

THE NIGERIAN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES WHICH PROMOTE INTER-ETHNIC
MARRIAGES AS EXPRESSED BY INTER-ETHNIC COUPLES IN OGBOMOSO

N.B.T.S
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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted purposely to examine Christian principles and practices which promote inter-ethnic marriages in Ogbomoso. In order to achieve this purpose, Questionnaire was administered as instrument for data collection on 60 respondents who engaged in inter-ethnic marriage. Two of them were widows, 32 were women and 28 were men. 46 of the respondents were Baptists, 5 were orthodox, and 9 were Pentecostal members. In terms of ethnic groups, 31 were Yoruba, 2 were Hausa, 6 were Igbo and 21 were from other ethnic groups. Among them were 42 civil servants, 9 traders and 9 artisans. The content validity of the instrument was ensured through the vetting of Masters and Ph.D. candidates in the Seminary. The revised drafts were further given to experts in the Seminary for scrutiny. The reliability of the instrument was measured in a pilot study which involved 17 respondents. The test and re-test method was adopted and it gave a correlation co-efficient of 0.94.

The following six hypotheses were tested:

1. There is no significant difference among (a) Christian education, (b) Christian brotherhood, (c) Christian virtues and (d) Christian spiritual gifts in promoting inter-ethnic marriages.
2. There is no significant difference between the views of males and females on the extent to which Christian principles and practices promote inter-ethnic marriages.

3. There is no significant difference among the views of Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo and other ethnic groups on the extent to which Christian principles and practices promote inter-ethnic marriages.
4. There is no significant difference among the views of public servants, traders and artisans on the extent to which Christian principles and practices promote inter-ethnic marriages.
5. There is no significant difference among the views of people with Primary VI and below, Grade II/School Certificate, NCE/OND and Degree holders on the extent to which Christian principles and practices promote inter-ethnic marriages.
6. There is no significant difference among the views of those who have been involved in inter-ethnic marriages for 1-5 years, 6-10 years and those above 10 years on the extent to which Christian principles and practices promote inter-ethnic marriages.

Findings revealed that Christian principles and practices such as Christian virtues, Christian brotherhood, Christian spiritual gift and Christian education found in spouses accounted for 75.25% of decision to enter into inter-ethnic marriages. Christian virtues exert greatest impact. The results of the study revealed the same or similar views between males and females, among all ethnic groups, length of marriage and occupations, leading to an acceptance of their respective null hypotheses

Based on these findings, the researcher recommended that: The pastoral caregivers and counselors should educate the parishioners that in Christ, language, culture, race and ethnic differences should not be seen as

barriers to inter-ethnic or cross-cultural marriage. The pastoral counselors should involve the youths who wish to enter into inter-ethnic marriage in thorough premarital counseling with emphasis on humility, endurance, tolerance, faithfulness, self-control, caring, forgiving spirit, etc. The church, with the assistance of the pastor should plan and organize marriage and family enrichment programs to strengthen the marriages and families of those already involved in inter-ethnic marriage. Christian youths should be encouraged and sponsored to attend conferences, Christian camp/retreat, fellowship, Bible study, mission outreach, etc. These will promote more inter-ethnic marriages among Christians.

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promoting inter-ethnic marriages. The sample consisted of 60 respondents. Two of them were widows, 32 were women while 28 were men. 46 of the respondents were Baptists, 5 were orthodox and 9 were Pentecostals. In terms of ethnic groups, 31 were Yoruba, 2 were Hausa, 6 were Igbo and 21 were other ethnic groups. The civil servants were 42, traders were 9 and artisans were also 9.

The instrument for data collection was a self-designed questionnaire titled, "Christian Principles and Practices Which Promote Inter-Ethnic Marriage in Ogbomoso." It has three sections. That is, Sections A, B and C as contained in Appendix 1. The findings revealed that five out of the six null hypotheses were accepted. Generally, all the respondents both males and females had high positive views that Christian principles and practices enhance inter-ethnic marriages. According to the findings, what really helped in enhancing inter-ethnic marriages were Christian principles and practices that were found in Christian education, Christian brotherhood, Christian virtues and Christian spiritual gifts. Examples of such Christian principles and practices were: Bible study, Sunday School, Christian camp/retreat, seminars, youth fellowship, tolerance, endurance, faithfulness, self-control, humility, singing, dedication, praying, caring, giving and preaching.

Conclusions

In conclusion, findings revealed that Christian principles and practices have tremendous positive impact in promoting inter-ethnic marriages. Especially, the findings revealed that Christian principles and practices such

