

**RELIGIOUS PARTICIPATION OF CHRISTIANS AND MUSLIMS
FOSTERING MUTUAL SOCIAL TRUST IN NIGERIA? AN
EXPLORATORY THEOLOGICAL STUDY**

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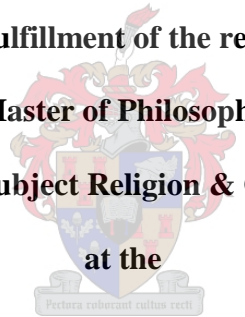
Thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Philosophy

in the subject Religion & Culture

at the

University of Stellenbosch



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December 2014

DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own original work, that I am the authorship owner thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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ABSTRACT

Several disciplines and scholars in the interdisciplinary field of Missiology and Science of Religions are probing the concept of ‘mutual social trust’. This research provides an exploratory and descriptive study of 1,516 individual Christians and Muslims in Nigeria, with a focus on whether religious participation is fostering mutual social trust among the ‘religious Other’. This research engages Pew’s data to show the extent to which active religious participation in and outside Christian denominations and the Ummah (Muslim Community) in Nigeria fosters mutual social trust and the reasons for this. This is interpreted in order to find out if the results have implications and could be a catalyst for affirming and promoting the human dignity of the ‘religious other’. Statistical significance is an indicator of what respondents sometimes assume is expected of them (ideal situation), and hence, the reason why a practical significance compares statistics with praxis. The data is interpreted from a statistical and practical significance perspective.

The first objective is to present similar research outputs, side by side, with how the data set used in this thesis has been investigated to address the research questions, hypotheses and research objectives. The second objective is to highlight areas of agreement, and if there are any discrepancies in the findings of this research, when compared to other studies. This study is an exploratory and descriptive research, which attempts to answer the questions such as “who, what, where, when or how and why?” A stratified random sample from all the seven geo-political regions, which are proportional to the population size and urban/rural population in Nigeria, was selected. One thousand five hundred and sixteen adults over the age of 18 years were interviewed by Pew Forum on ‘Religion and Public Life’, using English, Hausa, Yoruba and Pidgin languages. This sample was considered nationally representative of the Nigerian adult population.

The findings indicate that a high level of uncertainty and tension exists among Christians and Muslims with regards to trusting one another in the Nigerian context. This kind of tension leads to violence and constant clashes, resulting in the kind of experiences between Muslim and Christians, recorded in recent times. The Muslims and Christians in Nigeria have had a long history of misunderstandings and through these collective learning processes; they have reached a point that the evolving and changing patterns of trust indicates their way of coping with the situation. Trust in this situation impacts on society as a “consensual reality,” which reflects on the group behavior. A new survival order is created, which makes the situation messy at times, and seemingly out of control. These findings support the notion that trust has an individual property and is also a social system.

OPSOMMING

Verskillende dissiplines en akedemici in die interdissiplinêre veld van Missologie en wetenskap van Godsdienste is besig om die konsep van gemeenskaplike sosiale vertroue te ondersoek. Hierdie studie voorsien ondersoekende en beskrywende navorsing van 1,516 individuele Christene en Moslems in Nigerië met 'n fokus op die deelname in godsdienste as 'n middel om gemeenskaplike sosiale vertroue te kweek onder die "godsdienstige ander". Statistiese beduidenheid is 'n indikator van hoe respondente voel hulle moet optree (ideale situasie) en dit is hoekom dit prakties belangrik is om die statistieke te vergelyk met die praktyk. Die data is geïnterpreteer vanaf 'n statistiese en praktiese beduidenheidsperspektief.

Die doelwit van hierdie studie is om die studiemateriaal sy aan sy weer te gee met die data middele wat gebruik is om die studievraag, die hipotese en die studie objektiewe te beantwoord. Die tweede doelwit is om die ooreenkomste en verskille van die navorsing se bevindinge te vergelyk met ander studies. Hierdie studie wat ondersoekend en ook beskrywend is, streef daarna om die vraag na wie, wat, waar, wanneer, hoe en hoekom te beantwoord. 'n Multidimensionele, nie-geordende voorbeeld van al sewe geo-politieke areas wat in ooreenstemming is met die grotte van die kevolking en stedelike/landelike populasie in Nigerië, was gekies.

Pew Forum het onder haude gevoer met een duisend vyf handerd en sestien volwassenes ouer as 18 jaar oor 'Godsdienste en die publieke lewe' met die gebruik van Engels, Hausa, Yoruba and Pidgin tale. Hierdie proefneming was gevind as die algemene siening in Nigerië onder volwasenes.

Die bevindinge het aangedui dat daar 'n groot hoeveelheid onsekerheid en spanning onder die Christene en die Moslems in die Nigeriese konteks is, omdat hulle nie mekaar vertrou nie. Hierdie tipe spanning lei tot geweld en konstante konflik, wat oorloop tot die situasies wat onlangs deur die media gedokumenteer is. Die Moslems en Christene in Nigerië het 'n lang geskiedenis van misverstande en deur hierdie gesamentlike leerproses het hulle 'n punt bereik waar die groei en veranderende patrone van hulle vertroue hul eie manier van die situasie hantees, aandui. Vertroue in hierdie situasie oefen die rol van "ooreengekome realiteit" uit, wat die gedrag van die groep reflekteer. 'n Nuwe oorlewings meganisme is geskep wat die situasie by tye chaoties laat lyk. Hierdie bevindinge bied ondersteuning dat vertroue 'n individuele aspek bevat en 'n sosiale sisteem is.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge and thank my supervisor, Prof. D. X. Simon, for superbly mentoring and coaching me during the writing of this thesis. Through his wisdom and guidance, he helped shape my thoughts and ideas to reflect the essence of this study.

I would also like to express my gratitude and thanks to all the professors who ignited my enthusiasm and passion for this research through the teaching of their modules, especially Prof. Christo Thesnaar and Prof. Elna Mouton.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the God Almighty, who has enabled me to achieve this far in my life.

I also dedicate this work to all those who are participating and actively involved in building relationships of trust with the 'religious other' in all parts of the world, to the glory of God.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA:	Univariate Analysis of Variance
BIDR:	Balanced Inventory Desirable Responding
Cal:	Calculated
RELIGrec:	Religion
DENOMrec:	Denominational record
Educ:	Educational status
HD:	Human Dignity
Q97rec:	Age distribution
RP:	Religious Participation
MST:	Mutual Social Trust
SPSS:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
Tab:	Tabulated
WB:	Well-Being

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The subject of trusting and promoting the well-being of others is an important dimension of human dignity. Human dignity has become a global issue whereby discussions on the local news or even in business enterprises are hardly done without accusations or counter-accusations of the perceived abuse of human dignity¹. In terms of development, the world is where it is today due to the efforts of individuals, groups, organizations and governments who have prioritized the subject of human dignity. Regional boundaries conflicts, ethnic clashes, employee dissatisfaction all point towards the subject matter of human dignity. Defining human dignity is a huge challenge; it is, however, much easier to describe the absence of it. Failure to promote human dignity may be an indication of low levels of mutual social trust between individuals, groups, communities and other faiths. In this research, fostering mutual social trust through religious participation will be used as a proxy in assessing how well-being and other dimensions of human dignity can be promoted. According to Sandman (2002:178), “Dignity is an excellent example of a so-called ‘thick’ concept, encompassing both descriptive and normative or evaluative elements”. This view of making claims on the subject of dignity has descriptive and evaluative connotations. It describes how an individual, or a group of people, are expected to relate to an individual entity, and in turn, how such persons are to reciprocate (Sandman, 2002:178).

This brings one to the subject of values, which are shaped by several factors and become acceptable norms in society; subsequently, defining who we are. According to Shahriari, Mohammadi, Abbaszadeh, Bahrami and Fooladi (2012: 31), “Values mainly stem from cultural environment, social groups, social systems, religion and past to present experiences”. Values inform and are sustained by the religious participation of people from different religions, including “Africans [who] are incurably religious people” (Parrinder, 1974:9). Mbiti (1969:1) reiterates the same idea by saying that “Africans are notoriously religious and each people have its own religious system with a set of beliefs and practices. Religion permeates into all the departments of life so fully that it is not easy or possible always to isolate it”. Anyone conversant with developments in Nigeria would agree that religion is a great influence (Atanda,

¹ United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, viewed 11/11/2014, from www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/torture/torture-is; Social Care Institute for Excellence SCIE Guide 15, Published June 2010 and updated May 2013, viewed 10/11/2014, from www.scie.org.uk/publications/guides/guide15/index.asp; The South African Constitution Chapter 1, viewed 10/11/2014, from www.paralegaladvice.org.za/docs/chap01/04.html.

1989; Ilesanmi, 1997). Nigeria is a country that has undergone colonialism, thus, the Nigerians had no say in how it was constituted. It was amalgamated in 1914 and evolved into an extensive multi-ethnic and socio religious society.² This has resulted into an imbalance in the country, creating a lasting and destabilizing dichotomy, intolerance and a lack of trust between the two great religions of Islam and Christianity (Ekoko and Amadi 1989; Igbo, 1997; An-Na'im, 1997). However, we can no longer be satisfied with such generalizations, particularly in the context of interreligious tensions, conflicts and violence. The researcher asserts that the relationship between religious participation and values, like social and religious trust, are visible and can be measured, assessed and evaluated from a theological and interreligious perspective. If religious participation is used in the place of religion in all the above perspectives, then a pattern will begin to evolve. Therefore, the concept of mutual social trust in the Nigerian context cannot be overemphasized.

Religion seeks to help individuals or group of individuals to worship a divinity; to have a relationship that in the perception of the worshipper gives joy, peace and satisfaction. It also seeks to promote interrelationships with others in the same religion, as well as with individuals or groups in other religions. In juxtaposition with Jane Haddock's view of dignity:

Dignity is the ability to feel important and valuable in relation to others, communicate this to others, and be treated as such by others, in contexts which are perceived as threatening. Dignity is a dynamic subjective belief but also has a shared meaning among humanity. Dignity is driven for and its maintenance depends on one's ability to keep intact the boundary containing beliefs about oneself and the threat. Context and possession of dignity within oneself affects one's ability to maintain or promote the dignity of another (1996:930).

Religion seeks to promote human dignity by attempting to give meaning or improve the well-being of adherents. Haddock, referring to Chinn and Krammer (1991) postulates that "context, cultural meanings and values influence mental representations of the experience of dignity" (1996:929). Based on the context, an individual changes their concept of dignity because of the dynamic nature of the subject matter (1996:929).

² Pew Research Centre's Forum on Religion & Public Life (2011), *The Future of the Global Muslim Population: Projections for 2010-2030*, viewed xxx, from <http://pewforum.org/The-Future-of-the-Global-Muslim-Population.aspx>.

Thus, the moralistic trust of Uslaner posits that “moralistic trust is moral commandment to treat people as if they were trustworthy” (Uslaner, 2001:3). In his view, paraphrasing the Golden Rule of Kant, “categorical imperative” can be understood or interpreted to demand trust (Uslaner, 2001:3). Kant did not approach religion with “pure reason,” but rather with “practical reason” through “the window of morality” (Berkhof, 1989:8ff). His question shifted from “what can I know?” to “what can I do?” He labeled it the domain of the moral will (Heitink, 1999:21). However, Hardin (1998:13-14) sees strategic trust as “knowledge rather than action”. He opines that “moralistic trust must take action into account” (Hardin, 1998:13-14). Trust, as viewed by Uslaner is that people of other faiths may not share our beliefs, sometimes they may not even have contact with them, but have the moralistic trust or “belief that most people share your fundamental moral values” (Uslaner, 2001:4).

1.2 THE RESEARCH QUESTION & SUB-QUESTIONS

The main research question of this study is: “To what extent does active religious participation in and outside Christian denominations and the Ummah (Muslim Community) in Nigeria foster mutual social trust and the reasons?”

The research sub-questions are as follows:

- “Does the result have implications and could it be a catalyst for affirming and promoting the elements of human dignity of the ‘religious other’?”
- “Is there any statistical significance as an indicator of what respondents may sometimes assume is expected from them (ideal situation) in comparison with practical significance?”

This hermeneutical and quantitative study in the field of missiology and science of religions examines whether, and how, mutual social trust can be fostered through active religious participation within and outside a Christian denomination and a Muslim community. If yes, what are the possible consequences of affirming and actualizing the human dignity of the religious “other,” and the implications of this for Christian-Muslim relations in the contexts of ethnic, religious and other forms of exclusion and violence in northern Nigeria?

1.3 HYPOTHESES

The questions analyzed are presented with a table of basic descriptive statistics on participation, attendance and trust. H_0 stands for the null hypothesis signifying the expected logical outcome that is consistent with the theoretical framework and supported by empirical evidence. While H_a stands for the alternate hypothesis signifying the opposite logical outcome that is supported by empirical evidence.

H_0 – There is a significant statistical association and practical significance between religious participation, service attendance and fostering mutual social trust that more likely leads to the promotion of the human dignity of the religious “other”.

H_a – There is no significant statistical association and practical significance between religious participation, service attendance and fostering mutual social trust that more likely leads to the promotion of the human dignity of the religious “other”.

H_{01} – Well-being leads to mutual social trust as an outcome of religious participation and is more likely to have a significant positive impact on the promotion of the human dignity of the religious “other”.

H_{a1} – Well-being leads to mutual social trust as an outcome of religious participation and is not likely to have a significant positive impact on the promotion of the human dignity of the religious “other”.

With regards to this subject being discussed, there are several hypotheses that have been put forward by various scholars. For example, the hypothesis by Pamela and James (2004) states that “more religious active youths have a more significant experience of intergenerational community and that religious youths are more likely to interact with, trust and share similar perspectives with a non-familiar adult than those who are only sometimes involved or not involved in religious activities” (2004:710). Wilson’s hypothesis is that “identification among African Americans and gender identification among women should increase affection towards and confidence in other people generally” (2013: 4)., However, Wilson argues that this “is not to suggest that under all circumstances strong group identification will result in greater generalized social trust” (2013:4).

The hypotheses of this research is informed and discussed within the concept of ‘moralistic trust’ of the belief in the good will of individuals and what is suggested within a theology of religions by Paul Knitter, 2002, who has been involved in interreligious dialogue which pursues human well-being as a ‘common

good' from an ethical perspective. Moralistic trust is based on some sort of belief in the goodwill of the other. This is having the belief that others will not take advantage of you (Seligman, 1997:43; Yamigishi and Yamigishi, 1994:131; Silver, 1989:276). In the same vein, people who are 'trusters' are more likely to get involved in their communities (Putnam, 1993). Literature in this direction will definitely set a different agenda for Christian-Muslim relations in Northern Nigeria especially. The ethical-practical bridge in the theology of religions (mutual trust of others placed within the mutuality model) informs the research by leveling the playing field. Also, by affirming the uniqueness (particularity) of Christ and being open to the particularity of the 'other. This could be done through fostering mutual trust and authentic dialogue; showing love, being a friend, conversing and interacting with 'others'. (Knitter, 2007:134-146). Bosch (1991) explains it is a decision of the heart to accept the coexistence of different faiths, than it is of the intellect. He further asserts that true dialogue presupposes commitment, which does not imply a sacrifice of one's own position. Dialogue is only possible if it emanates from this. He argues that both dialogue and mission can only be conducted in an attitude of humility. He states that dialogue and mission should acknowledge that lived religions are worlds in themselves with different paradigms. This does not make dialogue a substitute for mission but mission should be done as "the church *with* others" (1991:483-499).

1.4 AIMS OF THE STUDY

The broad aim of this study is to explore the relationship between religious participation and mutual social trust on the one hand, and well-being and mutual social trust on the other. Another aim is to test for the statistical and practical significance of relationships between variables such as gender, age, education, income, religion and the denominational affiliation of Churches. Also, to study patterns of mutual social trust, values and how they impact a comparative theology of religions. Furthermore, to explore current present similar research outputs side by side with how the data set used in this research has been investigated, so as to address the research questions, hypotheses and research objectives. In the same vein, to show areas of agreement and discrepancies in the findings of this research when compared to other studies. This is an exploratory and descriptive study that attempts to answer the questions of "who, what, where, when, how and why"?

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives of this study are:

- To investigate religious factors that may be associated with the well-being (human dignity) of the other.
- To find out the existence and extent of the relationship between well-being (and other relevant aspects of human dignity) and mutual social trust, if any.
- To establish if active religious participation is associated with mutual social trust.
- To control for other possible determining variables, for example, whether the type of religious participation or denominational affiliation that a Christian or a Muslim belongs to has an influence on the way they think and behave in relation to the issue of trust; as well as to control for income, educational achievement, and whether gender makes a different contribution to how religious participation may lead to mutual social trust and the promotion of human dignity.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section describes the methodology used in this study. Mouton asserts that the type of methodology depends on the nature of the research problem and objectives (1996:39). Babbie, Halley, Wagner and Zaino (2011:6) argue that a social science research aims at developing theories in an attempt to “explain, understand, and make sense of the social world”. Seale (2012) also argues that a good social science research should be approached from a particular research paradigm or model, which is a way of thinking throughout the research and also looking with an inquiring eye. He postulates that the model leads to the formation of concepts, which inform the theories and from which hypotheses are derived, which invariably informs the research methodology. This in turn suggests the kind of methods to be employed, so as to enrich the quality of findings and act as a thorough guide in answering the research hypothesis and research questions (Seale, 2012:30-43).

The concept of mutual social trust is being approached from a macro-theory perspective, and a paradigm called *symbolic interactionism*. This paradigm “views human behaviour as the creation of meaning through social interactions, with those meaning conditioning subsequent interactions” (Babbie, 2010:34-37). This is not usually used for quantitative studies but since this is a triangulation study it is appropriate to use to discover patterns related to mutual social trust. The second paradigm used in this research is *structural functionalism* (as a social systems theory). It is a paradigm that divides social phenomena into parts; each of which serves a function for the operation of the whole as comparative theology of religion and empirical theology (Babbie, 2010:38). The deductive reasoning is generally used to operationalize

mutual social trust (Babbie, 2010:53-56). Babbie et al. (2011) postulates that a theory helps to describe relationships among concepts, which may be general kinds of ideas or understandings, forming a basis for social scientific research.

1.6.1 Perspectives on research methodology

Methodology in research may be recognized from three different perspectives; methodological paradigms, research methods and techniques (Mouton, 1996:37). When the methodological paradigm is engaged, it is normally at an abstract level describing or distinguishing between qualitative, quantitative or participatory research. However, the use of multiple methods, or mixed methods, is being utilized in current research studies (Mason, 1996; Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2003). They have distinguished between three approaches, that of triangulation, facilitation and complementary. Mason (1996) counsels that, “A researcher must think strategically about integration of multiple methods, rather than piecing them together in an ad hoc and eclectic way” (Mason, 1996:79).

By implication the user needs to be conscious of the ontological, epistemological and other assumptions underlying the methodology in use. For example, one can study how individuals reason and perceive themselves, their processes of knowing and learning can be picked up through a quantitative methodology. Methods refer to particular stages of the research process like data collection and analysis. The techniques represent the most rigorous aspect of the methodology. This informs the type of paradigms, methods and techniques to be used, in order to position any research methodology to effectively engage the research aims and objectives (Schoonraad, 2003:129). Adapting the suggestion of Du Plooy, that the “ontological, epistemological and theoretical assumptions” about a subject like *mutual social trust* “should be considered in deciding which methodological assumptions would govern a study” (Du Plooy, 2001:20-21). Therefore, the suggestion by Du Plooy (1996), that the epistemological assumption should guide the manner in which the researcher acquires knowledge (epistemology) is accepted. When discussing ‘mutual social trust’ in this study, Knitter’s generalized trust, which does not depend on the mutual reciprocity of the religious other is emphasized. However, that does not negate the fact that in this same study, other kinds of trust in relation to Coleman (1988) and Putnam (1993) have been factored into the areas examined.

1.6.2 Research Strategy

In this study, the research strategy followed is descriptive or causal research; and the research design and environment is field-work, using the Pew Research Centre data sets as a secondary resource. Osmer (2008) proposes in the descriptive-empirical task to give careful attention to the question, “What is going on?” Which he argues is at the heart of the descriptive-empirical task of practical theological

interpretation. The formal attending which is one of Osmer's concepts is used in this research to investigate situations and contexts (Osmer, 2008:31-39). Wan (2005) reiterates Osmer (2008) in an interdisciplinary manner by encouraging disciplinary synergism, mutual enrichment and research advancement. He argues, as the descriptive interdisciplinary task is engaged, the researcher is able to see the whole picture of how the parts interact for a better theoretical framework and an holistic representation of reality. He paints the picture of a dynamic interaction among the disciplines. He sums up his argument, that this kind of research increases the precision of new perspectives being incorporated into theological studies (Wan, 2005:4-5). Smith (1998) calls for an accurate and rich description of social life and how it works. He states that, "Our explanatory insights, if they turn out to be any good, must be built upon an intimate familiarity with the described reality that needs explaining. And that requires a great deal of prior descriptive empirical investigation" (Smith, 1998:3).

Mouton (1996) argues that the research strategy emanates from the methodological paradigm (qualitative or quantitative) in a manner that answers the research question. This can be described as exploratory or formal, descriptive or causal and in this particular study, the exploratory and descriptive strategy will be employed (Mouton, 1996:37). Here, both the quantitative and qualitative techniques are applicable, although exploration tends to lean towards the qualitative techniques (Cooper and Schindler, 2001:139). The objectives of the empirical aspect of this research is designed to gather deeper levels of understanding and acquire a broader understanding of mutual social trust from pertinent authors such as Knitter, Putnam, Coleman, and Boudeaux. Thus, the triangulation or mixed method of data analysis is appropriate here.

This study is exploratory as it tests two hypotheses in trying to answer the research question with the objective of discovering research problems that may be studied in the future (Cooper and Schindler, 2001:134). Mouton (1996) asserts, "Exploratory studies are typically used when very little previous research has been conducted on a specific topic". Discussing whether the religious participation of Christians and Muslims is fostering mutual social trust in Nigeria within an exploratory theological study seeks to fill this gap as explained above by Mouton, where very little previous research has been done on this specific area of study.

As mentioned earlier, descriptive research on the one hand, attempts to answer the questions, "Who, what, where, when or how?" While causal research, on the other hand, focuses on why or how one variable produces change in another, as distinguished by Cooper and Schindler (2001:136). The objectives, as discussed in the introduction of this chapter, attempts to describe the concept of mutual social trust, based on how various pertinent scholars have discussed and engaged with it in relation to social groups, which

religious participation falls under. This is done in order to explore whether the religious participation of Christians and Muslims in Nigeria is fostering mutual social trust. If they do, the onus is now on why? Which variable is responsible for the production of change in another? In the same vein, if they do not, the onus is on why not? Which variable is responsible for the production of change in another? All this is done, keeping in mind the generalized existing knowledge of the concept of mutual social trust and how the reality on the ground can be understood and engaged in, in order to make a contribution to the field of comparative theology of religions.

1.6.3 Research design

As discussed above, the research deals with the research environment, as well as with the perceptions of the participants (Cooper and Schindler, 2001:136). In this study, secondary data is used. Pew Research Centre on Religion and Public Life conducted a survey in Africa between December 2008 and April 2009, on ‘Tolerance and Tension: Islam and Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa’. The researcher acquired the necessary permission to use the Nigerian section of the dataset data set³. The following questions are analyzed in this research: Questions 9; 31 for trust; 40 and 41 are merged for religious participation; 7 for well-being; RELIGrec (indicating if the respondent was a Muslim or Christian); DENOMrec (indicating Christian denomination); 88 for human dignity; 96 for gender; 97 for age; 99 for education; and question 100 was used for INCOME with quartile adjustment, which will be described later.

Question 9 asks, “Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people?” This question has the following options to respond: Option 1, most people can be trusted; Option 2, can’t be too careful; Option 3 other/depends; Option 8, don’t know; and Option 9 for people who refused to answer. While question 31 asks, “And which comes closer to describing your view? I generally trust people who have different religious values than me, or I generally do not trust people who have different religious values than me?” This question has the following options: Option 1, for ‘I generally trust people who have different religious values than me’; Option 2, for ‘I generally do not trust people who have different religious values than me’; Option 8, for ‘don’t know’; and Option 9 for people who refused to answer.

Questions 40 and 41 were merged in excel format and exported back to SPSS to represent religious participation. For respondents who are not Muslims, question 40 asks, “Aside from weddings and funerals how often do you attend religious services... more than once a week, once a week, once or twice a month,

³ Permission was sort for and granted.

a few times a year, seldom, or never?” This question has the following options: Option 1, for ‘more than once a week’; Option 2, for ‘once a week’; Option 3, for ‘once or twice a month’; Option 4, for ‘a few times a year’; Option 5, for ‘seldom’; Option 6, for ‘never’; Option 8, for ‘don’t know’; and Option 9 for people who ‘refused to answer’. For respondents who are Muslims, question 41 asks, “On the average, how often do you attend the mosque or Islamic Centre for Salah and Jum’ah prayer?” This question has the following options: Option 1, for ‘more than once a week’; Option 2, for ‘once a week for Jum’ah prayer’; Option 3, for ‘once or twice a month’; Option 4, for ‘a few times a year, especially for the Eid’; Option 5, for ‘seldom’; Option 6, for ‘never’; Option 8, for ‘don’t know’; and Option 9 for people who refused to answer.

Question 7 (well-being) asks, “What about your personal economic situation, how would you describe it, is it very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad or very bad?” This question has the following options: Option 1, for ‘very good’; Option 2, for ‘somewhat good’; Option 3, for ‘somewhat bad’; Option 4, for ‘very bad’; Option 8, for ‘don’t know’; and Option 9 for people who ‘refused to answer’. Question 88 (human dignity) asks, “Some people think that the tactic of using arms and violence against civilians in defense of their religion is justified. Other people believe that, no matter what the reason, this kind of violence is never justified. How about you? Do you personally feel that the tactic of using arms and violence against civilians in defense of your religion can be justified, sometimes justified, rarely justified, or never justified?” This question has the following options: Option 1, for ‘often justified’; Option 2, for ‘sometimes justified’; Option 3, for ‘rarely justified’; Option 4, for ‘never justified’; Option 8, for ‘don’t know’; and Option 9 for people who refused to answer.

Question 96 (gender) asks one to record their gender, with Option 1 for male, and Option 2 for female. Question 97 (age) asks, “How old were you at your last birthday?” This question was an open ended one and interviewers recorded the respondents verbatim. The following were the options: Option 1, for age 18-24; Option 2, for 25-29; Option 3, for 30-34; Option 4, for 35-39; Option 5, for 40-44; Option 6, for 45-49; Option 7, for 50-54; Option 8, for 55-59; Option 9, for age 60 and over; Option 99 for people who don’t know or refused to answer.

Question 99 (education) asks, “What is the highest level of education that you have completed?” This question has the following options: Option 1, for ‘completed primary or less’; Option 2, for ‘some secondary/completed secondary’; Option 3, for ‘post-secondary and up’; and Option 9 for people who do not know or refused to answer.

Question 100 is for income, and asks, “Have there been times during the last year when you did not have enough money?” The respondents had 3 aspects of areas to consider, A – to buy food your family needed? B – to pay for medical and health care your family needed? C – to buy clothing your family needed? The answers were broken-down further into the following options: Option 1, for ‘yes’; Option 2, for ‘no’; Option 8, for ‘don’t know’; and Option 9 for people who refused to answer. This question and accompanying response categories were adjusted and recorded into rough quartiles as a representation of 1 for low; 2, 3, 4 for high; and 99 for people who refused to answer or do not know.

The RELIGrec question asks, “What is your present religion, if any? And would you describe yourself as a Christian, as a Muslim, or as neither one?” The list for respondents to answer are as follows: Option 1, for ‘Christian’; Option 2, for ‘Muslim’; Option 3, for ‘Ancestral, tribal, animist, or other traditional African religion’; Option 4, for ‘unaffiliated’; and Option 5 for ‘others, don’t know or refused to answer’.

If the respondent is a Christian, DENOMrec asks, “Please tell me which denomination or Church, if any, you identify with most closely”. The options ranged from: Option 1 for ‘Catholic’; Option 2 for ‘Anglican/Episcopalian’; Option 3 for ‘Baptist’; Option 4 for ‘Lutheran’; Option 5 for ‘Methodist’; Option 6 for ‘Presbyterian’; Option 7 for ‘Pentecostal’; Option 8 for ‘African Independent Church/African Initiated Church’; Option 9 for ‘Jehovah’s Witness’; Option 10 for ‘Seventh Day Adventist’; Option 15 for ‘Congregationalist’; Option 16 for ‘Dutch Reformed Church, Uniting Reformed Church or Christian Reformed Church’; Option 31 for ‘Ethiopian Orthodox’; Option 91 for ‘something else’; Option 92 for ‘none in particular’; Option 96 for ‘just a Protestant, not further specified’; Option 97 for ‘just a Christian, not further specified’; and Option 99 for people who do not know or refused to answer. However, some of these denominations are not relevant to the Nigerian context. Only the relevant respondent’s denominations will be analyzed.

1.6.4 Research methods and techniques

An aspect of the research methodology that includes sampling, data collection, data analysis methods and techniques (Mouton, 1996:37) is discussed in this section.

1.6.4.1 Using existing secondary data

The results of the surveys are based on face-to-face interviews conducted in Nigeria under the supervision of Princeton Survey Research Associates International and are based on a national sample.⁴ Several scholars have looked at secondary data as resources for research. These include data that have not been personally collected or gathered by the researcher, and it may be in several forms (Smith, 2011). According to Smith (2011), secondary data makes a special kind of data available which ordinarily would not be available to researchers, either because of technical expertise or financial resources. He reasons that a high quality data set and excellent surveys can be at the disposal of researchers by means of secondary data. The researcher has considered that even if data is obtained without bias (Lawton, 2003), and is consistent with research principles, study goals and objectives (Laxton, 2004), these do not necessarily make the data accurate or valid (Guler, 2004).

Also, high quality data is available at a reduced cost, thus maximizing the opportunities for researchers to do research in areas or on issues they would not ordinarily have had the capacity to engage in (Hakim, 1961:4). Considering another perspective, secondary data plays a significant role in capacity building through access to such data, as the researcher's interests perspective are broadened (Smith, 2008). The use of secondary data facilitates faster data analysis, saves money, time, energy and duplication of efforts (McCaster, 2005). However, in comparison with the primary data that was intentionally gathered by the researcher, the researcher may sometimes not achieve the research objectives, since ordinarily, there will be an unusual volume of data that was not originally collected to answer the current researcher's questions (McCaster, 2005).

