in PC Christianity in Ghana after major research works of Emmanuel Kingsley Larbi, Cephas N. Omenyo, Paul Gifford and J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu’s. This thesis focuses on two churches (COP and ICGC) whose influence in PC Christianity in Ghana is undoubtedly remarkable. Thus such specific study of the churches in their comprehensive ministry portfolios facilitated the thematic approach of the study of church polity and leadership, theological orientations and practices, liturgical forms and reforms, social policy and human developments and politics and civic engagements which provide insight into activities of the PC churches in Ghana. The study also shows how activities of the churches generate social, religious and cultural capital to empower or
disempower. As a result, the ambiguities that blurred the churches influence in society were noted. The study goes beyond the narratives, beliefs and practices of the churches but also shows how the churches engage in such issues in church governance and public life.

The present-day activities of the PC churches deserve a constant updating to show the constant changing nature of the movement. This research has noted shifts in the thematic areas aforementioned. This thesis provides knowledge of social, religious and cultural capital in Pentecostalism in the Ghanaian context which has not received ‘direct’ scholarly attention apart from a recent publication of Afe Adogame which devotes attention to the PC churches activities in perspective of social, religious and cultural capital among African churches in the diaspora.

My remit in this research was limited to structures and operations of the COP and ICGC that connect or disconnect with the concept of empowerment/disempowerment. As a result, I did not cover in detail particular themes such as gender equality and ecumenism in Pentecostalism in Ghana that may require separate study. Thus, I suggest studies into Pentecostalism in Africa in the following areas: first, research into the Women’s Movement of the COP vis-à-vis the church’s theological position on gender equality, and second, Pentecostalism and ecumenism. This thesis touched only on concerns on PC churches on gender issues and ecumenism and showed how it relates to the COP and ICGC. However, looking at the upsurge of PC Christianity in Africa and its relevance to society, it remains important to study Pentecostalism exclusively in the context of gender

studies and ecumenism unremittingly and their impact on the theological, moral, social and political formation of the movement and society.
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# LIST OF RESPONDENTS

## COP Respondents

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<td>Mrs. Elizabeth Quarshie</td>
<td>Ashaiman (Gt. A/R)</td>
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**Others**

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<td>Rev. Francis Wusu Gand</td>
<td>Takoradi (W/R)</td>
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<td>Paduasi-Kitasi (E/R)</td>
<td>22/04/2012</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Mrs. Vivian Oduro</td>
<td>Paduasi-Kitasi (E/R)</td>
<td>22/04/2012</td>
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APPENDIX 1:
Maps showing a cross section of Africa and Ghana
THE WAY FORWARD

As God's instrument for change, the Christian Council of Ghana is committed to:

1. Engaging critically in social issues and taking social actions that will transform society for the common good.

2. Promoting democracy and Good Governance.

3. Identifying the most effective ways of working together with Member Churches for the purpose of accomplishing the individual church’s agenda.

4. Providing humanitarian services and responding to emergency situations.

5. Promoting theological dialogue.

6. Promoting cultural, political and religious tolerance.

CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF GHANA

The Christian Council of Ghana was founded on 30th October 1929 as a result of a union of five churches: African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church; English Church Mission (Anglican); Ewe Presbyterian Church (now Evangelical Presbyterian Church); Presbyterian Church of the Gold Coast (now Ghana); and Wesleyan Methodist Church (now The Methodist Church, Ghana). The Council is a fellowship of Churches that have agreed to witness together in fellowship and service to the glory of God. Currently, our membership consists of sixteen churches and two Christian organizations.

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Council is to strengthen the capacity of our members to contribute to achieving Justice, Unity, Reconciliation and Integrity of Creation among various sectors of the Ghanaian society and provide a forum for joint action on issues of common interest. In seeking to achieve this, we are guided by the Holy Bible and, in all matters of national interest, remain non-partisan.
The Council's vision is to be 'The House of God's instrument for change in Ghana where the highest value is placed on Peace, Justice, Unity and Respect for Dignity and Integrity of Creation.'

For us, the Council finds itself working; the Council and its Member Churches will be proactive in making their contributions in:

1. The fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic.
2. Ensuring that conflicts and violence especially those that are political, religious and culture-based are minimized.
3. Leading the fight against corruption and promoting Good Governance.
4. Championing the advocacy for quality education, quality health care and general poverty reduction.
5. Championing respect for the rights of the underprivileged including migrants and displaced persons.

The primary role of the Council has been to strengthen and support Member Churches to improve and expand the scope of their witness and service within the world wide ecumenical fellowship. The Council is supporting the activities of its Member Churches acts according to the teachings of Jesus Christ.

