**Pentecostal Views on Violent Crises in Plateau State:
Pilot Study Report**

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Executive Summary

The primary purpose of this study was to determine whether Pentecostals differ in their views on the crises in Plateau State from individuals in other Christian denominations. Two secondary purposes of the study were: 1) determine whether Christians differ from Muslims in their views of the crises and 2) identify factors related to peaceful and violent attitudes.

The participants in this study included 176 students enrolled in education at the University of Jos. Most of the sample (83.6%) were between the ages of 18-27 years. Of the participants, 34.1% reported that they currently attend a Pentecostal church, 28.0% attend a mainline Christian church, 26.2% attend a Catholic church, and 11.6% are Muslim. Participants completed a questionnaire that assessed their beliefs about the crises in Plateau State.

There were no significant differences between Pentecostals, Catholics, and mainline Christians on any of the ten variables. Therefore, educated Christian youths, regardless of whether they are Pentecostal, Catholics, or mainline Christians, have similar beliefs and experiences of the crises in Plateau State.

There were two major variables on which Muslims and Christians were significantly different in their perception of the crises in Plateau State. First, Muslims are significantly more willing to compromise than Christians. Second, Muslims view other Muslim individuals as being significantly more violent than Christians view other Christians.

There were three variables that had significant relationships with attitudes toward peace: perception of own religion, perception of other religion, and perception of other individuals. The more that a person believes that their own religion is loving and forgiving, the more peaceful attitudes that person has. Likewise, the more positively a person views the other religion and individuals within the other religion, the more peaceful attitudes a person has.

Attitudes toward violence had two significant negative relationships: perception of own religion and perception of other religion. The more a person views their own religion as loving, the less violent attitudes that person has. Likewise, the more positively a person views the other religion, the less violent attitudes that person has.

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations were made:
- Leaders in both religions must purposefully embark on an educational campaign to instruct their members about the loving and compassionate elements within their religion to foster peaceful attitudes and reverse violent attitudes.
- Religious leaders of both faiths should make efforts to educate each other about the key tenets of their religion: Christian clerics should educate Muslim clerics about the loving aspects of Christianity while Muslim clerics should educate Christian clerics about the loving aspects of Islam.
- Positive interaction between individuals of both religions should be encouraged and facilitated to help foster peaceful attitudes.
- Individuals must purposefully demonstrate positive behavior around people of the other religion to show them the positive aspects of the religion.

Introduction

Plateau State has experienced a number of violent crises in the past decade. Many cite religion as a key factor in the crises. The primary purpose of this study was to determine whether Pentecostals differ in their views on the crises from individuals in other Christian denominations. Two secondary purposes of the study were: 1) determine whether Christians in general differ from Muslims in their views of the crisis than Christians and 2) identify factors related to peaceful attitudes.

The key variables in this study consisted of the following:

1. **Personal Witness:** Types of violence that participants personally witnessed during the crises such as seen burning buildings or observed fighting.
2. **Personally Affected:** Ways in which the participant has been affected by the violence, such as losing a friend/relative or having property destroyed.
3. **Willingness to compromise:** Degree of willingness to compromise in order to bring about peace.
4. **Perception of own religion:** Degree to which a participant believes their own religion focuses on living in harmony versus fighting back to protect one's rights.
5. **Perception of individuals from own religion:** Degree to which a participant believes that all people of their religion are completely innocent versus some people of their own religion may be fueling the crisis.
6. **Belief toward violence:** Degree to which violence is necessary in some situations.
7. **Belief towards peace:** Degree toward which peace is possible through cooperation versus driving out the troublemakers.
8. **Belief of other religion:** Degree to which the "other" religion (aka Islam for Christians and Christianity for Muslims) is violent verses a loving and forgiving.
9. **Perception of individuals from other religion:** Degree to which individuals from the "other" religion are violent versus compassionate.
10. **Interactions with people from the "other" religion:** Frequency of interactions with people from the other religion in daily life, such as in business transactions or studying.

Research Questions
1. Do Pentecostals differ from Mainline Protestants and Catholics on the ten key variables above?
2. Do Christians differ from Muslims on the ten key variables above?
3. What variables are related with *beliefs toward violence* and *beliefs toward peace?*

Methods

Participants
The participants in this study represent a random selection of 200-level university students enrolled in the education programme at the University of Jos (UniJos). The study participants included 176 students (50.3% male, 49.7% female). Most of the students (83.6%) were between the ages of 18-27 years. Only 5.3% of the sample were over the age of 38.