1.6.4.2 Sampling

There is the tendency to choose certain individuals over others in a sample group (Laxton, 2004), especially during the interview section, as used by Pew Research Centre on Religion and Public Life. According to the Pew Research Centre on Religion and Public Life, sampling size and margin of sampling error for each of the three groups (total population, Christians and Muslims) in Nigeria was as follows:

TOTAL POPULATION (170,000 APPROXIMATELY)

Sample Size	Margin of Error
1,516	+ or – 4 points

⁴ Pew Research Centre's Forum on Religion & Public Life (2011), *The Future of the Global Muslim Population: Projections for 2010-2030*, viewed xxx, from <http://pewforum.org/The-Future-of-the-Global-Muslim-Population.aspx>.

Among Christians

Sample Size	Margin of Error
678	+ or – 6 points

Among Muslims

Sample Size	Margin of Error
818	+ or – 5 points

For the results based on the full sample in Nigeria, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributed to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus the margin of error. In addition to sampling error, one needs to bear in mind that the wording of the questions and practical difficulties in conducting surveys, can also introduce error or bias in the findings of the opinion polls.⁵

1.6.4.3 Statistical procedures used and the coding of data

Descriptive analysis refers to the transformation of the raw data into a form that is easy to understand and interpret (Zikmund, 2003:473). When engaging the descriptive aspect of this research, tables are presented describing their variables and showing simple but meaningful, bivariate correlation with ANOVA for Hypotheses and research objectives. The quantitative analytical approach, the theoretical model and hypothesis in this study was tested based on empirical data from Pew Research Centre on Religion and Public Life (Whahab, S.A. et al., 2011). For the statistical analysis to be functional, it is pertinent to assign codes (usually in the form of numbers) to each response, for example, 1 for males and 2 for females (Malhotra, 1996:475). “Assigning numerical symbols permit the transfer of data from the survey to the computer” (Zikmund, 2003:458). Data was captured and stored in SPSS format. The PEW Forum data set have already subjected the data set to a verification process and have arrived at + or – 4 points. Tests were run using simple bivariate analysis using the Statistical Package software (SPSS). The data analysis and the techniques used are quantitative data analysis (descriptive statistics and some inferential statistics), qualitative data analysis (broad thematic survey and discussions of sociological concepts with meta theoretical and practical implications) and hence a triangulation (Cooper and Schindler, 2001:135; Mouton, 2001:166, Du ploy, 2001:191; Schoonraad, 2003:131).

⁵ Pew Research Centre on Religion and Public Life, *Tolerance and Tension: Islam and Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Adapting the Nigerian data set). Survey conducted December 2008- April 2009.

1.6.5. Data analysis

1.6.5.1 Phase one

The parameter used in this study for mutual social trust is derived from two questions (Brehm, 1999) measuring willingness to trust other people and perceptions that others cannot be trusted. Based on the Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR) developed by Paulhus (1991:17-59), Winkler et al. (2006) further subdivided this measurement in two paths, which they refer to as “self-deceptive enhancement,” which in their opinion captures a tendency to view actual situations in an optimistic way (though unconsciously). While in their opinion, “impression management” that “measures the extent to which a person consciously tries to construct a favourable picture of other people”. Several researches and literature have discovered that “trust questions are found to be correlated with scales of social desirability” (Rotter, 1967:651-665). Data was captured and stored in SPSS format. The Pew Research Centre on Religion and Public Life data set have already subjected the data set to a verification process and have arrived at + or – 4 points. Tests were run using the Statistical Package software (SPSS).

Zikmund (2003) opines, “Descriptive analysis refers to the transformation of the raw data into a form that is easy to understand and interpret” (Zikmund, 2003:473). Details of this aspect of the research are found in the three phases under discussion. The frequency distributions, mean and standard deviations shall be used in phase one of the data analysis. The attempt at engaging the descriptive aspect of this research before migrating to the causal aspect uses the “frequency distribution for a variable produces a table of frequency counts, percentages and cumulative percentages for all the values associated with that variable” (Malhotra, 1996:504). This will help in the calculation of the mean, “a measure of location or central tendency” (Cooper and Schindler, 2001:442). This, however, will assist the research, “when compared with the mean calculated for each variable, the researcher could establish how far away from the average the data values are” (Cooper and Schindler, 2001:444).

1.6.5.2 Phase two

a) Power calculations for ANOVA

Based on Cohen (1969), who has been encouraging researchers to do power calculations and this study will attempt to estimate the power (probability of rejecting the null hypothesis when it is false) in testing of the univariate situation. This will be achieved through the use of tables, and by defining small, medium and large effect sizes (Stevens, 1980:728). Several scholars have engaged

the subject of estimating power in univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) (Brewer, 1972; Cohen, 1969; Tversky and Kahneman, 1971). They advance two reasons why estimating power is important, “A priori estimation of power alerts the researcher to how many subjects per group are needed for adequate power and it affects how one interprets the results of complicated studies (Stevens, 1980:728). In this research, the interval scale is used with the Likert Scale, to enable the researcher to discover “the wider distribution of scores around the mean which may provide more discriminating power and establish covariance between two variables with greater dispersion around their means” (Allen and Rao, 2000).

- b) Present tables describing their variables and showing simple but meaningful, bivariate, or cross-tabulations of interest.
- c) Using the “quantitative analytical approach, the theoretical model and hypothesis” in this study is tested based on empirical data from the Pew Research Centre on Religion and Public Life by cross tabulations (Whahab, S.A. et al., 2011).

1.7 ETHICS OF THE RESEARCH

A formal letter was written by the researcher requesting permission to use the above-mentioned data, although this was not a prerequisite, as the data set is made available to the public. However, the Pew Research Centre granted the researcher permission to use the data. All sensitive aspects of the data will not be disclosed or used for any other purpose, apart from this research work.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE AND CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

This work follows several scholars in the field of comparative theology of religions to bridge the gap between theory and practice. The researcher poses alternative paradigms for understudying patterns of trust relations and aspects of human dignity, as an issue of major concern in our society. This research is significant because it introduces the concept of religious participation into the equation of understanding mutual social trust. This work takes to task the religious communities and scholars of religion to do more in the area of promoting human dignity in interfaith encounters. It challenges further studies on religion in Africa and Nigeria, in particular. Reference to the works of scholars about their thoughts on Africa shows that “studies of religion, media and culture are rare in/on Africa” (Walsh 1996; Bourgault 1995; Spintulnik 1993; Ziegler 1992). Other Nigerian scholars agree by saying, “the same goes for Nigeria” (Nwuneli, 1985; Uche, 1989).

1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

This study is limited to the secondary data set from the Pew Research Centre on Religion and Public Life. However, the researcher has access of all the variables and codes used in the original data gathered by the Pew Research Centre on Religion and Public Life and subsequently, the measurements that were used for analysis. As a national representative sample, Pew Research Centre on Religion and Public Life interviewed 1,516 people in Nigeria, which is relatively low, but is acceptable as a random sample of the population (Mohammed, 1998; Rozhan, Rohayu and Rasidah, 2001). The data set is also limited but contains all the necessary variables to answer the research questions. This research does not engage MANOVA, which is a multivariate analysis method. It is limited to certain aspects of theology of religions, but is sufficient to answer the research questions.

1.10 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

The research has been divided into six chapters. Chapter one serves as a general introduction and provides a background to the study, with relation to understanding human dignity, religious participation and relational patterns of mutual social trust in the Nigerian context. It seeks to broadly survey the justification and rationale behind the research, based on the sociological and theological dimensions of the research. In this chapter, key questions are raised; the hypotheses, aims and objectives of study, as well as limitations are stated. The methodology is also described, through which the research was carried out.

Chapter two explores a broad thematic historical survey of the literature, in order to question established boundaries, legitimacies and identities. Also, to show how Islam and Christianity penetrated Nigeria and the role of colonialism in the contemporary dynamics of interactions between Christians and Muslims. The nation state of Nigeria is presented and discussed, based on the people, composition and history of relations between Muslims and Christians. The constitutional framework is discussed as it had been understood in the past and as it affects contemporary relations. With regards to this aspect, the chapter discusses interfaith interactions among Christians and Muslims and the way forward. Attention is given to discussing and understanding dialogue and traditions, followed by several strategies and methods utilized in the past, as well as an introduction to the ethical practical bridge by Knitter.

Chapter three includes an extended literature review, in which a critical theory paradigm in the ecumenical studies and engagement proposed by Bosch is discussed. Further discussions focus on how mutual social trust impacts on society, and is considered in a manner that moves from superficial patterns to deeper practical realities. This chapter attempts to make use of an alternate paradigm to understand the problem, and move towards orthopraxis. An argument is created in this chapter that interreligious studies will require a paradigm shift in methodology from qualitative to quantitative, and better still, to triangulations or mixed methods of research. The deductive approach of enquiry has been adopted in this section of research as hypotheses are derived from theories and models. The meaning of mutual social trust is clarified through a method that queries ideological and societal assumptions from a body of generalized existing knowledge to dealing with a specific context between Christians and Muslims in an exploratory manner. Also, it is used to determine whether religious participation actually fosters social mutual trust in the Nigerian situation. Theologies of religions from a religious and sociological perspective are discussed in this chapter. Attention is given to how several theologies of religions either constitute challenges or create opportunities of building mutual social trust. Other issues discussed range from the concept of mutual social trust as an individual property depended on one's view of life or well-being as proposed by Uslaner, which does not depend on the reciprocity of the other. Against trust as a social system proposed by Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman and Robert Putnam, depended on the reciprocity of the other. The concept of religion, its relational patterns and how it interacts with human dignity across Christianity and Islam were also discussed. Christian and Muslim relations in the ethical-practical bridge of the mutuality model of Knitter, and how it can be used as a framework for Christianity and Islam dialoguing with one another were engaged. The concept of well-being and how it may impact on social mutual trust as an outcome of religion and the possibility of having a positive impact on the promotion of human dignity, were also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter four presents and interprets data to ascertain the relationship that exists between religious participation and mutual social trust, if any. The idea is to present similar research outputs, side-by-side, with how the data set used in this research has been investigated, in order to address the research questions, hypotheses and objectives; as well as to show areas of agreement and discrepancies in the findings of this research, when compared to other studies. The chapter explores whether religious participation of Christians and Muslims in Nigeria is fostering mutual social trust. If they do, what are the reasons? Which variable is responsible for the production of change in another? In the same vein, if they do not, why? Which variable is responsible for the production of change in another? All these questions were examined keeping in mind the generalized knowledge of the concept of mutual social trust and how

the reality on the ground can be understood and engaged in order to contribute the research's quota to the field of comparative theology of religions.

Chapter five presents similar research outputs on well-being and how it impacts on mutual social trust and the research objectives to do with income and educational qualification, side-by-side with those from the data set used in this research. This was done to show areas of agreement and discrepancies when compared to other studies. Income and education have direct implications on one's view of life or the meaning attached to life, as they provide the necessary exposure that could impact trust relations.

Chapter six summarizes the research findings, as well as gives recommendations and suggestions. It is also pointed out that the relationship between people, who participate in lived religions, is a form of a social group who meet in worship, and their relationship with the divine should reach out to people from other religions. There should be an expectation of participants of worship in all lived religions to promote interaction across religious borders. The rising tension between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria indicates that mutual social trust leading to voluntary community services among religious others is not happening. Mutual social trust is only fostered at a need to coexist basis, and not what is entrenched in the kind of religious participation happening. Some concluding remarks are also drawn at the end of the chapter.

CHAPTER 2: CHRISTIAN – MUSLIM ENCOUNTERS IN NIGERIA

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is a systematic study of Christian-Muslim relations and encounters in Africa, particularly in Nigeria, showing how Islam and Christianity penetrated Nigeria and the role of colonialism in the contemporary dynamics of interactions between Christians and Muslims. Historically related narratives are selected and studied in this research in order to look at an event in the past, so as to shed some light on contemporary issues (Hofstee, 2006:125). Basically, a broad thematic historical survey of literature is explored in this section of the research to question established boundaries, legitimacies and identities (Rupke, 2001:285).

Selective discussions on issues in religion and human dignity are explicated to closely examine the content of the preserved periscopes. This is done in order to discover the non-obvious meaning, as it reveals patterns associated with mutual social trust, which directly and indirectly affects the kind of relationship that exists between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria (Hofstee, 2006:124). Elo & Kyngas (2007) argues that it may be used for either a quantitative or qualitative study, and in this case, a triangulation. They suggest that it helps the researcher to test theoretical issues and patterns that will aid in the understanding of data as it focuses on “meanings, intentions, consequences and context” (Elo & Kyngas, 2007:107-109).

A selective discourse is used, especially when looking at constitutional issues and how they impact on interactions. The meaning of words will be studied within the constitutional framework and an analysis of language used will be discussed “beyond the sentence” (Mouton, 2001:168). Discourse in this study examines how identities, relationships, beliefs and knowledge systems are constructed in language use, combining textual interpretation informed by social theory with linguistic analysis. It also focuses on ideology in discussion, that is, the reproduction and transformation of relations of domination (Hjelm, 2011:134) and participant’s observation on Christian-Muslim encounter’s in Nigeria.

The next section in the study highlights the approach explored in this section of the research, and Nigeria is presented as a nation state. In the following section, the focus is on the composition, religious spread, and Christian-Muslim relations and encounters in Nigeria, with direct implication on the dynamics of trust. An understanding of a secular state is also introduced; primarily how it has been understood in the

past and how this affects contemporary politics in Nigeria. This is followed by a discussion on freedom of religion; and how it affects the Christian-Muslim relations in the Nigerian situation. A re-assessment of religion and how it affects construction of identity in Nigeria, which also influences religious crisis and conflicts, is discussed next. This is followed by interfaith interactions amongst Christians and Muslims, and the way forward. In this section, an overview of dialogue and traditions is offered, followed by several strategies and methods that have been utilized in the past, and an introduction to the ethical practical bridge by Knitter (2002), which will be discussed in detail in Chapters 3, and reiterated in Chapters 4 and 5.

2.2 NIGERIA

Nigeria is a West African country; noted to be the most populous African nation with possibly the highest Christian and Muslim population on the continent. It is reported that there are more than 80 million Christians in Nigeria, constituting about half of the total population. It has been revealed that there are seemingly more Christians in Nigeria, than in any traditional Christian country in Western Europe.⁶ There are suggestive views through research accounts that Nigeria's Christian population is nearly the same size as the total population of Germany. Nigeria's Muslim population is nearly equal to the Christian population. According to the Pew Research Centre's 2011 analysis of the global Muslim population, it is estimated that there were about 76 million Muslims in Nigeria in 2010.⁷ Meanwhile, there has been contention with the religious statistics in Nigeria; consequently, it is significant to state that this is always a source of contention in terms of people's involvement in governance or the sharing of resources, with regards to the various geo-political zones in the country.

2.3 RELIGIOUS SPREAD AND COMPOSITION IN NIGERIA

The proportion of Muslims and Christians in Nigeria is a politically sensitive issue. The national census has not included questions about religious affiliation, since 1963.⁸ In 1953, reports have it that 21.4% of

⁶ Pew Research Centre's Forum on Religion & Public Life, used for the purpose of their report, traditional Christian Western Europe includes the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

⁷ Pew Research Centre's Forum on Religion & Public Life, *The Future of the Global Muslim Population: Projections for 2010-2030, 2011*, <http://pewforum.org/The-Future-of-the-Global-Muslim-Population.aspx>

⁸ Pew Research Centre's Forum on Religion & Public Life, *Spirit and Power: A 10-Country Survey of Pentecostals, 2006*, <http://pewforum.org/Christian/Evangelical-Protestant-Churches/Spirit-and-Power.aspx>.

Nigeria's population was Christian, 45.3% was Muslim, and 33.3% belonged to other religions, including African traditional religions. Meanwhile, by 1963, the percentage of the population that belonged to other religions had declined by 15 percent, nearly matching the 13.1 percent increase for Christians. During this same period, the percentage of Muslims increased by less than 2 points.⁹ However, there has been growth in the Christian population to about half of the total population. The Christian population in Nigeria is diverse, and includes nearly 60 million Protestants, 20 million Catholics, and more than 750,000 other Christians. All of these groups have grown in Nigeria since the 1970s, and since then, the Pentecostal churches have experienced a dramatic growth (Anderson, 2004:156-161). Several narratives from the Pentecostal churches, which will be discussed later in these sections, have added to the gulf between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria.

Nigeria is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious space in which every issue is raised along political, ethnic and religious lines (Smyth and Robinson, 2001). The amalgamation of the country in 1914, has been considered by some sections of Nigeria as a "curse rather than a blessing" because of the diversity of ethnic divisions and groups. Others are of the opinion that this is a marriage that is unequally yoked. These complexities concerning groups of people and religions have earned Nigeria the reputation as being one of the most diverse and not united states (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005). However, one may wonder if the diversity based on ethnicity is the challenge facing the nation or is it diversity on the religious side. The facts lead to the conclusion that could be a mixture of the two dynamics, which raises a complex blend, considering the large population involved.

Several reasons may be advanced for these divisions, but religion lies at the heart of the matter. This is evident when issues such as Sharia law is revisited. The expanded implementation of personal to criminal aspects in the 12 northern states was not welcomed by the Christian community living in the southern part (Suberu, 2001:2005). Such reactions to the Sharia law have always existed, thus, revealing the absence of mutual social trust, especially among the Christian and Muslim population groups. They seem to read between the lines of policies and agenda's with religious undertones.

2.4 CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM RELATIONS AND ENCOUNTERS IN NIGERIA

2.4.1 Christian-Muslim relations in Africa and the spread of Islam to Nigeria

⁹ Pew Research Centre's Forum on Religion & Public Life, *Spirit and Power: A 10-Country Survey of Pentecostals*, 2006, page 85, <http://pewforum.org/Christian/Evangelical-Protestant-Churches/Spirit-and-Power.aspx>.

In this section, a broad survey of Christian-Muslim relations in Africa and how tension has been building over the long history of relationships between two rival missionary nations is discussed. There have been several narratives on Muslim-Christian encounters in Africa, which could be explained as the mixture of the good and bad moments in the history of the people. Some of the encounters without doubt were peaceful and uneventful, while others present very challenging moments. This could be the reason Onwubiko describes the situation saying "... tolerance... was once traditional in Africa" (1994:117) or as "the innate African spirituality that focuses on existential matters and has thus become the bedrock of African religiosity, which is live and let live with our religious diversities in harmony" (Mbillah, 2004:1-14).

Based on how Africans have viewed Christian-Muslim encounters, one could glean that tolerance was the norm and conflict was abnormal. One could relate this to the fact that there is bias in how one constructs history. There may be several narratives of the same event with varying objectives or target audiences. Sometimes, this may not be a totally wrong assessment but another perspective of looking at the same issue. Soares completely disagrees with the above narrative. He is of the opinion that

... Many studies, in particular those in theology and missiology, employ a decidedly outmoded social model that assumes that the "normal" state of affairs is one of peaceful coexistence and mutual tolerance between Muslims and Christians. While such attempts to understand and possibly promote religious "tolerance" are perfectly understandable in a world where conflict between members of different religious communities seem increasingly prevalent, interactions between Muslims and Christians, in Africa and elsewhere, cannot be understood as simply co-existing at a point on a one-dimensional continuum that runs from coexistence to conflict (Soares, 2006: 1-16).

It has always been a mixture of peaceful co-existence and conflicts as far as the records show. It may not be appropriate for any historian, despite his audience, to portray a one-sided narrative, which could be misleading and have more consequences than anticipated. The facts clearly show that Christians and Muslims in Africa have reacted and interacted differently on different occasions; one could not possibly say that it was wholly peaceful or wholly conflicted. Their relationship has always been a complex one, as highlighted by Soares. This is important because any one who desires to engage in this context must have this understanding or else fail before even starting. The Northern part of Africa had Christians in positions of leadership when Islam was just beginning. If the Christian leaders were not tolerant, Islam would not have entered this section of Africa at the time that it did.

Sometimes the tendency to glance through history without re-examination in the light of contemporary discourses could lead to a haphazard assessment of situations. The churches in North Africa were almost wiped out from the region through the Umayyad dynasty's empire coverage, which extended to the north of Africa. Only the Coptic Church was able to withstand the strategies of the gradual conversion of North Africa to Islam (Sanneh, 1983:15-17).

The rise of Islam and the opening of the trans-Saharan trade routes contributed to the rapid spread of Islam. The Berbers who had ruled North Africa before the Arabs came and the subsequent division caused by this encounter embraced Islam. This development further contributed to the expansion of Islam in sub-Saharan Africa (Clarke, 1983:10). At the period the Arabs also converted kings of Gao (985, AD) of Tekrur (1040, AD) and of ancient Ghana and Mali to Islam (Trimingham, 1992:28). By late 14th or the early 15th century, there were scattered settlements of Muslims in West Africa, as far as the tip of the tropical rainforest (Kenny, 2000:88-102), including Kanem-Bornu. Initially, this area was not conquered but religion was introduced by traders and it later emerged as the religion of the elites, business magnates, the aristocrats and ruling class (Ryan, 2006:189).

At this juncture, it is paramount to note that by the time the Portuguese began exploring the West Coast of Africa, Islam was already well established as the religion of the aristocrats and rulers in the Sahel Savannah. This was due to Islam's ability to absorb cultures and its level of communal living which Africans were used to. Recounting his experience around the Senegambia in 1456 and 1458, Diogo Gomes described an event involving an advisor (Muslim) of Niumi Musa according to Gamble (1999), a ruler in the same region, which is probably one of the earliest documented narratives of a Christian-Muslim encounter in sub-Saharan Africa. He said:

A certain bishop of their church was there, a native of Mali, who asked me about the God of the Christians, and I answered him according to the intelligence God had given me. I finally questioned him respecting Muhammad, in whom they believe. What I said pleased his lordship the king so much that he ordered the bishop within three days to leave his kingdom (Gamble and Haar, 1999: 263).

Examining the above excerpt, one can only contemplate what Gomez could have said about Islam that pleased the advisor to such an extent that a Christian Bishop and his kinsman were perceived as an immediate enemy and ordered to leave the area of his birth within three days, on the basis of differences in religious beliefs. It is possible that Gomes, the Portuguese explorer, sought to gain acceptance at all costs. To profess to a faith he hardly believed in may just have been a ploy to connect with a ruler of the

Senegambia. Further, more than intended, the words spoken led to the recording of an event, which is still referred to when the subject of Muslim-Christian encounters or interactions are raised. Juxtaposing the response from the Muslim advisor, one may conclude that the relation between the Christian Bishop and the Muslim ruling class was strained before the entrance of the explorer. It is possible the chief himself was not a Muslim, but his advisor being a Muslim now gets a “neutral source” in his thinking to justify why a kinsman should be sent out of his fatherland on the basis of religious differences.

Islam and Christianity are both missionary religions with the quest of assembling followership. The devotees of the African traditional religion were the first targets; followed by people whose faiths or religions were on precarious grounds. Thus, Islam and Christianity were very much minority religions in West Africa from the 15th to the middle of the 18th centuries. On the one hand, the believers of the African traditional religion, who were not as missionary minded, were gradually being converted to either Islam or Christianity. On the other hand, considering the kind of Islam and Christianity being practiced in the same region in contemporary times, one may safely say that an assimilation of the African traditional religion took place, and not a win of the one over the other. Traces of manifestations could be seen in Sufi practices and some Pentecostal practices, and the evolving of African Independent churches. The African traditional religious rulers were in the majority and were tolerant. This could be the reason why the Christian-Muslim encounter during this time was peaceful or tolerant. The African traditional rulers served as umpires in charge of their localities; hosting two new missionary religions conducting religious business and interacting so that they would not lose favour with their hosts. The sub-region interfaith relationships could be regarded as tolerant even though there may have been a means of survival in order to gain more following and acceptance (Fredricks, 2003:123-124).

The introduction of the Jihads (Holy war) from the late 18th century through to the early 20th century helped to increase the spread, influence and fame of Islam in the West African sub-region. One of the discourses and narratives or agenda was to resist colonialism, which was seen as a Christian enterprise (Fredricks, 2003:130-153). The increase in the population of Muslims in West Africa during the 19th and 20th centuries, as well as colonial expansion coinciding with Christian missionary movements seen as envoys of the colonial master, began to visualize themselves as rivals in the region. Contemporary religious tensions especially in Nigeria could be a result of growth on the part of Islam and Christianity with different narratives and interpretations of colonial or Western interventionism (Voll, 2006:28-29). It is worthy of mentioning that in the Nigerian context, people in the South West had contact with Malian traders and were converted to Islam before the Jihad movement. The middle belt also had large numbers

of converts to Islam throughout the post-colonial period (Peel, 1996:610). In Nigeria, Christianity is younger than Islam as its Christian missionary activities only came to full swing after the abolition of the slave trade. Through Western education, Christianity was able to make major breakthroughs even with the Hausa (Maguzawas) who converted to Christianity though the influence of Islam in their area was great (Kastfelt, 2003).

Blaming colonialism may not be implausible but the question would remain, “What for?” The Nigerian example could help shed more light and provide insight into the possible grievances of unequal treatment that could be misinterpreted by both Muslims and Christians. When the colonialists came to the northern part of Nigeria, they met some form of administrative organization that was working through the leadership of the Sultanate to the emirs and village heads. The Arabic language was a means of literacy; the rulers were in charge of their domains. All the colonialists needed to do was work with these rulers to control the ‘conquered’ terrain, which was not the case in other parts of the country. This was a way of reducing the cost of administration with less manpower, which was in short supply to tackle a vast region with a weather condition which was challenging to complicate matters which increased the hindrance to evangelize to the Muslim areas, thus the ‘core’ north became an ‘out of bounds’ area for Christian missionary activity. This led to an uneven development, especially in the area of education at independence (Rasmussen, 1993:10). This factor is raised and mentioned time and time again with regards to development, ethnic and religious gaps created by British colonialism in Nigeria.

2.4.2 Christian – Muslim relations and issues of contention in contemporary Nigeria

This is followed by a cross section of the contemporary era, to see how conflict emerges because of issues of secularism, constitution and other unaddressed perceived grievances by Muslims and Christians. The visible violence is a result of a long history of strained relationships. The recent uprisings referred to as the Boko Haram attacks in the media¹⁰ are not isolated cases when the history of mutual suspicion between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria are considered. Qur’anic schools in Nigeria have been neglected in the past (almajiris), who have at times in the past formed violent resistance groups, like the 1980 Maitatsine (Lubeck, 1985). Education is now a religiously contested space, as removing the state control of former Christian or missionary schools are undermining the push by the northern states to control the Muslim educational sector¹¹. The foregoing is necessitated because there is a lack of trust with regards to the intentions of teachers, in that schools are instituted to win Muslim children over to

¹⁰ The Nation, 8 August 2009.

¹¹ Daily Triumph, 16 November 2008.

Christianity (Ahmad, 2005:24). Similarly, Boer reports on escalating assassinations, acts of terrorism, religious violence and other forms of disturbances in Nigeria (Boer, 2003:93-97). Other sources of human right groups have estimated that about 10,000 people have been killed in religious clashes between 2002 and 2005 (Benzow, 2005).

One of the areas of contest and a basis for Christian-Muslim conflict is the issue of the Nigerian constitution, which possesses some level of ambiguity and leaves a wide margin of undefined interpretations.

We the people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

Having firmly and solemnly resolve, to live in unity and harmony as one indivisible and indissoluble sovereign nation under God, dedicated to the promotion of inter-African solidarity, world peace, international co-operation and understanding

And to provide for a Constitution for the purpose of promoting the good government and welfare of all persons in our country, on the principles of freedom, equality and justice, and for the purpose of consolidating the unity of our people

Do hereby make, enact and give to ourselves the following Constitution (Opening statement of Nigerian constitution after table of contents).

The Constitution clearly defines Nigeria as a sovereign nation under God, which could have several interpretations. What does ‘a sovereign nation’ imply? When placed under God, do the implications change? One of the strong contentions is that Christianity has not claimed to have laws for the faithful, separate from the laws of the land. In other words, there is no “Christian laws,” as over the years there has been a separation of church and state. Adding to the confusion is the way Christian leaders over the years have referred to Nigeria as a secular state, not putting into perspective how it would be interpreted by the Muslim community. The Muslim community now insists that since there is no provision for a code of conduct in Christianity and that the common law has catered for this group, they therefore want to be guided by Sharia, which is the law of Allah. Section 10 of the 1999 Constitution states that the Government of the federation of the state shall not adopt any religion as state religion¹².

Christians have interpreted this to mean that Nigeria is a secular state, which means a nation state without God. The Muslim community insists that this does not define them. It is important to see how secular

¹² T. Ademolekun, 2013, ‘A Historical Perspective in the Christian-Muslim Relations in Nigeria since 1914’, *Journal of Arts and Humanities (JAH)*, Volume 2(5), 61-62.

states have been viewed in order to appreciate the Muslim citizens' concern. The subject of secularism has always been a controversial one, but it also makes an interesting discussion. Over the ages people have used this word or concept to describe a certain space or ideal of life and how people are expected to live together or respond to religion and state. A cultural dictionary states that: "Secular is the opposite of sacred. Secularization refers to the declining influence of religion and religious values within a given culture" (The New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy, 2005).

The above definition of the word 'secular,' may seem to be used lightly when compared to the other definition "living in the world, not belonging to a religious order and also belonging to the state" (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2010). The disparity of thought, concept and ideas makes the understanding of 'secular state' unclear. People come to the table without a clear definition of terms and end up in conflict or misunderstandings. Berger (1969) suggests, "For most purposes it can be defined quite simply as a process in which religion diminishes in importance both in society and in the consciousness of individuals. ... put simply, the idea has been that the relation between modernity and religion is inverse – the more of the former, the less of the latter" (Berger, 1969:291). This sheds light on how secularism is being viewed across various spectrums. If scholarly opinions are so well spread, what do you think the everyday opinion would look like?

The picture of the Nigerian situation may not be clear at first, but another look at the disparity of how the secular state is viewed may begin to shed some light on how issues can be muddled up, ending in confusion. Another dimension is the fact that during the Christendom era, Christianity tried to marry religion and state, but this did not work out well. From the beginning, Islam is a marriage of religion and state. According to Sanneh (1997), "Islam is both religion and state". Muslims in Africa have developed a high level of confidence on the need for Islamic rule, based on Islamic sources such as the Quran, Hadith and Qiya, and a wealth of tradition of Muslim rule in pre-colonial Africa. The Christians however, do not have any political experiences to rely upon, placing themselves on the defensive. This is a typical scenario in the Nigerian context (Sanneh, 1997:1).

All those who have fully adopted the sovereignty of the state have also dissolved the separation of the church and state by awarding authority to the state in religious matters, "Thus has the versatile state stumbled on its own flexible contradiction" (Sanneh, 1997:187). The theory of sovereignty "is unlimited and illimitable" (Barker, 1951:60). This statement is backed by Padua's expression, which "asserted the primacy of law-making over all other expressions of state power. He insisted on the "indivisibility of ultimate legislative authority" (Ewart, 1974:30). In practice, the state does not show itself to be neutral, as

it is absolute in terms of power to organize life and command the obedience of men and women but to be “the value centre,” as Sanneh quotes Neibuhr (1960):. He affirms that the state becomes “the shadow of God on earth” followed by a third step when the state makes obligation a matter exclusively of its control” (Sanneh, 1997:188). Also, section 38(1) of the Nigerian constitution states that: “Every person shall be entitled to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom (either alone or in community with others and in public or in private) to manifest and propagate its religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance”. If this is literally upheld, the Muslims will not want to be deprived of such a right entrenched in the constitution.

