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Gender Issues in Global African Pentecostalism

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Introduction

Across Africa, Christianity is thriving in all shapes and sizes and Pentecostalism is taking the lead. Today, about 107 million Africans are Pentecostals and the numbers continue to rise.[1] Pentecostalism or classical Pentecostalism is a renewal movement within Protestant Christianity that places special emphasis on a direct personal experience of God through the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Like other forms of evangelical Protestantism, Pentecostals adhere to the inerrancy of scriptures and necessity of accepting Christ as personal Lord and Saviour. It is distinguished by belief in the baptism with the Holy Spirit as an experience separate from conversion. This empowerment includes the use of spiritual gifts such as speaking in tongues and divine healing.[2]

Pentecostal churches to some scholars are the fastest growing churches in

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[1]Ogbu, Kalu, *African Pentecostalism: An Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008, 11-12.
[2]E. A. Livingstone, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (3rd ed.), Oxford University Press, 2013, 461.

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contemporary religious expression in Nigeria.[3] Pentecostals share much in common, although the concrete forms in which these common characteristics are manifested may differ from one church to another, from one country to another, and even within one church on different occasions. However, Pentecostals share the gifts of the Holy Spirit and in doing so experience a dramatic conversion experience, through which they are introduced to a clear and dualist world-view.[4]

On Pentecostalism in Africa, Allan Anderson states that Pentecostalism is a big business in Africa. He opined that African studies showed that eleven percent of the African populations were charismatic in 2011.[5] He referred to African Pentecostalism as Africa Reformation of the twentieth century that has fundamentally altered the character of African Christianity, including that of the older mission churches. He acknowledges that there has been enormous growth of new Pentecostal churches in Africa. He opined that the remarkable growth has been with noticeable decline among many older churches to reinvent their strategies and obviously are being changed by the "pentecostalisation" process taking place. He believed that two major things aided Pentecostals, namely; strong pneumatology belief and their sole dependency on the power of the Holy Spirit.[6] The Pentecostal churches basically are characterized by distinctive emphasis on sanctification experience, a cleansing from sin or justification speaking in tongues, also known as "glossolalia", divine healing, prophecy.[7] There is no doubt that Pentecostal churches by the virtue of their size and number have become a force to reckon with worldwide.[8]

Kalu opines that Nigerian Pentecostalism is not an off–shoot of Azusa street revival or an extension in any form of American electronic church. This is because of its certain peculiarity that could be understood from African worldview, and that its pros and cons are soured from the interior of African spirituality.[9] Pentecostal churches usually require specific

[3] J. Akao, "The Twentieth Century Pentecostal Influence on the Worship in the Mainline Churches in Nigeria," *Ogbomoso Journal of Theology*, No.6 (December 1991): 2431

[4] Andre, Droogers, *Globalization and the Pentecostal Hidden Mysteries*, www.hiddenmysteries.org, Accessed 16th of June, 2018

[5] Allan, Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism Global Charismatic Christianity*. London: Cambridge University Press, 2004, 6.

[6] Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism Global Charismatic Christianity*,6.

[7] Y. Obaje, *Have you received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit?* Ogbomoso: Adebayo Glory Printers, 1986, 20.

[8] Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism Global Charismatic Christianity*, 6.

[9] Kalu, 12.

conversion experience which is called 'born again.'[10] Considering the effect of globalization on African Pentecostalism, Kalu opines that the image of Pentecostalism in Africa has been dominated by the globalism discourse.[11] Commentators focus on how global cultural forces have overwhelmed Pentecostalism in Africa and for this reasonprovided two dominant approaches to the relationship between global processes and local identities, especially how African Pentecostalism fits into the globalization model: the first model is the geographical expansion of the phenomenon and varied expressions in different cultures.[12] A second strand takes its cue from Marshall MacLuhan's concept of the global village and perceives the emergence of a global culture driven by the force of commerce and technology.[13] It is argued that this force, comprising of ideas and material culture arising from the West, are daily exported into various parts of the world. Its effect is to overawe local cultures and identities and to install a shared global culture.[14] Thus, in different regions, the Pentecostals imitate Westerners and speak in a new global lingua franca, English. In West Africa, some of the mega Pentecostal churches are (e.g. The Redeemed Evangelical Mission, The Redeemed Christian Church of God, Christ Life Church, Christ Apostolic Church and Living Faith Church).