What we have achieved:

1. In the year 2000 we were instrumental in preventing conflicts that were threatened during the ban on kumkum during the Homowo Festival. We initiated a statement that helped to maintain peace between the Christian and the traditional communities that year.
2. We have been a catalyst in bringing together various traditions of the Christian church: Pentecostal, Charismatic, Independent and Roman Catholic, to present a common witness on national issues.

Another cardinal concern of the Council is the political democratization process in the country. We continue to play a non-partisan role in the political history of the country through the statements we provide on various issues.

DONATE & SUPPORT

To own the Council means more than merely helping to set the Council’s agenda. It means that individual and corporate members need to take responsibility for supporting the Council financially. Since its inception, the Council has been dependent mainly on the goodwill of foreign partners with only a tiny proportion of our income coming from Member Churches.

The good news is that the situation is now changing. Recently, we have seen noticeable improvement in this area, with the membership starting to make greater financial contributions than ever before. In the past, Ghanaian churches contributed only 3% of the Council’s budget but today we have far surpassed this amount. In the year 2001 we recorded Member Churches contributing approximately 14% of the overall budget with local contributions increasing to more than 36%; but since we are seriously looking to the day when the Council’s budget will be raised fully from within Ghana, we must get complacent. If we are to remain sustainable we must continue to increase this amount.

Our objective now is to be able to fund at least 50% of the Council’s programme and activity costs locally to sustain the existing level of operations.

Though our budget is limited, we must move from a position of financial dependency on overseas partners towards one of interdependency where partnership is not seen only in terms of financial commitments, but as a two-way exchange of personnel, expertise and other resources as deemed necessary to promote visible mutual respect. It is primarily for these reasons that we call upon you for your support.

Standing Order Form

To (Your Bank):

I (or my organization) pledge an amount of:

[ ] Will be supportive to the Council in this specific way:
[ ] Need additional information
[ ] Will contact you at a later time

Signature:

Please send completed form to:

The General Secretary
Christian Council of Ghana
P.O. Box 919, Accra
Tel: 776678 / 773429 / 774097 / 020/309227
Fax: 776725
E-mail: ccc@afriacanonline.com.

(750 US dollar)
APPENDIX 3:
Pentecostal Charismatic churches advertised posters of Empowerment Programmes.
APPENDIX 4

INTERNATIONAL CENTRAL GOSPEL CHURCH - ICGC
MY 20-YEAR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2014-2034)

Name: ____________________________
Current Age: ____________________________ Age by 2034 ____________________________

**Genesis 13:14–15 (NKJV)** — 14 And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: “Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; 15 for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever.

**Habakkuk 2:2–3 (NKJV)** — 2 Then the LORD answered me and said: “Write the vision And make it plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it. 3 For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarry, wait for it; Because it will surely come, It will not tarry.

God first showed Abraham what his future could be like. He then asked Abraham to take action to possess the future. He also told Habakkuk to clearly write the vision. Similarly, we can envisage our future and write down the steps we want to take to get there. **What kind of future do you see for yourself?**

This planning guide is designed to help you plan the next 20 years of your life. You can amend it or use it as it is. You can also go online or research into other available formats.

Whatever happens, take up the challenge of planning your future.

Start with your 20-year goals and work your way backwards. You can carve out a 15-year plan, a 10-year plan, a 5-year plan and finally a one-year plan to get you started.

No plan is perfect. You cannot control all the variables of your life. However, your plan can be like the navigating instruments of a pilot. When the weather changes or turbulence sets in, it will help you keep your eyes on your intended destination and find your way.

Whether you plan for the future or not, the future will become your reality in time. Take time to carefully plan ahead.

In planning for the next 20 years, think carefully about these four questions. They provide a framework for setting your major goals. In the next 20 years...

1. What kind of person will I want to be? **CHARACTER**
2. What should I have achieved? **ACCOMPLISHMENTS**
3. What should I be doing? **OCCUPATION**
4. What should I own? **ASSETS**

**Defining Your Dream Or Purpose**
Defining your dream or purpose makes planning more meaningful. The questions below will help you carve a dream, document it and motivate yourself to passionately pursue it:
1. What am I enthusiastic about?__________________________________________

2. What have I always wanted to become?_________________________________

3. What gives me the greatest fulfillment?_______________________________

4. What do I constantly imagine about my future?__________________________

5. What do I do best with the least effort?_______________________________

6. What has my past experiences prepared me for?_________________________

7. What has my education and training equipped me to do?__________________

8. Which one thing would I do if I knew I could not fail?__________________

9. What do I want to be remembered for?________________________________

Other Important Questions
1. How would I want my children to describe/remember me?_________________

2. How would I want my spouse to describe/remember me?__________________

3. What is my most important strength(s)?_______________________________

4. What is my biggest weakness(es)?____________________________________

5. What can I change about myself to make me a better person?______________

Personal Relationships Assessment
1. Which friendships are the most valuable to me?________________________

2. Which friendships distract me from my goals in life?____________________

3. What new relationships are needed in my life?___________________________

• Remember: Friends are like elevators. They either take you up or bring you down.

