



WWJMRD 2020; 6(5): 46-50
www.wwjmr.com
International Journal
Peer Reviewed Journal
Refereed Journal
Indexed Journal
Impact Factor MJIF: 4.25
E-ISSN: 2454-6615

Ignatius Nnaemeka Onwuatuegwu
Department of Philosophy
Faculty of Arts Nnamdi
Azikiwe University Awka,
Nigeria.

Nkemjika Bernardine Nwagu
Department of
Entrepreneurship,
Faculty of Management
Sciences, University of Benin.

Correspondence:
Ignatius Nnaemeka Onwuatuegwu
Department of Philosophy
Faculty of Arts Nnamdi
Azikiwe University Awka,
Nigeria.

Multiplication of Religious Sects in the Modern World has affected the Social Behavior of Youths in all Aspects of Life: An Epistemological Enquiry

Ignatius Nnaemeka Onwuatuegwu, Nkemjika Bernardine Nwagu

Abstract

Karl Marx made a popular postulation where he averred that religion is the opium of the masses. Religion is not a new phenomenon in our world, per se. It has been part of indigenous culture and tradition of various parts of the world. Prior to the colonisation system and the jihad war which brought about the passage of the religion peculiar to a given people to another group people; every geographical entity and her people have their way of religion. Every religion in the world has its tenets and principles which are fundamental to the belief held by her followers across the globe. There are, however, some forms of inconsistencies when the denominations making up a given religious group are put to the test. In the world today, there are more than a thousand denominations or sects scattered across the known religious groups in the world. The known religious groups in the world are Islam, Christianity, and Buddha, Judaism, Hindu, Moralists, and atheists, among others. All these religious groups have principles which are common across them. That common principle is one of the significant roles of religion in the world today. The principle is the ability to have an impact and effect on the social, behavioural patterns of her followers. At all times the religion which one belongs to have a way to impact the social behaviour of that person? These religious groups also have a multifaceted sects or denomination that causes a bit different in or two doctrines which a particular sect or denomination upholds; however, notwithstanding the multifaceted sects and denominations which are seen within these religious groups, especially, in the Christian and Islamic religions respectively; the same common principle still applies; which is to impact the social behaviour of the members. It follows that religion may be deemed to have failed if it does not have any impact on the social behaviours of her followers. Although the state of social behaviours amongst the youths in all aspects of life could be said to be at a decaying level, there are still youths whose social behaviours are positive as a result of the religious sects. Thus, this paper tends to make an epistemological enquiry to find out if the multiplication of religious sects in the world has affected the social behaviours of youths in all aspects of life.

Keywords: Multiplication, Social behaviours, Youths, Religion, Religious Sects

Introduction

The social, behavioural patterns amongst the youths in our world today are at a very critical deformed shape. The state at which the social behaviours of the youths have decayed is at an alarming rate and thus calls for reflection. Many things which were previously considered as taboo, abomination or an eyesore, are now the common things seen amongst the youth (Ezeh; 2019). From series of observations, the apparent finding is that a high percentage of the youths are now mere religious robots while inside the religious centres of the religious groups they belong to and swaps to devil incarnate immediately after (Smidt, 2003). Further argument by Saroglou, Pichon, Trompette, Verschuere, & Dernelle, (2005), said that reincarnating the devil does not need to wait long till after the worship, it may even start prior to or during the religious gathering at the same religious centres.

There are many things wrong in the society we found ourselves; a society where people justify their ill actions or put blames for their ill actions on something else. The 25-year-old man who was apprehended last year in the capital city of Rivers State, Nigeria for the killings of more than six ladies within the Port-Harcourt Metropolis; was putting on the

crucifix and had a copy of the Christian holy bible in his hand. That is one of the millions of crimes and offences that are being perpetrated daily around the universe.

It seems as if there are fewer or no persons who are upright or straight forward in their conducts and actions all of the times, in all of the places and all of the circumstances. It can practically be said without mincing words that the multiplication of religious sects in the modern world today, and in all the nooks and crannies of various geographical areas, do affect the social behaviours of youths either positively or negatively (Bar-El, Garcia-Muñoz, Neuman, and Tobol, 2012).