Of the participants, 34.1% reported that they currently attend a Pentecostal church, 28.0% attend a mainline Christian church, 26.2% attend a Catholic church, and 11.6% are Muslim. Most of the students (67.1%) reported attending religious services more than once a week, 31.7% attend once per week, and only 1.2% reported attending less than once per week. Participants reported both the religion they grew up in and the religion they currently attend:

91.2% currently attend the same religion they grew up in; 5.8% changed to Pentecostalism, and 2.9% changed to Mainline Christian churches (1.2% from Islam; 1.2% from Catholicism, and 0.6% from Pentecostalism). No participants changed to Islam or Catholicism.

Approximately 37% of the participants reported that their state of origin was Plateau State.

Instrument
A questionnaire assessed participants' beliefs about the crisis. Extensive background information was elicited, including religious background and educational background.

Two of the variables, Personal Witness and Personally Affected, were assessed by asking participants to circle all conditions that applied to them during crises in Plateau State. Personal witness included: burning building, heard chanting, saw dead bodies, observed fighting, and participated in fighting. Personally affected included: relative/friend injured, relative/friend killed, my property destroyed, I was injured, and I had to flee. The frequency of experiences within each category was counted for each participant to get a total Personal Witness and Personally Affected score.

Interactions with people from the "other" religion was measured by asking participants to report how frequently they interact with people from the other religion in studying, business transactions, spending leisure time, and sharing meals. Participants indicated the frequency on a 5-poin scale from every day, once per week, once per month, once per year, and never. These four items were averaged to get an overall *interaction* score.

The two variables that measured beliefs of the "other," belief of other religion and perception of individuals from other religion, were measured with Likert scale items. The following instructions were given: "Below are statements about the other religion. If you are Muslim, think about Christians. If you are Christian, think about Muslims." Participants were asked to indicate their agreement with each item on a 6-point scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Belief of other religion was measured with four items such as "The other religion teaches forgiveness and love" and "The other religion is a violent religion" (reverse coded). Perception of individuals from other religion was measured with five items such as "People from the other religion are compassionate" and "People from the other religion are inherently violent" (reverse coded). Responses to these items were averaged to get an overall belief of other religion and perception of individuals from other religion score for each participant.

The remaining variables were also measured on a 6-point Likert scale. Instructions for these variables were as follows, "Below are some statements about the crises in Plateau State." They then indicated their agreement with each statement with the same 6-point Likert scale above. Willingness to compromise was assessed by three items, such as "My people must be willing to compromise with others to bring peace." Perception of own religion was assessed with six items such as "My religion teaches that we should not fight back" and "My religion says that we are to protect our rights, even if that means fighting" (reverse coded). Perception of individuals from own religion was assessed with five items such as "The people of my religion in Plateau State are acting against the principles of our religion" and "People from my religion can be violent" (reverse coded). Belief toward violence was assessed by three items such as "When your rights are threatened, violence is sometimes the only way to protect them." Belief towards peace was assessed by five items such as "Peace in Plateau State is possible when we all learn to work together" and "Peace will only come when the

troublemakers are driven out of Plateau State" (reverse coded). These items were also averaged to get total scores for each of the variables.

Procedure

Four different questionnaires, one of which was the questionnaire for this study, were randomly distributed as continuous assessment credit to the 900 students enrolled in the 200-level educational psychology course at the University of Jos, a core course for education students. At the end of a class session, the instructor gave directions for the questionnaires and class representatives distributed the questionnaires to the students. Because students were receiving course credit for completing the questionnaires, they had to list their name and matriculation number on the completed questionnaire. To encourage students to complete the questionnaire honestly, the following procedures were used to assure students that their responses would never be linked to them personally. A solid line was drawn immediately below the area where they were to write their name and matriculation number with the words "Do not write your name below. The top section will be removed upon submission" written in all capital letters. The instructor informed students that as soon as they submitted the questionnaire, their name and matriculation number would be cut off along the solid line so they would receive credit for completing the questionnaire, but they could not subsequently be linked to their responses. The questionnaires were returned by the students to the instructor within three weeks.

It is important to note that participants completed the questionnaire in late November/early December 2010, before the Christmas Eve bombings and subsequent violence in January 2011. At the time that participants completed this questionnaire, there had been no serious crisis violence within Jos metropolis for about 10 months.

Results

An item on the questionnaire asked participants to pick which option they thought best described the cause of the crises were. Table 1 presents the results.