During the Berlin conference in 1885, where there was the scramble and partition for Africa amongst colonial powers, one of the basic philosophies stipulated was freedom of religion and neutrality of the state in religious affairs. This was the adopted framework on how to rule the dark continent of Africa (Holger, 1984:25). However, at the Berlin Congress the German chancellor, Prince Otto von Bismarck, repositioned his original stand on new colonial powers “favouring and aiding all religions” when Turkey, a Muslim state and a signatory to the convention, requested that Muslim missionaries be included in that policy which was never granted (Hansen, 1984:26). This sounds very interesting that policies could change in the dynamics of who is benefiting from the same policies. As insignificant as this may sound, it has contributed to the confusion in the Nigerian context as the Muslims also have such narratives to draw from. The way Christianity is viewed as an extension of colonial powers may not be completely out of place even if in praxis the situation is not what it looks like.

According to Sanneh (1997), the issue of religious freedom had been interpreted in terms of the right of institutional mission agencies and churches to establish themselves rather than freedom of religion. As an individual matter, without state involvement, in Muslim areas the state would act as a protector. He describes that we had shades of territoriality surviving in the policy of institutional religious spheres of influence, which had a great implication on administrative practice. He also asserts, “The state would be neutral or indifferent in so far as the content of religious belief is concerned, but when it came to acts and deeds, it would be active to participate in the work or religious agencies, whether such a state interest restricted or helped religious agencies” (Sanneh, 1997:185).

Section 275(1) of the Constitution states: “There shall be for any State that requires it a Sharia Court of Appeal for that State”. And section 260(1) states: “There shall be a Sharia Court of Appeal of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja”. This clearly shows that a wide gap exists and there are so many loose ends

within the constitutional requirements, leaving room for conflicts. There is a form of religious representation at the federal level which points to the fact that Nigeria is a multi-religious country (Paden, 2005:81) and may be a reason for the wide support of the constitution of Shari'a laws (Afrobarometer, 2009: 6). Despite the fact that a lot of Christians do not support the Shari'a laws, they are not totally against its moral values (Ludwig, 2008:622-624). Ludwig suggests that several northern states have sponsored pilgrimages to Jerusalem in order to reduce opposition to Shari'a laws (Ludwig, 2008:617).

2.5 RELIGION AND IDENTITY IN NIGERIA

According to Marshall (2005:6), "Religion plays a very critical role in social life in Nigeria".. He further states, "Religion has marked importance for Africa across many dimensions...what we can find underscore the basic messages of high importance, major tectonic shifts, and complex patterns" (Marshall, 2005:1-2). However, Ellis and Tar Haar (2004) believe that religion is sometimes used as a tool for manipulation in poor societies in Africa. They are of the opinion that the high and powerful hide under the guise of the supernatural in order to justify and reinforce their power of control on the weak (Ellis and Ter Haar, 2004:2). They further assert, "It is largely through religious ideas that Africans think about the world today...Religious ideas provide them with a means of becoming social and political actors" (Ellis and Tar Haar, 2004:2).

The issue of identifying with various ethnic groups and religions is very strong in Nigeria. This can be viewed from an individual point of view or collectively, as a community. There is a high sense of belonging and an affinity that is so strong; constantly revealing itself in a variety of issues (Erickson, 1968). When social actors internalize identity, they usually gain their meaning from the process (Castells, 2004). A self-sustaining primary identity is organized around meaning that is derived from the process (Lasch, 1980). Dominant societal institutions tend to introduce legitimization of identity in order to rationalize their domination over social actors (Sennett, 1980; Anderson, 1983). One can see clearly that identities have aided the absence of mutual social trust in the Nigerian situation. Historically, identity has raised visible borders that it may be challenging to view situations objectively, without taking sides. In most instances, it is always "us" and "them", thus being "Muslims" versus "Christians". This has spread like cancer amongst almost every socio-political issue to be looked at through the lens of religion. The role and importance of religion cannot be over emphasized in the Nigerian context (Enwerem, 1995). There is a strong sense of religious identity in Nigeria (Paden, 2008). Religion is the strongest form of identity for most Nigerians. According to the Pew Research Centre's Forum survey, most Nigerians

would identify themselves with their religion before mentioning their ethnic group. According to Lewis and Bratton (2000), Christian and Muslim identities are at the centre of religious differentiation and conflict. In their view, the Muslim community is more articulate than the Christian community (Lewis and Bratton, 2000; Lewis, 2007).

At the crux of this religious identity is the absence of a mutual social trust that each group feels towards one another. According to the Pew Forum Survey, most of the Christians in Nigeria (62%) responded that they trust people from other religions only a little, or not at all. Amongst the Muslim community, (61%) said they trust people of other religions a little or not at all (Ruby and Shah, 2007). These statistics are troubling, but special attention will be given to this in the fifth chapter of this thesis. These findings highlight the absence of a very important subject, that of ‘mutual social trust’. How can we understand each other and live in peace and harmony, when such a very important element of relationship building is missing? This is one of the few researches that have highlighted the subject of trust being almost absent in the Nigerian context. Other researchers have focused on vital secondary issues, like a hidden political agenda, segregation or ethnicity; but the absence of trust is at the origin of all other issues.

2.6 RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS AND CRISIS IN NIGERIA

In the late 1960’s and early 1970’s, there was a period when the danger or fear of religious crisis was not present in the Nigerian context. According to the words of Tai Solarin¹³, “If anybody had told me 20 years ago that religion would become an issue in Nigeria, I would have said nonsense! Muslims and Christians have lived together for years: husbands being Christians, wives being Muslims or the other way round; brothers... one Muslim the other Christian” (Alegbe, 1990:31). This was the period between May 1967 and January 1970; when the nation was emerging from the civil war. The boundaries of trust were shattered, and all forms of togetherness and tolerance were obliterated. A new dawn of words emerged amongst Christians and Muslim Nigerians, but these did not correlate with their actions. This led to “bans and prohibitions with regard to church and school attendance, threatening and demonstrations, arrests, binding and placing in stocks, detention, beating and flogging, fines and imprisonment, sequestration, confiscation and destruction of property, torture, threatened and attempted execution and lastly in a few cases, and martyrdom” (Elaigwu, 1986:140-152). Christianity and Islam in Nigeria became strange bedfellows, lacking in mutual social trust.

¹³ Alegbe is reiterating what was said by Taisolarin without quoting his source.

An annual report by Tell Magazine and other sources on the human rights ¹⁴situation, recounts the Sharia riots that took place in Kaduna on 21 February 2000. On the 28th of same month, the religious riots in Abain Abia State were seen as a retaliation from the Kaduna mayhem. On the 28th of March 2000, there were religious riots in Damboa, Borno State. On the 23rd of May, there were renewed religious riots in Kaduna State. By April 13 2001, a religious riot in Kano State was followed by another religious clash in Jos, Plateau State on the 7th of September 2001. On the 16th and 18th of September 2001, religious riots broke out in Kano and Benue States, respectively. By the 21st of November 2002, religious riots had broken out in Kaduna state and Abuja. Further studies link the cause of the violence to the absence of mutual social trust, misuse of the media to communicate what was happening, and associations of happenings linked to other reasons that maybe responsible for religious violence.

Salawu (2010) defines 'ethno-religious conflict' as "a situation in which the relationship between members of one ethnic or religious group and another of such group in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society is characterized by lack of cordiality, mutual suspicion and fear, and a tendency towards violent confrontation" (Salawu, 2010:346). Along same vein, Jega (2002) views ethno-religious conflicts as "evils that are always around us and tend to always stretch the bounds of unity to a potentially snapping point" (Jega, 2002:36). According to Hacket (1999a), there has been a history of clashes between students, parents, teachers, and government officials from missionary and colonial times, up until the present day (Hacket, 1999a). However, the growing mistrust amongst Christians and Muslims is connected to the role of the media. In the words of Mathew Hassan Kukah, "The media has helped in fanning and sustaining the embers of bigotry" (Kukah 1993:100). Careful consideration of statements and comments by the media could bring about mistrust among the religious groups. This may result in people from different faiths formulating inaccurate conclusions that were not the original messages intended by the social actors (Morley and Kevin, 1995; Thompson, 1994). Some of these issues may lead to high levels of tension and the probability of reduced tolerance towards the 'religious other,' when considered along with the historical background of mistrust, and fear of domination by both Muslims and Christians (Williams and Falola, 1995). Clarke and Linden (1984) opines that analyses of complex scenarios such as these, when they interplay with political, economic and ethnic factors, get labeled as 'religious conflict' in the Nigerian situation (Clarke and Linden, 1984:42). Situations such as these may easily be manipulated by selfish politicians, as suggested by Adamu (1994:47), Ibrahim (1989) and Usman (1987).

¹⁴ 2000 Annual report on the Human Rights Situation in Nigeria, Tell Magazine, September 24, 2001; The Tribune September 19, 2001; and The Punch, November 22, 2002.

It would seem as if the role of the media could be neglected. However, another factor comes into play in the picture of both Muslim and Christian faithful followings, as is painted by the media (Hackett 1998; Morley and Kevin, 1995). In the nineteenth century, Nigeria had a history of Jihad movements that promoted intolerance and Islamic dominance (An-Na'im, 1997:83; Ischei, 1983:202f). Also, in the first republic, northern Muslim leaders had introduced a 'One North, One Islam' policy (Ohadike, 1992:104). The complex context of the Nigerian situation is not because of one single event, but as a result of several interwoven events. Ambassador Jolly Tank Yusuf, a Christian leader who believes there is a plan for the people to Islamize Nigeria, said:

Christians have been denied access to electronic media in 16 Northern states, while Islam monopolizes 24 hours for its broadcast in the same area. Agents of the devil compound the misery by using the media to heap insults on Christians. Every hour the Muslims broadcast provocative statements about Christianity. It means nothing, they proclaim, that people attend church on Sunday only to dance and listen to songs! Authorities merely wink (Yusuf, 1995:84).

Religion can be used to bring people together and to cause division among people. Sometimes one can see the bonding of people in social harmony and at other times it is the reason for violence (Maregere, 2011:17-23), especially when there is mistrust among the religious other. Braybrooke opines that we need to develop cordial relationships above tolerance or attempting to understand one another, to a conviction that each faith comes to the table with a unique and precious contribution that the world can partake and benefit from (Baybrooke, 2005:215). Religious intolerance has been defined as "hostility towards other religions, as well as the inability of religious adherents to harmonize between the theories and the practical aspect of religion" (Balogun, 1988:166). Baird and Resenbaum (1999) view intolerance as absolute bigotry, with a rigid and inflexible devotion to ones opinions, even when others may have a separate view. Which sometimes may not be pleasant, or hurts, or is harmful to others (Baird and Rosenbaum, 1999). However, religious intolerance has been identified as "the major source of religious conflict and violence in all societies as long as the history of mankind, and permeating all forms of human civilizations, with attendant destructive tendencies" (Gofwen, 2004:50).

2.7 INTERFAITH INTERACTIONS AMONG MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS: THE WAY FORWARD

Several scholars had proposed several routes or alternative causes of action. Mbillah said, "...accepting our differences and living with such differences in harmony" may be a positive way of interacting

between Christians and Muslims (Mbillah, 2004:7-8). Several approaches have been used over the years in the area of interfaith encounters, some of which will be revised in this section. However, a brief overview of the dialogue and traditions of Christian-Muslim relations is appropriate here, to reinforce the need for an alternative way forward on the history that has been negatively affected in the past. This section of the research therefore outlines the historical narratives on the dialogues and traditions. When we look at informing encounters between the religious other, there are platforms for dialogue, cooperation and interrelationships that have not been handled maturely over the years. When one stands back and takes another look at the kind of Christianity that Mohammed and the first generation of Muslims met, one would see that it was very different from the kind of Christianity we have today (Watt, 1991:1). The Christians they encountered were the “Great Church”, which was later subdivided into several parts consisting of the present-day Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and the protestant Churches. There were also expelled groups, like the Monophysites, Jacobites, Copts and Nestorians, who occupied the predominantly Muslim lands (Watt, 1991:1). The Church was associated with the ruling groups of the Byzantine or Eastern Roman Empire, which was Greek.

Considering their historical background, the Monophysites and Nestorians were both heretic groups abolished. The Muslims could not tell the difference with the larger Church. The Arab Christians were also at an embryonic stage, and at this point, did not have the New Testament translated in Arabic. They had a few translations in their monasteries, of which the quality of portions could not be ascertained (Watt, 1991:6). If any meaningful form of ‘social mutual trust’ must ensue, Christians must be humble enough to admit the weaknesses of the Christianity of that period compared to Islam, for the encounter to be meaningful (Watt, 1991:7). In the complex mix was the Greek theology defined by the ecumenical councils, which had become too abstract and was completely beyond the grasp of the ordinary Christian. Only religious intellectuals enjoyed the compositions, language and structure of doctrinal statements. Also these groups, who were driven from the Church, had every excuse to convert to Islam (Watt, 1991:7).

The failures experienced in the Christian – Muslim encounters could be said to have originated from the failure of Christians. In this regard, one could argue that if in that era of the Monophysites and Nestorians, Christian – Muslim encounters were strained, would it not be even more so today with the increasing tension of power and political quests for control, as we have in the Nigerian situation? The substantiation lies in the insincerity of purpose as the matter is even more complicated, even with the Church being unable to manage diversity, like the ecumenical council in the past. Globalization, technology and human rights have provided more opportunities for diversity without control. The ability of the law to register

religious groups has empowered several groups to spring up. Some of these groups, unfortunately, do not even follow basic tenets of the Christian faith. In the 21st century, Muslims observed with keenness all manners of obscene dressing and ‘immoral behaviour’ by the ‘church in Arabia’ in the form of corruption at leadership levels. With this ‘degeneration’ in the church in Arabia, could one not make any claim of holding on to spirituality in the gathering of the people of God? It is unlikely, as such an attempt will be met with high levels of resistance. Consequently, the impressions left on Islam and other religions by Christianity, thus, may be established in Kenny’s views on Christian-Muslim relations, submitted by Muhammed Talbi:

The two super powers of the times, the empires of Byzantium and Ctesiphon, were striving to impose their supremacy over the other existing nations. Nobody thought it wrong to expand the empire by force. You either had to persecute the others or suffer persecution yourself. We have since learned too that all wars are just or can be justified (Kenny, 1999:142).

Considering the way and manner in which Talbi expresses the reason for the Islamic agenda of the earliest era was for survival. This can be illustrated using a popular strategy in a contemporary game of basketball, where it is understood that the “best form of defence is attack”. In this context, it is a game of ‘survival of the fittest’. Therefore, one should not disregard the fact that different seasons had different philosophies of living and survival. In the 19th century, for example, it was a battle between the weak and the strong. Once a person was stronger, such determined how a number of resources, human, animal, material, etc., are distributed. In the 20th century, it was a battle between the rich and the poor. The rich dictated the pace. In the 21st century, which is now a knowledge driven society, it is a battle between those who know what they are doing and those who do not. Talbi further asserts that Islam was subject to the law of contingency. Whether Muslims liked it or not, they could not help but fit into their own period. “The train was already moving and they had to fit catch it”. This was the last resort, according to Talbi (cited in Kenny, 1999:143). Talbi proposes to Islam as cited in Kenny, 1999 the need for dialogue and to be like Christianity, who according to him has “unequal theological development ... Christian theology, according to him, has undue advantage by its confrontation with other intellectual systems” (Kenny, 1999:144). He ends his paper by proposing what he calls ‘preliminary conditions for dialogue,’ where Islam must avoid controversy, recognize that frontiers have changed, understand that conversions are no longer by argument, carrying out the duty of the apostolate, and acknowledge that plurality of ways of salvation is difficult to solve (Kenny, 1999:147-153).

Several approaches have been proposed and used in interfaith encounters between Christians and Muslims for over 1400 years. Bernnet (2008) describes two categories of approaches; ‘conciliatory’ and ‘confrontational’. In his view, “Whether Christian or Muslim conciliators share a more irenic or peaceful view of Christian Muslim relations, it is always a confrontationist, polemic, or antagonistic view” (Bernnet, 2008:9). This could be seen more as an attitude, or disposition of people who engage in interfaith encounters, which has helped set the pace for contemporary discourse. He characterizes these positions and the implication of the same strategies or ways of thinking as a dialogue or diatribe. The conciliator engages in dialogue, while the confrontationist engages in a diatribe. Confrontationists and conciliators usually operate with preconceptions that determine the way in which they view the other. The former believes that they already possess truth and that they possess this exclusively so that the other cannot have anything valuable to offer. They may also believe that they know all about the other’s beliefs before the encounter and considers them wrong (Bernnet, 2008:9). This kind of approach or way of thinking affects or influences the kind of space created for Christian-Muslim interfaith interactions.

When a conciliator approaches the other, their aim is to listen, to learn and to share. They assume that their religion is indeed true but not exclusively true; thus, other religions can also contain truth (Bernnet, 2008:10). This sounds like a compromising position, as many proposed approaches look seemingly defective in one way or another. A confrontationist will find it much harder to respect the opponent’s viewpoint. They aim to win an argument, not to agree or differ (Bernnet, 2008:12). This has characterized numerous interfaith interactions over the last 1400 years.

The Bible has been used as an agenda for dialogue or diatribe. In this kind of interfaith encounter, the Bible is used as the primary source of authority and forms the agenda for the Christian-Muslim relationship (Bernnet, 2008:14). Without doubt, anyone who engages in interfaith encounters will like to use his/her Holy book; and over the years, Christians have preferred to use the Bible to set the agenda for dialogue and interactions. Another strategy for Christian-Muslim interfaith encounters, is to use the Quran as a bridge. Islam accepts that followers of older religions did receive genuine revelation from God, yet insists that all previous revelations have been subsumed in the Quran. This is not different from the doctrine of fulfillment that was so popular among Christians, that Christianity is the fulfillment of the truth of other religions. So the Quran claims to be the completed truth of the pre-Islamic religions (Ali, 1987:124). Some Christian missiologists have also adopted the Quran as a point of entry into dialogue and encounter between Muslims and Christians. This has been widely criticized as a strategy that is widely used in Muslim countries of the world. It is important to state at this point that all possible

positions possess some form of weaknesses. It is also important to state that this is a human weakness that should be appreciated.

Farid Esack refers to both Muslim and Christian missionary activities as an extension of ‘scramble for Africa’. He asserts that both religions are more interested in spreading their religious groups at the expense of empowering Africans:

Muslims and Christians encounter each other on this continent over the remains of a carcass. (...) It is the rawness of Africa that motivates us, that age-old perception of African as ‘fertile territory’. (...) We, the ones who drive it, we never own Africa in the Sobukwean sense of the word, the way Robert Sobukwe uses it. We try to own it in the colonial sense of the word. (...) Our main concern in the midst of this is not for the potholes, not for the lives of people dying around us. In mission and *da’wah* often our main concern is a competition for converts. We live on a continent where millions are dying because of Aids or other poverty-engendered diseases, and yet our main concern is: How will my cap look like when I arrive at the scene of the accident so that I may possibly attract some of the people to my religion? (Esack, 2007:21-30).

It is easy to point out that the above statement may be an extreme position, but may not necessarily be out of place. How else can Christians and Muslims demonstrate that their motives are noble than to work together to have a better and less threatened earth? Just to point out that the ethical practical bridge proposed by Knitter, may not be out of place. Despite the fact that this will be revisited in detail in chapter 3 and in the analysis section of this research, it is appropriate to mention in order to echo from a distance the brighter side of this strategy and how it may foster social mutual trust. Trust is at the centre of conflicts between Christians and Muslims in Nigeria, and the ethical practical bridge could be the ‘magic wand’ or panacea, if used appropriately and consistently enough.

Habermas understanding of rationalization can be used to explain how the rapidly decaying relationship between Muslims and Christians are being constructed (cites by Dreyer, 2011:5). Dreyer (2011), drawing from this understanding, suggests “societies pass through collective learning processes in human discourses from one level to another. The patterns of rationalization can be reconstructed afterwards. Therefore the mechanism of learning sets societal developments in motion” (Dreyer, 2011:5). He argues for the public sphere, which he calls the “reasoned communicative exchanges,” where opinions are exchanged, formed and reinforced (Dreyer, 2011:8). Leaning on Habermas, as a secondary resource cited by Dreyer, 2011. Dreyer (2011) discussed issues we can learn from and a methodology of studying the changing and evolving patterns on the subject of trust. He believes that the problem of rationality must

not be limited to a particular approach alone but a simultaneous application of meta-theoretical, methodological and empirical levels, which this study attempts to achieve. He views this as a learning process, as human beings go through a collective learning process, which Habermas refers to as rationalization (Dreyer, 2011:3). Borrowing from Wuthnow (2008), the “tool kit” in this context is not only culture but a collective learning process that has become rooted in enduring dominant values, that are shared as a group norm, which may now be responsible for the prevailing circumstances.

The subject of trust between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria can be related to this same learning process. Dreyer believes that “people cannot help learning when they disagree on norms and values in communication processes and in societal crises, especially when they do not understand each other” (Dreyer, 2011:4). Tracing the lack of trust, would be gleaned from this methodology and would shed more light on why this situation is so messy and out of control. This may be an eye opener to seeing trust, not just at a meta-theoretical level, but as a concept that requires a methodology and empirical level. Staring the Nigerian Christian-Muslim relations in the face and raising issues that will require more attention (discussed in the preceding chapters). Such issues include how Christians and Muslims reacted to perceived slights and feelings of injustice in history? Does this have any impact on trust relations in contemporary times? Is the vagueness of the Constitution as a nation state under God still a valid reason for mistrust and conflict? How has the formation of the identity of Christians and Muslims affected trust relations? What is the implication of 60 million Protestants, 20 million Catholics and a rising number of Pentecostals to the same trust relations? How has the diversity of over 240 ethnic groups contributed to mistrust? Has both Islam and Christianity realized that the era of Jihad and the Crusades is being leveled? How do the various traditions affect dialogue and interactions of Christians and Muslims in Nigeria?

2.8 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

This chapter has highlighted the composition of Nigeria as a nation state with a multi-ethnic and multi-religious community of people, with an almost equal balance of Christians and Muslims. Being the most populous black nation on the African continent, helps the reader to have insight into why and how issues that concern this great nation deserves a good space for research as this one. Several factors that help to complicate the dynamics of non-tolerance, violence and lack of trust have been highlighted between Islam and Christianity in the Nigerian context. This will aid in the understanding of the complexity of the situation, and enable the reader to relate to the data that will be presented in chapters 4 and 5.

CHAPTER 3: SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS DIMENSIONS OF TRUST

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this section, an extended literature review is used to give an overview of scholarly writings on the subject of mutual social trust and other related values, that shed light on the thesis title '*Religious Participation of Christians and Muslims Fostering Mutual Social Trust in Nigeria: An Exploratory Theological Study*'. This is done in order to show the social and religious dimensions of mutual social trust, religious participation and the consequences for aspects of human dignity. The approaches used by various scholars, the sub-categorizations, schools of thought, debates and links between them (Hofstee, 2006:121) and the implications on this study; in combination with an extended literature review, a critical theory paradigm in the ecumenical studies and engagement proposed by Bosch (1991:189ff) is added, with a critical perspective on how mutual social trust impacts on society. An attempt to migrate from what can be seen on the superficial level to "consensual reality" to the various types of structures that shapes them. This is done in order to have an informed and querying mind to the general assumptions about social mutual trust, that forms the basis of our understanding of reality (Hofstee, 2006:125). In other words, there is a gulf between one's assumptions and reality, which becomes essential in a research of this magnitude. This research attempts to take an alternate paradigm into understanding the problem and moving towards orthopraxis. In Hofstee's emphasis, "There is the need to question ideological and societal assumptions that would otherwise go unquestioned or even unrecognized" (Hofstee, 2006:125).

Bosch (1991:189ff) argues that the world can no longer be divided into Christian and non-Christian territories partly because the West looks de-Christianized. It has actually become more religiously and culturally diversified due to multiple migrations of people from different faiths, contributing to a reconstitution of a new pluralist society. These multiple migrations could be challenges, as well as opportunities, for building mutual social trust. Bosch believes the present reality has forced Christians to re-examine their traditional stereotypic views of other faiths (Bosch, 1991:3). Likewise in research, interreligious studies will require a paradigm shift in methodology from qualitative to quantitative, and better still, to triangulations or mixed methods of research. This is because a new way of looking, thinking, viewing and discussing issues and problems of research like this one, is required. Bosch refers to Kuhn in his book "Transforming Missions," who argues that "existing scientific models is riddled with anomalies and is unable to solve emerging problems," which may require new paradigms in his words "waiting in the wings, ready to replace the old" (Bosch, 1991:188). He further proposes an

ecumenical/post-modern paradigm, which includes the religious dimension into our postmodern reality (Bosch, 1991:362-263).

A deductive approach of enquiry has been adopted in this section of research as hypotheses are derived from theories and models. The meaning of mutual social trust is “clarified through a deductive derivation of its constitutive meanings” (Mouton, 2001:117). This is used as a method to query ideological and societal assumptions from a body of generalized knowledge, to deal with a specific context between Christians and Muslims, in an exploratory manner. Also it is used to determine whether religious participation actually fosters social mutual trust in the Nigerian situation. The critical theory approach revisits in constant check with ideological understandings and how it has displaced individuals or groups, exploring power relations as forces that influence such relations and creates an awareness of the status created by individuals or groups (Dryzek, 1995:99). The critical theory paradigm “aims to give us knowledge of society: its structure and its dynamics and its life world ... thus enabling us to determine what our true interests are” (Nielsen, 1992:265).

The first section discusses theologies of religions from a religious and sociological perspective. Here, attention is given to how several theologies of religions either contribute challenges or create opportunities for building mutual social trust. The second section deals with the concept of mutual social trust as an individual property depending on view of life or well-being, as proposed by Uslaner (2001), which does not depend on the reciprocity of the other. Against trust as a social system proposed by Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman and Robert Putnam, depended on the reciprocity of the other. The third section deals with the concept of lived religion, its relational patterns and how it interacts with human dignity across Christianity and Islam. This leads to a further probe into whether trust is dependent on reciprocity as proposed by Putnam et al., or does not, as proposed by Uslaner in the subsequent section. The fifth section focuses on Christian and Muslim relations in the ethical-practical bridge of the mutuality model of Knitter, and how it can be used as a framework for Christianity and Islam to dialogue with one another. The sixth section looks at the concept of well-being and how it may impact on social mutual trust as outcomes of religion and the possibility of having a positive impact on the promotion of human dignity.

3.2 THEOLOGIES OF RELIGIONS AND TRUST

An attempt is made towards an alternative paradigm of enquiry on how religions are interacting (descriptive task), and could be interacting; to create a society that could live at peace, yet remain diverse

(prescriptive task). At the crux of the matter is mutual social trust, which could be a major determinant of how successful religious, society or traditions could interact in an all-encompassing healthy environment. Here Knitter's model is used as a pivot for paradigm and theologies of religions, while Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman, Robert Putnam and Uslaner's models are used to discuss the sociological dimensions of trust. Sequeri and Simmel's model are used to reinforce the place of trust in society and to place the proper value for the study of social mutual trust, especially as it affects Muslim-Christian relationship in the Nigerian context. Thus, this research's theoretical framework is a combination of Uslaner's generalized trust and Knitter's model for interpreting religious pluralism and Clooney's comparative theology of religions. Clooney's comparative theology of religions may inform dialogue between Christian and Muslim traditions and how religious participation may foster mutual social trust and the promotion of human dignity among the religious other. An attempt is made to contribute to the field of comparative theology of religions and empirical theology as a contribution to on-going theological discussion and research.

Firstly, it is important to state that people of different religions view things differently. Secondly, they interpret issues differently from people of other religions. Thirdly, this is a religious and social concern that has led to the development of theologies of religions. The reference to 'theologies' and not 'theology' implies that there may not be one single comparative theology of religions that could be applied to reflect the kind of social dynamics involved across religious borders (Clooney, 2010). Knitter (2007) proposes, "The presence, power and richness of other religious traditions have vigorously entered Christian awareness" (Knitter, 2007:1). Knitter attempts to lay out a systematic study of the theology of religions, the various theological positions on the relation of Christianity to other religious ways and the role of many religions in the divine plan. He argues that what Christians have often dismissed as the claims of Islam need to be re-examined in the light of experiences that reveal grace and truth present in our Muslim neighbours (Knitter, 2007:2-3). This will be discussed in more detail in the fifth chapter of this thesis, after the quantitative data has been presented, to effectively benefit from the proceeds of the paradigm used in this research.

Christians generally see this development as negative. However, in the postmodern era, because of diversity and plurality, people of several religions think differently and see things differently. This does not mean that the door for dialogue is closed. This actually calls for a space in which all varying views and opinions can have a melting point, not of uniformity or conformity, but speak to one another and learn from one another, while still holding deeply onto their own religious convictions, if they still exist afterwards. At some time, one may tend to realign their religious stand in the light of a new discovery.

Sometimes it may be difficult to do this since having such a mindset may mean a repositioning of several traditions and beliefs which may threaten doctrinal stands (Clooney, 2010).

The manner in which people of the Christian faith identify and construct religious views and values affects how they interact with people of other religions, and vice versa. In the 21st century, there is a need for a comparative theology of religions, in which generalized sets of phenomena can be used to explain specific situations and contexts. Usually, this is not a part of a quantitative research paradigm. Since this work is triangulated, it brings value to this understanding. This research work identifies concepts that can be generalized to other religions, which may become a basis for further studies in the development of a methodology of a comparative theology of religions. This leads to a scrutiny of the concept of trust, its dimensions and general patterns that affect how people relate to each other. The proposition of this research is that:

1. Quality of relationships (independent variable) can develop trust (dependent variable).
2. Mutual social trust (independent variable) leads to properly developed relationships (dependent variable).
3. Religious traditions in Christianity and Islam (independent variable) affect how people build relationships that lead to mutual social trust (dependent variable).
4. Theological traditions in Christianity, for example, Catholics, Pentecostals (independent variable) affect relationship building and how Christians trusts Muslims (dependent variable).
5. Religious participation, especially when engaged in voluntary community development amongst religious others (independent variable), can foster mutual social trust (dependent variable).

Trust is both an outcome and a dimension of social capital, which has individual properties. Also, a social system constantly overlaps. Under observation, it is not visible to the human eyes. The results of interactions of trust with individuals, and how social networks respond to situations and circumstances, points to this reality. Trust has an interpersonal capacity that shapes identity. Sequeri (2000:143) states, “No revelation of the other can happen without establishing a relationship of trust. Nor can there be any relationship of trust without revelation of the other”. Therefore, trust can be defined as a process, which has a personal and group dimension. It describes the state of mind or attitude of individuals or groups and how they permit and allow interactions. This is done in a manner that encourages networking despite diversity or pluralism in a social, economic or religious sense. Networking could be a form of bonding or

bridging, as proposed by Putnam (1993). This aspect will be discussed further in this chapter's section on the relational aspects of trust and human dignity.