This paper, therefore, examines the historical root of Pentecostalism, i.e. what Pentecostals believe and the diversity in their beliefs, Africa's experience of Pentecostalism as to gender issues in this era of globalization using Nigeria as a case study.

Pentecostal Diversity

The concept of Pentecostalism is, to a certain degree, very much a social science construct. The term covers a variety of forms; it seems difficult to determine exactly what they all have in common. First of all, there is much historical diversity. The first churches, founded at the beginning of this century, had a variety of precursors, thus ensuring diversity right from the start, and there is no doubt that the segregation of white and

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[10]Kalu, 11-12

[11]Andre, Droogers, "Globalization and Pentecostals"

[12]Ogbu, Kalu, *A Discursive Interpretation of African Pentecostalism*, England: Oxford University Press, 2000,121-142.

[13]Kalu, 12.

[14]Kalu, 12.

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black churches contributed in no small measure to this diversity.[15] Within a very short time, Pentecostal churches were founded throughout the Americas and Europe. They are all recognizable as Pentecostal churches, but at the same time they all have their own particular profiles, depending on their history and their cultural context.[16] One specific gift of the Spirit, such as healing, or exorcism, may receive more emphasis in a particular church. Although initially not identified as such, African Independent Churches later came to be seen as a type of Pentecostal church as well. The charismatic movementis also worthy of the name 'Pentecostal' despite being part of mainstream churches, including the Roman Catholic Church.[17] In Talking of historical diversity, it is of course quite possible for a church to change in the course of its history. For example, it does make a difference that, as was the case for the first 'founding' generation, the personal religious experience of the gifts of the Holy Spirit was already present or, as is often the case in succeeding generations that the experience has to be taught and learned. Moreover, a successful church will inevitably change because the larger number of believers makes institutionalization necessary. A church may then have to start developing vertical and hierarchical structures, in seeming contradiction of the initial free and equal access of all its members to the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The effect of this may be to herald the slow demise of the enthusiasm that so typified its early years.[18] As a consequence, dissidents may decide to leave the church and join another, or even to found a new church and start the cycle all over again.

There is also a social and organisational diversity, and the model of the autonomous church is, of course, a very common one. Many followers of the charismatic movement have often opted to remain loyal to their mainline churches, be they Roman Catholic or Protestant. Even when a church model is adopted, the size may differ enormously. At one extreme, there are the living-room churches with services being held at the leader's home, and at the other extreme we see multinational

[15] Walter Hollenweger, *Pentecost Between Black and White, Five Case Studies on Pentecost and Politics*, Belfast, 1974, 18-19.
[16] Daniel P. Miguez, *Spiritual Bonfire in Argentina, Confronting Current Theories with an Ethnographic Account of Pentecostal Growth in Beunos Aires Suburb*, Amsterdam: 1998, 4-6.
[17] Droogers, "Globalization and Pentecostal".
[18] Stanley Johannesen, "Third-Generation Pentecostal Language: Continuity and Change in Collective Perceptions." In K. Poewe, ed., *Charismatic Christianity as a Global Culture*, Columbia, South Carolina, 1994, 175-199

churches with a strong presence in many countries. Some churches construct an enormous cathedral-like prestigious central church building that can seat thousands of believers. Gender distribution may be another cause of variation; women are often in the majority, and usually under male leadership. There is also diversity with respect to political issues.[19]

