

EXAMINATION OF BAPTIST COOPERATIVE PROGRAMME, ITS BENEFITS  
TO THE LOCAL CHURCHES AND THE COMMUNITIES

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## ABSTRACT

This research work examined Baptist Cooperative Programme of the Nigerian Baptist Convention, its benefits to the local churches and the communities. To achieve the above objective the researcher designed and issued out a set of questionnaire to some selected churches in Ogbomoso Baptist Conference. Two hundred copies of questionnaire were distributed (one hundred to the pastors and one hundred to church members) on the impact of Baptist Cooperative programme on the church and the environs (communities). Ten convention officers were also served with interview guide on impact of Baptist Cooperative Programme of which copies were returned. Out of the two hundred copies of questionnaire distributed one hundred and seventy eight copies were returned which correspond to eighty nine percent of the respondent (eighty four pastors and ninety four members). The following were discovered from this research work: Some church members do not understand what the programme entails, some churches are not giving towards the cooperative programme, some pastors did not educate their members on the benefits of the programme to the local churches and the communities, other rural churches feel marginalized by not giving them loan whenever they apply. It was established too that some pastors are not faithful in giving which also affect the churches. The researcher recommended that: church members should be well educated about the programme and its benefits to the local churches and the communities; and that the Nigerian Baptist Convention is employed not to be bias in rendering services to the local churches.

## 5.2 Conclusion

The research work has established the biblical basis of cooperation, reasons why some local churches are not cooperating, the benefits of the programme to the local churches and the communities. It has also been established in the research that there

should be no reason genuine enough to foster unfaithfulness to this joint agreement. Every local church should contribute based on its income.

The research has shown that the future and success of the Nigerian Baptist Convention rests solely on this programme: because it is the financial back bone of the Convention. When there is no money nothing can be done. It is, therefore, important for the Convention to re-orientate her leaders in the churches as well as the members.

Poor understanding of stewardship was also revealed for the unfaithfulness of church members. The pastors, therefore, argued to teach faithful stewardship and practice it for the members to follow. The centre focus of the programme is to get means of fulfilling the great commission task which Christ has committed to our hands.

### 5.3 Recommendations

The researcher hereby wishes to make some recommendations or suggestions that will be a remarkable help to the Nigerian Baptist Convention pastors, church members and theological institutions. The recommendations are as follows.

1. The Convention should be more committed in support of local churches in both urban and rural areas. There should be no segregation. This will go a long way to enhance trust and confidence in the programme among local church members and churches.
2. Orientation should be taken to the local church's level so that every member would be educated about Baptist Cooperative Programme. Though it is been done at larger gathering such as Association, conference and the Convention but not all church members participated in such a gathering
3. Pastor should be well equipped through theological training so that they will lead by example through giving of their tithes and offerings.

4. Churches should be educated on faithful stewardship to the local church association, conference and Convention.
5. The Convention should be committed to interpret the Baptist practices and policies in to local languages so that they will be able to understand better because the writer thinks that was the reason some members could not define nor explain Baptist Cooperative Programme.
6. There should also be eradication of inequality or ethnicity barrier that every member and cooperating member church should be treated equally. Loan should be given to local churches in rural areas too. There should be no bias.
7. The Convention body should be committed to the goal of the programme and she should be faithful in spending the funds allotted to the programme
8. All the pastorless churches should be given pastors through the Convention and assist in paying them either some percentage or as the condition calls for.
9. Autonomy of the local church should not be rated above the Convention body. Otherwise, local churches will be using that to favor themselves and against the pastors who may want to lead the church in such manner.
10. Pastors that are not of Baptist background should be well orientated by serving as an associate pastor under an experience church Pastor who will introduce Baptist Politics and Practices to them; because majority of such pastors may not be leading their churches to cooperate with Baptist Cooperative Programme because they were not from that background.

If the listed recommendations are responded to positively by various stakeholders and see the cooperative programme as God's channel of reaching the lost

across the globe, then Nigeria would not only be a giant of African Politically, but also centre of gravity to Christianity in Africa.