Simmel (1950:326) argues, "Trust is one of the most important synthetic forces within society". Social mutual trust is at the heart of this research study and its interaction with social capital is defined and measured as generalized trust (Uslaner, 2002), norms and reciprocity and networks (Putnam, 1993). It becomes more interesting to see that despite the above definition of social capital, authors like Putnam (1993), Coleman (1998) and Bourdieu (1986) still view trust as specialized or personal based on an expected reciprocity. This is in contrast to Uslaner's generalized trust that is used as a model in this study. It is important to state that beyond what is being researched in the World 3 level¹⁵ as proposed by Mouton (2001) where he refers to the meta-physical. The subject of social mutual trust is discussed not only at World 3, but also World 1. World 1 of praxis is an interaction of Uslaner's generalized trust and Coleman, Putnam and Bourdieu's specialized or personal trust, based on knowledge and expected reciprocity of trust.

According to Uslaner (2002) people are more trusting, tolerant and accept of the 'religious other' in situations where generalized trust exists. The subject of trust has very interesting dynamics on how people interact and relate with one another. It allows for social interactions (Simmel, 1964). How people live their lives, how happy and tolerant they are, their state of well-being and participation in community development, all have trust at their centre. In the case of inter-cultural voluntary work, where people participate in community work with people who are culturally and religiously different, more trust is built (Wuthnow, 2005). In essence, the well-being, quality of life and view of life generally affect how a person trusts or does not trust. If the well-being of individuals or groups are placed side by side in the context of religious participation, it may seem logical that mutual social trust will be fostered. Religious participation may foster mutual social trust in the encounters and interaction between Christians and Muslims in the Nigerian situation. It seems as if the situation could be as simple as controlling for a better view of life, well-being, higher quality of life generally. In this research, trust is viewed as an overlap of the two theories. On one hand, the specialized or personal trust proposed by Putnam (1995) is based on reciprocity and the knowledge of others. On the other hand, a generalized trust of Uslaner is not based on reciprocity but has a positive outlook, view of others based on social upbringing and view of life. Several psychologists (Erickson, 1950; Allport, 1961; Cattell 1965; Rosenberg, 1956 and 1957) have discovered

¹⁵ Meta-physical as what is not tangible, beyond the physical, happening in the subconscious that informs decisions.

that this kind of trust is developed during early childhood, and as one grows through life forms the personality of an individual. If this view of trust being an individual property is matched with Uslaner's approach, optimism and sense of control of an individual's life makes social trust to be associated with personality variables.

Viewing trust as a social system, as well as a personal property, calls for a more robust examination of how the general patterns that impact on identity are being formed in the Nigerian context, as Christians and Muslims interact with religion and culture in a multi-ethnic religious society. Reflecting on and understanding other religions from a Christian theological perspective, leads to several theologies of religion, which most authors have narrowed down to concepts of exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism (Race, 1982; Coward, 1985; D'Costa, 1986; Wilfred, 1995; Sterkens, 2001; Amaladoss, 1989; Vermeer & Van der Ven, 2004). It is pertinent to state that there are several theologies of religion, but limited space does not permit a discussion of these in this research. One example is the "idea of local theologies as motivation for church members to voluntarily participate in projects amongst the poor and the humble in their own contexts" (Pieterse, 2011:2).

According to D'Costa (2005:627), "Exclusivism refers to the paradigm of only those who hear the gospel and explicitly confess Christ are saved". The exclusivist paradigm looks at the 'religious other' as inferior and not possessing any knowledge or truth about God's revelation. Invariably, they would not make space for the evolving type of religious diversity being experienced in the 21st century. In the same vein, D'Costa opines that the inclusivist paradigm focuses on "Christ as the normative revelation of God, although salvation is possible outside of the explicit Christian church, but this salvation is always from Christ" (D'Costa, 2005:627). The inclusivist paradigm focuses on a more accommodating paradigm, which sees the 'religious other' as possessing some form of revelation, of which the fulfillment is found in Christ. This would impact the kind of relationship such a worldview or paradigm would build with the 'religious other'. The pluralist sees other religions as equally possessing God's revelation. This becomes a reason for engaging in dialogue or building the necessary interactions that would make space for healthy religious diversity. As D'Costa (2005:627) puts it "all religions are equal and valid paths to the one divine reality and Christ is one revelation among many equally important revelations". However, the pluralist school of thought is the most accommodating of the three schools of thought in the contemporary context.

Wuthnow's (2005) typology has three main categories. The first category is the spiritual shoppers, referred to as the most open to religious diversity. The second category is the Christian inclusivists, who practice their own faith but also believe some truth is found in other religions. The last category are the

Christian exclusivists, who believe that the ‘religious other’ are inferior and do not lead to salvation (Wuthnow, 2005). Despite the fact that this research is not focused on typologies, Race’s typologies (1982) are also found in Knitter (2007). Race had exclusivism, which Knitter refers to as a total and partial replacement model (to indicate levels of fluidity); inclusivism, which Knitter refers to as a fulfillment model; pluralism, which Knitter refers to as a mutuality model; and particularities, which Knitter refers to as an acceptance model. The point of departure from the pluralism, proposed by John Hick and Paul Knitter (1987), is that that absolute claims about Jesus are neither possible nor necessary. The proposition here is that having “theologies of religions” as a paradigm, is another type of pluralism. This research views the ‘religious other’ as not necessarily possessing truth, revelation, or neither. This kind of theology of religions does not necessarily mean one is superior to the other, or right or wrong; but sees the other as bringing a contribution to the table of religious diversity, allowing for the kind of interaction that would impact society. The strength of this type of paradigm is that religions should be allowed to speak for themselves.

This research uses the model of mutuality and fulfilment proposed by Knitter (2007) It has a form of inclusivism and the mutuality model, which also adopts the ethical-practical bridge. Inclusivism in this regard, is holding the two convictions of the presence of God’s grace in all religions with the aim of leading them to salvation, and the unique manifestation of God’s grace in Christ as a universal claim of the final way of salvation (Race, 1982:38). This is a form of particularity, according to Race’s typology, which may be that the Holy Spirit may work in other faiths requiring the ‘religious other’ to regard them with respect and dignity. A reflection of Francis X. Clooney’s comparative theology of religions suggests that religions are to be found in dialogue, rather than theology. The ethical-practical bridge of Knitter emphasizes dialogue, using a commonly threatened earth as a platform for such dialogue. In essence, it is not a matter of who is on the right or on the left, but rather that of being true to what one believes. It is also a matter of allowing religious convictions and practices, and reaching out to them in dialogue, rather than engaging in debates that do not foster mutual social trust. This leads to what is being done in places of worship by Christians and Muslims during participation in their various religious endeavors.

Religious participation that moves beyond mere attendance to committed involvement should reinforce social mutual trust and promote the human dignity of the ‘religious other’. The challenge is, what kind of religious participation is being engaged in the Nigerian context? What kind of narratives or discourses are going on in the Christian and Muslim circles? Do people become more trusting as they participate in religious practices in their various places of worship? Do they trust because they have been privileged to a better life or they seem to have a better life because they are more trusting? How do group norms,

especially the issues on bonding and bridging as discussed in social capital by Putnam, Coleman and others affect interaction? How do we view, understand and interpret the various causes and effects, especially with regards to the issue of how identity is being constructed (usually inclined towards a qualitative approach) and how it affects what goes on in praxis? These issues are discussed further in the following sections.

The literature and research has also pointed out that gender and the type of group in which individuals participate, also affects the outcome of whether trust will be reinforced and whether it will lead to the promotion of human dignity of the religious other. Markus & Oyserman (1989) points out that there is growing evidence that women are more open to the other, than men. In another light, “Pentecostals image the introduction of the Sharia as a component of an insidious project to Islamize Nigeria” (Kalu, 2010:101). This kind of literature points to the fact that in the Nigerian context, Pentecostals are less tolerant of Muslims, and vice versa. Various kinds of Islamic groups may affect the extent of the social mutual trust of the ‘religious Other’.

Pieterse (2011) appeals to members of congregations who listen to sermons in their various places of worship to see their faith participation with Jesus as leading them to identify with the poor as Jesus did. He focuses on the humble and the poor by discussing what he calls “local theologies as motivation for church members to voluntarily participate in projects among the poor and humble in their own contexts” (Pieterse, 2011:1-3). He views poverty as a form of exclusion, as the poor are denied their identity as humans and part of society. Pieterse appeals to Wepener & Cilliers (2010) to buttress the fact that worship “generates a sense of belonging and relations of trust, helps with development of civil skills and service in developing material infrastructure and resources and it opens up opportunities to further transformation” (Pieterse, 2011:4).

In 2001, Pieterse conducted a study on grounded theory research of sermons on Mathew 25:31-46 among a number of the Dutch Reformed Church preachers. The research project extended to 2009. He discovered a clear pattern emerging out of the sermons of “listener’s faith participation with Jesus” as he identified with the poor. The Congregations should emulate the same. The research conducted by Pieterse (2011) is an intercultural engagement, which involves class, race and different denominations. This research focuses on how theologies are constructed by the narratives preached from the pulpits in local congregations by different denominations, to motivate church members to voluntarily participate in projects involving people of humble backgrounds and those different from themselves, either by skin

colour, language or social class. Worship is used here to generate and develop a sense of belonging and to build trust relations through voluntary community projects.

Wepener & Cilliers (2010) as cited by Pieterse, (2011) in agreement with Ammerman's line of thinking in linking the expectation of religious participation with social capital summarizes by concluding:

... That congregations offer certain markers for identification and a sense of belonging. Relationships of trust are formed here, and these relationships in turn facilitate communication and the co-ordination of activities in society and contribute towards the well being of participants. Individuals, as well as the broader society, benefit from this. In addition to this basic inherent social capital that congregations possess, they are also places where the voiceless can articulate their concerns (Pieterse, 2011:4).

The quote by Wepener & Cilliers (2010) clearly brings out the group dynamics, as we see congregations offering some kind of markers to distinguish themselves and create a sense of belonging. This is bonding capital, as it helps to effectively create and develop trust relations within the group (congregations). This comes from worship and faith participation in voluntary projects. As congregations get more involved in voluntary participations with others, a bridging capital is built and developed. This affirms the research by Wuthnow (2005), that voluntary participation with the other who is different, is more likely to create trust relations and build social capital. Special attention will be given to bonding and bridging capital in the section that discusses relational aspects of trust. This paradigm is different from what Uslaner proposes, in that it starts with individuals to building of traditions of congregations as it influences trust relations.

Dreyer, 2011 reviews the role of religion in modern societies when taking a deeper look at Habermas who initially postulated that religion, sometime later, will fade off or lose its relevance in modern times. According to Dreyer's assessment, Habermas had to change his theology as he did not consider the evolving of vocabulary, transitioning from the extreme religious to the extreme secular, in order for it to be able to participate in the current dialogue in the public space (Dreyer, 2011:1). In this research, the ethical practical bridge of Knitter is discussed as a panacea in this same chapter and reiterated in the data analysis and discussion chapters. Knitter (2007) uses vocabularies that could participate in the current dialogue in the public space by his proposal of the ethical-practical bridge, to fit into Wuthnow's submission of the changing role of religion in modern times.

According to Wuthnow, the changing role of religion in modern times due to the rise of religious diversity has raised serious issues that “affect well-being of religious groups themselves and of larger society” (Wuthnow, 2003:163). In this presidential address, he raises concerns that affect religious participants who function in a public space of religious diversity. Anthony, Hermans and Sterkens attempt to enlighten the reader on religious diversity and “structure of religious practice in a comparative perspective” (2007:100). In the light of the observations and submissions by these scholars, and as discussed in this research work, it calls for a method of enquiry into how to deal with the changing pluralistic world. This is done without compromising the core of one’s faith or belief, and staying true to the changing times and situations, without being judgmental.

3.3 TRUST AS AN INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY VERSUS TRUST AS A SOCIAL SYSTEM

In this section of the literature review, two schools of thought around the issue of trust, either as an individual property or a social system, are being evaluated. Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman, and Robert Putnam on one hand, argue that trust is a social system. Uslaner, on the other hand, sees trust as an individual property emanating from one state of well-being and view of life. Whether trust depends on the reciprocity of the other or having a good view of life and well-being is all that is required to be more trusting, is probed from these various perspectives.

In the process of describing social capital, sociologists like Pierre Bourdieu (1986), James Coleman (1988), Robert Putnam (1993) but to name a few have included the concept of trust, reciprocity and social network’s among in addition to the ones mentioned above(Hawe and Shiell, 2000). In this study, religious participation is used as a means of building social networks, even though it has deep religious connotations and influences behavioural patterns. In other words, religious participation is a means or process or platform used by individuals to form and build social networks. As people participate in religious places of worship, a kind of affinity and bonding is going on that affects behaviour or responses to issues that may have a societal impact.

These scholars have also attempted to reveal that there is a structural component in the process, which includes networks, connectedness and affiliations through associations. In this study, religious participation that informs behaviour can be considered. Also, a cognitive knowledge that engages trust and social cohesion could also be derived from religious participation to inform attitudes and perceptions

(Harpham, Grant and Rodriguez, 2004). In the Nigerian context, religion is a major means or form of identity construction. Uslaner brings in his concept of trust, as what one would expect from moral value. He opines, “Trust matters for the sort of things that bond us to others without expectations of reciprocity, giving to charity, volunteering time, tolerance of minorities, and promoting policies that redistribute resources from the rich to the poor” (Uslaner, 2001:1-2). He refers to this as “moralistic trust”, which he suggests is not dependent on having a personal knowledge of others. Although Uslaner does not explicitly state as such, he can be categorized in the school of thought that advocates that the Golden Rule of the reciprocity of the religious other is not needed. It is worthy to note that a form of the Golden Rule exists as a common denominator in one form or another in almost all of the world’s religions. If the positive is not found, then the negative will be seen as a guiding principle. The negative here signifies the same rule but is constructed from an opposite direction, as is the case of Islam. The Golden Rule states that “doing to others what you wish them to do to you,” while Islam says, “do not do to others what you will not want them to do to you” (Chilton, 2008:77).

The concept of trust and group dimension, as described by Putnam (1993) has been sufficiently engaged in, under the discussion of social capital. Liu and Besser (2003) have also included informal ties, formal ties, trust and norms of collective action, which are very visible in groups where there is religious participation. Does this mean that despite individual convictions, a possibility exists that people will behave differently in order to conform to group norms? Who is responsible for setting the group norms and to ensure conformity? This calls for further studies on the aspect of how social networks, and by implication, religious participation, is being influenced and shaped by expectations and standards which evolve from bonding.

Quoting Weber, Wuthnow (2008: 334) argues, “Dominant values tend to be enduring and shared, and for this reason provide stability and integration to a society”. Wuthnow further emphasizes that there could also be inconsistencies in values and several ways of making up for “these inconsistencies by resorting to other values. Providing rationalizations and incorporating situational factors into their thinking as behaviour did not always reflect values” (Wuthnow, 2008:334-335). Thus, does the complex interaction of trust and religious participation (group dimension) reinforce the promotion of the human dignity of the ‘religious other’? The concept of religion and human dignity in interfaith encounters is discussed in the next section.

3.3.1 Religion and human dignity

This section explores the concept of religion, as well as relational patterns of trust and how they interact with human dignity across Christianity and Islam. A sociology of values is introduced; and an explanation given of how people across religious boundaries delve into their “toolkit” of culture to bring out several perspectives and angles in order to engage in interfaith encounters. Here, several scholars ranging from a number of different fields, i.e. sociology of religion, psychology, philosophy, as well as interfaith scholars of Islam and Christianity, give a balanced view on the relational patterns of trust and the religious dimensions as they influence the promotion of human dignity in interfaith encounters. Values affect how people react to situations and how they respond or build trust relations. As individuals participate in church and society, interacting with others out of their “toolkit” of values and experiences, shapes how effectively or efficiently their bonding and bridging capital would be developed.

The concept of ‘lived religion’ is difficult to define because individual religious experiences cannot be challenged because they have a high emotional attachment. Egwu (2011) has referred to religion as “an elusive and imprecise concept”. In other words, no one has the right to query a person’s religious experience(s). Scholars of religion have traced the word religion from its *latin religio* (respect for what is sacred) and *religare* (to bind, in the sense of an obligation), which is used to describe several systems of beliefs and practices of what is perceived to be sacred or spiritual (Fasching and deChant, 2001).

Wuthnow (1987) believes that religion may not be the only source of moral directives where one may find culture playing an express role. Wuthnow makes reference to Swidle (1986) in his article, “The Sociological Study of Values,” about the presence of culture as a “toolkit” (Wuthnow, 2008:337). Invariably, religion means different things to different people, based on their worldview and understanding of their language of communication. One’s perspective may be strong on how he or she describes his or her religious experience. One could easily see how using Swidle’s “toolkit” to respond to various religious experiences, may also inform participation. Religion has been defined by Adeniyi as “body of truths, laws and rites by which a man is subordinated to transcendent being” (Adeniyi, 1993). Religion has also been described as a factor that influences individual attitudes and patterns in manners that tend towards positive and constructive views (Smith, 2003:17). It is also worthy to note that religion has contributed towards negative and unconstructive views.

Lived religion explains the reason behind what is experienced and how those religious experiences are. It also describes how it should be (Haar and Busuttill, 1995; McGuire, 2002.) This involves actions and experience through participation that leads to internalized values and commitment. People do locate and

identify themselves with their actions within a societal context, which is normally defined by their religion (Berger, 1967; Hamilton, 1995; McGuire, 2002). When convictions of groups are internalized, it creates “a commitment in the hearts of people” (Repstad, 2004:35). Haynes (1998:5) contends, “There is no such thing as religion without consequences for value systems. Group religiosity, like politics, is a matter of collective solidarities and, frequently, of inter-group tension and conflict, focusing either on shared or disagreed images of the sacred, or, on cultural and class, in short, political matter”. Bonding and bridging capital comes into play when discussing group religiosity. Bonding is a concept that describes the kind of interaction that goes on within a group. Relationships that lean towards building trust relations, reciprocity and other social norms and bonding are constantly built. These dynamics occur amongst people of the same affinity and who are similar to each other. While bridging could be described as the building of relationships of trust, reciprocity and social norms, among people who are different and considered as ‘the other’ (Woolcock, 2001:17-19). A careful look at what religion aims to achieve through individual and group identity towards high group dynamics and collective solidarities would probably point to the fact that religion, as a concept, promotes human dignity. However, whether religion achieves this aim is another matter that can be separated from ideal to reality on the ground. It is paramount to take a look at the concept of human dignity itself and how individuals man has related to it. Quoting Macklin (2002), Chalmers and Ida (2007:158) state, “Dignity is a fuzzy concept, and appeals to dignity are often used to substitute for empirical evidence that is lacking or sound arguments that cannot be mustered”. Gewirth defines human dignity in another perspective is “a kind of intrinsic worth that belongs equally to all human beings as such, constituted by certain intrinsically valuable aspects of being human” (Gewirth, 1992:12). This could be understood by others, as not only ‘actual value’ but also as ‘perceived value’.

Human dignity is challenging to define but the absence of it is “recognized, even if the abstract term may not be defined” (Schachter, 1983:849). According to Henkin (1992), and Beyleveld & Brownsword (2001), “The framers of the international instruments did not define human dignity... Nor were they precise about the relationship between human rights and human dignity” (Henkin, 1992:211). It may be an issue of practical application. This is why the absence of it could be easily noticed. Our consciences judge us as we relate to one another, whether we treat people in a right manner, or wrongly. Religious participation could be a synthetic force to promote the human dignity of the religious other. Some scholars have broken grounds by being leaders in charting an alternative approach to see human dignity as “ambiguous, although dignity is a signalling term that goes to the heart of what constitutes the quality of humanness” (Weisstub, 2002:269). Others explain, “The dignity of the individual is a cliché, yet it retains surprising force” (Tinder, 2003:238). However, despite this concept being a cliché, “The concept of

human dignity has become ubiquitous to the point of cliché. It is not simply a cliché because of the deeper foundation in comprehensive doctrines” (Witte, 2003:121). The pursuit of promoting human dignity is not just a fad, but a genuine endeavour.

Webster’s Dictionary (1991) defines ‘dignity’ as, “Worth or excellence, nobility of manner, quality of commanding esteem, high office or rank, noting that to stand on one’s dignity is to insist on being treated with respect”. Mairis (1994:947-953) suggests that dignity is “a personal possession related to having cognitive skills, feeling comfortable with oneself, and having control or choice over one’s surroundings, behaviour, and the way one is treated by others”. Dignity is linked to self concept and esteem of how people perceive themselves or the kind of value they place on themselves, which is also acknowledged or determined by how others and society see them, treat and relate with them. According to Hasson (2003:83), human dignity is “the foundational concept of the global human rights regime, the ultimate value that gives coherence to human rights” Arieli (2002:1) opines that the concept of human dignity was “the cornerstone and the foundation on which the United Nations sought to reconstruct the future international order of mankind and of public life in general”. This calls for attention to be given to the importance of human dignity in praxis as lived religions, United Nations and societal norms to desire to promote same. On a theoretical level, it is straightforward, but how does it work in praxis? Why is it getting more and more challenging and difficult to promote human dignity in praxis in the 21st century? Concepts and ideals on their own cannot promote human dignity. However, certain kinds of faith participation and engagement in voluntary projects with the religious other, can lead to the promotion of human dignity through the ethical-practical bridge and other similar kinds of faith participation, like the case of Wuthnow (2005 and 2008) and Pietese (2011).

Lived religion gives meaning and direction to the concept of human dignity. “The concept of dignity is itself vacuous. As a legal or philosophical concept it is without bounds and ultimately is one incapable of explaining or justifying any narrower interests... the term is so elusive as to be virtually meaningless” (Bagaric and James, 2006:260). In other words, “The concept of human dignity does not give us enough guidance... it has different senses and often points us in opposite directions” (Davis, 2007:177). The issue of promoting human dignity can be viewed by how people are treated within the same religion and also by other religions. A brief look at the promotion of human dignity within the context of the same religion helps one to appreciate the importance of human dignity in the world that we live in. Islam and Christianity have a history of instances where they have treated people of their same faith harshly because they have deviated from acceptable norms or perceived truths.

Ibn Rushd (Averroes) (d 1198/595) in the Muslim community; and the astronomer Galileo (d 1642/1051) in the Christian religion, were accused of deviating from the straight path of orthodoxy and were thus threatened to change their views. Ibn Rushd was accused of espousing the view that there are two truths, one for intellectuals and philosophers, and one for the ordinary people. They had to burn his books. Galileo was placed under house arrest for the last eight years of his life because he was accused of believing that the sun went around the earth rather than the other way around (Goddard, 1995:161).¹⁶ A pattern begins to come to the lime light as history shows both Islam and Christianity have treated people of the same faith in ways that we today could boldly say does not promote human dignity. This could shed some light on the issue of how humans have responded to situations or how they define themselves, understand who they are and should respond to situations. This has an overarching impact on how Christians and Muslims treat people from the same religion, and by extension, people from other religions, either in an individual capacity or collective capacity.

3.3.2 Trust and reciprocity versus moralistic trust

In this section, emphasis is placed on whether trust is dependent on the reciprocity of the other, or solely on having a good view of life, or a combination of both. This is achieved by looking at how various authors have argued their cases. Generally, people need some form of trust in order to work together and meet their goals. They might not necessarily know one another, but may still require trust in order to reduce the extent of exploitation, or inconveniences they might experience because of relating with one another. Trust is crucial if any benefit will be derived from their cooperation (Field, 2003). For example, in a taxi rank where almost every taxi driver could be seen as a rival or competitor, they come together to form a union in order to create a platform for discussing, relating and working, so as to reduce friction to a minimal level. This is a survival strategy in the context of rivalry or competition, where trust is developed and solidarity (bonding capital) reinforced.

However, an ongoing scholarly debate has been on how trust should be treated or studied, either as a product of social capital (Woolcock, 2004; Field, 2003) or an integral element of social capital (Coleman, 1998; Putnam, 1993 and Fukuyama, 1995). If trust is treated as a product of social capital, then it is hypothesis that it is based on the result of social capital. If it is treated as an integral part of social capital, then is placed in this study and understanding in such a manner which does not treat trust as ephemeral.

¹⁶ Others were not so lucky: the Sufi mystic, al-Hallaj, was crucified in Baghdad in 922/309 for having said “I am the truth”, which was taken by his contemporaries as being a blasphemous claim; and Michael Servetus was burnt to death in Geneva in 1553/960 for attacking the doctrine of the trinity.

Trust could move to another level when it is seen as a product of social capital. It becomes more reinforced. However, that does not negate the fact that it is a valuable component of social capital. Without trust, social capital may not exist. The presence of trust as a part of social capital gives it its potency.

Despite the fact that several scholars have really thought about the importance of trust, they have rarely examined trust as a concept. Gambetta mentions trust as an important factor, and then suddenly moves on to issues of less relevance (1988:ii). According to Dasgupta (2000:333), “It is not easy to model the link between personal, groups and institutional trust. However, the link needs to be studied if we are to understand the idea of social capital”. Luhmann (1988) has opined that sociology has not dedicated sufficient space to handle the concept of trust. Neither has religion dedicated enough space to handle the concept of trust. There has been a tremendous development of research on the concept of trust, as it cannot be removed from discussing social capital (bonding and bridging capital).

For Bourdieu, social capital represents an “aggregate of actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network” (Bourdieu, 1986:248). He argues, “Economic capital is at the root of all other types of capital” (Bourdieu, 1986:252). However, without social capital, economic capital cannot build the kind of networks and relationships that need to be built for efficiency and effectiveness. Putnam opines that social capital can be defined as “features of social organizations, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions” (Putnam, 1993:167). Afterwards, he modifies his definition as “features of social life networks, norms, and trust that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives” (Putnam, 1995:664-665). He proposes that social capital can be seen as “connections among individuals, social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them” (Putnam, 2000:19). Here, he treats trust as an outcome of social capital and not as an integral element of the same. This leads to the emphasis that a combination of trust, being a product of social capital and being an integral part of same, are relevant paradigms or perspectives of thinking and discussion?

Coleman (1988) views mutual trust as an integral form of social capital on which expectations and future relationships are based. Nahapiet and Ghosal (1998) refer to trust as the “key facet” in the relational dimension of social capital. A few scholars have opined that social capital is based on some form of reciprocity. The reason for the underlying assumption that some form of expected returns from the good done today by the recipient, individual or group. Some see social capital as “primarily the accumulation of obligations from others according to the norms of reciprocity” (Portes, 1998:7). Expectations of

reciprocity can help in bonding a community through a shared goal or objective, creating the enabling environment that may motivate collective action and promote the necessary goodwill for tolerance (Newton, 1997).

Trust enables people to put a higher level of belief in other people's promises, so that when the time comes they will fulfill what they have promised (Elster, 1989:274-275; Putnam, 1993:170). When trust becomes the basis for a presumed action, it is dependent on past knowledge and experience, which Yamigishi and Yamigishi (1994) refer to as "knowledge-based trust". In another way, Offe (1996) states that "trust in people's results from past experience with concrete persons". Uslaner brings in the concept of 'moralistic trust' as a moral commandment to treat people as if they were trustworthy. In a way, it is a paraphrase of the Golden Rule (Uslaner, 2001:3-4). According to him, trust has a moral dimension which is based upon "some sort of belief in the good will of the other" (Seligman, 1997 43; Yamagishi and Yamagishi, 1994:131). There is a belief that "others will not try to take advantage of us" (Silver, 1989:276).

According to Uslaner (2001:5), "Moralistic trust is a value that rests on an optimistic view of the world and one's ability to control it". The person who trusts does not expect reciprocity but just simply "trusts". This does not depend on reciprocity (Uslaner, 2001:11). This emphasizes how people should behave and treat one another. These are basic moral expectations, which are predicated upon the opinion that the world is a sphere filled with good people (Seligman, 1997:47). According to Rosenberg and Lane, such people believe that things will improve and the world can be made a better place through their actions (Rosenberg, 1956; Lane, 1959:163-166).

In this section, only three articles will be considered; although J. Mathew Wilson (2013) did not focus on religion and social trust per se, but researched "Group Identity and Social Trust in the American Public," which could be related to the present study. Ruben (2011) also considered an aspect that has a vital input for religion and social trust in his paper, "Can Religion Contribute to Development? The Road from "Truth" to "Trust"", which allows one to see how (Pis'tis) can be interpreted in a dogmatic approach to "faith," and in a pluralistic dimension interpreted as "trust". The third research by Sherkat and Ellison (1999) is much broader, but a thin thread will be extracted because of its relevance and perspective on religion, well-being, free space and social capital.

The study by Wilson (2013), "Group Identity and Social Trust in the American Public," considers the impact of strong identification of participants with a social group on generalized trust in others. The

author used three major groups (women, African Americans, and evangelical Christians) as his case studies. Wilson's theory is that "identification among African Americans and gender identification among women should increase affect towards and confidence in other people generally" (Wilson, 2013:4). He also notes, "This is not to suggest that under all circumstances strong group identification will result in greater generalized social trust" (Wilson, 2013:4).

In his research, Wilson outlines the circumstances or conditions in which a strong identification may likely promote or reduce generalized social trust, and empirically demonstrates its import for both questions of faith in others and for attitudes toward specific out-groups. In all three cases, the strength of individual members' identification with the social group powerfully shapes their impression of trust in their fellow citizens, and their affective responses to a range of other social groups. These findings have implications for our understanding of the sources and origins of social trust.

The author used "the scale measuring civic engagement (a predictive variable in the social trust equation) which is built from six individual items measuring individuals' involvement or willingness to become involved in community service and activities" (Wilson, 2013:11). He uses the social trust index built from two questions (as in Brehm, 1999), "measuring willingness to trust other people and perceptions that others are seeking to take advantage" (Wilson, 2013:12). He attempted to establish that there is a direct connection between identification with a social group and trust in generalized others, properly specified by a multivariate model. He included race, gender and religion in his analysis. He also included education in the model, which is thought to be correlated with greater knowledge and understanding of diverse groups of people, hence with higher levels of social trust (as in Sullivan, Piereson and Marcus, 1982; Wilson, 2013:13).

In the final analysis, it is clear that group identification can no longer be ignored in the discussion of individuals' attitudes toward the larger society, and invariably, when looking at how people relate with the 'religious other'. This group identification could be viewed as arising from strong group dynamics, which may be derived from religious participation. He was able to show that "groups through their orientation toward the larger society have the capacity to influence powerfully the social attitudes of those members that strongly identify with them. Their importance for social trust and affect toward out-groups rivals that of such well-known factors as education, age, and personal life experiences" (Wilson, 2013:21).