Table 1. Percentage of Students Indicating the Primary
Cause of Crises within Plateau State

Cause	Christian	Muslim
Religious in nature	82.4%	33.3%
Ethnic in nature	12.0%	38.9%
Economic in nature	1.4%	0.0%
Mainly over injustice	4.2%	27.8%

Participants were also asked to indicate the violence that they have witnessed during crises in Plateau State. The results are presented in Table 2. Note that only four participants reported participating in fighting: two Christian, one Muslim, and one did not report his religion. The percentage for Muslims participating in the fighting is higher simply because fewer Muslims were in the sample than Christians.

Table 2. Percentage of Students Indicating Violence
they have Witnessed During Crises in Plateau State.

Situation	Christian	Muslim
Burning Building	57.43%	68.42%
Heard chanting	21.62%	26.32%
Dead bodies	37.16%	31.58%
Observed fighting	22.97%	36.84%
Participated in fighting	1.35%	5.26%
None	20.27%	15.79%

Participants were also asked to indicate the ways that they have been impacted from crises in Plateau State. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Percentage of Students Indicating Ways They
Have Been Affected by Crises in Plateau State.

Situation	Christian	Muslim
Relative/friend injured	28.38%	26.32%
Relative/friend killed	28.38%	36.84%
Property destroyed	12.16%	21.05%
Personally injured	1.35%	0.00%
Flee	35.14%	10.53%
None	23.65%	15.79%

Comparison of Pentecostal Beliefs to Other Christians
The first research question asked whether Pentecostals differ from Mainline Protestants and Catholics on the ten key variables. The total scores for each of the ten variables were entered into a separate one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of One-Way ANOVA comparing Pentecostals to Catholics and Mainline Christians on Key Study Variables.

Variable	Pentecostal Mean	Catholic Mean	Mainline Mean	F	df	p
Personal Witness	1.36	1.53	1.43	0.24	2, 142	.787
Personally Affected	0.98	0.98	1.28	1.66	2, 142	.194
Interactions	3.08	3.45	3.40	1.71	2, 141	.185
Compromise	4.29	4.52	4.32	0.41	2, 142	.664
Peace	3.10	3.16	3.36	1.49	2, 142	.229
Violence	3.15	3.35	3.16	0.37	2, 142	.691
Belief own religion	4.92	5.12	5.07	1.13	2, 142	.326
Belief own individuals	3.80	3.92	4.02	1.13	2. 142	.326
Belief "other" religion	2.36	2.27	1.86	2.62	2, 142	.076
Belief "other" individuals	1.68	1.60	1.36	1.44	2, 142	.240

There were no significant differences between Pentecostals and other Christians on any of the ten variables. Therefore, educated Christian youths, regardless of whether they are Pentecostal, Catholics, or Mainliners, have similar beliefs and experiences of the crises in Jos.

Comparison of Christian Beliefs to Muslim Beliefs
The second research question asked whether Muslims differ from Christians on the ten key variables. The total scores for each variable were compared using separate *t*-tests. Table 5 presents the means and outcomes of the *t*-tests for each of the ten key variables.

Table 5. Results of *t*-tests Comparing Christians to Muslims on Key Study Variables.

Variable	Christian Mean	Muslim Mean	t	df	p
Personal Witness	1.43	1.68	0.80	162	.425
Personally Affected	1.08	0.95	0.58	162	.563
Interactions	2.28	3.53	4.86	162	<.0001***
Compromise	4.43	5.26	2.97	162	.003**
Peace	3.20	3.56	1.89	162	.061
Violence	3.21	2.68	1.73	162	.086
Belief own religion	5.02	4.70	1.94	162	.054
Belief own individuals	3.90	3.52	2.03	162	.004**
Belief "other" religion	2.15	3.76	5.77	162	<.0001***
Belief "other" individuals	1.52	2.89	5.68	162	<.0001***

*** p<.001. ** p<.01. *p<.05.

As can be seen from Table 3, there are five variables where Muslims and Christians are significantly different in their beliefs and experiences of the Jos crises. In this sample, Muslims interact with Christians significantly more than Christians interact with Muslims. Given that the university is predominantly Christian, this is a logical finding and provides credence to the results of the study.

Furthermore, Muslims are also significantly more willing to compromise than Christians. Secondly, Muslims view other Muslim individuals as being significantly more violent than Christians view other Christians.