There is an eschatological, even an apocalyptical, tendency in Pentecostalism. Pentecostals live in expectation of the imminent coming of the Kingdom of God on earth. They also hold a long-term view of human history, although there is no question of postponing the treatment of affliction in anticipation of that moment, and the Pentecostal faith in the gifts of the Spirit also serves to solve small and large problems, here and now, and within a short-term perspective of human history.[20]

Pentecostal believers despise the sinful world, and yet they participate and have even earned themselves a reputation of being responsible and reliable citizens and workers in it. The way in which equality and hierarchy are combined, also illustrates this facility to maintain a double perspective. Both forms of social management seem to belong to the Pentecostal repertoire and are used according to need and situation. Whereas, on the one hand, the gifts of the Spirit are experienced by both male and female, hierarchical tendencies are present. This means, for example, that women's prominent openness to the gifts of the Spirit, in no way guarantees them a place in the hierarchy. Inversely, men with no 'experience' of the gifts of the Spirit may nevertheless rise to positions of authority.[21]

Globalization

Religion sometimes receives a good deal of attention in globalization debates,[22] and fundamentalist forms, Christian and Islamic in particular, are said to thrive in the new globalizing climate. Christian expansion has always been viewed as a transnational phenomenon with globalizing tendencies, even before the term became popular. The Roman Catholic Church, for example, has been depicted as a religious multinational. The

[19] Hollenweger, 19.
[20] Droogers, "Globalization and the Pentecostal"
[21] Droogers, "Globalization and the Pentecostals"
[22] Droogers, "Globalization and the Pentecostals"

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Christian goal transcends national and cultural boundaries. The kingdom is seen as a blueprint of the ideal society and, despite obvious failures, some of its tenets have become universals, as is clear from the formulation of the Universal Declaration of the Human Rights, today's moral global framework. The so-called 'electronic' churches have fully embraced modern means of communication. In non-Western contexts especially, Christian converts have shown how people can adopt a global view and at the same time remain faithful to their traditional identities. They may even have developed heresies in the process, but when a popular religion opts to refrain from official controls; such heresies are free and unrestrained.[23]

To Hall, people involved in globalization processes in Africa, to protect themselves by trying to remain who and what they are (identity as root), while simultaneously developing their own history, and making strategic use of all new opportunities that present themselves (identity as route).This then is the somewhat gloomy globalizing world within which Pentecostal expansion occurs.[24] But it has also impacted on how women are viewed in contemporary world.

Gender Issues in African Pentecostalism and Globalization

The gender paradox in Pentecostalism is no secret. There are many more women in the movement than men, and yet women are not allowed into visible positions of authority. While Pentecostalism maintains to be an egalitarian movement, women are only as equal as men allow. In other words, female Pentecostals can be in any position of authority they want as long as it does not include authority over men.[25]

The literature on the gender divide in Pentecostalism is large albeit still new. We can certainly blame the neglect of the Pentecostal gender paradox by the social sciences (both the neglect of women and the neglect of Pentecostalism). We can also blame the predominance of theories that silence women's experiences and marginalize women (not only among Pentecostals). We can also blame a fundamentalist reading of Scripture that purportedly justifies male authority and the submission of women, especially in the church. But the fact remains that these vexing

[23]Droogers, "Globalization and the Pentecostals"
[24]Droogers, "Globalization and the Pentecostals"
[25]D. Ayegboyin and S. A. Ishola, *African Indigenous Churches: An Historical Perspective*, Lagos: Greater Heights,1997,116.

issues are not constituting the paradox.[26] Then, the question is: How is it that Pentecostalism is a religious movement largely made up of women, when women are not allowed into visible positions of authority?