Ruben believes that there exists a “strong mutual interaction between the academic fields of mission studies and development studies” (Ruben, 2011:225). In his work, he devoted much attention to conflicts where religion and development meet, for example, land reform under in Nicaraguan example of land reform under guerrilla warfare, and Rwanda reconciliation after Civil War. He devotes special attention to changing views on poverty, religion and development, conflict and trust, key religion-development interfaces and from “truth” to “trust”. Emphasis of his study on trust is that it is a vital ingredient when “building coherent communities” and in identifying “social cohesion” (Ruben, 2011:231). The author cites Ostrom and Walker’s (2003) analysis of “social values of trust and trustworthiness are required in order to enable communities to develop confidence in loyalty of other agents” (Ostrom and Walker, 2003:409).

This research work goes on to make reference to Putnam’s (2000) social values and relationships can constitute either, bonding ties, bridging networks or linkages amongst groups of people. Bonding occurs within any homogenous group (internal), bridging across groups (external), which allows for reciprocity and linking resources and information across groups. In the author’s view, Churches had always been at the forefront of promoting human dignity (Ruben, 2011:232). He opines that due to the high level of mistrust of government institutions, the Church has to take the lead in the process of healing and reconciliation, for “restoring mutual relationships” (Ruben, 2011:233). He asserts that the New Testament word “*Pis’tis*” appears with a dual meaning. Sometimes it is straightforwardly translated as ‘*faith*’ or ‘*truth*’, whereas on other occasions it is referred to as ‘*trust*’ (Ruben 2011:233 citing Thayer, 1983)¹⁷. He also believes that if one redefines religion as trust and the attributes of trustworthiness, one will give more attention to “emotional linkages between people, their identity-seeking behaviour and the key role of shared partnership relationships” (Ruben, 2011:234).

Sherkat and Ellison (1999) in “Recent Developments and Current Controversies in the Sociology of Religion,” dealt with a wide range of issues but only a few relevant to religion, well-being and trust will be highlighted here. They discussed religious beliefs and commitments in the contemporary United States, the influence of religion on social life in which religion, social movements and politics, religion and family issues, religion, health and well-being, and free social space and social capital were examined. To shed more light on the subject of religion and social mutual trust, the last two issues will be looked at. They opined that there is a very positive link between “religion with health, including positive emotions

¹⁷ Thayer, J. H. 1983. *Greek-English Lexicon to the New Testament*, downloadable at [Studydrive.org](http://www.studydrive.org), <http://www.studydrive.org/lex/grk/view.cgi?number=4102>.

such as love, contentment, and forgiveness, as well as hope and optimism that often grow out of personal faith” (Koenig, Cohen, George, Hays, Larson and Blazer, 1997: 233).

Greeley (1997) further posit that religious communities may serve as free social space for certain marginalized groups and may provide members with social capital that can be mobilized toward instrumental ends” (Greeley, 1997:587). This is also backed up by Warner (1993). This kind of mutual relationship leads to high social capital, which may promote exchange relations, within contexts governed by norms of reciprocity, trust, and mutual obligation (Coleman, 1988; Portes, 1998). Research discovers that “immigrant congregations, representing diverse faith traditions often afford social networks, information and skills, and other resources that facilitate the psychological adjustment and upward mobility of recent entrants” (Bankston and Zhou, 1996:18). In as much as this is true, to some extent, we have also seen behaviour not always being an accurate representation of beliefs and values, which does not make a simple prescription of action steps possible. However, one could have a better understanding of how the issue of trust works from the meta-physical level, and how it could be studied in an empirical manner through a scientific body of knowledge and trickle down to the grassroots to inform praxis.

3.3.3 Christian and Muslim relations in the ethical-practical bridge of the mutuality model

Here, Knitter’s ethical-practical bridge is introduced on how it can be used as a framework for Christianity and Islam to dialogue with one another. The ethical-practical bridge in the mutuality model of Knitter is not because proponents disagree with those who walk the bridge of replacement and fulfillment models. Rather, they prefer an alternative route to dialogue and cooperation among religions because of their belief in the effectiveness of the method (Knitter, 2007:134). Life is all about choices and the choices we make have their own consequences. The route of the ethical-practical bridge in the mutuality model that Knitter proposes could be a worthwhile route to inform praxis.

Knitter (2007) believes that for this ethical bridge, issues and ethical responsibilities “are the pillars that will sustain a new kind of interfaith exchange” (Knitter, 2007:134). He opines that this bridge of mutuality will be a new platform of opportunities for understanding one’s religion and the ‘religious other’ (Knitter, 2007:134-135). This kind of thinking gives rise to a common interest or agenda. This helps rather than having a competitive mind, which may be used as a bridge as it has been proposed. Knitter postulates that three essential steps are necessary in order to fulfill the conditions for the practice of this bridge of mutuality. The first is to ensure that actions are based on what the Scriptures teach. Second, it reflects past traditions but also engages the “Christians to carry out what Jesus held up as the laws: to love your neighbour” (Knitter, 2007:135). Hanging on the path of Christianity, this premise

should be an incentive for the openness at which such a proposal should be considered. If we indeed love our neighbour as Jesus commands us to, then we will require same kind of openness as proposed by Knitter.

In his view, whatever method of theology or approach used “does not foster a true love of other believers, then something is deeply dysfunctional with that theology, no matter how biblical it seems” (Knitter, 2007:135). One may say that Knitter believes that the fruit or end product of the method and practitioner will allow observers the opportunity to determine if the theology is appropriate or not. According to Knitter, it does not matter what ‘believers’ believe in. They should not be judged based on their beliefs but on the fact that they need to love; not on the condition that their religious beliefs are identical or the same. We should still extend love even when our differences are great. Our love is tested when our differences are blatant.

As practitioners, using the replacement or fulfillment model is not to put away beliefs that one holds dearly or is convinced about. They interpret them in a new light by maintaining the basic tenets and making room or accommodating the ‘religious other,’ not using vocabularies and descriptions or painting images that are harmful. The essentials of the beliefs are not tampered with but also ‘the truth’ should be communicated in love (Knitter, 2007:136). Knitter opines that “suffering” is common to all humankind and all religions, which he refers to as “universal reality”. He further asserts that poverty, victimization, violence and patriarchy are all varieties of suffering that the world is faced with. Not only is humanity suffering, but also the cosmos and creatures of the earth. What mankind has turned the world into by his decisions, lifestyle and actions is what we see all around us today (Knitter, 2007:137).

Despite the fact that there are several religions, there is only one threatened earth. He believes that this gives all religions a common agenda. Invariably, even if religions do not see any other reason to dialogue or cooperate with one another, they have a “common ethical task” which should hopefully open more doors on religious dialogue (Knitter, 2007:139). It is interesting to see how Knitter views the practitioners of the ethical-practical bridge as grassroots people, which he calls “ordinary” and not “experts”. The latter could be seen as leaders of religious groups, scholars of religion, etc., but the common person is very much affected by suffering (Knitter, 2007:140). Knitter postulates that this ethical-practical bridge “enables Christians not only to discover the riches of other faiths but also to rediscover what is the unique richness of their own” (Knitter, 2007:146). He views other religions and their efforts to alleviate suffering

in the world through acts of kindness of community development efforts as “real co-workers” in building the kingdom of God on earth (Knitter, 2007:146).

Knitter (2007) proposes a level playing field in the ethical bridge to reduce how the Christians and Muslims in Nigeria react to perceived historical slights or feelings of injustice. A practical way of doing this is through voluntary community based work by the Christians among Muslims over time. When this is done consistently, then religious participation may lead to improved quality of built relationships. Subsequently, mutual social trust could be reinforced. On the one hand, construction of identity which is firmly rooted in the Nigerian context in religion could begin to change the paradigm and tradition which affects how trust relations are built. The ethical-practical bridge prepares a platform for both Christianity and Islam to learn from each other and to discover the richness of their different beliefs.

The kind of theology of religions one accepts as a paradigm reflects the kind of mutual social trust and social dynamics involved across religious borders. As Knitter (2002) argues, Christians need not dismiss claims of Islam but re-examine the same in the light of revealed grace. Since trust is an outcome and dimension of social capital, which has an individual property, the ethical-practical bridge has the potential to help and shape the moralistic trust to promote human dignity. Trust is also a social system, which begins to shape identity formation and construction in a manner that social networks are built across religious borders (bridging capital). The ethical-practical bridge could be a panacea for both the ‘moralistic trust’ and ‘knowledge based trust’ to build a quality social network among the ‘religious other’.

3.3.4 Well-being reinforcing trust?

In this section, attention is given to the concept of well-being and how it may impact on social trust as an outcome of religion; and to see if it has a positive effect on the promotion of human dignity. There is a consciousness of the experience of lived religion in mankind which is an inclusive language. However, the developmental sciences have not fully explored this concept (Benson, Roehlkepartain, & Rude, 2003). Although there has been increased interest in studying benefits of religion to well-being, some of these existing studies provide minute details of theoretical explanations for their proposed outcomes or findings (Benson, Donahue, & Erickson, 1989; Erickson, 1992; Jessor, Van Den Bos, Vanderryn, Costa, & Turbin, 1995; King, 2003; Smith, 2003). According to Pamela and James (2004:710), “Comparisons across levels of religious participation suggest that more religious active youths have a more significant experience of inter-generational community. Religious youths are more likely to interact with trust, and share similar

perspectives with a non familiar adult than are those who are only sometimes involved or not involved in religious activities”.

Religion brings about meaning and well-being, various people have proposed that meaning is coherence in one’s life (Reker and Wong, 1988); and to goal directedness or purposefulness (Ryff and Singer, 1998). “The ontological significance of life from the point of view of the experiencing individual” (Crumbaugh and Maholick, 1964:201) and what does life mean? (Baumeister, 1991). There has been an increasing interest and renewed quest on the construct of ‘meaning in life’ with a focus on psychological strengths (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Meaning in life is regarded as a positive variable and an indicator of well-being (Ryff, 1989) and a facilitator of coping mechanisms (Park and Folkman, 1997). Research has discovered that religion as a factor fosters well-being. It is also associated with reduced levels of depression and hopelessness (Wright, Frost and Wisecarver, 1993). Other studies have revealed that youth who get engaged in religious participation have greater satisfaction and develop more coping mechanisms with life generally (Varon and Riley, 1999). It has been discovered that religion fosters many beliefs and practices that can strengthen people’s ability to cope effectively with life’s challenges (Pargament, Smith, Koenig and Perez, 1998). Several of the doctrines and teachings of religion help address life’s mental, emotional and inter personal stresses and struggles (Worthington, Berry and Parrott, 2001). The implication of the literature in this section is that through religious participation, people have a better understanding of meaning and well-being. They also learn to develop more moralistic trust. Invariably, they develop better coping mechanisms, thus, having the tendency to promote human dignity among the ‘religious other’.

3.4 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

The concept of trust has been discussed from a sociological and religious dimension. How these patterns of trust have been manifesting in the history of Christianity and Islam, was also reviewed. Also, how other authors have conducted similar researches and their results were presented in a theoretical framework for this study. This is to be able to do a comparison with the results in the chapters on data presentation, analysis and discussion, which will be discussed next. This is done in order to show how generalized knowledge can be used to access data and explain it in a manner that will enhance the theoretical framework. This model is a way of looking and thinking, which may not necessarily be the only perspective but brings in to the discourse some richness of how the subject matter could be handled as a narrative in the theological circle.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION: RELIGIOUS PARTICIPATION AND MUTUAL SOCIAL TRUST

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Several disciplines and scholars in the interdisciplinary field of Missiology and Science of Religions are probing into the concept of 'mutual social trust'. This research provides an exploratory and descriptive study of (n=1516) of individual Christians and Muslims in Nigeria with a particular focus on whether religious participation is fostering mutual social trust among the 'religious Other. Attention in this chapter is given to the presentation of data to show the extent to which active religious participation in and outside Christian denominations and the Ummah (Muslim Community) in Nigeria fosters mutual social trust, and why? This is interpreted to show if the result can become a catalyst for affirming and promoting the human dignity of the 'religious other'? This is done with statistical and practical significance in mind. Statistical significance is an indicator of what respondents sometimes may assume is expected from them and that is why a practical significance compares statistics with praxis. The objective is to present similar research outputs, side by side, with how the data set used in this research has been investigated, so as to address the research questions, hypotheses and research objectives; as well as to show areas of agreement and discrepancies in findings when compared to other studies. As mentioned in chapter one, descriptive research attempts to answer the questions such as who, what, where, when or how much, while causal research focuses on why or how one variable produces change in another (Cooper and Schindler, 2001:136). A stratified random sample from all the seven geo-political regions, which are proportional to the population size and urban/rural population in Nigeria, was selected. One thousand five hundred and sixteen adults over the age of eighteen years were interviewed by Pew Forum on 'Religion and Public Life', using English, Hausa, Yoruba and Pidgin languages. This sample was considered nationally representative of the Nigerian adult population.

As described in the introduction of chapter one, an attempt is made to describe the concept of mutual social trust, according to how various pertinent scholars have discussed and engaged with it. The concept was discussed in relation to social groups in which religious participation exists in order to explore whether religious participation of Christians and Muslims in Nigeria is fostering mutual social trust. If they do, what are the reasons? Which variable is responsible for the production of change in another? In the same vein, if they do not, why? Which variable is responsible for the production of change in another? All these questions will be examined in constant check with existing knowledge of the concept of mutual

social trust and how the reality on the ground can be understood and engaged in, in order to make a contribution to the field of comparative theology of religions.

4.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research questions are: “To what extent does active religious participation in and outside Christian denominations and the Ummah (Muslim Community) in Nigeria foster mutual social trust, and the reasons?” “Does the result have implications and could it be a catalyst for affirming and promoting the elements of human dignity of the ‘religious other?’” “Is there any statistical significance as an indicator of what respondents sometimes may assume is expected from them (ideal situation) in comparison with practical significance?”

This hermeneutical and quantitative study in the field of religion and culture examines whether, and how, mutual social trust can be fostered through active religious participation within and outside a Christian denomination and a Muslim community. If yes, what are the possible consequences for affirming and actualizing the human dignity of the ‘religious other,’ and the implications for Christian-Muslim relations in ethnic and religious contexts and forms of exclusion and violence in northern Nigeria? At this stage of the research, it is clear that there are several types of religious participation. The type of religious participation and groups or networks an individual is involved with, could have a positive or negative impact on how mutual social trust can be fostered. This will be highlighted in the course of the data presentation. It is pertinent to define what religious participation means and how it is used in this study. This was discussed in chapter three the section under the heading 3.2. Religion has become a necessity to humans, even if they have doubts about religion do identify themselves especially when filling out applications or data base forms in any country of the world. This type of data base (filling out of applications) may not necessarily be an indication of persuasion or beliefs. In this research, emphasis is not placed on persuasion or beliefs but on the processes of attending religious gatherings, to the extent of forming a kind of network, group affinity or bonding to provide a form of identity that may in turn, influence behaviour.

4.3 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

As discussed in the introduction of this chapter, the use of exploration according to Babbie (2010:92-93) is “to satisfy the researcher’s curiosity and desire for better understanding, to test the feasibility of

undertaking a more extensive study. To develop the methods to be employed in any subsequent study and merely to set out to learn more". He argues that exploratory studies are quite valuable in social science research, as they are essential whenever a researcher is breaking new ground or discovering new insights on a research topic. He cautions, however, that exploratory studies have to do with obtaining a representative sample as research may not actually answer its research problem and sometimes only points the way to the answer. This is why a further step is used, that of adopting the scientific description of what is observed which are more accurate and precise. Descriptive approaches answer the questions of what, where, when, how and why (Babbie, 2010:93-94). Pallant (2007) submits that descriptive statistics describe the characteristics of samples, check variables for any violation of assumptions underlying the statistical techniques and also address specific research questions (Pallant, 2007:53). In this research, the bar graph is used to aid description as it does show the number of cases in particular categories, and also shows scores on some continuous variables for different categories (Pallant, 2007:67).

This chapter analyses and discusses the data by using triangulation methodology. There is no suggestion here that the theological task somehow should be eliminated or subordinated by using empirical and often quantitative methods such as those discussed in this study. On the contrary, what is required is a partnership, in which the importance of theological questions is respected and the value of empirically derived constrains is prized (Wildman, 2013). Empirically minded theologians may also learn from this; that attending to multiple disciplinary perspectives can clarify complex definitional questions and steer around conceptual traps, such as defining and studying things in terms of what one discipline most easily grasps. This leads to what Whitehead (1925: 51) calls "the fallacy of misplaced concreteness". An example of misplaced concreteness could be seen in the way some theologians naturally think in terms of ultimate experiences¹⁸. They are likely to miss other aspects of spiritual experiences, whereas sociologists ask people how they think and discover that some think of spirituality in other ways as well. They may interpret experiences in terms of usage trends¹⁹. Psychologists may interpret experiences in terms of personality structures, and neuroscientists in terms of brain functions, thereby missing other aspects of

¹⁸ For nearly 25 years, Gordon Kaufman has been a senior professor of theology at Harvard. His earlier books, such as *Systematic Theology: A Historicist Perspective* (1968), *God the Problem* (1972): and *An Essay on Theological Method* (1975), have been important contributions to this America's theological discussions. Now, in his late 60s, he has written his best book, tying together a lifetime of theological reflection. In this book he makes reference to how Christians choose to use "God" as the symbol for the ultimate mystery of this creative process, so that "life must at all points be lived in awe and respect before the ultimate mystery of things. But now this mystery is apprehended as profoundly humanizing as well as relativizing: it is a mystery, therefore, that can be loved as well as feared, a mystery within which we can feel at home." The symbol of God, Kaufman maintains, points with particular effectiveness at once to the ultimate mystery and to the relativity of all human expressions of that mystery.

¹⁹ How words are perceived and used vary from time to time. There are words considered by the older generation as rude and the younger generations do not perceive it the same way. For example, 'hi' in contemporary times all over the world is accepted by young people as respectable enough, while the older generation may consider it as disrespectful.

spiritual experiences, including their theological and existential significance (Wildman, 2013). The fallacy of misplaced concreteness is misleading. As we describe spiritual experiences in terms that reflect our immediate interests rather than the nature of the experiences in their manifold richness, we then arbitrarily assert that phenomenon as nothing, through our narrow definition that registers it as such in our minds. Multidisciplinary approaches to spiritual experiences protect researchers against the fallacies of misplaced concreteness, and quantitative techniques help to convey the contributions of a number of disciplines to the overall interpretative task. They are ground breaking tools for discernment in research (Wildman, 2013). Our theological research, if it should be effective and efficient, must be built upon a familiarity with the described reality. This reality needs to be explained, which requires a great deal of prior descriptive-empirical investigation. Stopping at mere descriptions of particularities is social and scientifically underachieving. Sometimes our discussions are unnecessarily elaborate and discussion sections needlessly extended, speculative and loosely connected to empirical findings (Smith, 2010:3). This is very vital to our understanding of the relationships and associations of how Christians and Muslims bring rich contributions to how one interprets causations (Williams, Robert, and Kendrick, 1989: 110).

An inductive approach involving inferences from specific observations (i.e. sample of cases from the data set to a theoretical population (Nigeria) is used in this chapter. Everyday experiences are generalized from small numbers of observation (n=1516) to a general population or set of events involving about 170 million Nigerians. This is combined with retroductive reasoning, using inferences from observations. On the basis of observations, perceived patterns and trends in the observations, this research hypothesizes to explain observed events and data (Mouton, 2001:111-118). An evaluation and appraisal of findings are done to reiterate, discuss and show how the findings and overall research fits into the general body of existing knowledge in the study of lived religions. Data is presented and analyzed in terms of patterns, tested hypotheses interpreted in relation to interdisciplinary literature. The researcher discusses findings to confirm that identity and construction of religious views and values affect how people relate with people of other religions, especially Christians and Muslims in the Nigerian context. There is the need to do a comparative theology of religions at this juncture, using a generalized set of phenomena to explain the Nigerian religious context. This will aid and improve a researcher's method of enquiry into why Nigeria may be regarded as a very religious nation and yet one may be tempted to wonder why this kind of religious participation is not fostering mutual social trust amongst the 'religious other'. This research has proposed the issue of mutual social trust as the crux of the matter.

4.4 HYPOTHESIS AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This section of the research presents and analyzes data to answer the first hypothesis in this study and research objectives. The focal point is to determine whether religious participation of Christians and Muslims in Nigeria is fostering mutual social trust that more likely leads to the promotion of the human dignity of the religious ‘other’. It further highlights the relevant existing body of knowledge on the same, in order to have a more informed understanding and discussion of mutual social trust. The questions analyzed are presented with a table of basic descriptive statistics on participation, attendance and trust. H_0 stands for the null hypothesis, signifying the expected logical outcome that is consistent with the theoretical framework and supported by empirical evidence; while H_a stands for the alternate hypothesis signifying the opposite logical outcome that is supported by empirical evidence.

H_0 – There is a significant statistical association between religious participation and service attendance and fostering mutual social trust that more likely leads to the promotion of the human dignity of the religious “other”.

H_a – There is no significant statistical association between religious participation and service attendance and fostering mutual social trust that more likely leads to the promotion of the human dignity of the religious “other”.

Q9 (MST –Mutual Social Trust) as a dependent or outcome variable²⁰ is tested against Q40 and Q41 merged (RP – Religious Participation) in the data set. Q9 asks: “Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people?” While the merged questions representing religious participation comprises of question 40 and 41has Q40 asks: “Aside from weddings and funerals how often do you attend religious services... more than once a week, once a week, once or twice a month, a few times a year, seldom, or never?” Q41 asks: “On average, how often do you attend the mosque or Islamic Centre for Salah and Jum’ah Prayer?” This is done to ensure that the Christian and Muslim sample is captured in the data analysis in a general form before zooming into the Christian denomination data as the Muslim denomination data is outside the scope of this research.

²⁰ The questions used are standard survey questions that have been tested and applied in Pew Research Centre’s Forum on Religion & Public Life, *the Future of the Global Muslim Population: Projections for 2010-2030*, 2011, <http://pewforum.org/The-Future-of-the-Global-Muslim-Population.aspx>.

In the data set n, 30% (n=203) of the Christians answered most people can be trusted; while 62% (n=416) said they can't be too careful dealing with other people. The data indicates that 7% (n=51) said it depends on certain conditions and 1% (n=8) abstained from answering. The Muslim respondents had 27% (n=227) answering most people can be trusted; while 59% (n=475) said they can't be too careful when dealing with people. Another 11% (n=93) said it depends on certain conditions and 3% (n=23) abstained from answering the question. Q40 and Q41 were merged to measure 'religious participation'. This is done first to achieve a broad overview of both Muslims and Christians together before later narrowing down to Christian denominations only. The findings showed that 57% of the Christians attended services more than once a week, while 76% of Muslims attended prayers more than once a week. It also revealed that 32% of Christian and 11% of the Muslim respondents attended religious functions once a week. From the data set, one could see a high level of religious participation among Muslims and Christians in the Nigerian context.

4.4.1. Test of hypothesis

This is Q9 in the data set, which asks: "Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?"

TABLE 1 FREQUENCY COUNT OF MUTUAL SOCIAL TRUST

RATING	Number	Percentage*
Most people can be trusted	433	28
Can't be too careful	901	59
Other/Depends	150	10
Don't know	26	2
Refused	6	1
TOTAL	1,516	100%

* Percentages have been rounded up and the total should be 100%

Religious participation is a combination of two questions for both Christians and Muslims. If not Muslim, Question 40 asks: "Aside from weddings and funerals how often do you attend religious services... more than once a week, once a week, once or twice a month, a few times a year, seldom, or never?" While question 41, which asks if Muslim: "On the average, how often do you attend the mosque or Islamic centre for salah and Jum'ah Prayer?"

TABLE 2 A CASE SUMMARY OF MST, RELIGREC (RELIGION-CHRISTIAN OR MUSLIM) AND RELIGIOUS PARTICIPATION OF BOTH RELIGIONS

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
MST *	1516	91.9%	134	8.1%	1650	100.0%
RELIGrec						
MST * RP	1516	91.9%	134	8.1%	1650	100.0%

TABLE 3 A CROSS TABULATION OF MUTUAL SOCIAL TRUST AND RELIGION

MST * RELIGrec Cross tabulation

Count

	RELIGrec				%	Total
	Christian	Muslim	Ancestral, tribal, animist, or other traditional African religion	Other/Don't know/Refused		
MST (VOLUNTEERED)						
Most people can be trusted	203	227	1	2	29	433
Can't be too careful	416	475	9	1	59	901
Other/Depends	51	93	3	3	10	150
Don't know	7	18	1	0	1.6	26
Refused	1	5	0	0	.4	6
Total	678	818	14	6		1516

TABLE 4 A CROSS TABULATION OF MUTUAL SOCIAL TRUST AND RELIGIOUS PARTICIPATION

MST * RP Cross tabulation

Count

	RP								%	Total
	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00	8.00	9.00		
MST (VOLUNTEERED)										
Most people can be trusted	302	72	12	10	15	14	7	1	29	433
Can't be too careful	592	192	33	21	31	19	9	4	59	901
Other/Depends	97	33	6	5	3	2	4	0	10	150
Don't know	19	3	0	2	0	0	2	0	1.6	26
Refused	4	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	.4	6
Total	1014	301	51	38	49	35	23	5		1516

The null hypothesis is accepted; there is a significant statistical association between religious participation, service attendance and fostering mutual social trust that leads to the promotion of the human dignity of the religious “other”. The practical significance is something else entirely as the constant crisis in Nigeria displays it is only an ideal situation that respondents have indicated based on societal expectations. In the Nigerian context, one could see an overlap of the two major theories of trust adopted in the theoretical framework. One theory is that specialized trust is based on reciprocity and knowledge of others. The second theory is that generalized trust is not based on reciprocity, which may be developed through early childhood personality formed and view of life which some may also regard as well-being. Uslaner sees this as optimism and having a sense of control over one’s life. However, research has also shown that group dynamics are very strong with regards to the construction of identities because of the cultural values of the people in the Nigerian context.

Looking at the data based on whether people generally can be trusted or you can’t be too careful dealing with people, the way Muslims in the Nigerian context responded shows a high value of ‘don’t know’. Invariably, the issue or subject of trust among the religious other becomes a very valid point responsible for how people of both religions treat one another, which is directly related to the promotion of human dignity. This kind of data is showing the reader that interreligious dialogue will be minimal in this context. One could deduce that there exists an almost balanced divide between associating Christians with

tolerance in the Nigerian context. If Muslims do not associate tolerance with Christians in Nigeria, then the issue of having a platform for dialogue or interreligious dialogue is slim. One may begin to wonder if the Golden Rule exists at all in this religious context at all. If you will do to others as you will want them to do to you, and you do not associate tolerance with the 'religious other', then a complex set of relationships that can grow sour begins to form and develop into what may be beyond the control of what religious participation can achieve.

In essence, increased religious participation may lead to mutual social trust. Once unpleasant experiences exist in the subconscious of religious participants while their identities are being formed, then it may become even more challenging to promote human dignity. This in turn affects how people of different religions see one another, especially Muslims and Christians in the Nigerian situation. On the side of how Christians have reacted to the same question of whether most people of other religions can be trusted or they can't be too careful with trusting people of other religions, the respondents were more precise and opinionated about how they have constructed their ideas about Muslims. However, they still do have a high number of respondents who do not associate tolerance with Muslims at all. There were no extreme responses for undecided respondents. This pattern reflects more subjectivity than objectivity. Invariable opinions are being formed, based on perceived knowledge of the 'religious other'. The issue of generalized trust, which does not depend on reciprocity, seems to be far off. The range of responses is highly scattered when it comes to describing ones view of generally trusting people who have different religious values than themselves. How Christians have also responded shows a wide range of almost equally divided patterns of opinions. On the surface, this may seem as if the Muslims are judged negatively but it also reflects the kind of spiritual, social and theological space in which both Christians and Muslims co-exist in the Nigerian context.

There exists a positive relation between mutual social trust and religious participation. Based on the data set, one may arrive at this conclusion but as it was mentioned in chapter one of this thesis, some aspects of social science cannot be measured. However, research by Wuthnow (2005), Dreyer, (2011), Wepener & Cilliers (2011) and Pieterse (2011) points to the fact that religious participation, especially when it involves voluntary community services among the 'religious other' builds trust. If this kind of religious participation would be encouraged in the Nigerian context, then the likelihood of experiencing a positive mutual social trust is high. In the Nigerian situation, a complex interaction of trust and religious participation (group dimension) exists, which is supposed to reinforce or promote the human dignity of the 'religious other'. In the Nigerian context, there is more bonding capital than bridging capital as people participate in lived religions. They engage their "tool kit" of culture to develop evolving patterns of

bridging capital. The Muslims and Christians in Nigeria have developed a high bonding capital among people of the same religion but less of bridging capital.

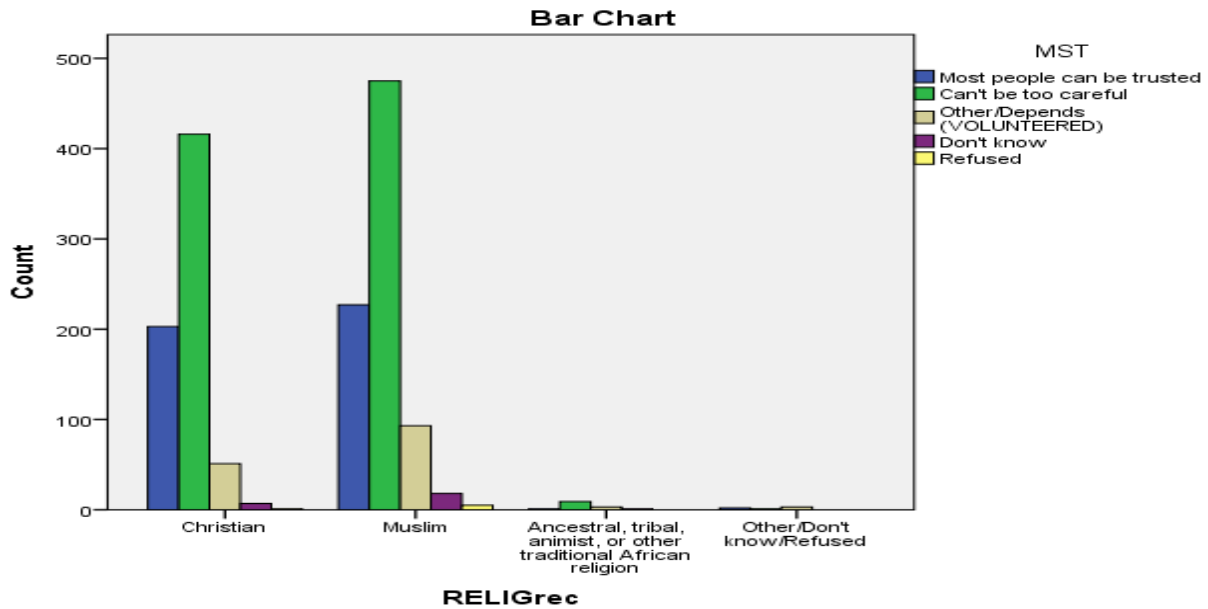
To control for other possible determining variables such as the type of religious participation or denominational affiliation, a Christian or a Muslim thinks and behaves differently on the issue of trust, or if age or gender makes a different contribution to how religious participation may lead to mutual social trust and the promotion of human dignity.