Statement of Problem

Rules and norms of behaviour are fundamental elements of religions. Every single religion contains a system of ideas and rules about how life *should* be lived. The rules are not restricted to the family (or the individual) but also cover the social dimension, that is, how to behave in the community (Benjamin, Choi, and Fisher, 2010). These social norms prevent individuals from misconduct within the society (“*Thou shalt not kill, nor commit adultery, nor steal, nor bear false witness against thy neighbour*”, Ten Commandments) and therefore restrain anti-social behaviour. Moreover, most religions promote generosity towards members of the society and also towards foreigners (in Islam the concept of *i'thar*, that is “preferring others to oneself”), especially towards those who need support (in Judaism, one is requested to give one-tenth of his earnings to the needy (Doetzel, 2001).

Religions also promote the egalitarian distribution of resources. As also found by Gordon, and Wilkinson, (2008) and Schwadel, (2005), egalitarianism is behind the idea of religious charity: sharing with those who have less. One of the basic principles of religions is that God observes what humans do. It follows that individuals believe that they are monitored continuously by Him, who has the power to punish those who deviate from the norm and reward those who follow the rules (Shariff and, Norenzayan, 2007).

Punishment and reward are expected in both the current life and the afterlife. It is observed that both the fear of divine punishment (Hell) and the expectation of divine reward (Heaven) significantly affect church attendance. Interestingly, belief in Heaven (reward) has a stronger incentive for church attendance than belief in Hell (punishment) (Cohen-Zada, 2005); (Bisin, Topa, and Verdier, 2004); (McKay, Efferson, Whitehouse, and Fehr, 2011).

We will proceed to make a rundown of the major religious sects in the world:

Table 1: Data distribution of the religious sects in the world

SN	RELIGION	POPULATION (World Population)	PERCENTAGE (World Percentage)
1	Christianity	2.2 Billion followers	32%
2	Islamism	1.6 Billion Followers	23%
3	No Religion	1.1 Billion Followers	16%
4	Hindu	1 Billion followers	15%
5	Buddhism	500 million Followers	7.5%
6	Judaism	14 million followers	0.02%

Source: A report published by the Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life (2012)

Literature Review

Concept of Religion and Social Behaviour

Religion is a way or mode of faith or belief which a person has taken for a given period. It requires a complete emotional, physical, spiritual and psychological being of any follower (Ezeh; 2019). Some persons have argued that Africa has no religion (Ajayi, 2018), while others have attributed religion to Africa (Lim & Putnam, 2010). I will align my opinion with that of Lim and Putnam, who stated that religion should and must be distinguished from Christianity or Islamism. According to Okoro (2011); religion is a matter of belief, in a place where there is something on *which* the people put their belief on for supernatural aid; there is religion. Religion is a class while Christianity, Hindu, Islam, Buddha, among others. Are subclasses of religion? It follows that one may be religious without being a member of any of the professed religious groups.

African religion is rooted to a belief in a supernatural being who oversees all aspects of life African traditional society was made of several autonomous communities, and these autonomous communities have, each their own supernatural being termed by the colonial masters as ‘gods’. The traditional society swore great allegiance to these gods. In the Igbo society, there is also a “chi” for every family and each individual has his “chi” who intervenes in his or her affairs (Okoro, 2011).

People had great respect and fear of the gods and were conscious of their acts, as no one wants to invoke the wrath of the gods or offend the gods. In the case where there are any unusual events which are to the detriments of the people; it was said that the people must have offended the gods and that the gods have to be consulted and appeased to quench their anger and wrath. When there are unknown or unascertained culprits for a crime; all the suspects are to be sworn before the shrine of the gods, and it was believed that the consequences are bored by the eventual culprit (Dow, 2007).

African traditional society had a form of religion, as already stated by Awoniyi (2016). However, the existence of the religion was short-lived by the intrusion of the colonial forerunners into Africa. The coming of the colonial “masters” as they termed themselves brought along with it; its religious system. As opined by (Awoniyi, 2016); immediately the colonial masters entered into the region; they tend to use any sociological and psychological means available to them to “brainwash” Africans into accepting them to stay. With time, they were able to make some Africans think their Supernatural being to be inferior to that of the white man. According to Ajayi (2018); Africans watched on while the gods are being carried away from Arochukwu, Igboukwu and Mberi as artefacts and some which the white man considered irrelevant, they burnt to ashes; to these, the gods did not react (Nwala, 2012).