The two last significant results provide evidence that Muslims perceive Christianity as being more loving than Christians perceive Islam and also that Muslims believe that Christians are significantly more compassionate than Christians believe about Muslims. However, it is possible that these last two results may be an artifact of this sample. As will be seen in the next section, individuals who have more interactions with people from the "other" religion view the religion and individuals within the religion significantly more positively than individuals with fewer interactions with the "other." Since the Muslims in this sample had significantly more interactions with Christians at the Christian university with a large majority of Christian students, it is possible that this finding may not generalize to other Muslims who have less contact with Christians.

Beliefs of Peace and Violence

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The final research question asked what variables are significantly related with beliefs toward peace and beliefs toward violence. To answer this research question, correlations were calculated between the variables. It is important to note that all participants were included in these analyses, both Christians and Muslims. Therefore, the findings generalize to both religions.

Attitudes toward peace and violence have a significant negative correlation (r= -.376; $t(171)$ = 5.31, p<.0001). This means that the more peaceful attitudes a person has, the less they believe violence is acceptable. This provides positive validity evidence for the measures of peace and violence attitudes.

Attitudes toward peace had three significant positive relationships: perception of own religion, perception of other religion, and perception of other individuals (see Table 6).

Table 6. Significant Correlations with Attitudes Toward Peace.

Variable	Correlation (r)	t	df	p
Belief own religion	.263	3.57	171	<.001
Belief "other" religion	.151	1.99	171	.048
Belief "other" individuals	.186	2.48	171	.014

The more that a person believes that their own religion is loving and forgiving, the more peaceful attitudes that person has. Likewise, the more positively a person views the other religion and individuals within the other religion, the more peaceful attitudes a person has.

Attitudes toward violence had two significant relationships, both of which were negative: perception of own religion and perception of other religion (see Table 7).

Table 7. Significant Correlations with Attitudes Toward Violence.

Variable	Correlation (r)	t	df	p
Belief own religion	-.365	-5.12	171	<.001
Belief "other" religion	-.171	-2.28	171	.024

The more a person views their own religion as loving, the less violent attitudes that person has. Since the absolute value of this correlation is high, this means there is a strong relationship between these two. Likewise, the more positively a person views the other religion, the less violent attitudes that person has. The absolute value of this correlation is low, so while significant, this relationship is slightly weaker. This means that a person's own religion has a greater relationship to violent attitudes than a person's perception of the other religion.

Other Interesting Findings
A significant positive correlation was found between the amount of interaction with individuals from the other religion and beliefs of the other religion (r = .297; $t(171)$ = 4.07, p<.0001) as well as amount of interaction with individuals from the other religion and beliefs

of individuals of the other religion (r = .291, t(171) = 3.98, p<.0001). This means that the more a person interacts with individuals from the other religion, the more positively they view the other religion and individuals from the other religion.

A strong positive relationship was also found between beliefs of individuals of the other religion and beliefs of the other religion (r = .690, t(171) = 12.45, p<.0001). This means that the more positively a person views people of the other religion, the more positively they view the other religion. The reverse is also true: when a person has negative interactions with people from the other religion, then their view of the other religion worsens.

Finally, one item on the questionnaire had an interesting response: My religion teaches that we have the right to rule in Plateau State. Of the Christians, 48.6% agreed to this statement. Of the Muslims, 52.9% agreed to this statement. It would be interesting to learn exactly where these beliefs came from, and if they are truly supported by the theology of each respective religion.

Conclusions

The primary purpose of this study was to determine whether Pentecostals differ in their views on the crises from individuals in other Christian denominations. On all ten key variables measured in this study, Pentecostals had similar beliefs to Catholics and Mainline Christians. Since the sample consisted of university students, it can be concluded that educated Pentecostal youths have similar beliefs of the crisis to educated youths of other Christian denominations.

There were two secondary purposes of the study. The first was to determine whether Christians in general differ from Muslims in their views of the crisis. There were five significant findings from this analysis. First, Muslims interact with Christians significantly more than Christians interact with Muslims, a reasonable finding given that UniJos has a predominantly Christian student body. It would be interesting to find out how these interactions have changed since the Christmas Eve bombings and subsequent violence in January 2011.

Second, Muslims are significantly more willing to compromise to bring peace than Christians. This was measured by items such as "My people must be willing to compromise with others to bring peace" and "I am willing to give up some of my rights to bring peace in Plateau State." This should challenge Christian leaders to open up a dialogue among Christians and between Christians and Muslims to identify ways in which both groups can come to an agreeable compromise to stop the violence.