4.4.2 Religions in Nigeria

It is pertinent to see the general spread of how Christians and Muslims respond to the issue of trust or mistrust of the 'religious other' before attention is given to Christian denominations. This research is a theological study looking at how Christians have responded to diversity, since this is a theological study. It is outside the scope of this research to test how Muslims would respond to the same situation.

RELIGrec asks if "Christian, Muslim, Ancestral worshipper or other," and Q9 is on "mutual trust". Which asks: "Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?"

FIGURE 1 RELIGIONS AND MUTUAL SOCIAL TRUST



On a general level of respondents, Christians and Muslims in Nigeria almost have a balanced level of trust and mistrust. However, Muslims have a slightly higher level of mistrust but also a little higher level of trust. This is not based on denominational affiliations but on a wider scope of analysis.

4.4.4 Denominational affiliation

Q36 and Q38 were used to determine denominational affiliation of Christians and Muslims. Categorizing the Muslim respondents was more cumbersome, but 56% do not identify with the Sufi orders. This spread the respondents from more classical or traditional Islam to the more extreme and radical Islam. This research does not include the latter category. The data set, however, points to the fact that there is an effect of denominational affiliation on the subject of trust in the Christian respondents. This section will concentrate on how Christians in the Nigerian context responded to denominational affiliation. In the Nigerian context generally, whether Muslims are vocal about their opinion or not, they have a strong methodology of how their identities are constructed. Their identities are more uniform than those of the Christians, which are based on the differences of doctrine and tradition. The data set shows that the Nigerian Catholics are more trusting; while other research, for example by Kalu, (2010) has shown that Pentecostals are the least trusting. This research found that the Anglicans, Baptists and the Pentecostals in the Nigerian context, trust even less than the Catholics. There seems to be a change in the narratives from the pulpits in the Nigerian context, which are changing the dynamics of the Pentecostals to the broad

spectrum of both orthodox and evangelical churches. Uslaner (2002) further discovered that some form of social interaction does not contribute to positive relationships, which may lead to trusting others. He conducted this experiment in a bar (Uslaner, 2002:17). In Kalu's submission, "Pentecostals image the introduction of the Sharia as a component of an insidious project to Islamize Nigeria" (Kalu, 2010:10). Kalu (2010) opines that Pentecostal and charismatic groups in Nigeria contributed to the rising and ongoing tension, tolerance and low trust between Christians and Muslims. He suggests they have "demonized Islam in their theology and practices" (Kalu, 2010:101). He claims both religions have rejected the "plurality in the worldview and cultural backgrounds of their indigenous communities" (Kalu, 2010:101).

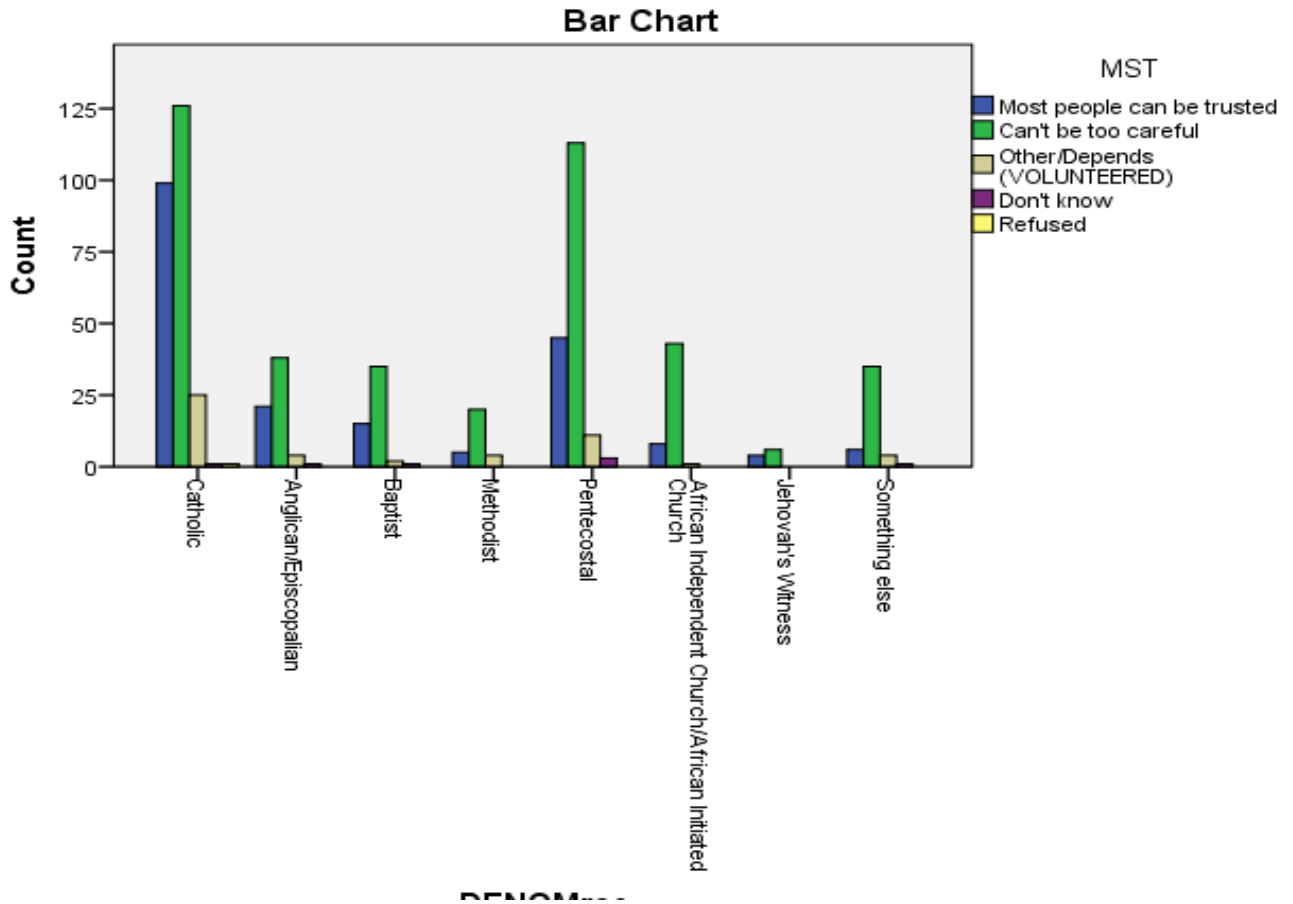
DENOMrec ask: "As I read a list, please tell me which denomination or church, if any, you identify with most closely. Catholic, Anglican/Episcopalian, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Pentecostal, African Independent Church/Africa Initiated Church, Jehovah's witness, Seventh Day Adventist, Congregationalist, Dutch Reformed Church, United Reformed Church, or Christian Reformed Church, Ethiopian Orthodox, something else, none in particular, ust a Protestant, not further specified, just a Christian, not further specified, don't know/Refused". If the respondent names more than one of the groups in the list, they are probed to learn which denomination or church the respondent identifies with most and to record that response.

TABLE 5 A PERCENTAGE AND FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS AND MUTUAL SOCIAL TRUST

DENOMrec

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Catholic	252	15.3	37.2	37.2
Anglican/Episcopalian	64	3.9	9.4	46.6
Baptist	53	3.2	7.8	54.4
Methodist	29	1.8	4.3	58.7
Pentecostal	172	10.4	25.4	84.1
African Independent Church/African Initiated Church	52	3.2	7.7	91.7
Jehovah's Witness	10	.6	1.5	93.2
Something else	46	2.8	6.8	100.0
Total	678	41.1	100.0	
Missing System	972	58.9		
Total	1650	100.0		

FIGURE 2 CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS VS SOCIAL TRUST



The Catholic denomination has a high level of trust of the religious other. Looking at the Figure 4.2. there is a small margin of members who really have a very high trust margin of the ‘religious other’. This is rather strange but supports the reality on the ground. All over the world, the Catholic faith has been more pluralistic than other denominational affiliations, which we can see from the scholars in the pluralist schools of thought, like Knitter (2002) and Clooney (2010). The type of religious participation and examples set by the leadership of the Catholic Church points in this direction. When the last pope was appointed, there was a sizeable and recognizable Muslim delegation, Jews and others taking a special place at the occasion. However, the Nigerian situation shows a large growing Catholic population who have a concern for trusting the ‘religious other,’ which may also be a pointer as to why there is a high level of mistrust among Christians and Muslims. In the Nigerian data set, it is an interesting discovery that the Anglican, Baptist and Pentecostal denominations have the same kind of response, while the Methodist denomination stands out as more trusting of the ‘religious other’. This discovery could show the shift in

patterns of behaviour, based on the kind of narratives preached from the pulpit of these congregations to warrant a shift from what was observed by Kalu (2010:101) in the 1970's. Only the Pentecostals demonized Islam, which contributed to the rise in tension between Muslims and Christians. Even the Evangelicals followed suit.

TABLE 6 CROSS TABULATION OF CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS AND GENDER

DENOMrec * Q96. RECORD GENDER Cross tabulation

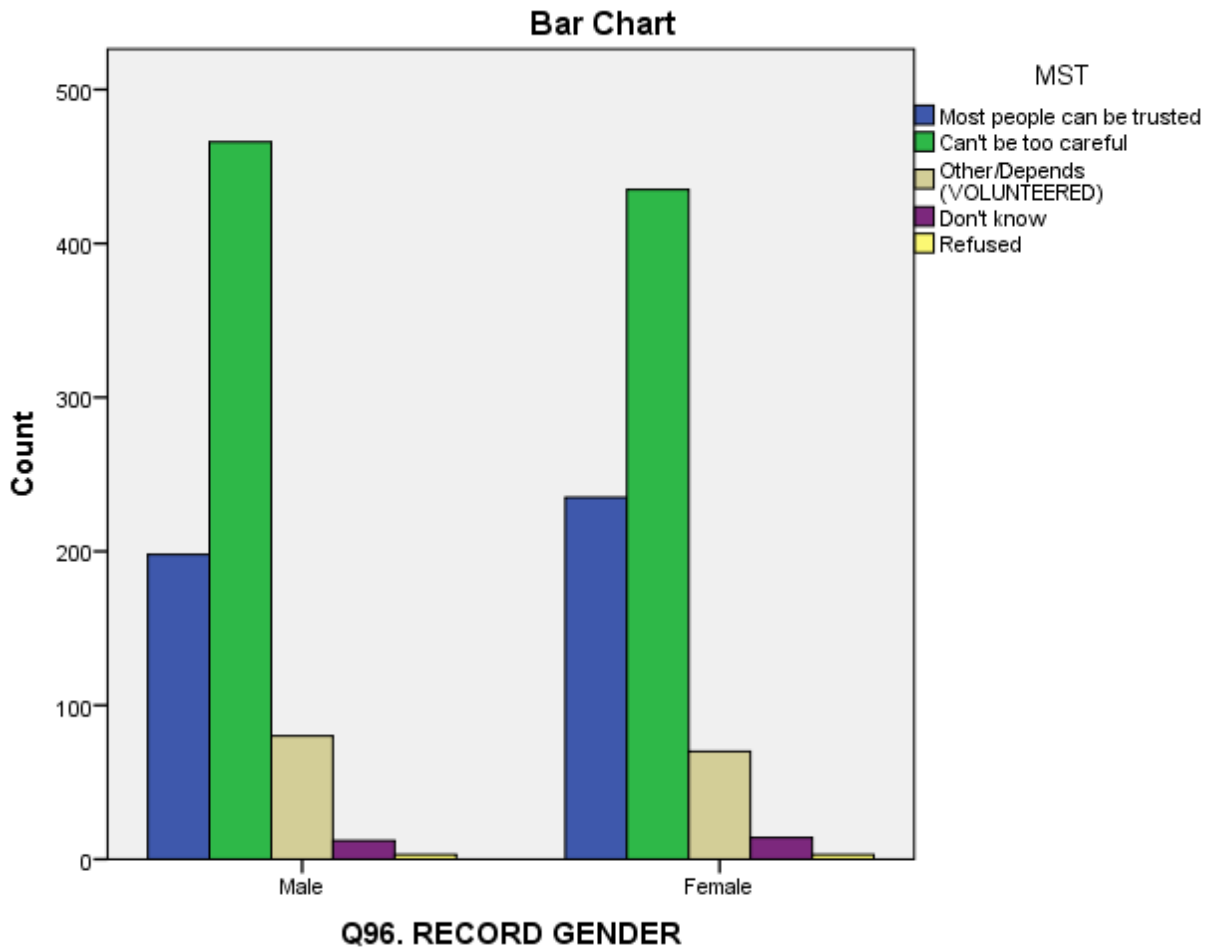
Count

	Q96. RECORD GENDER		%	Total
	Male	Female		
Catholic	123	129	37	252
Anglican/Episcopalian	34	30	9	64
Baptist	30	23	8	53
Methodist	10	19	4	29
Pentecostal	81	91	25	172
African Independent Church/African Initiated Church	25	27	8	52
Jehovah's Witness	6	4	2	10
Something else	25	21	7	46
Total	334	344		678

4.4.5 Testing the relationship between mutual social trust and gender

Several hypotheses have been put forward by various scholars with regards to this subject under discussion. For instance, that females are more trusting in the American example and have increased affection towards the religious other (Wilson, 2013:4). However, Wilson argues that it “is not to suggest that under all circumstances, strong group identification will result in greater generalized social trust” (Wilson, 2013:4). In a similar research, Markus & Oyserman (1989) discovered that the female gender was more trusting than men. There is a positive relationship between mutual social trust and gender. It implies that a person’s gender tends to impact on mutual social trust.

FIGURE 3 BAR CHART OF GENDER AND MUTUAL SOCIAL TRUST



The female gender is discovered to be more trusting in the Nigerian situation, which is in agreement with other researches discussed in the introductory section of this chapter.

4.4.6 Testing the relationship between mutual social trust and age

Uslaner (2002) discovered that the issue of trust is not about giving something in return, especially for young people. He holds the opinion that “trust does not depend upon reciprocity” (Uslaner, 2002:11). He conducted a survey in 1996 and found that “people who were helped by others when they were young were no more trusting than people who did not received such assistance” (Uslaner, 2002:11). His analysis of the Giving and Volunteering survey of the Independent Sector reveals 38.5 percent of the youth who had received one form of assistance or another from people, believed that most people can be trusted, as compared to 38.3 percent who had not received such assistance (Uslaner, 2002:39). According to

Wuthnow (1991), only a third of the populace believes that other people care about neighbours and friends.

Varon and Riley's research showed that young people and members of their families who have attended religious institutions show greater satisfaction with their lives and how they relate to others (Varon and Riley, 1999). Some studies have shown that people who are involved in religion tend to develop more coping mechanisms with challenges of youth (Thorton and Camburn, 1989; Lammers et al., 2000; Murry 1994; Whitehead, Wilcox and Rostosky, 2001). Pamela and James, 2004:710) found that "more religious active youths have a more significant experience of intergenerational community and that religious youths are more likely to interact with trust and share similar perspectives with a non-familiar adult than those who are only sometimes involved or not involved in religious activities". Several other researches, i.e. that of Pargament et al., (1998); Ellison, (1991); Koenig, George and Siegler, (1988), indicate that in America, religions do comprise and foster several kinds of beliefs and practices which enhance and enrich people's ability to develop coping mechanisms to deal with life's issues and challenges. It was discovered that religions offer young people various kinds of cognitive skills and an aptitude for facing or confronting mental, emotional and interpersonal stressors (Worthington, Berry and Parrot, 2001; Taylor et al., 2000).

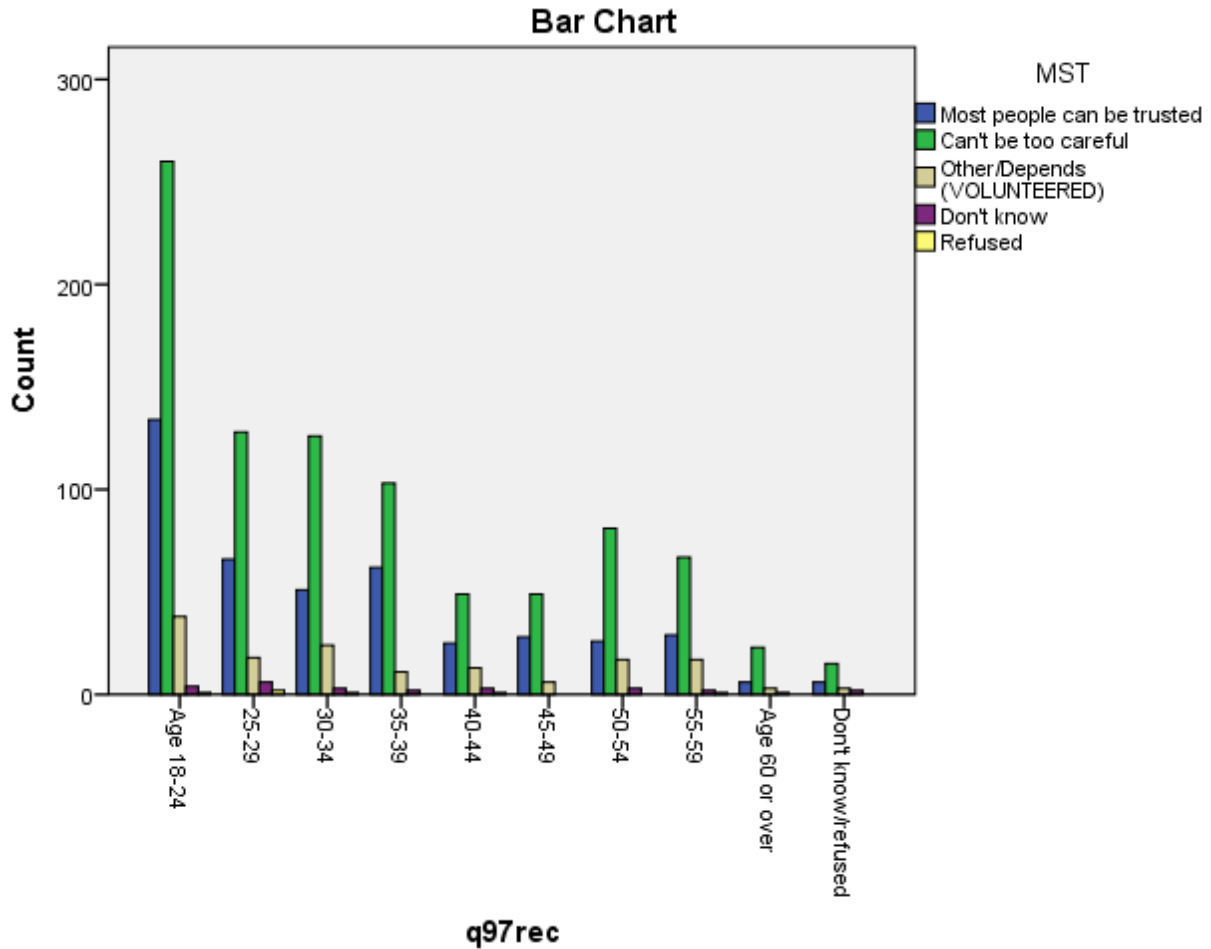
The question regarding age was Q97, which ask: "How old were you at your last birthday?" This was an open-ended question and the interviewers recorded the respondents' verbatim responses. These have been recorded into the categories below: 1 (Age 18-24), 2 (25-29), 3 (30-34), 4 (35-39), 5 (40-44), 6 (45-49), 7 (50-54), 8 (55-59), 9 (Age 60 or over) and 99 (Don't know/refused). There is a positive relationship between mutual social trust and age.

TABLE 7 MUTUAL SOCIAL TRUST AND AGE CROSS TABULATION

Q97rec * MST Cross tabulation

	MST					%	Total
	Most people can be trusted	Can't be too careful	Other/Depends (Volunteered)	Don't know	Refused		
Age 18-24	134	260	38	4	1	29	437
25-29	66	128	18	6	2	15	220
30-34	51	126	24	3	1	14	205
35-39	62	103	11	2	0	12	178
40-44	25	49	13	3	1	6	91
45-49	28	49	6	0	0	5	83
50-54	26	81	17	3	0	8	127
55-59	29	67	17	2	1	1.7	116
Age 60 or over	6	23	3	1	0	2	33
Don't know/refused	6	15	3	2	0	1.3	26
Total	433	901	150	26	6		1516

FIGURE 4 BAR CHART OF AGE AND MUTUAL SOCIAL TRUST



Younger people in the Nigerian situation tend to be more trusting, in accordance with other researches and existing knowledge. However, the level of mistrust is also high. This category seems to be the foot soldiers used as the warriors for religious violence when such situations escalate.

The subject of trust has been researched from two perspectives: generalized trust, which does not depend upon reciprocity from others; and knowledge based trust, which is dependent on reciprocity from others. Religious participation is a form of bonding and should be able to form bridging capital. Religious participation is a form of group solidarity, which should influence how we see others. The kind of religious participation based on the emphasis of narratives from the pulpits and relationships developed through bonding and bridging, will reflect the kind of volunteering amongst the religious others. Generalized trust is based on a view of life, experiences and well-being. Lived religion should promote

interaction and relationships through religious participation. However, the data set shows a high degree of caution from respondents, which may point to the fact that a high level of uncertainty exists, as well as tension with regards to trusting the religious other in the Nigerian context. This kind of tension can lead to violence and constant clashes, resulting in the kind of experiences being recorded in recent times among Muslims and Christians. On Q9, 30% (n=203) of Christians said most people can be trusted, while 62% (n=416) said they cannot be too careful with others. On the same Q9, 27% (n=227) of Muslim respondents said most people can be trusted, and 59% (n=475) said one can't be too careful with trusting others. Data shows 7% (n=51) Christians and 11% (n=93) Muslims gave conditions for their positions, which could fall on either side of the positive or negative responses.

Reflecting on and understanding other religions from a Christian theological perspective leads to several theologies of religion, especially when the issue of trust is involved. There is an unending argument on typologies of religions and possible interpretations and implications to the 'religious other'. Whatever the school of thought employed on the 3 major paradigms of pluralism, inclusivism and exclusivism, it does not remove the fact that challenges of articulation, comprehension and praxis exist. The pluralism adopted in the theoretical framework of this research is the fulfillment model combined with some form of inclusivism and mutuality model, which adopts the ethical practical bridge. As the researcher juxtaposes Knitter, Wuthnow, Dreyer and Pieterse's models, a pattern of thinking begins to form. In Wuthnow's study on how religious groups promote forgiving, he ascertains that about a third of people in the American public really have trust or care when it comes to needs of friends and neighbours.

In essence, one can say that despite the high level of religious participation, trust is not being fostered. Wuthnow thus proposes that religion leave the question open of whether forgiveness is reinforced simply by religious socialization and participation in general or whether it can be facilitated by specific kinds of religious activities (Wuthnow, 1991). In the Nigeria context, being less forgiving may be a factor hindering mutual social trust from being fostered among the religious Other Coleman agrees and concludes, "The role of social interaction in small groups and other voluntary associations has been emphasized as a way of maintaining or restoring trust" (Coleman, 1990:300). Dreyer and Pieterse's study on a church with character and its social capital for projects amongst the poor contributes "the line of thought regarding the participation between the church for the poor and the church of the poor on an equal footing in the exchange of social capital to each other" (Pieterse, 2004:11). This explains how they have constructed their religious identity in line with their social status. Their affinity and bonding is strong, however, the worshippers did not consider how this same affinity would play out when it comes to the religious other.

Dreyer (2009:431) further asserted, “A congregation with an inner circle of committed church members, with a movement from the inside to the outside and back inside, has the competence and motivation to reach outside the inner circle to the poor in other contexts with effective projects such as social capital to make a difference in South Africa”. In this case, consideration was not given to how the same will play out among people of other religions. In the Nigerian situation, a balance almost exists in the population amongst the Christians and Muslims. Nigeria has the highest population of Muslims living in one country in Africa. One can see how and why in other regions like Southern Africa where Christians are in the majority, the response in certain circumstances may vary from the norm. Such variations can be seen, even in North African countries where Muslims are in the majority. The mutuality model will be expanded on towards the close of this chapter in order to see how Knitter’ model may help the Nigerian context with the interpretative and theological analysis of the opportunities and challenges gleaned from the data.

4.5 MUTUAL SOCIAL TRUST IN ETHICAL-PRACTICAL BRIDGE

This section of the research focuses on the interaction and patterns, which shape actions based on the paradigm or tradition being used. Social capital theory emphasizes bonding and bridging, and how they impact on theology, witness, dialogue and service, as viewed from the paradigm of Putnam (1995) and Uslaner (2010). Of significance here is to discuss the various traditions and their implications on how their models interact with the ‘religious other’. The chapter concludes with a discussion of Knitter’s ethical-practical bridge.

4.5.1 Exclusivists, theology, witness, dialogue and service

According to Wuthnow (2005), this paradigm sees other religions as inferior and not leading to salvation. This paradigm sees from the eyes of the gospel that all other religions do not lead to a saving faith, knowledge and power of God. This school of thought believes that God may save all through faith. They are never able to know the ‘religious other,’ as they firmly believe that only through Jesus Christ can all religions be evaluated. This basic evangelical paradigm requires an explicit faith in Christ for salvation. The issue of theological stand, witness, dialogue and service to the ‘religious other’ is affected by the paradigm one holds about others. The exclusivists tend to experience more conflict and less pressure of witnessing and service among the ‘religious other,’ or nothing at all. In essence, trust is not properly built. From the data set, this forms the large category of Christians in the Nigerian context, thus, resulting in less trust being established.

4.5.2 Inclusivity, theology, witness, dialogue and service

Wuthnow (2005) views this category of Christians as people who have a universe of relative truth of the possibility of salvation, which is present in other religions since God works in mysterious ways. However, their ultimate salvation can only be found in Christ. They could be patronizing and unstable during dialogue as they believe in general revelation and that one does not need to possess knowledge of Christ's work to be saved. They have rationalized that some, through no fault of their own, may die without hearing about Christ. Their paradigm is helping unveil Christ and discover that he is already present in other religions. It is mostly Catholics that hold this stance, as they believe that saving works of faith exist outside the known boundaries of the Church. Under this premise, if God is at work in other religions, why do we need to preach to them? This discourages dialogue and values differences, such as the pluralist position. In the Nigerian context, the small populace of this paradigm has not allowed for proper dialogue and witnessing to the 'religious other' but have been high on service amongst the 'religious other', which has helped reduce the occurrences of reduced violence in areas dominated by this denomination.

4.5.3 The mutuality model: the ethical-practical bridge and pluralism

Pluralism does not focus on whether religions are right or wrong, but rather that they could be a valid path to salvation. This paradigm believes Jesus is the fulfillment, but that there may be possibilities of salvation in other religions. This paradigm emphasizes interfaith dialogue, comparative religion, ecumenical/mission studies. etc. They possess a radical openness and promote tolerance, dialogue and peaceful co-existence. This paradigm does not really value religious differences as they consider the mysterious core of all religions to be the same. This group is not well represented in the Nigerian context. There is a need to hold a pluralist paradigm, while holding onto one's beliefs and faith.

The mutuality model is a typology of the fulfillment model that views Christianity as a fulfillment of other religions and not as a replacement, which is considered a balanced understanding of other religious traditions. This position affirms that God's love is universal for all people and fulfilled in Christ (Knitter, 2002:63). The perspective of the ethical-practical bridge provides a platform of active faith participation in voluntary community projects among people who are considered 'the other'. The proponents use ethical issues and responsibility as platforms to sustain a kind of interfaith exchange. Their ideology is that theology should foster true love of others as common grounds are sought for opportunities to interact. This provides a common agenda as doors are opened for religious dialogue (Knitter, 2002:134). Theology leads to witnessing and this brings about dialogue, which eventually leads to service. The ethical-practical bridge is a convenient platform to see these progressions of relating to others. People within the same

group experience more bonding and the extension of bridging to others. As they participate together, knowledge of each other is deepened; there is ample opportunity for reciprocity, which encourages both bonding and bridging, based on the model of Putnam et al. However, Uslaner's approach is a pivot to the ethical-practical bridge, which does not expect reciprocation. Engagement is achieved through a person's view of life, which trusts others without any knowledge of the other, nor expects reciprocity.

It is very easy to become sentimental about one's doctrinal or theological stand when it comes to religion. One may be blinded by tradition and refuse to be open to the growing lack of mutual social trust among religions. Leaning on Clooney (2010) it is important for religions to speak to one another. We are living in a world of diversity and the ethical-practical bridge may be a way for religions to dialogue and work together despite differences. Knitter states that, "If theology of other believers does not foster a true love of other believers, then something is deeply dysfunctional with that theology, no matter how biblical it seems to be" (Knitter, 2007:135). However, one may tend to argue that people of other religions are not believers and this may not necessarily apply to them. We have a common threatened earth, as well as ecological and social challenges, which could be a common ground for people of different faiths to work together. Thus, Knitter believes that "a shared ethical dialogue, as it were, will open doors and lead the way to a more effective religious dialogue" (Knitter, 2007:139). Knitter emphasizes authentic dialogue, having a level playing field, commitment to Christ and openness to others as crucial to explore the ethical-practical bridge.

4.6 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

This chapter has focused on presenting and discussing the data set using the theoretical model of the research as a road map to understanding the thought patterns. It is pertinent to say that this same subject could be looked through other kinds of lenses but this is the lens chosen by the researcher to actualize the research goals and objectives. The above data presented has been tested and a general agreement with the generalized knowledge on the subject of mutual social trust has been found, with the exception of a few variables that did not display any significant difference in the results.

CHAPTER 5: DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION - WELL-BEING AND MUTUAL SOCIAL TRUST

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The objective of this chapter is to present similar research outputs on well-being and demonstrate how it impacts on mutual social trust and the research objectives that have to do with income and educational qualification, side by side, with those from the data set used in this research. This will be done to highlight areas of agreement, as well as any discrepancies, when compared to other studies. Income and education have direct implications on one's view of life or the meaning attached to life, as they provide the necessary exposure that could impact trust relations.

5.2 HYPOTHESIS AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

5.2.1 Hypothesis

The null hypothesis is the expected predictive pattern based on generalized knowledge, which may be the actual situation in practice or not. The alternate hypothesis is the outcome discovered, which may not be the expected outcome.

H_0 – Well-being leads to mutual social trust as an outcome of religious participation and is more likely to have a significant positive impact on the promotion of the human dignity of the religious “other”.