Social behaviour has to do with the responsive actions, inactions and reactions of someone in a given society at a specific time, circumstance and to give persons or persons. This definition is substantiated on the ground that one’s behaviour is dynamic depending on the place, time and persons involved. The argument is that the way a man would react towards a female seduction in a school setting will be different from how he would react in a church or mosque or even in a club house. People tend to have different attitudes depending on where they are and whom

they are with. This does not in any way imply that the dynamism is a prove of human tendencies to pretend; rather, it shows that the sociological and psychology at which a person is will determine the person’s social behavior (Saroglou, Pichon, Trompette, Verschueren, & Dernelle, 2005).

However, the behaviour is not an attitude that pops up only for a short while. If such is only exhibited for a short while, it may just be termed an act or adrenaline response to stimuli. Conduct will be classified as behaviour when it has overtime be exhibited in similar circumstances in the same manner. Thus, social behaviour may include one’s actions in family, religious ground, school, market, and other places of social interactions (Tan, 2006).

This paper is limited to the social behaviours exhibited by youths. This paper tends to find if the multiplications of religious sects in the world affect the social behaviours of youth in all aspects of life. Although, the work is to find if the multiplication of religious sects affects social behaviours of youths in all aspects of life; this paper may not comprehensively ascertain data for all the aspects of the social behaviours of youths; thus, our finding is limited to the most common behaviours in the society.

Methodology and Materials

The concern in this paper is not just about the social behaviours being negative or positive; it is to find out if the multiplications of religious sects in the world have affected the social behaviours of youths. In order to ascertain this, the researcher will apply the empirical research methodology which will allow the use of surveys and questionnaires, which the discussion that will follow from the data collated will enable the research to substantiate if the multiplication of religious sects affects the social behaviours of youths in all aspects of life.

This paper adopts a descriptive methodology in ascertaining an epistemological enquiry as to whether the multiplication of religious sects in the modern world affects the social behaviour of youths in all aspects of life. The target population was majorly youths from the two most popular religions in the world, Islam and Christianity collated concurrently.

Results and Discussion

Demographic profile:

A number of above 1000 survey forms and questionnaires were distributed across members of the Islamic and Christian religion on a proportion of 60% for Christians and 40 per cent for the Muslims. When the forms were returned or retrieved from respondents with about 440 forms retrieved from the Christians and 288 forms retrieved from the Muslims; as a result of inappropriate fillings of the forms, the researcher only carried out the findings with 600 forms with a total of 379 forms from the Christian groups and 221 forms from the Islamic group.

Table 2: Demographic profile

Variables	Population	Percentage
Religion		
Islam	221	36.8%
Christianity	379	63.2%
Gender		
Female	270	45%
Male	330	55%

Level of Education		
School Certificate	80	13.3%
University Degree	405	67.5%
Others	115	19.2%
Age Groups		
Below 18	0	0
18-25	260	43.3%
26-35	245	40.9%
35 above	95	15.8%
Employment		
Employed	190	31.7%
Self Employed	200	33.3%
Unemployed	210	35%
Faith base		
Strong Christian	209	34.9%
Strong Muslim	170	28.3%
Average Christian	170	28.3%
Average Muslim	51	8.5%
The frequency at Religious gatherings/worship		
More than once per week	225	37.5%
Once per week	270	45%
Less than once per week	105	17.5%

In Table 2 above, the figures and data ascertained are restricted to the two major religion in the world.