It could be as a result of an undeveloped ecclesiology among Pentecostals (and this may include an undeveloped anthropology). The charismatic movement in the mainline churches finds its own problems in the often uncritical adoption of hierarchical patterns of the mother church. For some reason, charismatic manifestations do not seem to challenge institutional structures. However, Classical Pentecostals, on the other hand, have falsely adopted the Protestant idea of the "priesthood of all believers" in addition to a more genuinely Pentecostal notion of the "prophethood of believers. Also it could be what Cheryl Bridges Johns has frequently lamented, that the gender divide in Pentecostal leadership is to be blamed on the dominance of the priestly image of ministry and a restricted image of prophet hood. She sees an abundance of "priestly Pentecostalism" characterized by a male dominated hierarchy and institutionalism while women are placed in the position of prophetic Pentecostals that co-exist with the priesthood albeit without challenging the patriarchal authority which needs further development in this global era.[27]

There are to my knowledge no studies on the juxtaposition of priesthood and prophethood in Pentecostalism. The prophetic dimension of Pentecostalism has suffered since the beginnings of the modern movement.Evidence to the latter can be found frequently and with particular intensity in regions like Latin America and North America, where the patriarchal heritage and male dominated image is still strong. The emphasis on women as prophets instead of priests is coupled with the relegation of women's authority to the household instead of the church.[28] The prophetic gift has consequently moved to the family (where it encounters other obstacles). In the Pentecostal churches, prophecy holds no significant ecclesiastical authority. And that is the crux of the matter: the idea and office of the priest has been severed from

[26]Andre Droogers, "Paradoxical Views on a Paradoxical Religion, Models for the Explanation of Pentecostal Expansion in Brazil and Chile" in B. Boudewijnse, A. Droogers, and F. Kamsteeg, eds., *More than Opium, An Anthropological Approach to Latin American and Pentecostal Praxis*, Lanham, Maryland, 1998, 1-34.

[27]Droogers "Paradoxical Views on a Paradoxical Religion", 33.

[28]Droogers "Paradoxical Views on a Paradoxical Religion", 33.

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the image and anointing of the prophet. I believe these discussions will go nowhere quickly unless we face the theological problem of juxtaposing priesthood and prophethood in Pentecostal churches. A more developed anthropology and ecclesiology might indicate that men and women are called and equipped to be both prophets and priests. At least in my reading of Scriptures, prophets and priests are not mutually exclusive. In the very least they coexist in the exercise of authority among the people of God. In the Spirit-filled church, they should be one and the same.

Female Religious leadership in African Pentecostalism in Nigeria

The women's status in Nigerian Pentecostal churches is paradoxical in that men and women are equal in theory, but in practice women are socialized into rigidly submissive roles in relation to their husbands and other males in the church hierarchy.[29] Women role in the Pentecostal churches according to Olademo are often moderated by their social status through marriage or psychological composition questions, such as how menstrual blood can co-exist with divine presence in a sacred space. She added that in theory, women should have equal access to leadership positions in Pentecostal churches and this conviction could manifest itself in different circumstances. The wife of a founder or leader of a Pentecostal church is automatically co-opted into the ministry as ace-pastor. Some professional Pentecostal women may receive a divine call to start a Pentecostal church which will make her the founder and leader of such a ministry.[30]

It is interesting to note that there are many Pentecostal churches being headed by women today in Nigeria; it was not so some years back as said earlier where female preachers were deprived of being in authority. This would, however, help to confirm how weak patriarchy has become in our dispensation. Pentecostal churches, more than before are witnessing the steady influx of women into its leadership structure and man is gradually losing its ground in the church against women; given the fact of the situational factors and personal call into the ministry.[31]

Aluko who examined the trend within the Anglican Communion in

[29]O. Olademo, "Women Pentecostalism and Public Life in Nigeria," *Orita: Ibadan Journal of Religious Studies*, xiii, (June 2009): 155-160.
[30]Olademo, 158.
[31]Olademo, 157.