H_a – Well-being leads to mutual social trust as an outcome of religious participation and is not likely to have a significant positive impact on the promotion of the human dignity of the religious “other”.

Q7 (WB – Well-Being) is analyzed against Q88 (HD – Human Dignity) in order to test the second hypothesis. Q7 asked, “And what about your personal economic situation how would you describe it-is it very good, somewhat good, somewhat bad or very bad?” While Q88 asked, “Some people think that the tactics of using arms and violence against civilians in defense of their religion is justified. Other people believe that, no matter what the reason, this kind of violence is never justified. How about you? Do you personally feel that the tactic of using arms and violence against civilians in defense of your religion can

be often justified, sometimes justified, rarely justified, or never justified?” Only 8% (n=56) of Christians and 6% (n=52) of Muslims described their economic situation as very good. Another 55% (n=370) of Christians and 53% (n=431) of Muslims believe it is somewhat good. When the two are averaged, 63% (n=252) of Christians and 60% (n=335) of Muslims feel good about their economic situation, which is directly linked to their view of life and well-being.

TABLE 8 WELL-BEING FREQUENCY COUNT AND PERCENTAGES

RATING	Number	Percentage*
Very good	108	7
Somewhat good	810	53
Somewhat bad	421	28
Very bad	165	11
Don't know	8	.5
Refused	4	.3
TOTAL	1,516	100%

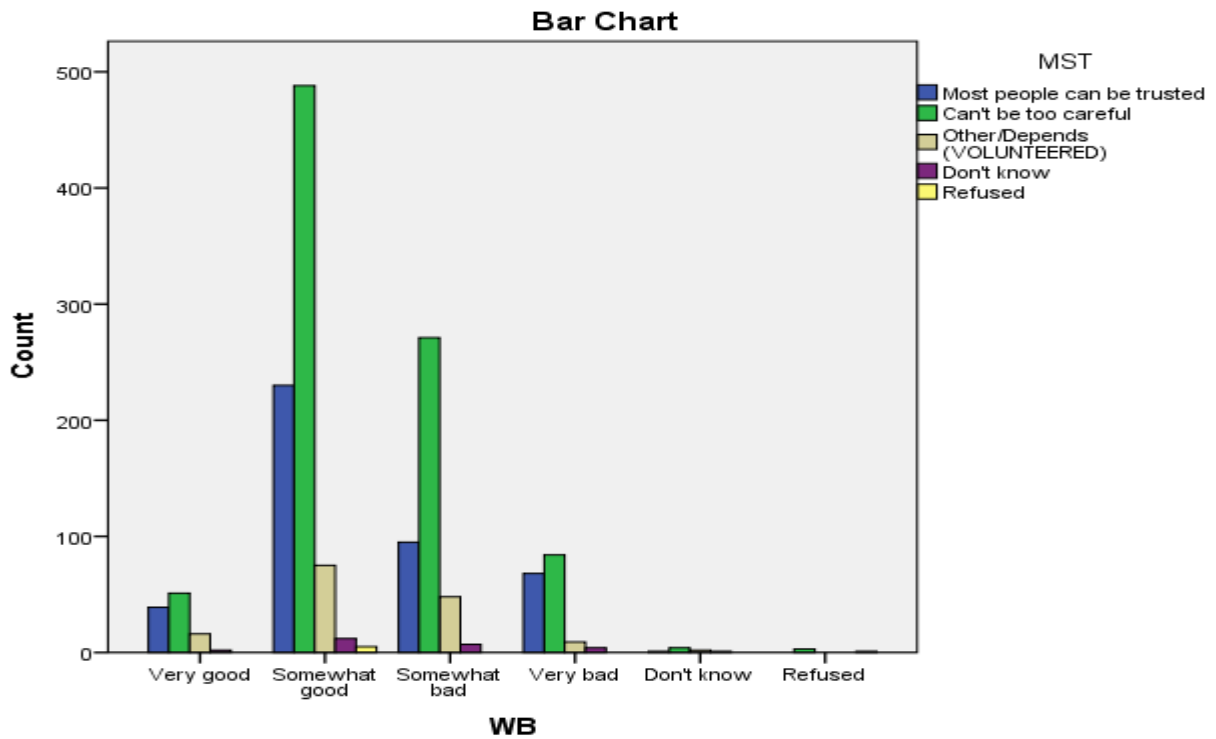
*Percentages have been rounded up and the total should be 100%

Since the null hypothesis is accepted, meaning/well-being leads to mutual social trust as an outcome of religious participation and it has a significant positive impact on the promotion of the human dignity of the 'religious other'.

TABLE 9 A CROSS TABULATION OF MUTUAL SOCIAL TRUST AND WELL-BEING

		MST					%	Total
		Most people can be trusted	Can't be too careful	Other/Depends (Volunteered)	Don't know	Refused		
WB	Very good	39	51	16	2	0	7	108
	Somewhat good	230	488	75	12	5	53	810
	Somewhat bad	95	271	48	7	0	28	421
	Very bad	68	84	9	4	0	11	165
	Don't know	1	4	2	1	0	.6	8
	Refused	0	3	0	0	1	.4	4
Total		433	901	150	26	6		1516

FIGURE 5 BAR CHART OF MUTUAL SOCIAL TRUST VS WELL-BEING

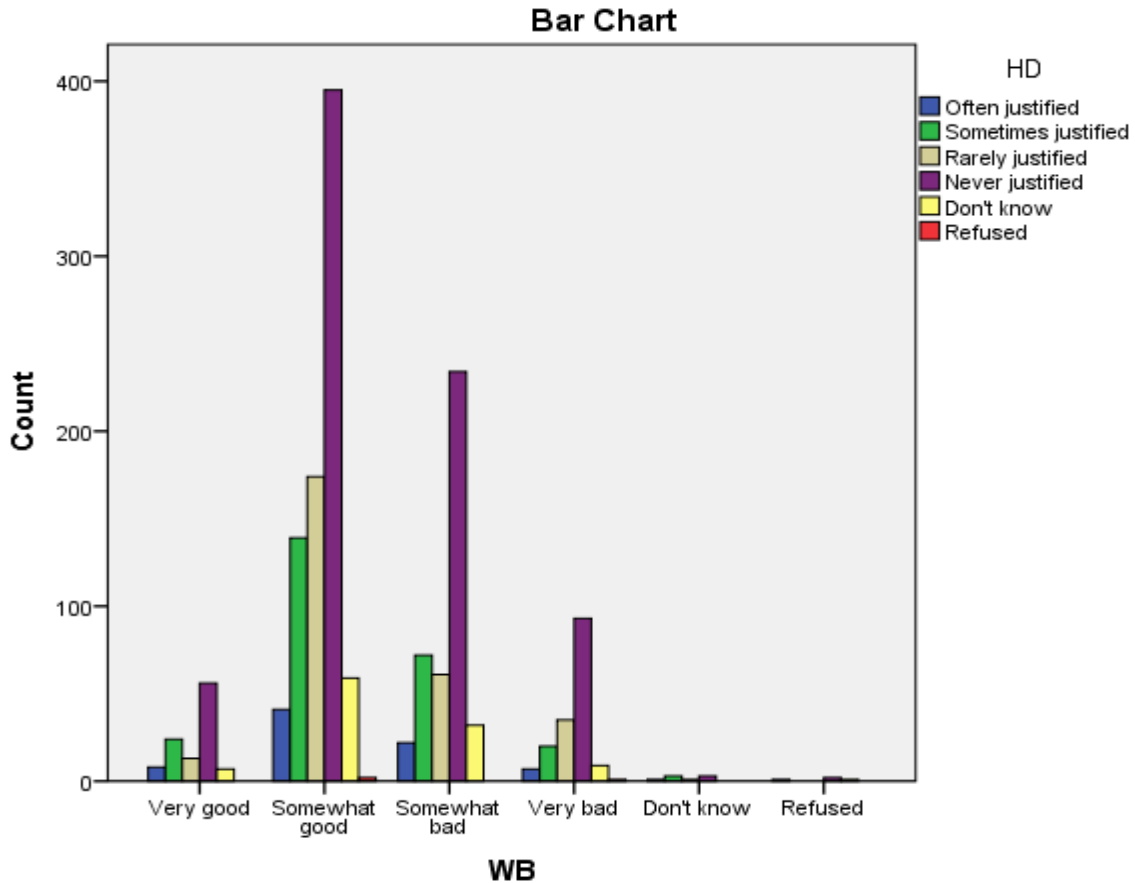


However, in the Nigerian situation, there is a high response rate of a cautious response that one cannot be too careful in trusting others, which may be an indication of the highly volatile situation amongst Muslims and Christians.

5.2.2 Investigating religious factors that may be associated with the well-being (human dignity) of the other

Q88 was used to check how Christians and Muslims respond to the promotion of human dignity through their philosophy of life on whether arms and violence should be considered an option, especially in relation to conflict resolution or registering grievances or self-defense. The question asked, “Some people think that the tactic of using arms and violence against civilians in defense of their religion is justified. Other people believe that, no matter what the reason, this kind of violence is never justified. How about you? Do you personally feel that the tactic of using arms and violence against civilians in defense of your religion can be often justified, sometimes justified, rarely justified, or never justified?” Of the respondents, 4% (n=24) Christians and 7% (n=56) Muslims answered ‘often justified,’ another 15% (n=105) Christians and 18% (n=153) Muslims answered ‘sometimes justified,’ while another 18% (n=120) Christians and 20% (n=163) Muslims answered ‘rarely justified’. It was also recorded that 55% (n= 378) of Christians and 47% (n= 392) of Muslims answered ‘never justified,’ while another 8% (n= 51) of Christians and 7% (n=51) of the Muslim respondents refused to answer the question. There is a positive relation between human dignity and well-being.

FIGURE 6 BAR CHART ON HUMAN DIGNITY AND WELL-BEING



Out of n=80 people who chose the ‘often justified’ option on the human dignity question, n=49 of these respondents are from people who have a ‘very good life’ (n=8) respondents or ‘somewhat good life’, with (n=41) respondents reporting high well-being. The option of ‘somewhat bad’ (n=22) respondents, ‘very bad’ (n=7) respondents, while the category ‘don’t know’ and those who refused to answer have (n=1) respondent each. In the same vein, out of (n=258) who answered ‘sometimes justified’, (n=24) of the respondents belong to the ‘very good’ (WB), (n=139) to ‘somewhat good’ (WB), while the ‘somewhat bad’ has (n=72) respondents, ‘very bad’ (n=7) respondents, and ‘don’t know’ with (n=3) respondents. In the ‘rarely justified’ section, out of (n=284) respondents, (n=13) of them are from the ‘very good’ (WB), (n=174) of respondents are from the ‘somewhat good’ (WB), (n=61) from ‘somewhat bad’, (n=35) from ‘very bad’ and 1 ‘don’t know’. In the ‘never justified’ section, of (n=783) respondents, (n=56) are from the ‘very good’, (n=395) from the ‘somewhat good’, (n=234) from ‘somewhat bad’, (n=93) from ‘very bad’, (n=3) ‘don’t know’ and (n=2) respondents refused to answer. However, it is puzzling to also observe that all the categories of respondents had a high response rate of ‘violence never being justified’.

5.2.3 To find out the existence and extent of the relationship between well-being (and other relevant aspects of human dignity) and mutual social trust, if any

By cross tabulating mutual social trust with human dignity, out of the same (n=80) respondents who chose the 'often justified' option in the human dignity question, (n=24) of them are in the category of most people can be trusted. The findings also show (n=45) of them are people who feel 'you can't be too careful' in trusting others', (n=9) respondents in this category said 'it depends' and (n=2) respondents 'do not know'. Out of the (n=258) in the 'sometimes justified' section, (n=87) fell under 'most people can be trusted', (n=143) respondents fell under 'can't be too careful' trusting others, (n=24) respondents fell under 'it depends' category and (n=2) 'don't know'. In the 'rarely justified' section of human dignity question, among (n=284), (n=86) respondents are from the 'most people can be trusted', (n=178) from 'can't be too careful' and (n=17) fell under 'certain conditions' (it depends), while (n=2) respondents do 'not know' and (n=1) respondent refused to answer. In the 'never justified section' among (n=783) respondents, (n=208) fell under most people 'can be trusted', (n=471) respondents 'can't be too careful', (n=88) respondents 'it depends', (n=12) respondents 'don't know' and (n=4) respondents refused to answer.

FIGURE 7 BAR CHART OF MUTUAL SOCIAL TRUST AND HUMAN DIGNITY

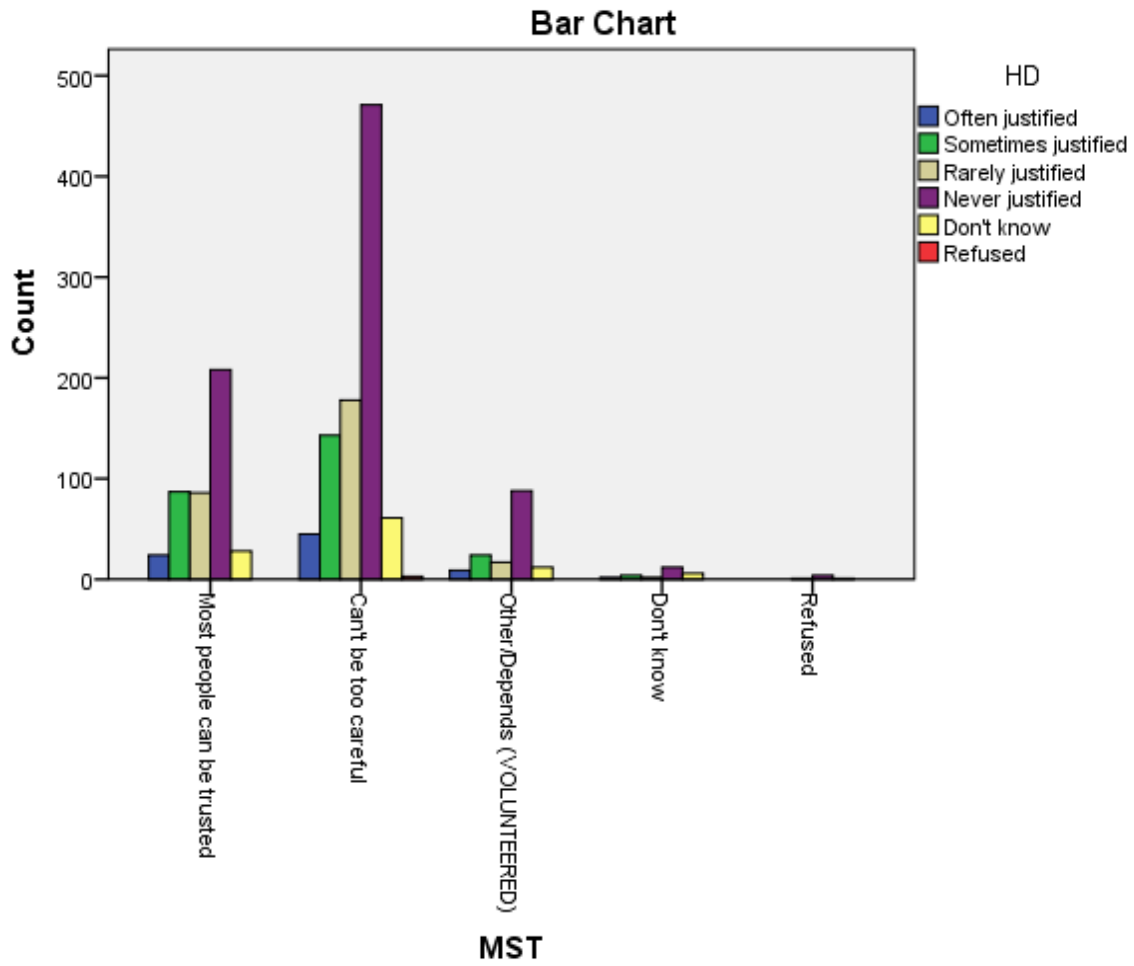
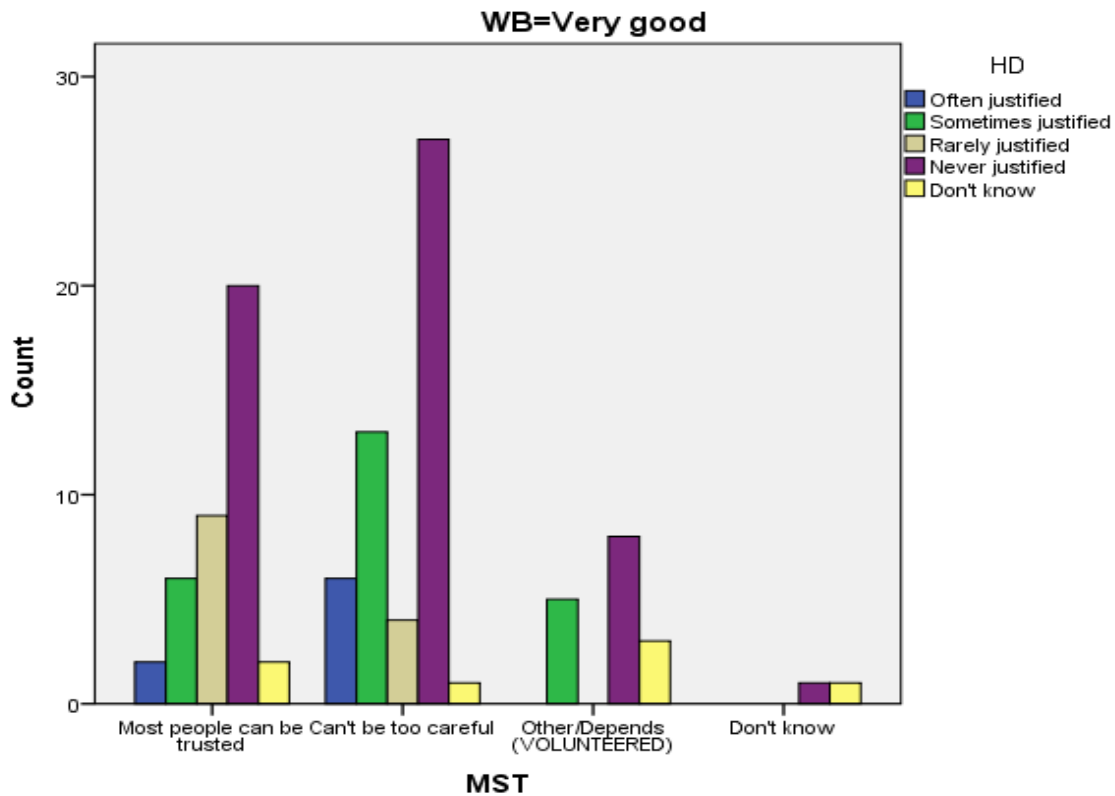


FIGURE 8 BAR CHART OF MUTUAL SOCIAL TRUST, WELL-BEING AND HUMAN DIGNITY



The researcher discussed findings to reinforce the subject in chapter two of this research; values affect how people trust or behave towards others, and how people construct identity also shapes their values, especially amongst Christians and Muslims, in the Nigerian context. Generalized knowledge about sociological and religious dimensions of trust does help to arrive at a comparative theology of religions that is appropriate for the Nigerian context. The issue of mutual social trust is at the centre of reasons why; despite the religiousness of Nigeria and the level of religious participation, it seems as if trust is not fostered towards the religious other.

FIGURE 9 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF MUTUAL SOCIAL TRUST

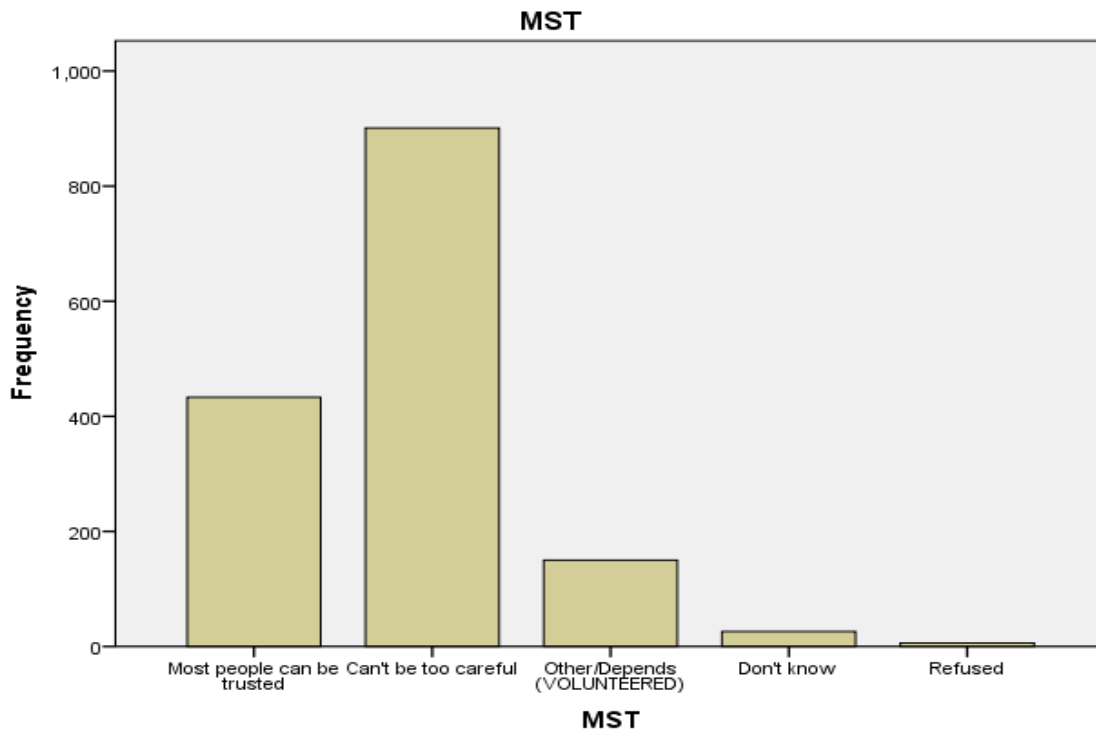
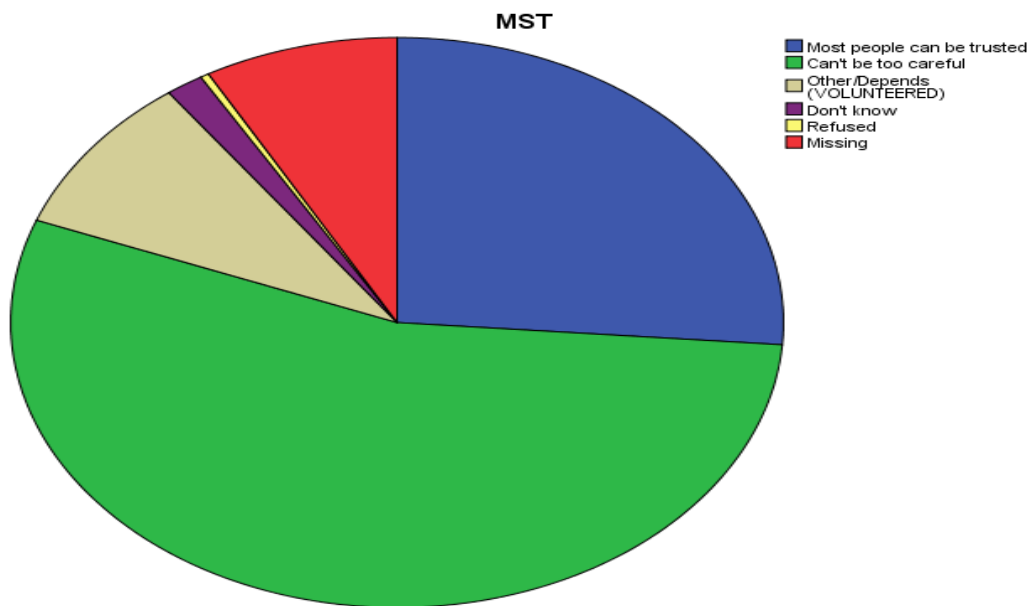


FIGURE 10 PIE CHART FOR MUTUAL SOCIAL TRUST



The subject of trust has been researched from two perspectives: the first is moralistic trust or generalized trust, which emanates from having a good view of life and does not expect reciprocation. The second is specialized trust or knowledge based trust, that stems from having a knowledge of the person in question and expects reciprocity. When people participate through worship in lived religions a bonding capital is created. However, the bonding capital should not be the climax as there should be the possibility of being able to create a bridging capital. The relationship of people who participate in lived religions is a form of social group who meet in worship and their relationship with the divine should reach out to people from other religions. There should be an expectation of participants of worship in all lived religions to promote interaction across religious borders. The rising tension between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria indicates that mutual social trust leading to voluntary community services among religious others is not happening. Mutual social trust is only fostered at a need to coexist basis and not what is entrenched in the kind of religious participation happening. On Q9, 30% (n=203) of Christians said most people 'can be trusted', while 62% (n=416) said 'you can't be too careful' with others. On the same Q9, 27% (n=227) of Muslim respondents say most people 'can be trusted' and 59% (n=475) said, 'you can't be too careful' with trusting others; 7% (n=51) Christians and 11% (n=93) Muslims gave conditions for their positions, which could change under certain terms.

Since the null hypothesis is accepted, well-being leads to social mutual trust as an outcome of religious participation. Well-being also has a significant positive impact on the promotion of the human dignity of the 'religious other'. The dynamics of how people respond to trust, especially when they have a good view of life and a high state of well-being, has reflected how they handle the issue of trust. It was discovered that the higher one is on the ladder of life, the more trusting they become because of how they have constructed their identity, which helps in how they perceive others. Similarly, how the 'religious other' is viewed, is directly proportional to where one locates themselves in the ladder of life. However, the role of the media is a variable that brings a complex divide in the Nigerian context. The manner in which incidences and crisis are reported in the news media helps shape identities and people's perceptions of those from other religions. This may be responsible for the complex spread of how people from other religions are viewed.

5.2.4 To investigate religious factors that may be associated with well-being (human dignity) of the other

A positive relation exists between human dignity and well-being. The reinforcement of this is found in the outcome of the hypothesis above. However, having a positive view of life affirms the position of

comparative theologies of religions of proponents like Knitter (2002) and Clooney (2010). These scholars are of the opinion that dialogue, rather than orthopraxis only, should be the foundations for theology. Thereafter, the Christian Scriptures and traditions follow. They disagree with several other scholars who hold scriptures and traditions to be at the centre (Knitter, 2002:203). Knitter repositions this idea by saying “lets’ temporarily put on the shelf” (Knitter, 2002:204) what people think about theology and tradition as it informs relating with religious other and allow religions to speak for themselves. He challenges theologians to take a risk to allow themselves to actually talk with and learn from them (Knitter, 2007:204).

A balanced view of life helps promote human dignity. A comparative theology does not put away theology but reorders the starting point to be dialogue first, followed by theology and traditions. What is discovered from other faiths becomes a basis for assessing our beliefs and gain a better understanding of what Christianity really means and stands for. They propose that “other religions can become the microscopes with which Christians look at the data of Christianity (Knitter, 2002:205). This in itself created a safe platform for dialogue and promotion of human dignity. The factors which may be associated with well-being and human dignity are culture, upbringing, experiences, religious participation, where trust becomes the thread binding the fabric together to determine if the outcome would be positive or negative toward the religious other.

5.2.5 To find out the existence and extent of the relationship between well-being (and other relevant aspects of human dignity) and mutual social trust, if any

Since the null hypothesis is accepted, the coefficient is significant. Construction of identity shows there exists a high significance between having a positive view of life, balanced well-being and mutual social trust. This will definitely rub off onto how the ‘religious other’ will be treated. The Golden Rule of Kant, which says “you do unto others what you would want others to do unto you” comes into play here. Every lived religion has this rule in their theology and traditions. However, it has not led to a paradigm shift of positions of violence amongst Muslims and Christians in the Nigerian context. The patterns of rationalization, as proposed by Habermas are reconstructed after collective learning processes in human discourses and experience has taken place from one level to another. The formed opinions are exchanged (Dreyer, 2011 8). Using the concept of “the tool kit,” Wuthnow also helps us to see another dimension of culture and the collective learning process. As groups come into contact with behavioural patterns which they cannot change or disagree with, they form new cultures or norms of dealing with the situation (Dreyer, 2011:3-4).

The Muslims and Christians in Nigeria have had a long history of misunderstandings and through this collective learning process, they have reached a point that the evolving and changing patterns of trust are indicating their way of coping with the situation. Bosch (1999:189ff) agrees with Habermas where he argues that trust impacts on society as a “consensual reality,” which reflects group behaviour. This has contributed to displacing individuals and groups and recreated new statuses in society (Dryzek, 1995:99) and re-orienting society and groups within societies of reality of structure, dynamics and its present world. How groups react to issues and situations begin to change constantly as coping mechanism (Nielsen, 1992:265). A new survival order is created, which makes the situation messy at times and seemingly out of control. Sequeri (2000:143) describes that a relationship cannot be built unless trust exists. How is trust built? Trust is an individual property and a social system as well. There is the individual dimension and the group dynamics. Simmel calls it “synthetic forces within society” (1950:326). The approach of Knitter (2002) and Clooney (2010) moves comparative theologies into another level of interaction with God and men. They argue that a “comparative theology seeks first to bring about change in the Christian before it thinks about changes in others”. Also, “by using the insight of non-Christian religions as a resource”, one can launch deeper into his own beliefs in more robust ways (Knitter, 2007:206). They propose a deep understanding of people of other faiths as we learn about their religion. In other words, loving them opens the door to appreciating their beliefs, which builds friendship (Knitter, 2007: 210).