The social behaviours of the youths in line with how they are affected by the multiplication of religious sect are shown in the table below:

Table 3: Social behavior of the youths

Variables	Population	Percentage
Sex before Marriage		
YES	220	36.7%
NO	112	18.7%
NOT SURE	–	0
MAYBE/SOMETIMES	268	44.6%
Do you support Abortion		
YES	150	25%
NO	170	28.3%
NOT SURE	59	9.8%
MAYBE/SOMETIMES	221	36.9%
Do you take alcohol or smoke		
YES	255	42.5%
NO	160	26.7%
NOT SURE	–	0
MAYBE/SOMETIMES	185	30.8%
Can you engage in fraud to make ends meet		
YES	84	14%
NO	290	48.3%
NOT SURE	108	18%
MAYBE/SOMETIMES	118	19.7%
Do you support jungle justice		
YES	137	22.8%
NO	225	37.5%
NOT SURE	48	8%
MAYBE/SOMETIMES	190	31.7%
Do You party or club		
YES	187	31.1%
NO	100	16.7%
NOT SURE	33	5.5%
MAYBE/SOMETIMES	280	46.7%
Your fellow in Religion is more of a brethren than your biological relatives who are of different religious sect		
YES	149	24.8%
YES	190	31.7%
NO	51	8.5%

NOT SURE MAYBE/SOMETIMES	210	35%
Can you tattoo or Pierce your body (except your ear)		
YES	110	18.3%
NO	301	50.1%
NOT SURE	28	4.7%
MAYBE/SOMETIMES	161	26.9%
Do you eat all types of meat		
YES	359	59.8%
NO	155	25.9%
NOT SURE	36	6%
MAYBE/SOMETIMES	50	8.3%
Can you marry someone who is of different religious sect		
YES	201	33.5%
NO	122	20.3%
NOT SURE	80	13.3%
MAYBE/SOMETIMES	197	32.9%
Does one's Hairstyle and Dressing matter in your religion		
YES	215	35.8%
NO	170	28.3%
NOT SURE	18	3%
MAYBE/SOMETIMES	197	32.9%
Would you protest, or participate in revolution or riot		
YES	186	31%
NO	144	24%
NOT SURE	78	13%
MAYBE/SOMETIMES	192	32%
Is there any genre of music that is inappropriate		
YES	90	15%
NO	177	29.5%
NOT SURE	45	7.5%
MAYBE/SOMETIMES	288	48%
Is there any visual program inappropriate for you to watch		
YES	263	43.9%
NO	101	16.8%
NOT SURE	66	11%
MAYBE/SOMETIMES	170	28.3%
Do you think the society should permit gay, lesbians and bisexuals practices		
YES	80	13.3%
NO	338	56.3%
NOT SURE	33	5.5%
MAYBE/SOMETIMES	149	24.9%
Can you keep close friends who are of different religious sect		
YES	288	48%
NO	97	16.2%
NOT SURE	56	9.3%
MAYBE/SOMETIMES	159	26.5%
Can adopt family planning and use of contraceptive in marriage		
YES	201	33.5%
NO	135	22.5%
NOT SURE	66	11%
MAYBE/SOMETIMES	198	33%
What mostly influenced your answers above?		
Religious Belief	480	80%
Moral/conscience	60	10%
Cultural belief	14	2.3%
Others	46	7.7%

From the table above, the social behaviours of the respondents who are majorly youths are affected in one way or the other as a result of the multiplications of religious sects in the world today. It follows that there are actions the youth would not have ordinarily taken if not as a result of the religious sects in the society.

Conclusion

The world has different religious sects, and these religious sects have in various denominations doctrines that may be similar or different to the other. Some religion shuns the consumption of some animal meat; others do not. While some religions preach against alcohol consumption, others said it could be taken to a certain extent. These are ways in which the religious sects and its multiplications affect the social behaviours of the youths today. From the results and data collated, it is obvious that most of the youths based their social behaviours on their religious belief. The impact on which religion has on anyone's conduct and social behaviours need not be overemphasised.

Every religion in the world today has something in common; the ability to compel the behavioural pattern of her followers. This they can convincingly be achieved by giving the follower assurances of everlasting life, or eternal reward either within or above the earth. Though the data collated and analysed in the paper, covers just two religions out of the 5 major religions in the world; it should be reckoned that the two religions (Islam and Christianity) have about 50% of the entire world religion population; thus, the result obtained evidently shows the social behaviours of the youths as they are affected by the multiplications of religious sects. The researcher is not ignorant that some of the answers ascertained from the survey forms and questionnaires are sentimentally filled; but, it is believed that it is a popular view that multiplication of religious sects in the world affects the social behaviours of youths.