Nigeria said at its recent Provincial meeting the request for a consideration of women's ordination was brought up for discussion. The House of Bishops though voted against the desire for some obvious reasons, we must note that the evolving situation in the Church of Nigeria Anglican Communion calls for particular attention in that by December 12, 1993, the then Bishop of Kwara Anglican Diocese in person of Rt. Rev. Herbert Haruna (Rtd.) said he was moved by the spirit of God shortly after the Lambert Conference of 1988 and he set in motion the machinery for ordaining three women as priests. The dynamics of women in spiritual development is made manifest in the way God is using women in the contemporary church. God is proving to the skeptics that women, like their male counterparts, are effective instruments that can be used for global evangelism. Olajubu cites the following examples of churches that were founded and are being led by women:

> Ona IwaMimo Cherubim and Seraphim Church, off Stadium Road, Ilorin, founded by the Mother-in-Israel, V. John; The God's Grace Church, Tanke, Ilorin, founded by Prophetess F. E. Alaba; Saint Peter's Spiritual Church, Oko-Erin, Ilorin, founded and led by Her Grace, E.B. Kolawole; and Christ the Messiah Church, Tanke, Ilorin, founded and led by Prophetess G.I. Ayinmila.[32]

There are some other women who are actively involved in ministering in the church. They include Bishop (Mrs.) Margaret Idahosa, who took over the ministry of her husband, late Bishop Idahosa. Today, rather than crumble, the Church of God Mission tends to stabilise as it works through the realities of the new situation. Prophetess Deborah Aboyin of the Peace and Righteousness of God Ministries, Okene, saidthatsome women also have been noted for their giftsin preaching, healing, prayers, and prophecies. Available statistics in some Nigerian seminaries and theological colleges show that more women are being graduated in preparation for pastoral ministries.[33]

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[32]O. Olajubu, "Women Awareness and Leadership in Church Structure in Nigeria," *African Journal of Biblical Studies*, VI/1 (April 1991): 76.

[33]Agnes Adeyeye, "Value Placement of Women in the Development of the Church in Contemporary Nigerian Society," A PhD Thesis submitted to the Department of Religions, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, June 2014,210.

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Significance of Women Involvement in Some Nigerian Mega Pentecostal Churches

The following churches in Nigeria would be analysed in this section. The Redeemed Christian Church of God, Deeper Life Bible Church, Winners Chapel, Mountain of Fire and Miracles, and Rhema Chapel. These Pentecostal churches are reformists in their desire to renew existing ecclesiastical structures and ecumenical in their search for Christian unity across denominational lines. In this paper, we would check three out of the mega Pentecostal churches which have placed value on the involvement of women in the church leadership.

The Redeemed Christian Church of God

The founder of The Redeemed Christian Church of God, Rev. Josiah Olufemi Akindayomi was born on July 5, 1909 in Ondo State. In March, 1981, Pastor E. A. Adeboye, a Ph.D degree holder in Applied Mathematics and a Senior Lecturer at the University of Ilorin was divinely chosen to take over as the General Overseer with a total of 40 parishes. A new era was born. The phenomenal growth began under the leadership of Pastor Adeboye. Today, RCCG has become the fastest growing Pentecostal church in the world.[34]

Value Placement on Women in the Redeemed Christian Church of God

Pastor (Mrs.) Y. M. Obembe, a full-time pastor at the RCCG was interviewed at Ilorin. She is 43 years old. She started attending the church in 1987 and got married in 1997. She was ordained as a Deaconess in 1998, an Assistant Pastor in 2001 and a Pastor in 2007.According to her, women in RCCG have played and are still playing roles in the mission. In terms of welfare, they have built an orphanage home called Heritage Home at the Redemption Camp. They have trained some orphans from Nursery School to the university level. They also care for widows by donating new clothes, food stuffs, etc. In terms of evangelism, every year the parish, area, zone and province hold special programmes to reach out to sinners and populate the kingdom of God.