MY 20-YEAR PLAN/GOALS (A Summary Of My Life 20 Years From Now)

1. Spiritual:___________________________________________________________

2. Ministry:__________________________________________________________

3. Family/Relational:__________________________________________________

4. Health/Fitness:______________________________________________________
MY 20-YEAR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2014-2034)

5. Educational/Personal Development:

6. Career/Occupational:

7. Financial/Investment:

8. Real Estate/Infrastructure:

9. Societal Impact/Legacy:

10. Overall Summary/Description: In 20 Years, I will be

MY PERSONAL COMMITMENTS FOR YEAR ONE (First Year Plan)

To achieve your 20-year goal you have to commit to do some things on a REGULAR basis. These are some goals you can work with in the FIRST YEAR of your 20-year plan.

As the grace of God abounds toward me, I commit myself to accomplishing the following goals this year (The more specific your goals the easier it is to measure them as you go):

A. Spiritual Goals (eg. I'll bring order into my life by avoiding a life of sin/ I commit to start each day with a half hour of prayer and bible study)
   1. 
   2. 
   3. 

B. Ministry Goals (eg. I will enroll as a church worker and serve God with my gifts and talents)
   1. 
   2. 
   3. 

C. Family/Relational Goals (eg. I’ll model Christ to my children/I’ll invest in my children’s education/I’m committed to marriage for life so I’ll treat my spouse with respect and appreciation)
   1. 
   2. 
   3. 

D. Health & Fitness Goals (I’ll exercise thrice a week/I’ll eat healthy/Do my annual check-up/I’ll rest well)
   1. 
   2. 
   3. 

We serve a God who is able to take the people the world sees as ordinary and transform them into winners. No matter where you are starting from, commit to this process of lifelong transformation. Take time to prayerfully and thoughtfully write out this plan. Believe with all your heart that God is with you and is committed to give you the victory. Keep your plan close by and let it guide your actions everyday. Remain faithful to God and over the next 20 years you will see you life blossom as you climb all the way to the top. God richly bless you.  

- Pastor Mensa Otabil
APPENDIX 5

PURITY BANNER EXPLAINED
APPENDIX 6:
Pentecostal Charismatic Churches
Billboards of Empowerment
Appendix 7:

Details of COP’s Organogram

1. BOARDS
   a. Board of Trustees
   b. Finance Board
   c. Pensions Board
   d. PENTSOS Board
   e. Pentecost University College Council
   f. International Missions Board

2. COMMITTEES
   a. National Ministerial Committee
      • Area Ministerial Committee
      • District Ministerial Committee
   b. Estate Committee
   c. Literature Committee
   d. National Music Committee
      • Area Music Committee
      • District Music Committee
   e. Local Music Committee
      • National Electoral Committee
      • Area Electoral Committee
   f. Area, Districts & Local Committees

3. MINISTERS
   a. Apostles
   b. Prophets
   c. Pastors
   d. Evangelist
   e. Teachers
   f. Tent-Making Ministers
   g. Overseers
   h. Probationary Overseers

4. PRESBTERY
   a. Area Presbytery
   5. Area Head
   6. Area Executive Committee
   7. Worship
   b. District Presbytery
      • District Executive Committee
      • District Ministers
   c. Local Assembly
      • Local Secretary
1. NATIONAL COMMITTEES/BOARDS
   • National Missions Board
   • Church Order and Doctrine Committee
   • Ordination Board
   • Ecumenical Board
   • Stewardship Board
   • General Office and Personnel Administration Committee
   • Finance and Budget Committee
   • Education Committee
   • Projects/Estate Management Committee
   • Legal Advisory Committee
   • Business Development Board

2. SUPPORT MINISTRIES
   • Youth Ministry
   • Women’s Ministry
   • Men’s Ministry
   • Intercessory Ministry
   • Family Enrichment Ministry
   • Music & Art Ministry
   • Media Ministries
   • Children’s Ministry
   • Ushering Ministry
   • Missions Ministry
   • Covenant Families
   • Singles Ministry
   • Campus Ministry

3. INSTITUTIONS
   • Central University
   • Central Educational Foundation
   • Central Aid
   • Altar Development Company Limited
   • Central Bible College

4. MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION
   • Ministerial Executive Committee (M.E.C.)
   • All Ministers of the Church
   • Ordained Ministers

5. THE LOCAL ASSEMBLY
   • Local Church Council
     (Pastors & Deacons/Deaconesses)

6. AREA
   • Area Supervising Minister
   • Area Committee

7. DISTRICT
   • District Supervising Minister
   • District Committee

8. REGION
   • Regional Supervisor
APPENDIX 9:
Campaign Messages on Billboard
The Changing form of Liturgy in ICGC