In every epistemological enquiry, the purpose is to ascertain if a proposition or assertion is true? And how does one know if it is true? In this regard, the proposition or assertion in this paper is that multiplication of religious sects in the world affects social behaviours of youths. This paper ascertained that the statement is true and basis via which it was so ascertained was based on an empirical study carried out using data collated from two major religions. One would ask; how does one ascertain the results as it relates to the other religions not collated? The researcher applies simple logic rules of inference to reach a conclusion in this paper. The inference is built on the premise that all the world religions have a common principle of influencing the behavioural patterns of her followers since they all teach about things to do and things not to do at any given time; the two religions used in this paper are renowned religious sects in the world and have a common principle too; therefore the result ascertained with them is also a true reflection of the religions.

References

1. Ajayi, D. O. (2018) 'Religiosity' in Nigeria: Myths and Mystries; A paper presented at the Conference of Peace and Religious Studies, Abuja, Nigeria.
2. Awoniyi O. (2016) Introduction to Philosophy and Religion in Africa, Bells Publishers, Ilorin, Nigeria.
3. Bar-El, R., Garcia-Muñoz, T., Neuman, S. and Tobol, Y. (2012). 'The Evolution of Secularization: Cultural

- Transmission, Religion and Fertility - Theory, Simulations and Evidence', *Journal of Population Economics* 26(3): 1129-1174.
4. Benjamin, D.J., Choi, J.J. and Fisher, G.W. (2010). 'Religious Identity and Economic Behavior', National Bureau of Economic Research: No. w15925.
 5. Bisin, A., Topa, G. and Verdier, T. (2004). 'Religious Intermarriage and Socialisation in the United States', *Journal of Political Economy* 11(3): 615-664.
 6. Cohen-Zada, D. (2005). 'Preserving Religious Identity Through Education: Economic Analysis and Evidence From the US', *Journal of Urban Economics* 60(3): 372-398.
 7. Doetzel N. (2001) Relationships between morals, religion and spirituality. A paper presented to the 'Linking Research to Practice' research seminar at the University of Calgary.
 8. Dow J. W. A (2007) scientific definition of religion; Available on <http://www.anpere.net/2007/2.pdf> Accessed on 28/2/2020
 9. Ezeh, G. C. (2019) Understanding Religion and its Roles in Underdevelopment, In *Journal of Inter-Disciplinary Studies*, 2(2);
 10. Gordon, M. and Wilkinson, C.(2008) Conversations on Religion, The Cromwell Press, Wiltshire
 11. Lim, C., & Putnam, R. D. (2010). Religion, social networks, and life satisfaction. *American Sociological Review*, 75(6), 914-933
 12. McKay, R., Efferson, C., Whitehouse, H. and Fehr, E. (2011). 'Wrath of God: Religious Primes and Punishment', *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 278(1713), 1858-1863.
 13. Nwala, T. U. (2012) A Modern Introduction to Philosophy and Logic, Niger Books and Publishing Co. Ltd, Nsukka, Nigeria.
 14. Okoro, C. M. (2012) Philosophy and Logic (Revised Edition) Jones Comm. Publishers, Enugu.
 15. Saroglou, V., Pichon, I., Trompette, L., Verschuere, M., & Dernelle, R. (2005) Prosocial behavior and religion: New evidence based on projective measures and peer ratings. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 44, 323-348
 16. Schwadel, P. (2005). 'Individual, Congregational and Denomination Effects on Church Members' Civic Participation', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 44: 159-171.
 17. Shariff, A.F. and Norenzayan, A. (2007). 'God is Watching You: Priming God Concepts Increases Prosocial Behavior in an Anonymous Economic Game', *Psychological Science* 18: 803-809.
 18. Smidt, C. (2003). Religion as social capital: producing the common good: Baylor University.
 19. Tan, J.H.W. (2006). 'Religion and Social Preferences: An Experimental Study', *Economics Letters* 90(1): 60-67.