The values placed on women are vast. They are allowed to operate freely. They talk, contribute and preach on the altar. They can be choir leaders, ushers and children teachers. They can lead prayer meetings, Bible

[34]Interview with Pastor Mrs Y. M Obembe , Wife of the Assistant Provincial Pastor, Kwara Province 3 on 08/09/2011

studies, etc. They are also assigned special roles. They can also be ordained as Deaconess, Assistant Pastors and Pastors. There are women as Parish, Area, Zonal, Assistant Provincial, Provincial and Regional Pastors.

There is a female Special Assistant to the General Overseer, Pastor Mrs. Oretola. There is no woman in the Governing Council yet. In this case, the disposition of the RCCG is best described as a work in progression and with time, women will be members of the Governing Council. The church believes in the Scripture that says, "and it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions" (Joel 2:28). If a man and woman are ordained together as Assistant Pastors in the same year, the man can become full Pastor by the fourth year while the woman will have to wait for another three years which makes seven years altogether. However, the women who are ordained in the ministry must have good testimony. A woman of one husband; even if she is a widow she must not be the second wife.[35]

Deeper Life Bible Church

The church was founded by W. F.Kumuyi, born in 1941, in a town called Erin-Ijesha, OsunState. He was educated at May Flower Secondary School Ikenne, Ogun State, and the University of Ibadan, where he studied Mathematics in 1964. He was formerly a member of the Apostolic Faith.[36]

Value Placement on Women in Deeper Life Bible Church

The Deeper Life Women Ministry has been playing a key and supporting role within the Deeper Christian Life Ministry right from inception, focusing on meeting the specific, spiritual, and family needs of women both within the church and the entire world. Through this ministry, multitudes of women have been saved, restored, sanctified, and Spirit-filled. Many separated families have been re-united and several other family problems resolved.

Due to overwhelming demand for the truth, the Women Mirror magazine was established. Apart from meeting specific needs of different

[35] *Joyful Mothers*, Congress Edition, Vol., 8, No. 3 (2008); 7
[36] Alan, Isaacson, *Deeper Life*, London: Holder and Stroughton,1990, 14.

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women categories, the magazine touches on child training, Bible quiz and a host of others. The Deeper Life Bible Church Women Ministry is a supportive ministry in the local church. It supports all programmes ordained by the leadership of the church by actively getting involved through prayers, evangelism, teaching, visitation and hospitality. It believes in the women ministry that God is calling all women to a unique walk with Him. God has used many women in the past and is still using many today.

An interview was conducted with one of the state group children coordinators under the women ministry. She has been in the Deeper Life Bible Church for about 18 years. She said women oversee the affairs of women in the church because they are under the men folks. They cannot head a church, though some churches were started by women in some areas, men are sent to head those churches. The woman can talk in the general church, she can lead prayer, she can lead bible study, she can lead the choir; but she cannot preach if the church coordinator is around, she cannot interpret for the male, and she cannot be ordained as a pastor. The wife of the state pastor can organiseprogrammes for women under the support of the state pastor. Women also go for evangelism. They organise outreaches to the prison, orphanages, hospitals and to the widows. According to her, the women already have so many responsibilities. They care for their homes, their husbands, children, and work of God.[37]

Christ Apostolic Church

The founding founders of this church include Pastors Odubanjo, Medayese, Akinyeleand Ayo Babalola. They were into evangelism before they were led to form a denomination; Christ Apostolic Church in 1942 after so many names have been suggested.[38]

The CAC doctrines and tenets are derived from different sources, namely, the Holy Scriptures, the soul inspiring sermons and lectures of its founding fathers. Spiritual guidance dictated by internal stresses, and references to the literatures and magazines of some older churches, in and outside Nigeria. All these are grouped into three; tenets, manifestation of the Spirit and the practices of the church.[39] There are

[37] Interview with Mrs. Adegoke on 9/9/2011
[38] S.G. Adegboyega, *Short History of the Apostolic Church in Nigeria*, Ibadan: Respirit Industrial Press, 1978, 33.
[39] A. Aloka, *The Christ Apostolic Church, CAC 1928-1988*, Ibadan: Ibukunola Printers, 1991, 15.

thirty-five districts of CAC in Nigeria, each headed by a District Superintendent or District Pastor and a District Secretary.