Thirdly, Muslims view other Muslim individuals as being significantly more violent than Christians view other Christians. This factor was measured by statements such as, "People from my religion can be violent" and "The people of my religion in Plateau State are acting against the principles of our religion." This means that Muslims are more willing to admit that other Muslims are acting against the principles of their religion than Christians are willing to admit. Again, this should challenge Christians to critically examine themselves and other Christians to determine whether they too are acting against the principles of Christianity in both word and deed.

Fourth, Muslims perceive Christianity as being more loving than Christians view Islam. Finally, Muslims believe that Christian people are more compassionate than Christians

believe about Muslims. As discussed in the Results section, this finding should be taken with caution until it can be confirmed by assessing Muslims who do not have as much interaction with Christians as the students who participated in this study.

The other secondary purpose of this study was to identify factors related to peaceful and violent attitudes. There were three factors significantly related to peaceful attitudes in this study: belief of own religion, belief of other religion, and belief of other individuals. The more that a person views their own religion as loving and compassionate, the more peaceful attitudes they have. The more that a person views the other religion as loving and compassionate, the more peaceful attitudes they have. Finally, the more a person believes that individuals from the other religion are loving and compassionate, the more peaceful attitudes they have. This means that peaceful attitudes can be fostered through education: education about the loving and compassionate themes within a person's religion, educating them about the loving and compassionate themes of the other religion, and educating them about loving and compassionate deeds by individuals from the other religion.

There were two factors related to violent attitudes: belief of own religion and belief of other religion. People with violent attitudes have a lower understanding of the loving and compassionate elements within their religion. Likewise, people with violent attitudes have a lower understanding of the loving and compassionate elements of the other religion. The same educational program as described above would likely reduce violent attitudes.

Recommendations

Both peaceful and violent attitudes are related to a person's belief of their own religion. Therefore, leaders in both religions must purposefully embark on an educational campaign to instruct their members about the loving and compassionate elements within their religion. This should improve peaceful attitudes and reduce violent attitudes amongst their members.

Likewise, both peaceful and violent attitudes are related to a person's belief of the "other" religion. Therefore, religious leaders of both faiths should educate each other about the key tenets of the other religion: Christian clerics should educate Muslim clerics about the loving aspects of Christianity while Muslim clerics should educate Christian clerics about the loving aspects of Islam. Likewise, they should discuss the elements of their religion that have been misunderstood to support violence. Increasing mutual understanding of both faiths will foster peaceful attitudes and reduce violent attitudes.

Peaceful attitudes are also related to a person's perceptions of individuals from the other religion. Furthermore, a person's perception of individuals from the other religion is related to the amount of interaction that a person has with members of the other religion. Therefore, positive interaction between individuals of both religions can help foster peaceful attitudes. When there is mutual positive interaction, then Christians learn that not all Muslims are violent, and Muslims learn that not all Christians are violent.

Furthermore, individuals must be purposeful to demonstrate positive behavior around people of other religions to show them the positive aspects of the religion. Since beliefs of the other religion is positively related to beliefs of peace and negatively related to beliefs of violence, purposefully engaging in positive interactions with people from the other religion will go a long way to fostering peace.

Suggestions for Further Research

This study was conducted with university students. Therefore, the conclusions can only be generalized to educated youths. Further research should be conducted to determine whether these results will generalize to other populations. For example, the comparison between Pentecostals, Catholics, and Mainline Christians found no significant differences in attitudes toward the crisis. However, these findings may not generalize to the leaders of the respective denominations. Indeed, a tentative finding from the NPCRC research thus far is that there is much confusion amongst members about the key beliefs of Pentecostalism. Therefore, Pentecostal leaders may have different beliefs about the crises from Catholic and Mainline leaders.

Second, the sample of Pentecostal members is limited to educated youths. Perhaps there might be denominational differences in beliefs toward the crises amongst uneducated Christians, or amongst older Christians.

This sample also had a smaller sample of Muslims than would be desirable to draw reliable conclusions about Muslims in general. Further research should draw on a larger, more diverse sample of Muslims.

Further research should also expand the scope of the study. It would be interesting to learn the core religious values that individuals with peaceful attitudes draw upon to support their peaceful views. Similarly, it would also be interesting to learn the core religious values that individuals with violent attitudes draw upon to support their violent views. This would then provide a better knowledge-base that religious leaders can draw on to support peaceful attitudes amongst their members. Furthermore, religious leaders could then also directly address the problematic values that their members have that are used to support their violent attitudes.