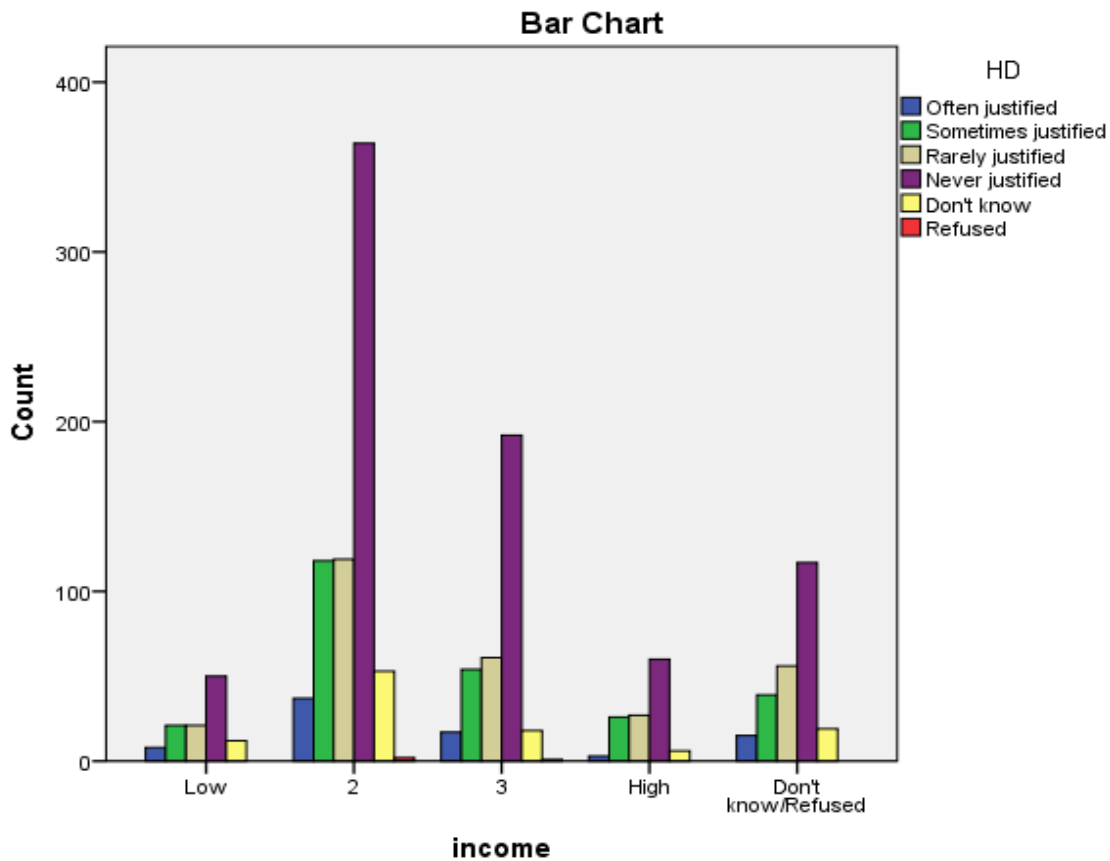
To control for other determining variables, for example, whether the income and educational achievement of a Christian or Muslim makes a different contribution to how religious participation may lead to mutual social trust and the promotion of human dignity among the religious other.

5.3 TESTING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL MUTUAL TRUST, INCOME AND HUMAN DIGNITY

Cross tabulating the income and human dignity question, out of the n=80 (5%) respondents who chose the ‘often justified’ option, n=8 (10%) respondents fell in the ‘low income category’, n=37 (46%) respondents to ‘level 2 income’, n=17 (21%) respondents to ‘level 3 income’; n=3 (4%) respondents to ‘high income’ category and n=15 (4%) respondents refused to answer, or did not know. In the ‘sometimes justified’ section, out of n=258, (17%) respondents who chose this answer, n=21 (18 %) of the respondents are in the ‘low income category’; n=118 (46%) respondents to ‘level 2 income’; n=54 (21%) respondents to ‘level 3 income’; n=26 (10 %) respondents to ‘high income category’ and n=39 (15%)

respondents did not answer or do not know. In the ‘rarely justified’ section, out of n=284 (19%) respondents, n=21 (7%) respondents fell in the ‘low income category’; n=119 (42%) respondents fell in the ‘level 2 income’; n=61(21%) respondents in the ‘level 3 income’ and n=27 (10%) respondents to the ‘high income’ category. While n=56 (20%) respondents did not answer or did not know. For the ‘never justified,’ n=50 (6%) out of n=783 (52%) respondents fell in the ‘low income’ class, n=364 (46%) respondents in the ‘level 2’ income, and n=192 (25%) respondents in the ‘level 3’ income. N=60 (8%) respondents fell in the ‘high income’ category, while n=117 (15%) respondents did not answer, or do not know. There is a positive relationship between mutual social trust and income. This implies that ‘level of income’ has a positive impact on the degree of social mutual trust.

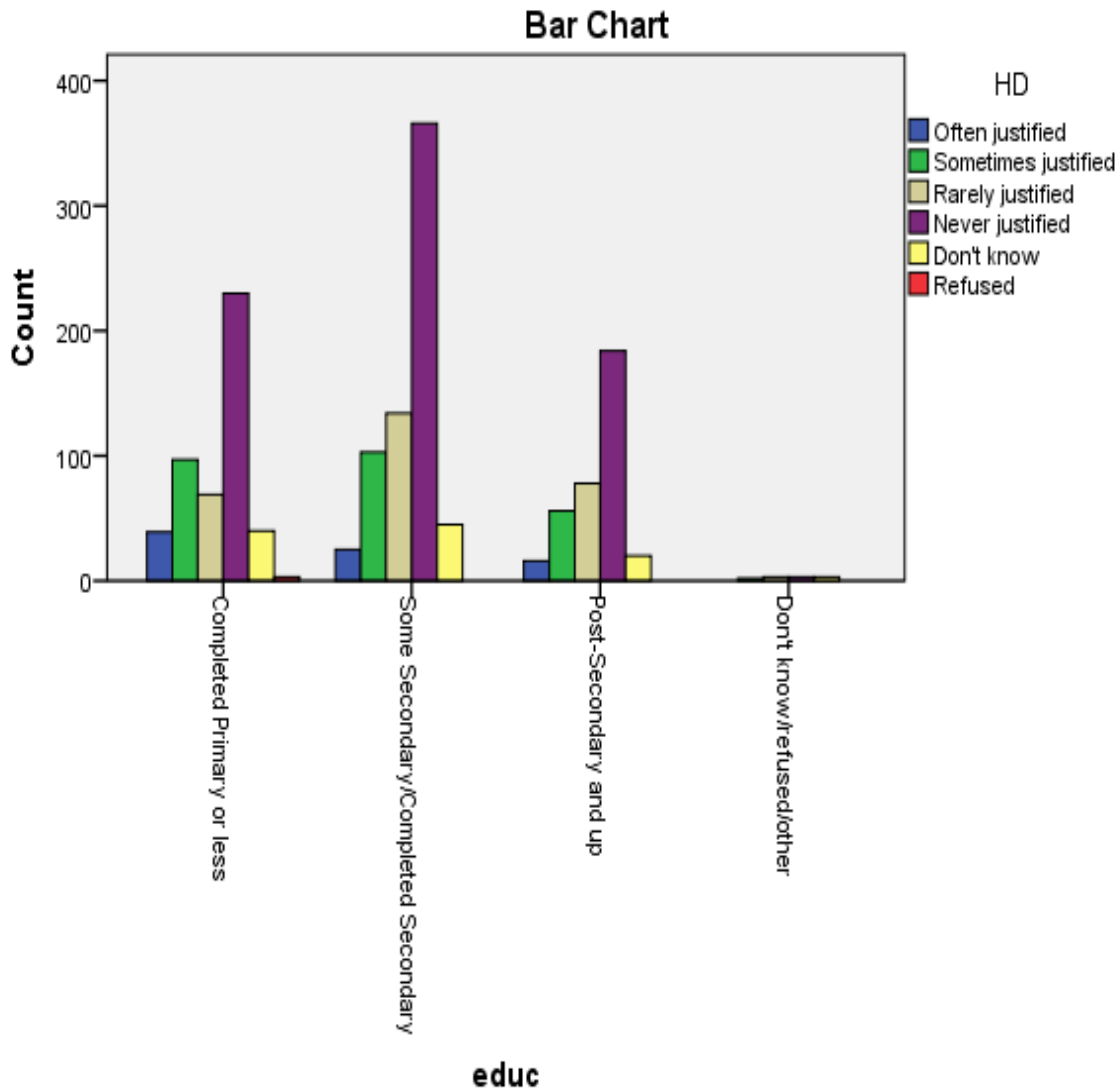
FIGURE 11 BAR CHART OF INCOME AND HUMAN DIGNITY



5.4 TESTING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL MUTUAL TRUST, EDUCATION AND HUMAN DIGNITY

From cross tabulating the education and human dignity data, the findings showed that n=80 (5%) respondents chose 'the often justified' option, n=39 (49%) respondents completed primary school or less; n=25 (31%) respondents completed some secondary education; n=16 (20%) respondents had post-secondary education and higher. In the 'sometimes justified' section out of n=258 (17%) respondents who chose this answer, n=97 (38%) of the respondents 'completed primary school' or less, n=103 (7%) respondents 'completed some secondary education'; n=56 (22%) respondents had a 'post-secondary education' and n=2 (.8 %) respondents did not answer or do not know. In the 'rarely justified' section, out of n=284 (18%) respondents, n=69 (24%) respondents 'completed primary school or less'; n=134 (47%) respondents completed some secondary education, and n=78 (27%) respondents had a 'post-secondary education'. While n=3 (1%) respondents did not answer or do not know. The 'never justified' section, out of n=783 (52%) respondents, n=230 (29%) respondents completed primary school or less; n=366 (47%) respondents completed some secondary education and n=184 (23%) respondents a post-secondary education. While n=3 (.4%) respondents did not answer or do not know. There is a negative relationship between mutual social trust and education. It implies that a person with a higher education qualification tends not to trust others, thereby exhibiting low mutual social trust. This is a very interesting finding in the Nigerian situation, which is contrary to what has been discovered by other researches that education has a high effect on how people trust. This may be a pointer also to the volatile situation of the Nigerian situation between Muslims and Christians.

FIGURE 12 BAR CHART OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DIGNITY



5.5 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

The data presented has been tested. A general agreement with the existing knowledge on the subject of mutual social trust, with the exception of education, was found to have a low significance rate in the Nigerian situation. This chapter has focused on discussing the data using the theoretical model of the research as a road map to understand the thought patterns. It is pertinent to say that this same subject could be looked at through other lenses. The researcher chose this lens to actualize the research goals and objectives. This section of research indicates that the Muslims and Christians in Nigeria have had a long

history of misunderstandings. This has led to a long road of collective learning process. This has led them to have reached a point that the evolving and changing patterns of trust are indicating their way of coping with the situation. One may argue that trust impacts on society as a “consensual reality,” which reflects group behaviour. This has contributed to displacing individuals and groups and recreated new statuses in the Nigerian context and re-orienting society and groups within societies of reality of structure, dynamics and its present world. How Christians and Muslims react to issues and situations begin to change constantly as coping mechanism. A new survival order is created, which makes the situation messy at times and seemingly out of control. This reinforces the hypothesis that a relationship cannot be built unless trust exists.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The field of Missiology and Science of Religions are probing into the concept of mutual social trust from an interdisciplinary perspective. This research provides an exploratory and descriptive study of 1,516 individual Christians and Muslims in Nigeria, with a focus on whether religious participation is fostering mutual social trust among the ‘religious Others’. Pew’s data is researched as a secondary resource to show the extent to which active religious participation in and outside Christian denominations and the Ummah (Muslim Community) in Nigeria fosters mutual social trust and the reasons for the evolving patterns. This is interpreted to find out if the results have implications and could be a catalyst for affirming and promoting the elements of human dignity of the ‘religious other’. Both practical and statistical significance was sort for as a statistical significance is an indicator of what respondents sometimes may assume is expected from them (ideal situation) and that is why a practical significance compares statistics with praxis. The data is interpreted from a statistical and practical significance perspective. This chapter of the thesis attempts to summarize what has been done in the previous chapters. It also seeks to reduce findings to recommendations and clarify in the conclusion the theological contribution of the research findings as a result of the theoretical framework adopted.

This study is an exploratory and descriptive research that attempts to answer the questions of “who, what, where, when or how and why?” A stratified random sample from all the seven geo-political regions, which are proportional to the population size and urban/rural population in Nigeria, was selected. One thousand five hundred and sixteen adults over the age of eighteen years were interviewed by the Pew Forum on ‘Religion and Public Life’, using languages English, Hausa, Yoruba and Pidgin. This sample was considered to be nationally representative of the Nigerian adult population. The findings indicate that a high level of uncertainty and tension exists among Christians and Muslims in the Nigerian context, with regards to trusting one another. An observer of this kind of tension would understand it could lead to violence and constant clashes, resulting in the kind of experiences between Muslim and Christians, as has been recorded in recent times. The Muslims and Christians in Nigeria have a long history of misunderstandings; through these collective learning processes, they have reached a point that the evolving and changing patterns of trust indicate their way of coping with the situation. Trust in this situation impacts on society as a “consensual reality,” which reflects on group behaviour. A new survival

order is created, which makes the situation messy at times and seemingly out of control. These findings support the idea that trust has an individual property and is a social system.

6.2 SUMMARY

6.2.1 *Summary of research approach and findings*

This research is both quantitative and qualitative in methodology. Knitter's ethical-practical bridge of mutuality model is used as a framework for interpretation; to help shape a pattern of thinking and discussion of how the research questions are being answered. A thorough review of the literature was done to cover social and religious aspects of mutual social trust. The problem has been reduced from complex relationships to simple patterns, to enhance our understanding and application of the Nigerian situation. This work has not just focused on causations, as was also part of the task set before it. Analysis of data and explanations of result when compared with generalized knowledge lead to recommendations that were made in order to lead a line of thought direction of what may be repositioned in order to improve praxis. Conclusions arrived at to reiterate hypotheses and how in praxis interreligious dialogue may be optimally used to reposition how one relates with the religious other.

Human dignity is important and very relevant in contemporary times. The absence of human dignity may be an indication of low mutual social trust among people. Human dignity has both descriptive and evaluative elements. In other words, when there is an absence of human dignity, it is felt. Values are informed and sustained by religious participation. In the Nigerian example, religion is a major source of constructing identity, and generally on the African continent. Every lived religion should promote human dignity, interaction, bonding and bridging capital. Human dignity is a dynamic concept and relationship with the religious others should be based more on practical reason than pure reason, orthopraxis rather than orthodoxy. Not that pure reason in itself is negative or orthodox but such kinds of religious participation do not lead to mutual social trust. The window of morality should be explored. This foundational belief is the platform for having a level playing field.

This calls for a reiteration of the question, does religious participation foster mutual social trust in Nigeria? At a level of pure reason, 'yes'; but at a level of practical reason, 'no'. What kind of religious participation should be going on? There is definitely a statistical association between religious participation and mutual social trust at the pure reason level, but what happens in the gap of reason and praxis? In the Nigerian context, well-being does not have any impact on mutual social trust and the promotion of human dignity by extension. Several hypotheses have been considered in this research in the

form of generalized knowledge. It was discovered that mutual social trust in the Nigerian situation does not lead to Christians and Muslims getting involved in other communities for voluntary services. Thus, authentic dialogue, showing love, interacting with others by using the ethical-practical bridge model, should level the playing field.

6.2.2 Implication of these findings in the Nigerian context

The Nigerian situation is unique, as a lot of concern and attention is given to it in the media globally. One of the reasons may be because it is the most populous black nation on the African continent. She is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious nation state. Religion is at the matter of mistrust, as every issue is interpreted from the perspective of religion, before even considering ethnicity. Historical records show that Muslims and Christians in Africa have interacted and reacted differently on different occasions, which could not be considered wholly peaceful or wholly conflict infested. Islam and Christianity are missionary religions, who in the Nigerian context have assimilated African traditional religion. The constitution of Nigeria possesses some level of ambiguity and leaves a wide margin of undefined interpretations. The opening statement of the 1999 Constitution defines Nigeria as a nation state under God. Also, section 10 of the Constitution states the government of the federal republic shall not adopt any religion as the state religion. Hence, the confusion of secularism versus Sharia comes to the table making it an uneven playing field, contrary to what Knitter is proposing in his ethical-practical bridge. The issue of identifying with various ethnic groups and religions is very strong in Nigeria. There is a high sense of affinity and sense of belonging. How people have constructed identities has contributed to the absence of mutual social trust. Crises and conflicts have made Nigeria a very volatile state, as religion has been used to either bring people together or cause division. Several approaches have been proposed and used in interfaith encounters between Christians and Muslims over the past 1400 years. Some of these were negative and others positive. The Nigerian situation confirms what Dreyer notes, "People cannot help learning when they disagree on norms and values in communication processes and societal crises, especially when they do not understand each other" (2011:4). This describes the dynamics of the Nigerian situation.

6.2.3 Research propositions

The propositions of this research are that:

1. Quality of relationships (independent variable) can develop trust (dependent variable).

2. Mutual social trust (independent variable) leads to properly developed relationships (dependent variable).
3. Religious traditions in Christianity and Islam (independent variable) affect how people build relationships that leads to mutual social trust (dependent variable).
4. Theological traditions in Christianity, for example, those of Catholics and Pentecostals (independent variable), affect relationship building and how they trust Muslims (dependent variable).
5. Religious participation, especially when engaged with the voluntary community development among religious others (independent variable), can foster mutual social trust (dependent variable).

Trust is both an outcome and a dimension of social capital, which has individual properties and a social system that constantly overlaps. Under observation, it is not visible to the human eye. The result of the interaction of trust with individuals, and how social networks respond to situations and circumstances, points to this reality. Alternative paradigms of enquiry on how religions are interacting (descriptive task) and could be interacting to create a society that could live at peace and at the same time could still remain very diverse (prescriptive task) had been engaged. An attempt was made to contribute to the field of comparative theology of religions and empirical theology of religions. How people live, how happy or tolerant they are, their state of well-being and participation in community development, all has trust at its centre. More trust is built when people participate in voluntary community work with people who are culturally and religiously different. Well-being, quality of life and view of life generally affect how a person trusts. The ethical-practical bridge of Knitter emphasizes dialogue using a commonly threatened earth as a platform for dialogue. It is not a matter of who is right or wrong, but about being true to what one believes. It is a matter of allowing religious convictions and practices, reaching out to them in dialogue rather than engaging in debates, which do not foster mutual social trust.

The researcher discussed findings to confirm that identity and construction of religious views and values affect how people relate to people of other religions, especially Christians and Muslims in the Nigerian context. There is the need to do a comparative theology of religions, using an existing generalized set of phenomena to explain the Nigerian religious context. Despite the fact that Nigeria may be regarded as a very religious nation, one may be tempted to wonder why this kind of religious participation is not fostering mutual social trust amongst the 'religious other'. This research has discovered the issue of trust as being the crux of the matter. Looking at the data based on whether people generally can be trusted or that one can't be too careful when dealing with people, the way Muslims in the Nigerian context

responded shows a high value of 'don't know' and a high number of dispersion above the mean. Invariably, the issue or subject of trust amongst the religious other becomes a very valid point responsible for how people of both religions treat one another, which is directly related to the promotion of human dignity. This kind of data is showing the reader that interreligious dialogue will be minimal in this context. One could deduce that an almost balanced divide exists between associating Christians with tolerance in the Nigerian context. If Muslims do not associate tolerance with Christians in Nigeria, then the issue of having a platform for dialogue or interreligious dialogue is slim. One may begin to wonder if the Golden Rule exists at all in this religious context. If you will do to others as you will want them to do to you, and you do not associate tolerance with the 'religious other,' then a complex set of relationships that can grow sour begins to form and develop into what may be beyond the control of what religious participation can achieve.

In essence, despite the fact that increased religious participation may lead to mutual social trust once there exists in the subconscious of religious participants while they form identities, then it may become even more challenging to promote human dignity or how people of different religions see one another, especially Muslims and Christians in the Nigerian situation. On the side of how Christians have reacted to the same question of whether most people of other religions can be trusted or they can't be too careful trusting people of other religions, the respondents were more precise and opinionated about how they have constructed their ideas about Muslims. However, there were a high number of respondents who were intolerant of Muslims altogether; and no extreme responses for undecided respondents. This pattern reflects more subjectivity than objectivity. Invariable opinions are being formed, based on perceived knowledge of the 'religious other'. The issue of generalized trust, which does not depend on reciprocity, seems to be far off. The range of responses is highly scattered when it comes to describing ones view of generally trusting people who have different religious values than themselves. How Christians have also responded shows a wide range of almost equally divided patterns of opinions. On the surface, this may seem as if the Muslims are judged negatively but it also reflects the kind of spiritual, social and theological space in which both Christians and Muslims co-exist in the Nigerian context.

In the Nigerian context, based on Pew Religion and Public Life data set, it is an interesting discovery that the Anglican, Baptist and Pentecostal denominations have the same kind of response, while the Methodist denomination stands out as more trusting of the 'religious other'. This discovery could show the shift in patterns of behaviour, based on the kind of narratives preached from the pulpit of these congregations, to warrant a shift from what was observed by Kalu (2010:101) in the 1970's. Only the Pentecostals

demonized Islam, which contributed to the rise in tension between Muslims and Christians. Even the Evangelicals followed suit. The female gender is discovered to be more trusting in the Nigerian situation, which is in agreement with other researches discussed in the introductory section of chapter 4. Younger people in the Nigerian situation tend to be more trusting, in accordance with other researches and generalized knowledge. However, the level of mistrust is also high. This category seems to be the active warrior age bracket or religious violence when situations escalate.

The subject of trust has been researched from two perspectives: generalized trust, which does not depend upon reciprocity from others; and knowledge based trust, which is dependent on reciprocity from others. Religious participation is a form of bonding and should be able to form bridging capital. Religious participation is a form of group solidarity, which should influence how we see others. The kind of religious participation based on emphasis of narrative from the pulpits and relationships developed through bonding and bridging will influence the kind of volunteering among the religious others. Generalized trust is based on a view of life, experiences and well-being. Lived religion should promote interaction and relationships through religious participation. However, the data set shows a high degree of caution from respondents, which may point to the fact that a high level of uncertainty and tension of trusting the religious other in the Nigerian context exists. This kind of tension can lead to violence and constant clashes resulting into the kind of experiences recorded in recent times among Muslims and Christians. With regards to Q9, 30% of Christians said most people can be trusted; while 62% said they can't be too careful with others. On the same Q9, 27% of Muslim respondents said most people can be trusted; and 59% said one can't be too careful when it comes to trusting others; 7% Christians and 11% Muslims gave conditions for their positions, which could fall on either side of the positive or negative responses.

6.2.4 Implication of this study for theology of religions

Reflecting and understanding on other religions from the Christian theological perspective leads to several theologies of religion, especially when the issue of trust is involved. There is an unending argument on typologies of religions and possible interpretations and implications to the 'religious other'. Whatever school of thought employed of the major 3 paradigms of pluralism, inclusivism and exclusivism, it does not remove the fact that challenges of articulation, comprehension and praxis exist. The pluralism adopted in the theoretical framework of this research is the fulfillment model combined with some form of inclusivism and mutuality model, which adopts the ethical practical bridge. In essence, one can say that despite the high level of religious participation, trust is not being fostered. He asserts that

religion leaves open the question of whether forgiveness is reinforced simply by religious socialization and participation in general or whether it can be facilitated by specific kinds of religious activities (Wuthnow, 1991). Not being able to forgive may be responsible for the low rate of mutual social trust among Christians and Muslims in Nigeria. Coleman agrees and concludes that “the role of social interaction in small groups and other voluntary associations has been emphasized as a way of maintaining or restoring trust” (Coleman, 1990:300).

Dreyer and Pieterse’s study on a church with character and its social capital for projects amongst the poor contributes “the line of thought regarding the participation between the church for the poor and the church of the poor on an equal footing in the exchange of social capital to each other” (Pieterse, 2004:11). This explains how they have constructed their religious identity in line with their social status. Their affinity and bonding is strong, however, the worshippers did not consider how this same affinity would play out when it comes to the ‘religious other’. Dreyer further asserted that, “A congregation with an inner circle of committed church members, with a movement from the inside to the outside and back inside, has the competence and motivation to reach outside the inner circle to the poor in other contexts with effective projects such as social capital to make a difference in South Africa” (Dreyer, 2009:431). In this case, consideration was not given to how the same will play out amongst people of other religions. In the Nigerian situation, there exists almost a balance in population among Christians and Muslims. Nigeria has the highest population of Muslims living in one country in Africa. One can see how and why in other regions like Southern Africa where Christians are in the majority, the response in certain circumstances may vary from the norm. Such variations can be seen, even in North African countries where Muslims are in the majority.

Well-being leads to social mutual trust as an outcome of religious participation. Well-being also has a significant positive impact on the promotion of the human dignity of the ‘religious other’. The dynamics of how people respond to trust, especially when they have a good view of life and a high state of well-being, has reflected how they handle the issue of trust. It was discovered that the higher one is placed on the ladder of life (where you perceive yourself to be in terms of financial position and wellbeing), the more trusting they become because of how they have constructed their identity, which helps in how they view others. Similarly, how one views the ‘religious other’ is directly proportional to where one is located on the ladder of life. However, the role of media is a variable that brings in a complex divide in the Nigerian context. The manner in which incidences and crises are reported in the news media helps shape identities and how people of other religions are perceived. This may be responsible for the complex dispersion of how people of other religions are viewed.

However, having a positive view of life affirms the position of comparative theologies of religions of proponents like Knitter (2002) and Clooney (2010). These scholars are of the opinion that dialogue, rather than theology only, should be the foundations for theology. Thereafter, the Christian Scriptures and traditions follow. They disagree with several other scholars who hold at the centre, Scriptures and traditions (Knitter, 2002:203). Knitter repositions this idea by saying, “let’s temporarily put on the shelf” (Knitter, 2002:204) what people think about theology and tradition as it informs relating with the religious other and allows religions to speak for themselves. He challenges theologians to take a risk to allow themselves to actually talk with and learn from them (Knitter, 2002:204).

A balanced view of life helps promote human dignity. A comparative theology does not put away theology but reorders the starting point to be dialogue first, followed by theology and traditions. What is discovered from other faiths becomes a basis for assessing our beliefs and gains a better understanding of what Christianity really means and stands for. They propose that “other religions can become the microscopes with which Christians look at the data of Christianity (Knitter, 2002:205). This in itself created a safe platform for dialogue and promotion of human dignity. The factors which may be associated with well-being and human dignity are culture, upbringing, experiences, and religious participation, where trust becomes the thread binding the fabric together determining whether the outcome would be positive or negative toward the religious other.

Construction of identity shows a high significance exists between having a positive view of life, balanced well-being and mutual social trust. This will definitely rub off on how the ‘religious other’ will be treated. The Golden Rule of Kant which says ‘do unto others what you would want others to do unto you’ comes into play here. Every lived religion has this rule in their theology and traditions. However, it has not led to a paradigm shift of positions of violence amongst Muslims and Christians in the Nigerian context. The patterns of rationalization, as proposed by Habermas, are reconstructed after collective learning processes in human discourses and experience has taken place from one level to another. The formed opinions are exchanged (Dreyer, 2011:8). Using the concept of the “the tool kit,” Wuthnow also helps us to see another dimension of culture and the collective learning process. As groups come into contact with behavioural patterns, which they cannot change or disagree with, they form new cultures or norms of dealing with the situation (Dreyer, 2011: 3-4).

The Muslims and Christians in Nigeria have had a long history of misunderstandings and through this collective learning process, they have reached a point where the evolving and changing patterns of trust are indicating their way of coping with the situation. Bosch (1999:189ff) agrees with Habermas when he

argues that trust impacts on society as a “consensual reality,” which reflects group behaviour. This has contributed to displacing individuals and groups and recreated new status in society (Dryzek, 1995:99) and re-orient society and groups within societies of reality of structure, dynamics and its present world (Nielsen, 1992:265). A new survival order is created, which makes the situation messy at times and seemingly out of control. Sequeri (2000:143) describes that a relationship cannot be built unless trust exists. How is trust built? Trust is an individual property and a social system as well. There is the individual dimension and the group dynamics. Simmel (1950:326) calls it “synthetic forces within society”. The approach of Knitter (2002) and Clooney (2010) moves comparative theologies into another level of interaction with God and mankind. They argue that a “comparative theology seeks first to bring about change in the Christian before it thinks about changes in others”. Also “by using the insight of non-Christian religions as a resource,” one can launch deeper into his own beliefs in more robust ways (Knitter, 2002:206). They propose a deep understanding of people of other faiths as we learn about their religion. In other words, loving them opens the door to appreciating their beliefs, which builds friendship (Knitter, 2002:210).

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on this research and its findings, the following are recommendations for the Nigerian context:

1. The subject of mutual social trust and interreligious dialogue has raised the need for a deliberate change and inclusion in the narratives and discourses of Muslims and Christians in the Nigerian context in a positive dimension. This will ensure that Muslims and Christian leaders will be more mindful of the kind of narratives and discourses when people are gathered in various places of worship, both in private and in public.
2. Both Christians and Muslims should realize the need for the promotion of human dignity and that they face the common reality of a threatened earth, which requires joint action to save and sustain it.
3. The promotion of human dignity should also be extended to all levels of education curricula from the primary to the tertiary to ensure that a new format of identity creation is entrenched in the society.
4. The promotion of human dignity should also be entrenched in training media practitioners, clergy and Government functionaries in order to ensure that the strategy becomes effective from top to

bottom for monitoring, and from the bottom to top for implementation, especially at the grassroots level.

5. People who have excelled in the promotion of human dignity should be celebrated in places of religious participation and in the nation as a whole, in order to stimulate emulation.

6.4 CONCLUSION

Taking a close look at Knitter's argument, one may agree that a high level of objectivity and fairness exists when it comes to other religions. He has not judged, nor approved of any theological beliefs, neither does he advocate a side. He proposes a common ground for the beginning of a relationship that has capacity to lead towards many possibilities but more probably positive and progressive dimensions. He articulates his opinions based on how consistent our theology and actions speak for our religious persuasions. In an indirect manner, he asks to see "the fruit" of religious beliefs. Like Clooney, he would prefer that religions speak for themselves and not the proponents. Dialogue and social mutual trust is at the centre of what Knitter and Clooney are proposing. As far as Knitter and Clooney are concerned, any religion that does not consider mutuality, interreligious dialogue and partnership, needs to reconsider and check what they stand for. Also, such religions are only a part of the problem and not the solution, especially in the 21st century. They both look at it as a dialogue among equals, not one single religious persuasion is superior to another. This may give the appearance that they are unsure of their religious beliefs, but they believe it is a necessary premise for interreligious dialogue. Any participant must come with the least possible bias and be open for religions to dialogue with one another. For Knitter, the ethical-practical bridge could be a starting point.

After introducing his goals, methodology and basic presuppositions, Knitter proceeds to present four main theological options or "models" for Christian reflection on other religions, which he calls the "replacement model", "fulfillment model", "mutuality model" and "acceptance model". The replacement model (more commonly called exclusivism, a label that Knitter dislikes and wants to abandon) is the traditional view of most of the Church history. In the theoretical model it was made clear that the fulfillment model with some form of inclusivism as it was traditionally called, has been adopted. Christ is the fulfillment and is non-negotiable; the religious persuasion may be negotiable especially in areas of tradition. The uniqueness of who Jesus is, what he has done, the difference he makes, is for all peoples. One using the fulfillment model may be open to discovering other religious truths found in other religions that have not experienced the revelation of Christ. As long as these truths do not contradict Christ and

what he has said or done. Christ appeared for the salvation of all people and that should not be taken away from them. This also opens up a wide spectrum for dialogue among religions. Knitter prefers to use the word “mutuality model,” traditionally referred to as pluralism, rather than inclusivism. Knitter attempts to show Christ’s uniqueness without denying or pulling down the necessity of other religious leaders like Buddha, Muhammad, Krishna, etc. To sum up, this has been a call for a comparative theology of religions in a pluralistic society like Nigeria, using the ethical-practical bridge of the mutuality model to foster mutual social trust.

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