Value Placement on Women in Christ Apostolic Church (CAC)

The Good Women Association in CAC is a national body for women in the church. Membership is for adult female members through local assemblies. The association was founded at the convention in Ile-Ife in 1944.[40] The association has her aims, the spread of the gospel especially among women, rendering health services according to CAC belief especially among pregnant women and children plus the re-education of CAC girls. The Good Women Association has since 1960 single-handedly run the Babalola Memorial Girls' Grammar School, Ilesha, Osun State. The association has also built a modern building for the family of late Ayo Babalola at his home town Odo-Owa in Kwara State.

Programmes in the pipeline of the association include establishment of more post primary institutions for girls and the building of a permanent hall for the association's annual meeting. The women are involved in supportive activities in the church such as cleaning, organizing seminars, retreats, caring for the children, aged and the sick. Singing is another area where members play a prominent role. This is evident from the many melodious and thought provoking choral records produced by gifted members of the association. Women can take church attendance and interpret during sermons but cannot preach and sit on the altar. Women are excluded from holding sensitive positions, like that of the treasurer. Some years ago, according to Olajubu, women are not allowed to be ushers to avoid distractions during the service.[41] However, the trend has changed because now women are more in ushering department.[42]

A woman cannot lead the first prayer session during Sunday service neither can a woman give the closing prayer and benediction. Women cannot officiate during Holy Communion. There is no woman in the governing body of the C.A.C. The official stand of the church on the participation of women in the church worship is in accordance with Paul's injunction that women are to keep silent in the church. A good illustration of this is a situation where the female evangelist, prophetess

[40]Ronke, Olajubu, *The Christ Apostolic Church, CAC 1928-1988*, Ibadan: Ibunkunola Printers,1991, 117.
[41]Olajubu, 117.
[42]Interview with Mrs. Anuoluwapo CAC Oke-Iyanu Ilorin 05/09/2012

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and church founder is required to function under the authority of a male pastor.[43]

The wife of the Zonal Chairman of C.A.C Oke-Iyanu, Ilorin, Mrs. Anuoluwapo was interviewed. To her, Iyaagbebi literally means the woman that helps to deliver i.e. a midwife. She said a midwife is a calling from God, and after the call, the one called has to go for prayers after receiving from God and also attends the Seminary in Ede for two years with fasting for seven (7) days. After the graduation, the woman will be posted to a church as a midwife. The church sets aside a day in a week for women who are barren, those having problem of still birth and pregnant women for prayer programme. These programmes usually involve counseling, prayers and faith. There is ante-natal clinic where the women concerned are being taught how to take care of themselves and some tests are also conducted for them.[44]

Conclusion

In this paper, the significance of women in African Pentecostalism given the influence of globalization has been addressed using Nigerian Pentecostal churches as a case study. The three mega Pentecostal churches used are: The Redeemed Christian Church of God, Deeper Life Bible Church and Christ Apostolic Church. Although there exist some differences on the value placed on women in these Pentecostal churches, the fact remains that there is patriarchal dominance which silent women in the churches, thus denying them place of authorities. This is being decisively challenged in this era of globalisation. Therefore, the paradox "How is it that Pentecostalism is a religious movement largely made up of women, when women are not allowed into visible positions of authority?" is no longer an issue that affects the Pentecostal churches in Africa again especially Nigeria.

[43] *CAC Supreme Council, Christ Apostolic Church Constitution and Doctrine*, Akure, CAC Press Limited,1998, 13-14.

[44] Interview with Mrs. Anuoluwapo CAC Oke-Iyanu Ilorin 05/09/2012

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